DETERMINANTS OF CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR TO SUSTAIN THE RETURN INTENTIONS PROGRAM OF TOURIST IN MARINDUQUE

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Abstract: The purpose of this research was to evaluate the determinants of customer behavior as basis for the development of sustainable return intentions program. Surveys were completed by the local and foreign tourists visited in the province of Marinduque. The study aims to answer which among the factors of customer behavior (Cultural, Social, Personal, and Psychological) greatly influence the return intentions and serves as basis of the province to develop a sustainable return intentions program. Through a survey of 397 local/foreign tourists in the province, it was found out that the respondents' demographic profile posted significant differences in the respondents' perceptions. In particular, gender, age, civil status, an educational attainment showed significant differences in the respondents' mean ratings on several variables that were considered in the study. Results of the test of Correlation showed significant and positive correlation between the determinants of Customer Behavior and areas defining the Return Intention Programs. The study also showed that Psychological Factors have the strongest relationship with the different facets of sustainability of Return Intentions.

Keywords: customer behavior, return intentions, determinants

Introduction

In the tourism industry, stakeholders and marketers will benefit from a deep understanding of customer behavior and tourist satisfaction in the achievement of the goal for customers' return intentions. Information on the factors that determine customer behavior is vital in the offering of attractive tourist destinations and the development of efficient marketing strategies that result in increased customers' intention to return, to a large extent in predicting future customer behavior. Factors that have the largest effects on repurchase intentions and customer satisfaction need to be determined to provide customers the basis for choosing tourist destinations that meet their demand and preferences. Miragaia and Martins (2015) recommends the identification of the most valued attributes of customers viewed as fundamental in attracting and keeping customers satisfied. Long term survival and operation can be achieved through the knowledge of customers' behaviors, the design of products and services that satisfy their demands, and which can lead to satisfaction and future intention to repurchase.

Repeat visitation in the tourism industry is desirable and an important strategy for both public and private institutions for reasons of increased revenue, achievement of stability in company income, reduced cost for expenditures on people who are not potential buyers. It becomes less expensive to maintain existing customers compared to the attraction of new customers, with high ration of repeat visits reduce the allocation of large budget for marketing (Oppermann, 2013). The study considers retention of customers as more profitable in comparison with winning prospective customers, making it vital to retain existing customers and the improvement in their intention to buy or revisit in order to gain profitability and business sustainability. Repeat visitation in the study of Alegre &Juaned (2013), indicates satisfaction of customers. Positive customer

attitude is attributed to high level of satisfaction and the development of efficient marketing strategies facilitates customer repurchase.

With the increasing growth trend of the tourism industry in the province, the researcher, as a resident and a member of a public educational institution is concerned of the progress and development of the province in which tourism is one of the main contributors to economic development of the region. Increase in the number of visitors implies growth of the tourism industry. This entails enhancement of tourism destinations' strategies to achieve sustainability of the industry in the long term. The study can become the basis for the formulation of strategies that will retain existing customers and attract potential customers in the industry towards achieving sustainability of the government's program for return intentions.

Customer Behavior

Consumer behavior can be influenced by both internal and external factors. The external factors include trust in the travel agency, the overall perception of options, prior travel experience, travel limits (time, money, etc.), degree of perceived risk, etc. The internal factors include social and personal factors. Family, peer groups, social classes, culture, and subculture are some of the major factors that affect an individual's travel behavior. Learning, motivation, perception of alternatives, and attitudes are other important factors that affect destination choice, according to him. Fashion, a shared border, a common language, and distance are additional important factors for both developed and developing nations. Understanding consumer behavior is essential. Numerous literature studies identify social, cultural, personal, and psychological factors that influence destination choice. Cultural factors consist of culture, sub-culture, and social class. Many researchers have noticed significance of culture.

Return Intention.

The study by Som et al. (2013) emphasizes revisit intention as a crucial factor in the competitive market of tourist locations, taking into account the lack of clarity surrounding the causes of people's repeated travels and the determination of the traits that attract them. The basis for a thorough understanding of the elements that encourage repeat visitors was provided by the key factors influencing repeat visitors with relation to their intention to revisit. Local delicacies, good value for money, the ability to interact with the local community, and friendliness of the locals were deemed to be the most crucial elements for repeat visits. Enhancing relationship, unwinding, achieving prestige, enhancing societal, and escaping from the daily grind were discovered to be crucial elements in revisiting aim around the destination.

Sustainability of Return Intentions Program

Recurring visits are a significant occurrence in the fields of tourism, economics, and international travel. Through word-of-mouth advertising of the tourist site, the current visit of visitors might favorably stimulate the possibility of return intentions in the ensuing periods. The factors of consumer behavior that will influence intents to return to the tourist site and develop a sense of loyalty to the location are necessary to be identified when building return intention programs. Managers need to focus on tactics that encourage repeat business. The administration of Marinduque created a program that will be long-lasting. Effective tourism planning delivers benefits through government revenue, tourist receipts, and employment, per the study of Som & Badarneh (2013).
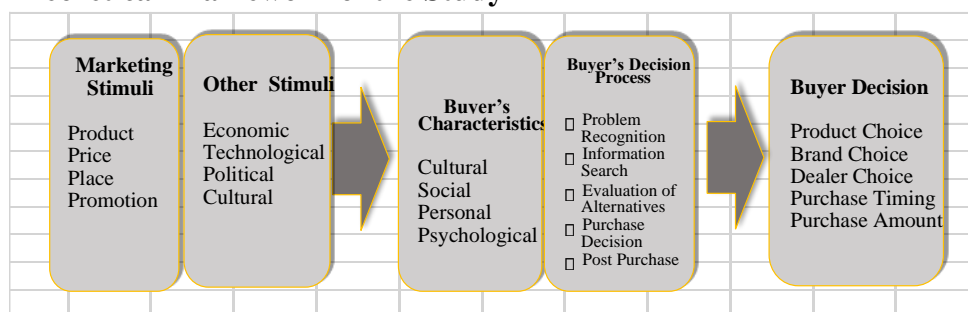
Theoretical Framework of the Study

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework of the Study

"Model of Consumer Buying Behavior"

By: (Kotler, 2002)

The study adopts the "Model of Consumer Buying Behavior", developed by Kotler (2002).The consumer behavior is influenced by many factors like psychological factors, personal factors, social factors and cultural factors. Tourist behavior can be further grouped under these four major categories as,a) Personal factors: includes age, family lifestyle, profession, annual income and lifestyle, b) Psychological factors: includes tourists' personality, self-image, motivations, and perception., c) Social Factors: this consists of culture, family, social class, reference group, d) Cultural Factors: comprises of factors like physical ambience, social ambience, time of visit, state of mind.

As presented in Figure 1, consumer buying behavior starts with the understanding of stimulus response involving marketing and environmental stimuli, entering the buyer's consciousness. The characteristics of the buyer and the process of decision making lead to certain purchase decisions. The marketer needs to understand the influence of stimuli in buyers' consciousness and purchase decisions of buyers. The model presents the influence of cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors in the consumer's buying behavior.

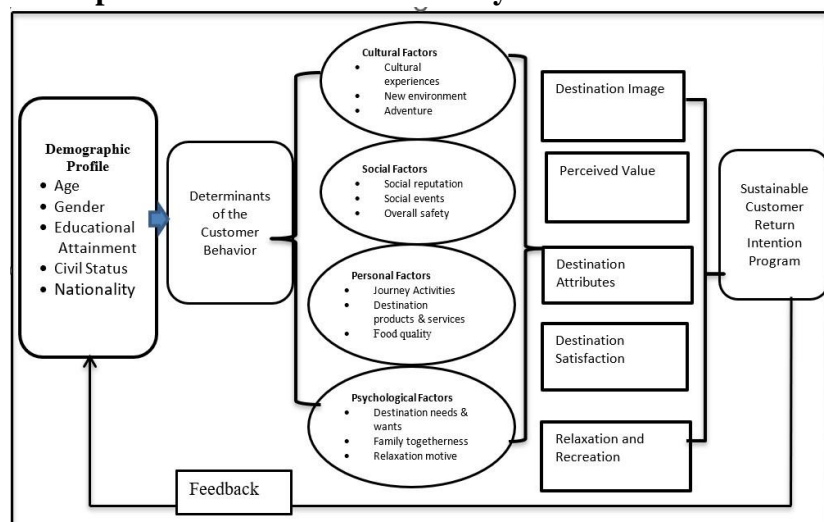**Conceptual Framework of the Study**

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework of the Study

The study formulated a relationship model that provides a simplified framework of the concepts and variables used in the study, their relationships, and direction of influence. As shown in the figure, factors influencing the buying behavior of customers in Marinduque include psychological, personal, cultural, and social factors. Buying behaviors of customers are influenced by certain demographic factors and buyer characteristics which can lead to decisions for purchase. The model assumes influence of demographic variables of respondents in terms of age, gender, educational attainment, nationality and civil status, on the buying behavior of customers in Marinduque. Contributing to buying behavior influence are behavioral factors of cultural, social, personal, and psychological of customers.

Buying decisions of customers and the factors affecting these decisions can serve as basis in the formulation of a sustainable customer return intention program in the promotion of tourism industry in the province, by the policymakers of Marinduque. The research adopted the notion that demographic and buyer characteristics will influence the buying behavior of customers. The model performed an analysis on the buying behavior of customers that will lead into decisions for purchases as explain in Figure 2.

Statement of the Problem

The study aims to assess the determinants of customer behavior to sustain the return intentions program of Marinduque.

Specifically, it seeks answer to the following:

1.	What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, educational attainment, civil status, and nationality;

2.	How do respondents assess the determinants of the customer behavior that sustain the return intention program of Marinduque in terms of Cultural, Social, Personal, and Psychological factors;

3.	How sustainable was the return intentions program of Marinduque in terms of Destination Image, Perceived Value, Destination Attributes, Destination Satisfaction, and Relaxation and Recreation;

4.	Is there significant relationship between the determinants of the customer behavior on the sustainability of the return intentions program of Marinduque?

5.	Is there significant difference in the assessment of the respondents on the significant relationship between the determinants of the customer behavior and sustainability of the return intentions program of Marinduque, when grouped according to demographic profile?

6.	Which of the determinants of customer behavior variables predict sustainability of the return intentions program of Marinduque

Hypotheses of the Study

HO1: There is no significant relationship between the determinants of the customer behavior on the sustainability of the return intentions program of Marinduque.

HO2: There is no significant difference in the assessment of the respondents on the significant relationship between the determinants of the customer behavior and sustainability of the return intentions program of Marinduque, when grouped according to demographic profile.

HO3: The determinants of customer behavior variables do not predict sustainability of the return intentions program of Marinduque

Methodology

This study utilized the descriptive method of research design through quantitative and qualitative approaches. The method was appropriated to this study since it aims to describe the different factors that influence the customer's buying behavior in Marinduque as a basis for sustainable customer's return intention program. The technique employed a survey questionnaire which allowed and served as basis to enable the researcher to formulate generalizations. The study utilized random sampling design, in which each sample had an equal probability of being chosen as respondent of the study. According to The Economic Times (2018), in random sampling each subset member carries an equal opportunity to be chosen as part of the process of sampling and the sample chosen randomly is an unbiased representation of the total population. Slovin's random sampling formula was used to determine an appropriate sample size from the population and selection of the respondents who participated in the study. The researcher employed 397 respondents from the municipalities of Marinduque. The populations of the study were composed of foreign and local tourists visiting the tourism destination in Marinduque province, for the year 2017, with the data provided by the Department of Tourism. The researcher used random sampling in order to determine sample size. Likewise, Slovin's formula was utilized in order to get the accurate sample of the study.

Results and Discussion

1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 1. Summary of the Respondents' Demographic Profile

Profiling Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
20 years & below	111	27.96
21 to 30 years	87	21.90
31 to 40 years	91	22.90
41 to 50 years	53	13.35
51 years & above	55	13.85
Profiling Variables	**Frequency**	**Percentage**

Total	397	100.0
Gender		
Male	181	45.6
Female	216	54.4
Total	**397**	**100.0**
Educational Attainment		
Elementary	8	2.02
High School	39	9.82
Undergraduate	141	35.52
College Graduate	188	47.36
Master's Degree	19	4.79
Doctoral Degree	2	.50
Total	**397**	**100.0**
Civil Status		
Single	151	38.03
Married	132	33.25
Separated	66	16.62
Widow	48	12.09
Total	**397**	**100.0**
Nationality		
Filipino	390	98.24
Foreign	7	1.76
Total	**397**	**100.0**

When the respondents' educational attainment was explored, results showed that most respondents are either undergraduate to college graduates. As observed, these two group represent 35.5% are 47.4% of the respondents. A minority of 4.8% and 0.5% have masteral and doctoral degrees respectively. While 9.8% and 2.0% are High School and Elementary graduates. According to Perreau (2014), Age is one of the Personal Factors that greatly affect the customer behavior when it comes to taste and preferences, it can be assumed that customers' taste can change during lifetime and in different stages of life.

2. Respondent's Assessment in the Determinants of Customer Behavior Sustainability of Return Intentions Program

Results presented on the determined how Cultural Experiences influenced the return intentions of the respondents. The overall area mean scores for Cultural Experiences was 4.13, equating to a rating of agree. This signifies that the respondents consider Cultural Experiences as a determinant of return intentions. Of the different facets of Cultural Experiences, the highest rating (4.20) was observed on the aspect of enjoying, learning and living a different lifestyle, brought about by cultural experiences. Receiving a rating of strongly agree meant that the respondents' return intentions are highly influenced by the kind of lifestyle experiences they have encountered. This finding implies that respondents consider cultural experience as important in satisfying their needs for travel to destinations which can affect their future decisions to revisit the tourist locations. Respondents' agreement on the high influence of cultural experience on their return intentions are supported by the study of Zeng (2017), which provides evidence that cultural experiences impact visitors' satisfaction of their travel and can lead to encourage return intentions. Cultural offers that influence cultural experiences can be tangible or intangible and are considered important attributes of a destination. According to Patuelli et al. (2014), tourists use cultural experiences to meet their cultural needs and acquire new experience and knowledge. Cultural experiences can have an increased impact on visitors' intention to return

(Do Valle et al., 2001), and can influence visitor's willingness to revisit and recommend the destination to friends (Romao et al., 2015).

3.   Sustainability of Return Intentions Program

The succeeding results for the different areas that explained the sustainability of the Return Intentions Program in the tourist destination particularly in Destination Image, Assessed Value, Destination Attributes, Destination Satisfaction, and Relaxation and Recreation. Destination Satisfaction received an overall mean score of 3.93 or high. This signifies that the return intentions program is successful in generating high levels of satisfaction among the respondents. Similarly, all items received mean scores that equated to high. This in effect suggests that all components of Destination Satisfaction are supported by return intention programs. According to Jang and Feng (2013), destination loyalty are more important than satisfaction because repeat visitors are significant. But according to Chen and Tasi (2013), the attractive destination image maximizes the satisfaction of the tourists and not only because of their loyalty. Relaxation and Recreation received an overall area mean score of 4.00 or high. This relates that the return programs also complement the aspect of aspect of Relaxation and Recreation. Similarly, all item components of this area received a rating of high. This signifies that all aspects of Relaxation and Recreation are being addressed and complemented by the return intention programs. However, an item that stood out dealt with the quality of relaxation and recreation experienced by the tourists as key for their long-term intentions to return. As it is, the return intention programs are efficiently responding on improving the quality of relaxation and recreation from the respondents.

4.   Significant Relationship between the Determinants of Customer Behavior and Sustainability of Return Intentions Program

Using Pearson Correlation, results showed that the determinants of Customer Behavior are significantly correlated with the areas defining the Sustainability of the Return Intention Programs

Table 2: Significant Relationship of Determinants of Customer Behavior and Sustainability of Return Intentions Program

Determinants of Customer Behavior		**Areas defining the Sustainability of Return Intention Programs**				
		Destination Image Overall	Perceived Value Overall	Destination Attributes Overall	Destination Satisfaction Overall	Relaxation and Recreation Overall
Cultural Factors Overall	Pearson Correlation	.568	.634	.468	.426	.502
	p-value	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Social Factors Overall	Pearson Correlation	.219	.195	.272	.256	.178
	p-value	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Personal Factors Overall	Pearson Correlation	.644	.710	.617	.622	.627
	p-value	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Psychological Factors Overall	Pearson Correlation	.763	.721	.738	.758	.753
	p-value	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000

The significant correlations between the two areas are evidenced (see Table 22) by the generated p-values. As observed, all p-values are less than the level of significance of 0.05. Such signifies that that the correlation coefficients were all significant. In addition, all Pearson Correlation coefficients possess a positive sign. Such indicates that all variables are positively correlated. This meant as the increase in one determinant, also means

an increase in the value of the other determinant. An increase in the value of determinants of Customer Behavior also leads to an increase in the value of the Sustainability of the Return Intention Programs.

Another critical factor in interpreting Correlation is the magnitude of the coefficients. Correlation Coefficients that are near to 1 are said to have strong correlation, close to 0.5 with moderate correlation and close to 0 meant weak correlation. In the case of this study, varied magnitudes of relationship were observed. Determinants with strong correlations are the following:

1. Psychological Factors and Destination Image
2. Psychological Factors and Perceived Value
3. Psychological Factors and Destination Attributes
4. Psychological Factors and Destination Satisfaction
5. Psychological Factors and Relaxation and Recreation
6. Personal Factors and Perceived Value

Results showed that Psychological Factors have the strongest relationship with the different facets of sustainability of Return Intentions. An improvement in the Psychological Factors will also translate to a positive effect on the different determinants of Return Intention Programs. In like manner, the improvement in the Return Intention Programs leads to improvement in Psychological and Personal Factors.

5. Significant Difference in the Assessment of Determinants of Customer Behavior and Sustainability in Return Intentions Program when grouped according to Demographic Profile

Results of the Independent Sample t-test showed significant differences in the perceptions of the male and female respondents on the following areas:

• **Food Quality** – As results showed, the p-value (0.029) of the t-statistic (2.196) was less than the level of significance of 0.05. Hence, it can be said that significant differences were observed in the ratings of the male and female respondents. The mean scores particularly relate that the females have significantly higher ratings (4.11) than the male respondents (3.97).

• **Destination Satisfaction** – The t-statistic (-2.665) for this area generated a p-value (0.008) less than the level of significance of 0.05. This in effect establishes the finding that there are significant differences observed between the male and female respondents. In particular, the female gave higher ratings (4.00) than the male respondents (3.83).

• **Return Intentions** – The computed t-statistic (-2.219) generated a p-value of (0.027). This in effects leads to the presence of significant differences between the male and female respondents. As observed, the females gave significantly higher rating (4.03) than the male respondents.

Results clearly showed that Gender has the capability to differentiate the assessment of the respondents on three areas, Food Quality, Destination Satisfaction and Return Intentions. For the three areas, consistent results were observed. The female respondents gave higher ratings than the male respondents.

6. Predictive Model of Sustainable Return Intentions Program

Table 3: Predictive Model of Sustainable Return Intentions Program

Customer Behavior Variables (X)	Return Intentions (Y)			F-ratio (p-value)	R-squared
	Beta Coefficients	t-statistic	p-value		
Constant	0.139	1.007	.315	333.876 (0.000)	.773
Cultural Factors (CF)	0.207	6.225	.000		
Social Factors (SF)	-0.083	-2.735	.007		
Personal Factors (PeF)	0.156	5.744	.000		
Psychological Factors (PsF)	0.665	17.826	.000		

Using multiple linear regression, the research was able to generate a model (see Table 28) that can predict that sustainability of the return intentions program. Results of the model showed significant relationship between Return Intentions and Customer Behavior. This is particularly evidenced by the p-value (0.00) of the F-ratio (333.876). The F-ratio provides a measure of the overall significance of the regression model. Since the p-

value of the F-ratio was less than the level of significance of 0.05, the model is deemed significant. In addition, the value of the R-square strengthens this finding. As observed, the value of the R-square relates that 77.3% of the variations in the Return Intentions are explained by the Customer Behavior variables.

The values of the t-statistics relate the significance of each predictor (Customer Behavior variables) in determining the Return Intentions. Except for the t-statistic of the Constant, all t-statistics have p-values less than the level of significance of 0.05. This in effect relates that all Customer Behavior variables are significantly related and can predict the value of Return Intentions.

The Beta Coefficients provided the extent of effect given by each Customer Behavior variables to Return Intentions. Interpretations of each predictor are summarized below.

• As the respondents rating on Cultural Factors **increases** by one unit, the assessment or ratings on Return Intentions **increases** by 0.207 units

• An **increase** in the rating on Social Factors leads to a **decrease** on the ratings of Return Intentions by 0.083 units

• When the respondents' rating on Personal Factors **increases** by one unit, the ratings on Return Intentions **increases** by 0.156 units

• Lastly, an **increase** in the rating on Psychological Factors lead to an **increase** in the rating on Return Intention by 0.665 units

These relationships lead to the predictive model

Return Intentions = 0.139 + 0.207 CF - 0.083 SF + 0.156 PeF + 0.665 PsF

Results of the Hypothesis Testing

HO1: There is no significant relationship between the determinants of the customer behavior on the sustainability of the return intentions program of Marinduque.

Results of the Pearson Correlation showed that the determinants of customer behavior are significantly correlated with the variables forming the return intentions program. In particular, results related that both variables are positively correlated with each other. This therefore leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (see Section 4).

HO2: There is no significant difference in the assessment of the respondents on the significant relationship between the determinants of the customer behavior and sustainability of the return intentions program of Marinduque, when grouped according to demographic profile.

Except for Nationality, all other demographic variables such as Gender, Educational Attainment, Age and Civil Status posted significant differences in the respondents' ratings or mean scores. This in effect leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (See Section 5).

HO3: The determinants of customer behavior variables do not predict sustainability of the return intentions program of Marinduque.

Using multiple linear regression, results showed that Customer Behavior variables have the capability to significantly predict the return intentions program. This therefore leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis

Conclusions

1. The study's results were fueled by mostly females, single, Filipinos and have the reached college level.

2. Assessment results showed positive Customer Behavior and Return Intentions for Marinduque.

3. Customer Behavior assessment have a big impact in sustaining return intentions program in the tourist destination.

4. Customer Behavior was positively affecting Return Intentions. Likewise, Return Intentions have the capability to positively influence Return Intentions.

5. Age, gender, civil status and educational attainment have the capability to cause differences in the respondents' Customer Behavior and factors affecting Return Intentions.

6. Customer Behavior was a critical predictor of sustainability of Return Intentions.

7. The Cultural, Social, Personal, and Psychological factors have positive and negative impact in the Return Intentions in the tourist destination respectively.

Recommendations

1.   The public and private institutions shall develop operational plan pertaining to tourism attractions. Likewise, they shall focus on Cultural, Personal, Social, and Psychological factors in order to sustain return intentions.

2.   Holistic approach in the assessment of customer behavior in the important aspects of life upon return, employment, access to tourist destinations, and the feelings of security.

3.   Strong monitoring process and follow-up mechanisms, optimally years after the return intentions (i.e. seminars, travel arrangement).

4.   The institutions shall cascade the plans and programs to the Community in order to have Collaborative efforts of implementing the sustainable return intentions program.

5.   The people of Marinduque should assist into promotional campaign to increase tourism and implement a return assistance programs which recognize the returnees a new destination with new possibilities and opportunities.

6.   Further research is recommended using other variables to replicate the study.

7.   The results of the study will be submitted to the Department of Tourism Office for reference and/or proper implementation

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