

Malaysian Young Travellers' Online Purchase Intention of Travel Products

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ABSTRACT

Youth travellers are global citizens who have become gradually imperative for the travel and tourism around the world. For that reason, it is crucial for the businesses and marketers to regulate the best use of this benefit via understanding the standpoint of youth in online purchase. The eventual goal of this research is to study the factors influencing the youth travellers' purchase intention of travel products in Malaysia. Six factors, namely perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, price, website design quality, trust and perceived risk were tested. The results have clearly showed that perceived usefulness and trust exert significant influences on the Malaysian youth consumer's purchase intention of travel products. Thus, H1 and H5 were supported. However, H2, H3, H4 and H6 were rejected as the perceived ease of use, price, website design quality and perceived risk found to have insignificant relationship with Malaysian youth consumer's purchase intention of travel products. The implication, limitation and recommendation for future study were discussed.

Keywords: Online Purchase Intention, Travel Products, Malaysian Youth Consumers

INTRODUCTION

The emergent interest in youth tourism is becoming increasingly significant. It is considered to be the most dynamic markets of the global tourism industry. UNWTO declared that almost 20% of the 940 million international travellers generated from young people in 2010 (UNWTO, 2008). Over the last decade, youth travel has become a large sector of global tourism as compared to other markets of tourism, and now representing 23% over billion of international tourist. The conception of youth tourism is well-defined as all tourism activities that are appreciated by young whose age are between 15 and 29 years (Horak and Weber, 2000). Plus, youth travellers are very interested in using the internet as their source of information for travelling. Thus, the evolving of internet unlocked a window of opportunity to deliver imperative advantage to businesses in developing countries through online platform. The internet has also increased the occasions for social interaction through travel. It helps young travellers to bond beforehand, throughout and after their trip to local people and their knowledge to make informed choices that enrich their travel experience.

To the best knowledge of the researcher, consumers' online purchase intention of travel products can be further investigate especially among youth consumer in Malaysia context as

there are limited studies in that particular topic. Despite the exploration of online purchase intention has been done in many literatures in the perspective of foreign countries, most of them focused on general consumers and less likely to focus on youth consumers. Hence, this study will be emphasised on youth due to their unique characteristics such as technology orientation, extensive exposure to media and long-life expectancy (Awan & Fatima, 2014).

Young generation nowadays relishes travelling more than any generation before, and as explained by Swarbrooke and Horner (2001), they would rather not to take a holiday with their parents. The increasing purchasing power plus spending behaviour of young people has made this group an eye-catching target for different industries. Thus, the main objective of this study is to analyse the association between perceived usefulness, perceive ease of use, price, website design quality, trust, risk and online travel purchase intention among youth travellers in Malaysia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Taiyab (2005) defined the 'young' tourism market as travellers between 16 to 25 years old, who travel involves at least one night's stay. Reisinger and Mavondo (2002) found that a rising quantity of young people now continue their education beyond the age of 25. What furthestmost important is, the youth, mainly the students, though reflected as more price-sensitive yet they have ample time to travel (Grigolon, Kemperman & Timmermans, 2012; Zufara & Fitriya, 2019). Furthermore, Huang and Petrick (2010) indicated that young travellers aged between 18 and 25 years are anticipated to be very prominent.

Intention is the influential factor for a person to act toward particular behaviour. It is well-defined as the antecedent or motivational component that will drive the consumers' judgement to purchase certain products and services (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2010; Chen and Yee, 2014). As for purchase intention, Chen and Yee (2014) stated that, the purchase intention will happen when a person decided to carry out a purchasing decision on commodity or service in the future.

Davis (1986) elucidated perceived ease of use as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort" while perceived usefulness is "the degree to which a person believes that use of a particular system would enhance his or her job performance". Likewise, perceived ease of use also signifies as how easier the new technologies are going to be appreciate and use to assist the consumers to complete their tasks (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Malhotra, 2002). Perceived usefulness is an imperative dimension that calculates the behavioural intention to purchase online. Research of Kim and Song (2010) termed the perceived usefulness of online stores is prominently depends upon the features of system or technology for example: advance search engines, personal shopping cart, multilingual, product filter (brand and price) and rewards or miles point redemption service etc. In short, both constructs will be assimilated into current research framework as it has been widely recognized and consistently proven to induce the consumers' online purchase intention in the future. Moreover, perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness were found to influence the purchase intention of students toward the technology (Cham, Low, Lim, Aye, & Ling, 2018; Lim, Cheng, Cham, Ng, & Tan, 2019; Lau, Cheung, & Lam, 2016). Thus, the first and second hypotheses are formulated to examine the influence of perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use to online purchase intention of travel among youth consumers:

H1: *Perceived usefulness has a positive influence on the consumers' online purchase intention of travel products.*

H2: *Perceived ease of use has a positive influence on the consumers' online purchase intention of travel products.*

Price signifies as a critical factor which has always influence consumers in making online purchase decision (Phan and Mai, 2016). Kotler and Armstrong (2010) termed price as the sum of monetary value that given in trading for products or services. In travel industry, travel products with low cost but moderate quality is the key factor that benefited the online travel purchase where it benefits the company to upsurge competitive advantage on the competitors congested market (Nguyen, 2015). In this case, the travellers seem to be more anxious about price rather than quality. In accordance to many other published studies, there were evidences shown that the price has significant relationship with online purchase intention (Cham, Ng, Lim, & Cheng, 2018; Delafrooz, Paim, & Khatibi, 2010; Harn, Ali, & Hishamuddin, 2006; Lim, Cham, & Sia, 2018; Zolkopli, Ramli, Azmi, Kamal & Abdullah, 2016). Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: *Price has a negative influence on the consumers' online purchase intention of travel products.*

Website design quality is a success factor of online retailing. The design is crucial because it is not only connects the consumers and companies together but also critical in predicting whether the consumers willing to continuously use the website (Kim, Shaw & Schneider, 2003). Previous study indicated the components of website design quality consist of visual design, informational content design, and navigation design (Ganguly, Dasg, Cyr & Head, 2010). The most essential element of a high quality website is the content. Information content design refers to what and how the information being arranged in the website (Ganguly et al., 2010). When consumers perceived high satisfaction on the website design quality, they might have higher intention to continuously purchase item online (Tan, Ariff, Zakuan, & Sulaiman, 2016). Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: *Website design quality has a positive influence on the consumers' online purchase intention of travel products.*

Trust is the propensity of an individual's inclination to belief on another party's behaviour even without protection of second party (Cham, Lim, Aik, & Tay, 2015; Pandey & Srivastava, 2016). Trust in ecommerce can be clarified as the consumers' subjective belief on the vendor who will fulfil and complete the transactional responsibility (Ponte, Carvajal-Trujillo, & Escobar-Rodríguez, 2015). During online purchase deal, consumers incline to easily expose themselves to loss (identity theft and financial fraud) when their private information like contact number, bank account, and email/home address being misused by the website providers. Trust plays a critical role in affecting the online purchase intention (Lim et al., 2019; Meskaran, Ismail & Shanmugam, 2013). Other than that, numerous studies have also pointed out that trust has direct significant relationship with online buying decision. When the consumers have higher level of trust toward the online retailer, they will more likely to have higher online purchase intention (Lim & Cham, 2015; Thamizhvanan & Xavier, 2013). Thus, the next hypothesis proposed is:

H5: *Trust has a positive influence on the consumers' online purchase intention of travel products.*

Perceived risk is one of the psychological processes encountered by the consumers during the purchasing of merchandise online (Lim et al., 2019; Singh, 2015). Zhou, Dai and Zhang (2007) argued that brick and click store perceived a greater risk than brick and mortar store due to their business nature with no face to face interaction between consumer and retailer. Liang and Huang (1998) contended that the nature and the degree of risk perceived by the consumers regulate their intention to shop online. Consumer will less likely to purchase online when there is high degree of risk. Therefore, the hypothesis developed is:

H6: *Perceived risk has a negative influence on the consumers' online purchase intention of travel products.*

RESEARCH METHOD

A total of 300 questionnaires have been circulated, and 276 questionnaires were successfully collected and retained for data analysis with 92% of response rate. This research is explicitly targeted on young Malaysian consumers. Respondents must fulfil certain criteria in order to achieve the objectives, and to upsurge the accuracy of the research. These criteria are: respondents must be of Malaysian nationality and have prior online purchase experience. Hence, online survey has been chosen to ensure that all potential respondents have accessed to the Internet, thereby increasing the chance to reach the target respondents.

The questionnaire in this research can be divided into four sections: Section A of the questionnaire contained general information questions. Section B of the questionnaire contained questions respondents' demographic profile. Section C designed to gather responses on the key constructs of the research framework, including perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEU), price factor (P), website design quality (WD), trust (T), and perceived risk (PR). In order to make sure the content of the questionnaire is reliable and valid, all the measurement items were adapted from prior studies related to this research. Trust has been measured with items adapted from a research conducted by Chen and Barnes (2007). Perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness were adapted from Lim and Ting (2014) and Chen and Barnes (2007). Price is measured with items modified based on journal of Phan & Mai (2016) and Pi, Liao, Liu and Li (2011). Web design quality is measured with items modified based on Montoya Weiss & Grewal (2003). Perceived risk is adapted from Masoud (2013). All the measurement scales were measured using five-point Likert scale, where 1 = Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree. Section D of the questionnaire contained three questions that intended to examine Malaysian youth's current and future intention to purchase via Internet, as well as the level of willingness to recommend online purchase to others. Five-point Likert scale was also applied into Section D, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

Out of total of 276 respondents, the gender distribution were 38% male and 62% female. In term of marital status, 83% of the respondents were single follow by 16% married and 1% for divorced. Finding specified that 68% of the respondents were students while 32% with employment.

Table 1: Respondents' General Information

General Information	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Experience of Online Purchase of Travel Products	Yes	240	87
	No	36	13
Intention to Purchase Travel Products Online in Future	Yes	25	69
	No	11	31
Duration of Online Purchase	Less than 3 months	43	18
	3 - 7 Months	45	19
	8 - 12 Months	44	18
	2 - 3 Years	54	23
	4 - 5 Years	22	9
	More than 5 Years	32	13
Travel Products That Purchased Online	Flight Ticket	170	71
	Accommodation	163	70
	Car Rental	77	32
	Travel Accessories	103	43

Goodness of data for the 6 variables with a total of 43 items in this study were verified using Cronbach's Alpha analysis. The Cronbach's Alpha value for perceived usefulness variable (5 items) is 0.823, perceived ease of use variable (5 items) is 0.851, price variable (6 items) is 0.866, website design quality variable (8 items) is 0.893, trust variable (7 items) is 0.901, and perceived risk variable (7 items) is 0.70 and online purchase intention variable (5 items) is 0.924. For the dependent variable, the Cronbach's Alpha value for the online purchase intention (5 items) is 0.924. All the instruments adopted to test the variables in this study indicated a good level of internal consistency based on the assumption of George and Mallery (2003).

RESULTS

Multiple regression analysis was used to verify the relationships between youth consumers' online purchase intention on travel products in Malaysia and their antecedents which include their perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, price, website design quality, trust and perceived risk were tested (refer to table 2). There is a significant positive relationship between perceived usefulness and trust on youth consumers' online purchase intention on travel products in Malaysia. Thus, H1 and H5 were supported with significant findings. As for H2, H3, H4 and H6 with $p > 0.05$, the finding reflected that perceived ease of use and the pricing of the products, the interface of the web design quality and the perceived risk associated with the use the platform did not significantly influence the youth consumers' purchase intention. The value of R^2 specified that 51.8% of the independent variables contributed to the dependent variable of youth consumer's purchase intention of travel products in Malaysia.

Table 2: The relationship between the six antecedents and youth consumers' online purchase intention on travel products in Malaysia

Independent variables	Dependent Variable (Intention to Migrate Abroad)			
	Beta	t	p-value	Outcome
Perceived Usefulness	0.236	3.956	0.000	Supported
Perceived ease of use	0.086	1.489	0.138	Not supported
Price	0.078	1.539	0.125	Not supported
Website design Quality	0.056	0.926	0.355	Not supported
Trust	0.407	6.675	0.000	Supported
Perceived Risk	-0.057	-1.146	0.253	Not Supported
R ²			0.518	
F			48.271	

DISCUSSIONS

The result of the study revealed that there was a positive significant influence between the youth consumer's perceived usefulness on the travel products and their online purchase intention. This conclusion was comparable with the result concluded by several past researches. For instance, Sin, Khalil, and Al-Agaga (2012) found that perceived usefulness is positively correlated to the online purchase intention among the young consumers. Abdullah, Jayaraman, Shariff, Bahari, and Nor (2017) noted that technology's usefulness increase the inclination of the consumers to purchase travel products online, and Kim and Song (2010) noted that increase perceived usefulness can increase consumers' online purchase intention. This finding proposed that the intention to purchase the products may upsurge when the consumers can evaluate the usefulness of product online. This contributed significantly to the important emphasis of unique features in the website in term of simplicity and functionality. Therefore, travel companies or related stakeholders should put more consideration website contents and interface to maximise the result outcome.

The finding also revealed that trust is another key element to influence the youth consumers' online purchase intention on travel product in Malaysian. According to Grabosky (2001) and Chui, Lin and Tang (2005), customers' willingness to purchase online will be boosted with the sense of trust as this element may lower their degree of psychological concern about the online retailers' behaviour. Other conceptual and empirical research carried out by Jarvenpaa, Tractinsky, and Saarinen (1999) contended that consumers in multiple cultures tend to have different expectation toward trustworthy and belief and greater consumer trust can increase consumers' intentions to purchase intentions. During online purchase transaction, consumers rarely have direct physical contact, i.e. face to face interaction with the online vendors. Thus, the positive relationship with the online retailers may only be built based the consumers sense of trust toward online retailers' ability to deliver products and services. If the seller failed to evoke consumer trust, the level of consumer loyalty as well as intention to purchase from the store may also decrease (Jarvenpaa, Tractinsky, & Vitale, 2000).

Referring to the results of coefficient regression (Table 2), perceived ease of use has no significant effect on consumers' online purchase intention, since the P-value ($p= 0.138$) is greater than 0.05. The result is consistent with the previous study from Chen and Yee (2014) which indicated that perceived ease of use is insignificant in explaining the online purchase intention. Most of the consumers like to use innovative technologies which are less complex and informative to improve their shopping experience. However, this only verified that technology ease of use can increase consumers' intention to visit website in searching for

product information but not the intention to purchase the actual products (Gefen & Straub, 2000). The results may also indicate that perceived ease of use on the e-commerce platform may not be a condition that will influence purchase intention as most of the respondent may already well verse with the internet shopping interface that mostly came with similar design. Moreover, majority of the youth respondents in the current study were with tertiary and above education level. Ease of use from the travel websites may not be a factor that would affect their purchase intention as they may already familiar and capable of manipulating the skills needed for the travel websites. Therefore, youth consumers' intention to purchase travel products online does not decrease even there was lack of perceived ease of use.

Price as shown in Table 2 with p-value of $(0.125) > 0.05$, did not reflect any significant relationship with the youth consumers' purchase intention toward travel products. The results of this study were contradicted with Kinney, Ridgway and Monroe (2012); Chen, Monroe, and Lou, (1998); Lin, Lee, Lin, and Lin (2009) which recommended that consumers tend to buy less when they need to pay more. One possible justification for the context of this study is that the online shoppers and traditional shoppers were different in their shopping behaviour. Online shoppers may put more emphasis on needs and least concern about price if the products was able to fulfil their requirement, whereas traditional shoppers are price concern as they have higher price conscious and obtaining a low price for the chosen product is more important than anything (Donthu & Garcia, 1999; Park, Kim, & Foxx, 2012).

The outcome signifies in this study specified that website design quality has no significant influence on consumers' online purchase intention of travel products although previous studies found that website design quality is positively associated with online purchase intention (Cyr, 2008; Tan, Ariff, Zakuan & Sulaiman, 2016). The finding on the significant influence of website design quality on consumers' online purchase intention seem inconclusive as the current was concurred with the study of Hasanov and Khalid (2015) which stated that website quality do not influence online purchase intention.

Perceived risk was also found to be another insignificant factor to influence youth consumers' online purchase intention on travel products. Risk perception may be a crucial predictor in the study of online shopping for the last decade (Gefen, 2000; Liang and Huang, 1998; Mitchell, Davies, Moutinho and Vassos 1999). However, in the present study, increase of risk perception does not reduce consumers' intention to purchase online anymore. This incident may probably due to the respondents' online shopping experience as most of the respondent have at least 2 or 3 years online shopping experience. High exposure to online shopping for the duration of 2 or 3 years may improve customer's confident and lessen perceived risk particularly product risk, financial risk and privacy risk if they intent to purchase non-digital products (Dai, Forsythe, & Kwon, 2014).

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

In response to the endlessly growing of size and purchasing power of young travellers in Malaysia, this research established a fundamental study to further explore the influence of perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, price, website design quality, trust and perceived risk on Malaysian young consumers' online purchase intention of travel products. Present findings of this study provided significant insight and implication regarding the mind-set of Malaysian young travellers age between 18-40 years old to the online retailers and marketing managers in travel industry of Malaysia. Concerning the young consumers in Malaysia, the

results seem to propose that they tend to purchase travel products online if perceived usefulness and trust exist throughout the process. Online retailers and marketing managers who make decision and develop tactic plan can attempt to focus more on the perceived usefulness of the travel websites and consumers trust.

Online retailers need to realise that travel website is the only platform that provide direct contact to the consumers. Consequently, online stores need to possess a useful website that able to increase consumers' willingness to purchase online. In consider improving perceived usefulness, online retailers should design their websites to be user friendly with simple and easy ordering and delivering process as well as adequate details that expedite decision making. Therefore, online retailers should undertake continuous maintenance of websites which is essential for the system stability, which in turn affects the perceived usefulness of websites.

In fact, consumers are required to provide their personal information for example: name, bank account, phone number and home address etc. during the online transaction process. This all makes sense that consumers trust toward online retailer is critical for them to purchase online since majority of the consumers tend to shop in trustworthy online stores. In order to boost trust among youth customers on online environments, online retailers should impress their consumers with safe transaction environment by having greater selection of advance security tools and policies on the website.

Furthermore, online retailers may need to offer a community site for the consumers to place their service and product reviews which later can be used by the new consumers as reference before they make actual purchases. From the marketing standpoint, the marketing managers should determine their potential consumers; thereafter allocate some reasonable cost in advertisement in order to convince their users that they are honest and trustworthy online travel website.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Purchase intention viewed as an imperative part of the online shopping context. A conceptual model based on the theoretical fundamentals from past literatures was proposed by integrating perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, price, website design quality, trust and perceived risk with consumers' online purchase intention. The whole results revealed that both perceived usefulness and trust have direct positive and significant effect on young consumers' online purchase intention of travel products. This suggests that useful travel website in term of technology and internet features with greater consumers' trust can shape the online purchase intention. Hence, online retailers and marketers should emphasis more on perceived usefulness and trust in order to strengthen their competitiveness. Nonetheless, the results of H2, H3, H4 and H6 suggest that perceived ease of use, price, website design quality and perceived risk have no significant effect on the online purchase intention of travel products among young consumers in Malaysia.

It has been acknowledged that trust is the most persuasive factor toward online purchase intention of youth in Malaysia. Seemingly, young consumers prefer to purchase from trustworthy and honest travel online website where they are able to procure reliable and quality information as well as a safe transaction environment from the online retailers. In the future, researchers may consider including demographic profile as moderating variable as part of the research framework, reducing time pressure to increase representative sample size

and create multilingual questionnaire that comprise of English, Malay and Mandarin. With all of the recommendations, the future researchers will be able to establish a more comprehensive model in determining the purchase intention among young Malaysian on the travel products.

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