

Unraveling the Impact of Tourist Participation Behavior on Tourists' Satisfaction and Loyalty: An Empirical Investigation from Morocco

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Abstract *This groundbreaking study explores the relationship between participative behavior, satisfaction, and loyalty intention of tourists in the tourism sector. By creating a novel conceptual framework and analyzing data collected through surveys, we found that involving customers in the value-creation process impacts positively their satisfaction. However, contrary to expectations, the study revealed that tourist satisfaction does not significantly influence loyalty. The insights provided are invaluable for travel agency managers, emphasizing the importance of customer involvement in developing tourism offerings for enhanced customer satisfaction and improved brand relationships.*

Keywords: Customer Participation, Value Creation, Customer Satisfaction, Customer Loyalty, Tourism Experience

INTRODUCTION

The research by Prahalad and Ramaswamy (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004b, 2004a, 2000) and Vargo and Lusch (Vargo & Lusch, 2004) has significantly progressed our comprehension of the impact of value co-creation on business-customer dynamics. Their findings emphasize a paradigm shift, asserting that value stems from holistic customer experiences rather than solely company-centric methods. Vargo and Lusch's (2004) Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) underscores the pivotal role of service in exchanges, where both customers and companies contribute collaboratively to create value. This approach fosters interactions and resource-sharing, enabling the co-production of valuable services (Etgar, 2008; Grönroos, 1997).

Vargo and Lusch (2008) highlight customers' crucial role in co-creating value, prompting active engagement

from tourism service providers like travel agencies and tour operators (Jiang et al., 2021). Continuous dialogue, resource integration, and customer involvement are vital for innovative offerings (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004a). The process of value co-creation entails the harmonious synergy of firm resources, including location and employees (Campos et al., 2018), and equally important customer resources like time, effort, money, and knowledge (Grönroos & Gummerus, 2014; Ind & Coates, 2013; Mathis et al., 2016; Prebensen & Xie, 2017).

Active customer participation is key to successful value creation (Chathoth et al., 2016) and positive experiences (Mathis et al., 2016). Encouraging co-creation behavior strengthens interactions, relationships, and satisfaction (Laud & Karpen, 2017; Tommasetti et al., 2017). Recent attention on customer participation in value co-creation (e.g., Prebensen & Xie, 2017; Wu et al., 2018) involves customers sharing information, interacting with employees,

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and participating in decision-making (Chan et al., 2010), bridging gaps between expectations and experiences (Mostafa, 2020; Woratschek et al., 2019), enhancing satisfaction (Auh et al., 2019; Chan et al., 2010; Chen & Chen, 2017; Prebensen & Xie, 2017) and well-being (Dekhili & Hallem, 2020; Junaid et al., 2020; Xie et al., 2020). Moreover, customer participation strengthens the customer-company relationship, serving as a driving force for loyalty (Junaid et al., 2020; Nardi et al., 2020; Wang & Yu, 2019; H. Wu et al., 2020).

Inside the evolving tourism landscape, customer participation responds to pandemic impacts, blurring roles between suppliers and customers. Informed tourists seek enriching experiences (Tan et al., 2014). By involving customers in shaping these experiences, companies meet needs, creating lasting moments (Grissemann & Stokburger-Sauer, 2012) that contribute to personal development (Mehmetoglu & Engen, 2011; Morgan et al., 2009).

This study contributes to tourism by exploring customer participation dimensions in crafting offerings and advancing theory and practice. It examines participation's influence on satisfaction and loyalty intention, enhancing tourism research in Morocco and guiding travel agencies toward exceptional customer experiences.

BACKGROUND THEORIES AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Customer Participation in the Creation of Value

Customer participation within the value-creation process constitutes a pivotal aspect of co-creation behavior (Yi & Gong, 2013), encompassing customer participation behavior and customer citizenship behavior. The literature underscores the importance of customer participation behavior, reflecting actions displayed by consumers during service encounters. Conversely, customer citizenship behavior, voluntary in nature, contributes to organizational value enhancement (Bove et al., 2009; Yi et al., 2011; Yi & Gong, 2008).

Active customer participation not only enhances experiences but also deepens engagement with service components, resulting in higher value perception, memorable encounters, and positive thoughts toward providers (Buonincontri et al., 2017; Campos et al., 2017; Zatori et al., 2018). This, in turn, increases repeat visits and loyalty (Priporas et al., 2017). Integrating client participation into value creation has the ability to boost happiness, build strong relationships, and drive long-term success in the dynamic service industry.

The importance of customers in creating their own experiences is recognized in marketing and tourism literature. Co-creation approaches give two main competitive advantages: increased productivity through efficiency benefits and the development of attractive offers as a result of collaboration between customers and service providers (Grissemann & Stokburger-Sauer, 2012). Co-creation, particularly for tourism providers, enables fast market adaption, cost-sharing with tourists, and risk reduction, eventually leading to increased profitability, market share, and revenues (Neuhofer et al., 2012; Rodríguez et al., 2011; Shaw et al., 2011).

Customer participation is a key element in the tourism industry, encompassing mental, physical, and emotional dimensions (Rodie & Kleine, 2000). It involves engagement, co-production, and personalization (Minkiewicz et al., 2014). Participation can be categorized into psychological and physical aspects (Prebensen & Xie, 2017) and four co-creation dimensions: information seeking, information sharing, responsible behavior, and personal interactions (Yi & Gong, 2013). These dimensions drive value and enhance service delivery. By leveraging these dimensions, businesses can innovate, prioritize customers, and foster enriched experiences, ensuring sustained success in the ever-evolving tourism landscape. This approach is crucial for the competitive and digitally dominant tourism industry.

Customer Satisfaction in the Tourism Industry

The concept of satisfaction occupies a significant role within the marketing literature of the tourism industry, as evidenced by various studies (e.g., Ballina et al., 2019; Meng et al., 2008; Prayag & Ryan, 2012). It pertains to the post-purchase behaviors of customers, encompassing their attitudes, decisions to repurchase, and loyalty toward a business (Vega-Vazquez et al., 2013; Chand & Dahiya, 2014). However, a precise definition of satisfaction remains elusive (Vega-Vazquez et al., 2013). While it is commonly understood as an evaluation of a supplier's ability to meet or exceed customer expectations (Kursunluoglu, 2011; Levy & Weitz, 2007), recent research suggests that satisfaction involves not only individual performance assessment compared to expectations (Kursunluoglu, 2011; Levy & Weitz, 2007) but also incorporates social dimensions (Fournier & Mick, 1999) focusing on intangible aspects such as value co-creation and relationships (Vargo & Lusch, 2004).

Numerous studies have demonstrated a positive link between customer participation and satisfaction in tangible products (e.g., Norton et al., 2012) and service sectors (e.g., Navarro et al., 2016). The tourism industry similarly observes the

impact of customer involvement in participatory activities on enhancing satisfaction (e.g., Buonincontri et al., 2017; Mathis et al., 2016). Several factors within the tourism context influence customer satisfaction, including service quality, destination image, motivation, and perceived value of the vacation experience (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Prebensen et al., 2013). Understanding customer satisfaction is crucial for effective marketing strategies within the tourism sector, as it directly influences consumption patterns and future intentions to revisit a destination.

Satisfaction is a positive response to a shared consuming experience (Mathis et al., 2016; Prebensen et al., 2013), derived from the expected value of a travel experience. It involves customer participation and co-creation of experiences (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004b). Customer satisfaction is determined by the value they add to the experience (Bendapudi & Leone, 2003), which can be understood through equity theory (Adams, 1963). Customers' satisfaction, willingness to return, and recommendation could be impacted if they feel their efforts are not appropriately appreciated or rewarded.

Experiential interactions lead to customer satisfaction, particularly when consumers actively participate in value co-creation (Mathis et al., 2016; Prebensen et al., 2016). In the tourism industry, customers expect enjoyable experiences due to their involvement (Grönroos, 2008; Vargo & Lusch, 2008). Experiences are highly significant for customers, leading them to invest more in personalized experiences that cater to their specific needs and desires (Franke & Piller, 2004; Schreier, 2006). Satisfying travel experiences result in positive emotions, pleasure, personal fulfillment, improved quality of life, and overall well-being (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011; Filep, 2014; Kahneman, 1999; Lin et al., 2017; Richards, 1999; Vada et al., 2019).

The Loyalty of Tourists to the Tourism Industry

The relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty has been a significant focus in various industries, such as shopping (Brakus et al., 2009; Choi et al., 2017) and services (Nysveen et al., 2012; Nysveen & Pedersen, 2014). In the tourism industry, "loyalty" refers to customers intending to repeatedly use a tourist service from the same agency and recommending it to others. The relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty is regularly highlighted in marketing literature.

According to studies, when customers actively participate in co-creating their travel experiences, they are more willing to buy from the same company and recommend it to others (Grisseman & Stokburger-Sauer, 2012). Several studies have shown the importance of satisfaction in developing long-term consumer relationships (e.g., Babin & Griffin, 1998; Baker & Crompton, 2000; Grappi & Montanari, 2011).

Within the tourism industry, satisfaction is considered a precursor to loyalty. Research suggests that when customers participate in co-creation activities and find satisfaction, their likelihood of being loyal to the service provider increases (Mathis et al., 2016). Various studies show that satisfaction from co-creation positively impacts the intention to revisit a destination (Zhang et al., 2019) and the inclination to recommend the company to others (Grisseman & Stokburger-Sauer, 2012). Memorable and satisfying experiences also significantly influence loyalty to a destination (Kim & Brown, 2012); when tourists have enjoyable experiences, they are more inclined to return in the future (Mechinda et al., 2009).

These findings highlight the critical link between customer satisfaction, loyalty, and the overall success of tour operators and tourism destinations. Encouraging customer participation, participation, and collaboration helps businesses establish loyalty. This leads to more repeat business, positive word-of-mouth referrals, and a lasting competitive advantage in the competitive tourism industry. Essentially, the interaction between customer satisfaction, loyalty, and active customer involvement is crucial for long-term success in the tourism sector.

Hypotheses

This study explores the relationship between consumer participation, satisfaction, and loyalty, focusing on hypotheses related to information seeking, information sharing, responsible behavior, and personal interactions. It emphasizes the importance of active customer involvement in creating positive experiences and cultivating loyalty (illustrated in Fig. 1).

- Hypothesis 1 (H1): Customer satisfaction is significantly affected by how customers seek information (H1a), share information (H1b), demonstrate responsible behavior (H1c), and engage in personal interactions (H1d).
- H2. Customer satisfaction with participation performance has a significant impact on their loyalty.

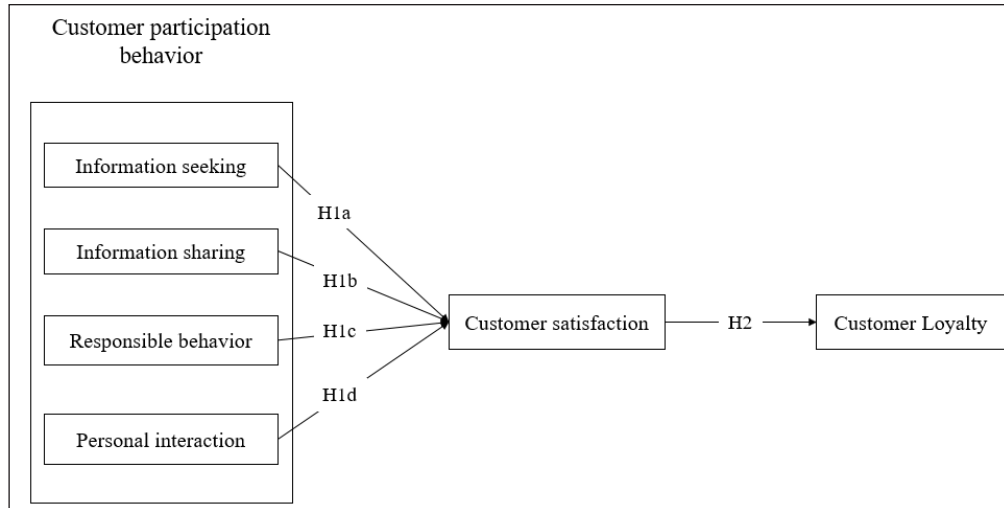


Fig. 1: Theoretical Model of the Study

METHODS

Design of Research

The study employs structural equation modeling (SEM) to evaluate research hypotheses. It collects quantitative data through a survey and uses path analysis to estimate relationships between factors (Lleras, 2005). This method has been used in previous tourism research. The research aims to explore the relationship between customer participation behavior and satisfaction, as well as the impact of satisfaction on tourism loyalty. This comprehensive analysis provides valuable insights into the dynamics of these interactions, which are crucial in the field of tourism studies.

Constructs Measurement

The construct measures employed in this research are based on established and validated scales from the literature, adjusted to the Moroccan context. A five-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5) was used to measure the items, combining existing scales and adapting them to the topic of co-creative behavior in the tourism context (Table 1). Constructs such as tourists’ participation behavior and satisfaction were measured using scales developed by Yi and Gong (2013), Grisseman and Stokburger-Sauer (2012), and Neal et al. (2007), while tourist loyalty was assessed using items from Bansal et al. (2004) and Brodie et al. (2009).

Table 1: Measurement Model of the Study

Construct	Items	Authors
Information seeking	I have asked other people for information about this travel agency’s offerings.	Yi and Gong (2013)
	I searched for information on the location on this travel agency.	
	I have paid attention to how others behave to use this service well.	
Information sharing	I clearly explained what I wanted the travel agency to do.	Yi and Gong (2013)
	I gave the travel agency the appropriate information.	
	I have provided the information necessary for the agency to perform its functions.	
	I answered all the questions of the travel agency concerning the service offer.	
Responsible behavior	I have completed all the tasks requested by the travel agency.	Yi and Gong (2013)
	I have adequately performed all expected behaviors.	
	I fulfilled my responsibilities to the travel agency.	
	I followed the employee’s directives or orders.	
Personal interaction	I was friendly with the employees of the travel agency.	Yi and Gong (2013)
	I was kind to the employees of the travel agency.	
	I was polite to the employees of the travel agency.	
	I was courteous to the employees of the travel agency.	
	I did not act rudely towards the employees of the travel agency.	

Construct	Items	Authors
Satisfaction	All in all, I feel that this tourism experience has enriched my life. I am really glad I went on this trip.	Grissmann et al. (2012); Neal et al. (2007)
	Overall, I am very satisfied with the visit to this destination.	
	My tourism experience has met my expectations.	
	If I could have this tourism experience again, I would change nothing.	
Loyalty	I am likely to do most of my future travel with this travel agency.	Bansal et al. (2004); Brodie et al. (2009)
	I am likely to purchase trips from this travel agency the next time I need to travel.	
	I will recommend this travel agency to my friends and relatives.	
	I enjoy discussing about this travel agency with others.	

Source: Authors' elaboration.

Procedure for Data Collection

The study focused on a specific group with prior experience with travel agencies in tourism. A pre-test involving 55 participants ensured the survey's suitability. The main study used an online questionnaire distributed through convenient sampling over eleven weeks. Respondents' relevance was ensured by strict screening question based on Lee and Kim's (2010) recommendation. Only individuals with verified previous travel agency experience were included. Out of 450 responses, 127 with incomplete data were excluded. The final sample size was 323 respondents, reflecting the rigorous selection process and yielding a 71.78% response rate.

DATA ANALYSIS

Findings

In this study, IBM SPSS v25 is employed for data analysis, utilizing Principal Components Analysis (PCA) for exploratory analysis. PCA helps examine measurement instrument characteristics and reduces item redundancy, especially useful for large datasets. Experts recommend PCA as an initial step to refine the identification of underlying dimensions within measurement scales (Gerbing & Hamilton, 1996).

Later, both measurement and structural models were assessed using a structural equation model (SEM) on Amos v25. The data analysis followed two phases: first, ensuring data reliability and validity, and second, rigorously testing research hypotheses. This meticulous approach enhances the study's findings' credibility and accuracy.

Demographic Profile Information

Analyzing the demographic profile of the 323 respondents, the sample consisted of 53.3% males (172) and 46.7%

females (151). Among the surveyed tourists, a significant majority (approximately 56.7%) fell within the 35-44 age bracket, while around 31% were aged 25-34. Smaller portions were found in the 45-54 (9.3%) and 55 and older (3.1%) age groups.

Concerning income distribution, most respondents (64.1%) reported earning between 50,001 MAD and 80,000 MAD. Additionally, 25% indicated incomes ranging from 80,001 MAD to 180,000 MAD. A smaller fraction (less than 10%) had incomes between 30,001 and 50,000 MAD, and only 2.5% of participants earned over 180,000 MAD.

The survey revealed that over 60% of tourists engage in two to three annual trips, with 58.8% traveling outside Morocco. Table 2 provides a detailed breakdown of these demographic characteristics.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (n=323)

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	172	53.3
Female	151	46.7
Age		
25-34	100	31
35-44	183	56.7
45-54	30	9.3
>55	10	3.1
Education Level		
University	323	100
Annual Income (In Moroccan Dirham)		
From 30 001 to 50 000 MAD	25	7.7
From 50 001 to 60 000 MAD	87	26.9
From 60 001 to 80 000 MAD	120	37.2
From 80 001 to 180 000 MAD	83	25.7
Above 180 000 MAD	8	2.5
Travel Frequency		

Item	Frequency	Percentage
1	115	35.6
2	183	56.7
3	18	5.6
More than 3	7	2.2
Destination		
In Morocco	85	26.3
Outside Morocco	190	58.8
In Morocco, Outside Morocco	48	14.9

Evaluation of the Model of Measurement

To evaluate the measurement model and suggested correlations, we began the data analysis with an exploratory

factor analysis (EFA), followed by a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Following that, we employed the IBM SPSS Amos statistical program to examine the study hypotheses.

The Relationship between the Measuring Model and the Index

To ensure the constructs' internal consistency and unidimensionality, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted. The measurement scales for participation behavior, satisfaction, and loyalty were confirmed as unidimensional, supported by Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) values above 0.6 (visualized in Fig. 2).

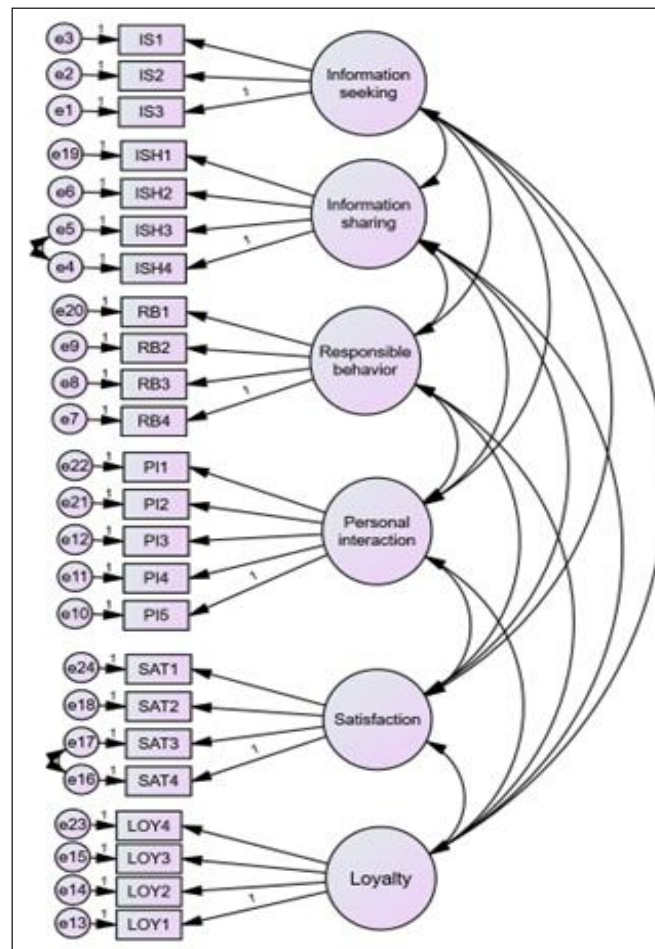


Fig. 2: The Measurement Model

A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to assess connections between observed indicators and underlying constructs. Adjustments were made to the measurement model for good fit. Strong scale reliability was evident with Cronbach's alpha from 0.786 to 0.888, indicating internal

consistency. Composite Reliability (CR) values for all constructs surpassed the recommended threshold of 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978), ranging from 0.730 to 0.888 as shown in Table 3. These results confirm the model's robustness and validity.

Table 3: Mean, Standard Deviation, Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted

Component	Mean	ST. Dev	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE	Square Root of the AVE
Information Seeking	3.577	0.864	0.786	0.730	0.575	0.758
I have asked other people for information about this travel agency's offerings.	3.634	1.011				
I searched for information on the location on this travel agency.	3.576	1.008				
I have paid attention to how others behave to use this service well.	3.520	1.076				
Information Sharing	3.563	0.999	0.888	0.878	0.645	0.803
I clearly explained what I wanted the travel agency to do.	3.598	1.128				
I gave the travel agency the appropriate information.	3.539	1.081				
I have provided the information necessary for the agency to perform its functions.	3.548	1.177				
I answered all the questions of the travel agency concerning the service offer.	3.570	1.230				
Responsible Behavior	3.549	0.885	0.885	0.860	0.608	0.780
I have completed all the tasks requested by the travel agency.	3.557	1.003				
I have adequately performed all expected behaviors.	3.570	1.094				
I fulfilled my responsibilities to the travel agency.	3.523	1.101				
I followed the employee's directives or orders.	3.517	1.026				
Personal Interaction	3.577	0.865	0.869	0.883	0.610	0.781
I was friendly with the employees of the travel agency.	3.650	1.068				
I was kind to the employees of the travel agency.	3.588	0.997				
I was polite to the employees of the travel agency.	3.573	1.141				
I was courteous to the employees of the travel agency.	3.548	1.086				
I did not act rudely towards the employees of the travel agency.	3.526	1.037				
Satisfaction	3.615	0.927	0.887	0.878	0.642	0.801
All in all, I feel that this tourism experience has enriched my life. I am really glad I went on this trip.	3.601	0.973				
Overall, I am very satisfied with the visit to this destination.	3.585	1.001				
My tourism experience has met my expectations.	3.619	1.172				
If I could have this tourism experience again, I would change nothing.	3.644	1.131				
Loyalty	4.088	0.803	0.887	0.888	0.666	0.816
I am likely to do most of my future travel with this travel agency.	4.130	0.879				
I am likely to purchase trips from this travel agency the next time I need to travel.	4.087	0.891				
I will recommend this travel agency to my friends and relatives.	4.043	0.951				
I enjoy discussing about this travel agency with others.	4.090	0.991				

Validity of the Convergence

The analysis of the study focuses on determining convergent validity by analyzing the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs. Table 3 shows that the AVE values are above the acceptable threshold of 0.50, as proposed by Bagozzi and Yi (1988). This implies that the measuring items successfully converge, hence establishing the convergent validity of each concept under consideration. This validation boosts the reliability and consistency of the study's measuring approach, increasing the trustworthiness

of the research findings and allowing for a more confident interpretation and generalization of the findings.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was confirmed by comparing the square root of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) with correlation values for each construct. None of the AVE square roots correlated less than one with other factors, establishing discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). This emphasizes the constructs' distinctiveness and independence, ensuring they measure separate aspects

of the phenomenon studied. This finding strengthens the measurement model's validity, enabling meaningful conclusions and accurate inferences within the research field.

Structural Model Evaluation

Index of Structural Model Fitting and Correlation

The measurement model and its proposed relationships were thoroughly assessed using various fit measures (in Table 4). These included chi-square (χ^2), degree of freedom (DF), adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI), goodness of fit index (GFI), root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker & Lewis index (TLI), and root mean residual (RMR). Results strongly supported the model's validity. The normalized chi-square (χ^2/df) was 228.000. AGFI and GFI exceeded 0.9, at 0.927 and 0.946 respectively, indicating a good fit. RMSEA was 0.020, well below 0.05, signifying a desirable fit. CFI approached a perfect fit at 0.998, and TLI was strong at 0.997.

Table 4: Goodness-of-Fit Measures

χ^2	228.000
DF	222
AGFI	0.927
GFI	0.946
RMSEA	0.020
CFI	0.998
TLI	0.997
RMR	0.025

Additionally, correlation analysis (in Table 5) explored construct relationships. All correlations were statistically significant ($r > .05$) at the 0.01 level using Pearson's index, validating variable relationships. Notable associations included "information seeking" and "satisfaction" (0.809), and "responsible behavior" and "satisfaction" (0.809). Weaker correlations were found between "satisfaction" and "loyalty" (0.022), and "personal interaction" and "loyalty" (0.039). These findings shed light on relationship strengths, aiding a deeper understanding of the research domain's dynamics.

Table 5: Correlation Analysis

	Information Seeking	Information Sharing	Responsible Behavior	Personal Interaction	Satisfaction	Loyalty
Information seeking	1					
Information sharing	0.750	1				
Responsible behavior	0.677	0.808	1			
Personal interaction	0.659	0.729	0.738	1		
Satisfaction	0.809	0.867	0.809	0.783	1	
Loyalty	0.158	0.069	0.047	0.039	0.022	1

The Testing of Hypotheses

The measurement model transitioned into a structural model (Fig. 3) in this study to test proposed hypotheses. This model

illustrates the connections between "information seeking," "information sharing," "responsible behavior," "personal interaction," and "satisfaction" on one side, and the link between "satisfaction" and "loyalty" on the other side.

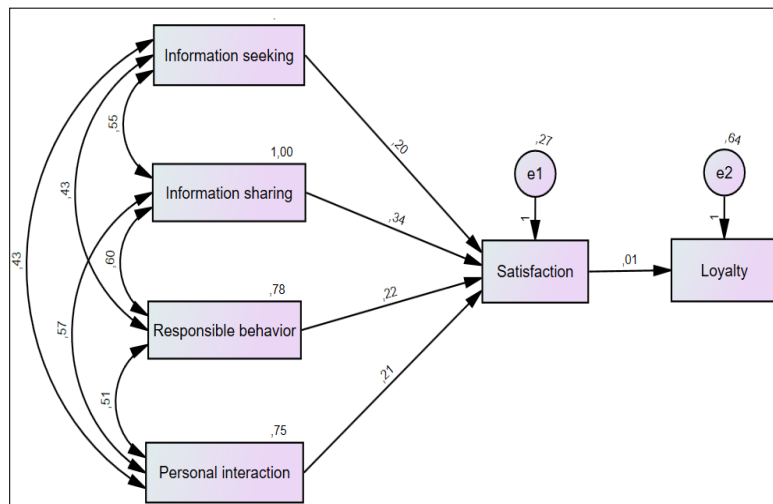


Fig. 3: Structural Model

The research's final phase involved hypothesis testing using Amos and SPSS (Table 6). Regression analysis results indicated a significant and positive relationship from "information-seeking" to "satisfaction" ($\beta = 0.200$, $t = 4.393$), supporting H1a.

The path from "information sharing" to "satisfaction" was found to be significant ($\beta = 0.345$, $t = 7.640$), thus supporting H1b.

On the other hand, regression analysis demonstrated a significant and positive association between "responsible

behavior" and "satisfaction" ($\beta = 0.218$, $t = 4.452$), validating H1c. Similarly, a significant and positive connection between "personal interaction" and "satisfaction" ($\beta = 0.212$, $t = 4.303$) supported H1d.

However, contrary to expectations, the data did not support hypothesis H2, suggesting a significant impact of "satisfaction" on "customer loyalty" ($\beta = 0.010$, $t = 0.212$). This unexpected outcome poses an intriguing avenue for future exploration.

Table 6: Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesized Paths			β	Standard Error	T-Value	Results
Information seeking	→	Satisfaction	0.200***	0.046	4.393	Supported
Information sharing	→	Satisfaction	0.345***	0.045	7.640	Supported
Responsible behavior	→	Satisfaction	0.218***	0.049	4.452	Supported
Personal Interaction	→	Satisfaction	0.212***	0.049	4.303	Supported
Satisfaction	→	Loyalty	0.010	0.048	0.212	Not Supported

*** $p < .001$

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The study examines the influence of customer participation on satisfaction in tourism by utilizing Yi and Gong's (2013) customer co-creation behavior scale. It contributes to the understanding of customer participation in tourism and offers theoretical and managerial implications based on empirical results.

Theoretical Implications

This study emphasizes the important role of customers in co-creating their travel experiences, supported by previous research (e.g., Binkhorst & Den Dekker, 2009; Morgan et al., 2009; Schmidt-Rauch & Nussbaumer, 2011). Customer involvement in shaping travel offerings has proven effective for differentiation. The study focuses on the impacts of customer participation and presents a model illustrating two outcomes. Empirical data validates the measurement model and demonstrates the positive performance of the structural model.

The findings affirm that various aspects of customer participation, like seeking and sharing information, responsible behavior, and personal interactions, positively affect customer satisfaction. Interestingly, actively engaged tourists report higher satisfaction and more positive emotions. These results align with existing literature (e.g., Lin et al., 2017; Mathis et al., 2016; Prebensen & Xie, 2017; Xie et al., 2020), suggesting that engaged customers tend to be more satisfied than passive ones.

However, a notable discovery is that customer satisfaction does not significantly influence customer loyalty, which contrasts with some prior research (e.g., Kim & Brown, 2012; Mechinda et al., 2009). Instead, this aligns with studies finding no strong link between tourist loyalty and destination satisfaction (e.g.; Forgas-Coll et al., 2012; S. Lee et al., 2011). The study proposes explanations, such as lower incomes and price sensitivity in the study's context (Morocco) and the influence of service providers' behavior on satisfaction. Inappropriate behavior negatively impacts the travel experience and loyalty. Thus, service providers must carefully choose partners to ensure positive experiences for customers co-creating travel packages, leading to enhanced destination loyalty and a competitive edge in the travel industry.

Managerial Implications

This study underscores the significance of involving customers in shaping tourism offerings. To effectively execute co-creation strategies, travel agencies should engage customers in the design process through constructive dialogue and stronger social interactions (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004b, 2004a). Creating a pleasant environment for positive customer participation is vital, and welcoming their ideas and clarifying their role is crucial (Füller et al., 2009). This not only saves resources but also optimizes offerings and offsets pandemic-related losses.

Customer participation offers insights into behavior, enhancing agencies' understanding of clients' needs. By

collecting and analyzing shared customer data (Assiouras et al., 2019), managers can provide services aligning better with customer expectations (Hall & Williams, 2008; Kristensson et al., 2008).

Surprisingly, the study finds that travel agency customers aren't inherently loyal. To foster loyalty, managers can personalize strategies like tailored emails, build a community platform for sharing experiences, establish a reward system, and ensure ongoing feedback. These practices bridge the gap between customer participation and travel experience, boosting satisfaction, loyalty, and destination revisits. Such efforts benefit the agency's financials, enhance customer experience, and strengthen its market competitiveness.

LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The study provides valuable insights into co-creation behavior in tourism services, but it also acknowledges several limitations that need to be considered.

Firstly, the model's testing is confined to travel agencies, possibly limiting its applicability. To enhance its robustness, future research should extend testing to encompass other tourism service providers like hotels and tour operators. This broader analysis would yield a more comprehensive understanding of co-creation behavior across the tourism industry.

Secondly, the study focuses on customer participatory behavior and its relationship with satisfaction and loyalty. Future research could consider both participatory and customer citizenship behavior, incorporating customer well-being as an outcome of participation. This would provide insights into the wider implications of co-creation in fostering positive customer experiences.

Furthermore, the study primarily focuses on the customer perspective, suggesting future research should explore the viewpoint of tourism service providers, specifically the components of the DART model (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004b), to better understand and nurture co-creation partnerships, as they involve collaboration between customers and companies.

Addressing these limitations in future studies on co-creation behavior in tourist services might help service providers improve client experiences and loyalty. A thorough examination of co-creation dynamics is critical for promoting innovation and competitiveness in the rapidly changing tourist sector.

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