

Chapter 10

Using the Decomposed Theory of Planned Behavior (DTPB) to Explain the Intention to Book Tourism Products Online

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to investigate the factors influencing the intention to use the Internet to book tourism products online in Tunisian context. To this end, the authors selected the Decomposed Theory of Planned Behavior (DTPB) to help account for the intention to book online. The authors conduct an online survey. Data was obtained from 158 questionnaires and analyzed through regression. The study demonstrated the importance of causal relationships between predictor variables and the dependent variable, namely the intention to book online. A novel result, perceived usefulness does not admit a positive impact on the attitude towards online booking. Thus, the study has confirmed the explanatory power of the DTPB model in accounting for consumers' behavioral intention in the context of e-tourism.

INTRODUCTION

Several models and theories explain and predict behavioral intention to accept information technology (IT). Among these models, the technology acceptance model (TAM) developed by Davis (1989) is widely accepted in the literature. Further studies contribute to the improvement of this model (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). Those models ben-

efit from previous research, including the theory of planned behavior (TPB) (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) and the decomposed TPB model (DTPB) (Taylor & Todd, 1995). Moreover, in order to explain behavioral intention, researchers also use various theories such as the theory of innovation diffusion (Rogers, 1995) or the theory of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1977).

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In the context of information technology usage, several models and theories are used in order to explain behavioral intentions. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) was developed to predict behaviors that people do not have any control over (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The purpose of the paper is to account for intentions to use the Internet to book tourism products online in Tunisian context through a variation of the TPB, namely the Decomposed Theory of Planned Behavior (DTPB) developed by Taylor and Todd (1995). The DTPB model takes into account attitudinal, social, and control factors to explain technology usage that other models such as TAM model and theories have neglected.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) is an extension of the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) that predicts behavior over which people do not have complete volitional control. TPB achieves this by “including a predictor of behavioral intention and behavior called perceived behavioral control” (Notani, 1998, p. 248). From the TPB, Taylor and Todd (1995) develop the decomposed TPB (DTPB). This model aims to explain the behavior of users based on the relationship between beliefs, attitudes, intention, and behavior. According to this model, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are the elements that help to understand the reasons or factors explaining individual actions, even if the intention is considered as the best indicator of behavior (Herrero Crespo & Rodríguez del Bosque, 2008). DTPB focuses on the identification of beliefs and factors those influence the three determinants of behavior, namely attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. This model decomposes attitude into three variables, namely perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and compatibility, a variable arising out of Rogers’s diffusion of innovation theory

(Rogers, 1995). Compatibility is “the extent to which [an] innovation is perceived as consistent with existing values, past experiences, and needs of potential users” (Rogers, 1995, p. 224; In Eastin, 2002, p. 253).

Compatibility is largely used as an antecedent of attitude. Chen, Gillenson and Sherrell (2002) propose a model integrating Theory of diffusion of innovation- TDI- and TAM and conclude that compatibility influences attitude toward online purchasing and that it is an antecedent of perceived usefulness. Chen and Tan (2004), in a study designed to determine the key success factors for the acceptance of online stores, find that the compatibility variable is an antecedent of attitude among perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, trust, and perceived service quality. The greater compatibility is, the higher the likelihood of the adoption of online stores. Vijayasarathy (2004) and Lin (2007) also show that compatibility has an impact on attitude toward the acceptance of the Internet as tool.

In addition, the DTPB takes into account the perceived behavioral control (PBC) variable. According to Chen and Wu (2005), PBC reflects a person’s perception of the ease or difficulty to implement behavior. The literature on the impact of the perceived behavioral control variable shows that this construct influences behavioral intention only, regardless of the context of the studies, which is justified by the fact that the TPB model predicts this relationship (Mathieson, 1991; Taylor & Todd, 1995; Hsu & Lam, 2006; Lu, Zhou & Wang, 2009; Hwang, Lin & Wang, 2010).

The last construct of the DTPB concerns subjective norms. Subjective norms refer to: “perceptions in relation to an individual’s ability to produce a particular behavior” (Davis, Bagozzi & Warshaw, 1989, p. 983). According to Lin (2007), “subjective norms refer to consumer perceptions regarding the use of online shopping under the influence of opinions of referent groups such as friends or colleagues” (Lin, 2007, p. 434). Subjective norms represent the set of influences

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