An Empirical Study of the International-Tourism Management by a Model of Consumer Behaviour

Fumihiko Isada
Yuriko Isada

Abstract

The objective of this study is to analyse, empirically, the lengthier stay by foreigners and starting businesses by foreigners, using a model of consumer behaviour for a successful case of the management of international tourism. An important issue for tourism management common to many tourist sites is how the number of foreign tourists is increased. In particular, a multi-lateralization or stabilization of revenue can be attained by increasing not only the number of short-stay tourists, which does tend to be changed, but also the number of tourists who stay on a long-term basis. Furthermore, taking in not only tourist income but also business investment from overseas contributes to the local development of a tourist site. If many foreigners reside in the locality and begin businesses, in addition to just going shopping as tourists, it is thought to lead to an improvement in the local economy because of the direct investment from overseas. Moreover, when sources of knowledge or wisdom from overseas flow into a locality, it can even be expected that some transition or innovation in the society or economy, that was not previously considered, may happen. On the other hand, although it may be easy for a tourist site to increase the number of short-stay visitors temporarily by, for example, a particular event, cases which succeed in increasing the number of the lengthier stay or in starting businesses from overseas are scarce.

In this study, we considered one of the ski resorts in Japan which has succeeded in rapidly increasing the number of the foreigners’ lengthier stay and the promotion of foreigner’s starting businesses in recent years. The success factors were investigated by presenting a questionnaire to foreign tourists there. As for the design methodology of the research, environmental transitions, such as the recent Internet developments of social networks, were added to the consumer-behaviour process models of previous studies.

The results show that the creation of a community controlled by the foreigners where there was reliance and empathy, and a network of tourism resources, are clear success factors. On the other hand, neither the expansion of a one-way advertising campaign nor improvements in transportation had a significant correlation. In conclusion, in order to expand the number of travellers and direct investment from overseas, the improvement of tourism resources by inter-regional associations and deregulation by the government, etc. are useful.

Key words: international tourism management, consumer behaviour, empirical analysis, lengthier stay, starting business by a foreigner
1. Introduction

The objective of this study is to analyse, empirically, the lengthier stay and starting businesses by foreigners, using a model of consumer behaviour for a successful case of the management of international tourism. An important issue for tourism management common to many tourist sites is how the number of foreign tourists is increased. In particular, a multi-lateralization or stabilization of revenue can be attained by increasing not only the number of short-stay tourists, which does tend to be changed, but also the number of tourists who stay on a long-term basis. Furthermore, taking in not only tourist income but also business investment from overseas contributes to the local development of a tourist site. If many foreigners reside in the locality and begin businesses, in addition to just going shopping as tourists, it is thought to lead to an improvement in the local economy because of the direct investment from overseas. Moreover, when sources of knowledge or wisdom from overseas flow into a locality, it can even be expected that some transition or innovation in the society or economy, that was not previously considered, may happen.

On the other hand, although it may be easy for a tourist site to increase the number of short-stay visitors temporarily by, for example, a particular event, cases which succeed in increasing the number of the lengthier stay or in investing business from overseas are precious. In this study, we considered one of the ski resorts in Japan which has succeeded in rapidly increasing the number of the foreigners’ lengthier stay or starting businesses in recent years. The success factors were investigated by presenting a questionnaire to foreign tourists there. As for the design methodology of the research, environmental transitions, such as the recent Internet developments of social networks, were added to the consumer-behaviour process models of previous studies.

2. Previous research

2.1. The purchase process

According to Kotler (2000), by the time consumers decide on the purchase of a product, they will have passed through the following five purchase processes. The first process is problem recognition. This is the first step in which consumers are driven to feel the need for a product by a certain stimulation. For example, a person who sees a friend’s new car may also want a new car. The second process is an information retrieval. In order to know about a product in more detail after the generation of need, this step involves collecting information. However, this may not be performed when the need can be fulfilled by purchasing immediately. The third process is an evaluation of alternatives. In this step possible substitutes are compared. The fourth process is a purchase decision. This is the step that determines the purchase of a particular product through an appraisal. At the time of the purchase decision, the outcome may not be decided by a purchaser’s intention per se, but may be affected by the influence of external preventive factors such as others’ attitudes. The fifth process is a post-purchase behaviour. Consumers experience satisfaction or dissatisfaction after purchasing merchandise. When satisfied, the same product may be purchased again, or an acquaintance might be informed of the outcome. In the case of dissatisfaction, the product might be returned, or information might be used to increase the value of the product.

Favourable attitude formation and overcoming the perceived risk constitute key aspects of purchase decision-making. According to Fishbein (1963), consumer behaviour can expressed in terms of a multi-attribute attitude model which appraises each attribute (cognitive element) of a product, and the sum of the products of each appraisal informs the purchase decision-making. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) suggest that the intention of an individual to take a particular action is affected not only by his/her own attitude but also by the influence of others. An attitude which indicates the desirability of using a product, and subjective norms, i.e. perceptions of the attitudes and expectations of important others, drive behavioural intention towards using a product. Although it is difficult for a company to change a consumer’s personal attitude directly, it is possible to affect
a consumer’s attitude through influential others surrounding the consumer.

2.2. Recognition and feeling

According to Rosenberg and Hovland (1960) and Breckler (1984), there have been many studies in the field of social psychology, conducted over a long period of time, on consumers’ attitudes. Much of this research suggests that there are two components of consumer attitudes: recognition (appraisal based on an objective indicator), and feeling (appraisal based on consumers’ subjective experience). However, although recognition and feeling have been considered in social psychology and consumer behaviour research through numerous studies, there has been comparatively little study of the significance of these components in the formation of an attitude.

Many of the views on cognitive processing had coalesced in consumer behaviour research by the 1970s. For example, the human brain was compared to the electronic computer, and consumer behaviour was systematically explained by information processing models, such as external information inputs, processing, and storage (Bettman, 1979). Thus, Ajzen (2008) contends that in these studies, consumers were assumed to behave in rational patterns, that is, they were assumed to appraise the attributes of a product rationally and to purchase what they recognized objectively to be the best product.

However, according to Buck et al (2004), Chaudhuri (2006), and Robinette et al (2001), many studies in later years asserted the magnitude of the role of feelings in consumer behaviour. Now in many industrial fields a stage of maturity has been reached where the view that consumers’ buying behaviour is predicated only on making a product that is excellent in terms of technical specifications is no longer tenable. According to Schmitt (1999) and Chaudhuri (2006), in the industrial world emotional marketing and experiential marketing have attracted attention, and importance is increasingly attached to appealing to consumers’ emotions in marketing strategies. Furthermore, Lindstrom (2008), on the basis of a neuro-economics and neuro-marketing study, indicates that judgment founded on recognition is preceded by emotion. In the field of social psychology, Wilson et al (1993) propose that judgment by emotion or intuition does not necessarily pass through systematic processing. For example, once the reason for a selection is carefully considered after a decision is made, satisfaction will decrease.

As mentioned above, recent research has found emotion to be an important factor that influences consumers’ attitudes towards a brand. However, according to Keller (2007), there is almost no preceding research that has indicated positively and quantitatively that the influence of emotion is greater than the influence of cognitive processes on consumer attitude.

2.3. Models of consumer behaviour

Historically, there have been many models of consumer behaviour. Barry (1987) refers to the AID model proposed by Lewis in 1898 to explain consumer behaviour, which consists of three steps: attention, interest, and desire. This hierarchical model, which divides the actions of a consumer at the time of the purchase of a product or service, was the beginning of research that applied psychology to the field of business administration. Lewis amended the AID model in 1900, adding action, resulting in the four-step AIDA model. Since then, various new models have been proposed by researchers or those in business. Approaches such as that of AIDA presented a simple model supposing a typical consumer image. After the 1970s, research on consumer behaviour incorporated various factors, such as individual differences, and elaborated on the analysis. However, even now the AIDA model and its variations are often mentioned for their simplicity and are widely used.

In Japan, the AIDMA model advocated by Hall (1924) that added M (memory) to the AIDA model has long been widely accepted. The consumer behaviour represented in the AIDMA model is as follows. Consumers recognize a product from commercial messages on television or in magazines, etc. and develop an interest or regard for it, and desire is produced. This results in the purchase of the product following the emotional step which incorporates the consumer’s desire.
Again, in Japan, Dentsu Inc. advocated the application of the AISAS model, which incorporates the concept of “search and share” in place of the desire–memory process in the AIDMA model, after the appearance of the Internet. The AISAS model categorizes consumer behaviour into five elements: attention, interest, search, action, and share. These reflect the change in consumer behaviour when the consumer engages in on-line purchasing. The birth of on-line catalogue-selling sites and price comparison websites resulted in the need to consider the process of searching before that of buying. Consumers share information through blogs, social networking sites, sharing sites, etc. after purchasing, and this helps other consumers decide on purchases.

Although the AISAS model captured a feature of consumer behaviour in the Internet age, it does not engage sufficiently with consumers’ recognition and emotion processes. Thus, the Dentsu Inc. Open Innovation Laboratory proposed the SIPS model; SIPS stands for sympathize, identify, participate, share, and spread. At present, on social media such as Twitter or Facebook, the level of sharing of information has been increasing steadily. In the SIPS model, empathy with the information or philosophy disseminated by a person or company serves as the initiator of consumer behaviour. Through consumers’ empathy and identification, the motivation for action is born, in turn leading to participation (which also includes actions without a purchase), sharing and the beginning of diffusion. Through the initial motivation, consumers look for further information using search engines or social media, and take certain actions (which also include actions without a purchase). Thus, when considering future marketing, it is important for companies to disseminate and share information, in order to induce empathy and to develop participation. Although there is currently insufficient empirical research to substantiate this, it may be that the concept of empathy captures the young Internet generation’s behavioural patterns especially well.

2.4 Perceived risk and diffusion theory

According to Bauer (1960), perceived risk is a subjective risk characterization evaluation. Bettman (1974) considered that perceived risk affects consumers’ attitudes. If a perceived risk fails to occur, a favourable attitude will be formed towards a product. Although the influence of personal communication tends to be considerable, the extent to which it is given serious consideration depends on the source, and differences are found depending on the field of study.

The Bass model (1969) of new product revenue projection describes various diffusion curves; this model projects total revenue at the macro level. The model divides consumers into two types, the innovator and the imitator, and captures the interaction between consumers. The model has been expanded with the inclusion of different variables, such as pricing, advertising, etc.; its widespread use, for example in Europe, America and Japan, has found a good fit in numerous production scenarios, with a similar curve in different circumstances. From a variety of results, it has been found that, in the diffusion process of a new product, the influence of an imitator is considerably larger than the influence of an innovator, and this suggests the significance of the interaction between consumers.

Feick and Price (1987) distinguish between an opinion leader, who has knowledge or expertise by virtue of his involvement with a product, and an early adopter, who has knowledge and expertise based on experience. In addition to the opinion leader and the early adopter, there is also the “market maven”, a consumer who has a great deal of up-to-date knowledge, often of multiple products or markets, and who is trusted as a source by others; there are more females than males among market mavens, and market mavens are looked to by the media to lead opinion.

In terms of risk, Forsythe and Shi (2003) classify the perceived risk in Internet shopping into four types: settlement risk, product risk, credit risk and time risk. The rise in consumption through Internet shopping requires that companies develop a marketing strategy that can reduce the perceived risk. To do this, according to Doh and Hwang (2009), word-of-mouth communication with a high level of integrity and trust is required, because perceived risk increases in the comparison and selection purchasing steps in Internet shopping.
2.5. Word-of-mouth communication and the Internet

According to Arndt (1967), word-of-mouth communication is communication concerning a brand, a product, or a service through an oral exchange among speakers without commercial consciousness. In this definition, word-of-mouth communication is an oral personal communication channel between friends and acquaintances. Dichter (1966) proposed that there are several important features for a speaker and a hearer respectively, in terms of the mechanism generating word-of-mouth communication: for a speaker, these are product involvement, self-involvement, involvement with others and message involvement; for a hearer, they are authority, trust, expertness, interest, the intimacy of a source, etc. According to Arndt (1967), word-of-mouth communication in relation to a product or service can be roughly divided into positive word-of-mouth communication and negative word-of-mouth communication. Furthermore, word-of-mouth communication can be classified in terms of certain dimensions, such as information about a product’s attributes, usage information, and experience information.

Engel et al. (1969) compared the word-of-mouth effect with the effect of advertising, and concluded that advertising is effective in gaining early attention or interest, whereas word-of-mouth communication becomes important just before the purchasing decision. According to Day (1971), the difference in the effect of advertising and word-of-mouth is more noticeable in a new product than in an existing product. Wilson and Peterson (1989) analysed the difference in the effect of advertising and word-of-mouth if the potential buyer holds a prior expectation (i.e. has evaluated the product) prior to exposure. In the case of new products, it is only in the case that there is a “fit” with the prior expectation that the influence of word-of-mouth is strong.

According to Bristor (1990), word-of-mouth inducement primarily comprises three factors: an individual factor, a product factor and a situational factor. Moreover, a word-of-mouth effect is affected by the social relationship between the source and the recipient. The strength of ties, homogeneity, and the level of trust in the source are important for how the social relationship affects word-of-mouth communication. According to Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (1995), the conditions in which word-of-mouth communication is most likely to happen are as follows: (1) when information for consumers to make a product choice is insufficient; (2) when appraising the objective standard of a product is intrinsically difficult and others’ experience can be used as a vicarious trial; (3) when the capability to appraise a product or service is lacking; (4) when other sources are perceived to be untrustworthy; (5) when it is easier to use the information of people with influence than information from other sources; (6) when there is a strong social relationship between a messenger and a recipient; and (7) when an individual has a strong desire for social recognition. Wells and Prensky (1996) list the types of product which tend to generate word-of-mouth communication – products new to consumers, technically complicated products, products accompanied by risk, and products with extensive exposure.

For Buttle (1998), there is no requirement for meeting in word-of-mouth communication; rather it can comprise communication on the Internet, and it can also be initiated through other communication tools such as letters and the telephone. If there is a social relationship with the maker of a communication, word-of-mouth communication will be realized. In Helm and Schlei’s (1995) view, word-of-mouth communication is not solely communication between consumers, and it can comprise the exchange of information between a third party expert, an acquaintance, a potential consumer, etc.

Rosen (2000) argues that present-day consumers are sceptical about information disseminated by a company, and tend to disregard the overflow of advertising information in self-defence. On the other hand, through the development of the Internet, consumers seek the opinions of other consumers concerning products before they purchase them, and they come
together with other consumers on-line to share their expenditure experience and evaluate the product or service after the purchase. Word-of-mouth information on the Internet is exchanged with many consumers and others. An informant’s appraising information is easier to understand than advertising information, and is more readily accepted. Therefore, consumers use word-of-mouth communication on the Internet as a source of decision-making concerning purchases, rather than the conventional mass media. As a result, the interaction between consumers and companies by word-of-mouth communication on the Internet is of importance to business strategy.

2.6. Anonymity and trust

According to Joinson (2003), an addresser’s anonymity is characteristic of the communication model of the Internet. Sproull and Kiesler (1986) argue that the anonymity of communication on the Internet causes a lack or a shortage of social context (geographical, organizational, and situational). Since the subordinate information about the consumers who are writing the product appraisals, etc. in word-of-mouth communication on the Internet is insufficient, trust in not only the content but also the source is important in order for the information to be trusted.

As Wang and Emurian (2005) point out, the concept of trust is discussed in various fields, and there are various definitions. Hovland and Weiss (1951) found a significant difference in opinion transformation when comparing sources with high credibility to those with low credibility, and, similarly, Kelman and Hovland (1953) noted that an informer’s credibility had an influence on changes in attitude. Walster et al (1966) found that when informants described content to the detriment of their own profit, the trust of the recipient tended to increase. According to Wheless and Grotz (1977) and McGinnies and Ward (1980), trust originates in an informer’s seriousness, the intent not to persuade, profit independence, etc. In a similar vein, Blackwell et al (2001) and Sheth and Mittal (2004) found that sources which stood to gain a profit and those with a direct stake were viewed as untrustworthy.

2.7. Trust and expertness

According to Hovland et al (1953), trust depends greatly on who is providing information, and an addresser’s credibility in a communication affects changes in the hearer’s attitude. Fogg and Tseng (1999) categorize the components of credibility as trustworthiness and expertise. Trustworthiness relates to the perception of the addresser’s goodness and morality, and expertise to the perception of the addresser’s knowledge and capability. Thus, expertise is the extent to which an addresser is perceived to be the source of the “right” opinion, and trust relates to the perception of the intent of the addresser and the extent to which the information can be valued. Expertness is closely related to the theme or content of a communication, and the degree of an informer’s expertness changes with the theme. It is considered that, to some extent, an addresser’s age, leadership, and similarity of social background are indicators of expertness.

Cohen (1964) suggested that recipients are persuaded to a greater extent by the addresser who has the greatest expert knowledge. The perception of expertness is based on an informer’s qualifications such as training, experience and capability (Horai, Naccari, and Fatoullah, 1974). According to Wallace (1999), since there is a high level of anonymity on the Internet, it is difficult to find indicators of status, race, age, sex, etc., but it is easier to discern immediately whether an addresser is an expert. Therefore, on the Internet, the significance of expertise is higher than in the real world. This perceptual significance was noted by Briggs et al (2002), who found that the perception of the addresser’s expertness was the most important factor in whether or not recipients accepted advice gained from the Internet.

On the other hand, Sternthal et al (1978) found that, in some circumstances, an expert addresser had less of a persuasion effect than a moderately credible addresser (when the addresser was identified beforehand and the recipient already held a favourable opinion on the issue).
Furthermore, Hovland and Weiss (1951) found that the persuasion effect of an informer with high credibility was lost one month afterwards, whereas the persuasion effect of an informer with low credibility increased over time. The upturn of the persuasion effect accompanying the passing of time was named the sleeper effect. According to Kelman and Hovland (1953), the recipient of a persuasive communication gradually forgets his ties with a highly credible informant and the contents of the communication, whereas the effect of a less credible informant is more pervasive over time.

2.8. Trust and similarity

According to Brembeck and Howell (1952), Minnick (1957) and Oliver (1957), to name but a few, the similarity between an addresser and a recipient may be linked to the transformation of the recipient’s attitude in persuasive communication. According to Coleman et al (1957) and Rogers and Bhownik (1971), in the field of diffusion research, similarity is important in the communication between an addresser (opinion leader) and a recipient (follower).

According to Rogers (1995), while there may be differences between an opinion leader and a follower in terms of knowledge and experience of the innovation, ideally all other variables (for example, schooling and social position) will be similar. Diversity in knowledge or experience relates to expertness, whereas similarity relates to the characteristics of the addresser and recipient. Wallace (1999) posits that there is a trend for one’s own opinion to be strengthened by finding similar opinions on-line. Moreover, since the others’ attributes are rarely known, a similarity judgment is chiefly made on the basis of harmony of attitudes and interests. It is thought that the concept of similarity is connected with the concept of empathy discussed above.

3. Hypothetical derivation

The objective of this study is to discuss, based on consumer behaviour theory, what kind of efforts are necessary for a tourist site to increase the number of the lengthier stay of its visitors or tenants, and also to increase the number of entrepreneurs among foreign tourists.

In previous studies on the traditional marketing of a tourist site, the existence and size of local hotels, restaurants, etc., the ease of access to an airport, etc., as well as the improvement of tourist facilities, are found to be important (Laws, 1995; Ritchie and Crouch, 2003). However, it is thought that the characteristics of such a basic tourist site do not have a different influence on a short-term guest and a guest staying for a long time. Rather, the visitor who is staying for a longer time, who does not need to move after a short period, is assumed not to think that access to an airport is very important. For a visitor making a lengthier stay, the surroundings or the activities may be assumed to be important in addition to the particular resources of the tourist site. Above all, at a tourist site, it is thought that the value of enjoying a personal experience over many hours is important. For example, encounters and interchanges in the local area with various people may be precious. Such questions are approached below from the viewpoint of consumer behaviour theory.

According to the literature on the purchase process, the formation of a positive attitude in the making of a decision about a purchase is important. It is also suggested that the formation of a positive attitude is influenced not only by the ideas of the person himself/herself but also by the people surrounding him or her. Furthermore, since satisfaction with a purchase has an influence on whether the person himself/herself would purchase again and on other consumers’ purchases, an improvement in satisfaction level after a purchase is important.

In the preceding studies of the emotions in consumer behaviour, the traditional consumer behaviour model assumed that consumers’ attitudes and satisfaction levels are reached rationally – that consumers calculate the utility which the attributions of a product cause, compare their prior expectations with reality, and will be satisfied if the actual utility is above their prior expectation. However, attitude and satisfaction level are influenced not just by rational reckoning but by emotion nowadays. The influence of emotion has also become greater for daily necessaries that are thought
of as important for basic functioning. A trip is, especially, a product that enriches a life. In the buying behaviour for a trip, more ambiguous emotions, such as personal experience, taste, and feeling, which cannot be explained by the rational / functional purchase decision model, may be important factors.

According to the previous studies on the models of consumer behaviour, it is supposed that such ambiguous emotions are increased by empathy. A positive attitude may be formed if empathy is gained by the unusual experience which will be acquired on the trip, and the satisfaction level may increase further if such personal experience is shared with others. That is, the level of satisfaction with a trip may be decided not only by the utility or by the attributions of the product itself. It is thought that the level of satisfaction with a trip is synergistically expanded by participating and experiencing in the trip and by communication with others. Social networks on the Internet are probably very much increasing the influence of such communications with others today.

According to the preceding studies on perceived risk, in order that a consumer may form a positive attitude towards a product, a reduction of perceived risk is important. The information from a mass communication is not really relied on by consumers for the reduction of perceived risk nowadays. Instead, individual communications and, especially, information from actual users are very useful in order to lower the perceived risk.

According to earlier studies on the diffusion theory of an innovation, if the purchasers of a product increase in number, the imitation purchasers increase in number at an increasing tempo. It is important to note that the increase in ordinary consumers’ utilization leads to an expansion of the purchases of other general consumers in particular. Social networks on the Internet are very useful tools in spreading such information, and sharing it. If personal experience of the utilization of a product spreads and is shared on social networks on the Internet, the network of empathy may spread at an increasing tempo.

According to the preceding studies on word-of-mouth communication, the influence of word-of-mouth communication on a decision to make a purchase is greater than the influence of mass advertising. Therefore, companies will use word-of-mouth communications strategically. However, since anonymity is very common in word-of-mouth communication on the Internet, there is a problem about trust for a user. For example, trust in word-of-mouth communication on the Internet has been reduced because of the scandal of a word-of-mouth site about trips by consumers in which employees of the accommodation posted false information (Mail Online, 2011).

According to previous studies on word-of-mouth trust, trust in word-of-mouth communication on the Internet and a word-of-mouth addressee are strongly relevant. In order for word-of-mouth trust to increase, a word-of-mouth addressee’s expertness and similarity are important. Among these, expertness may be important for the early stage of the consumer behaviour process, so that the consumer can obtain access to information about the product by word-of-mouth communication. On the other hand, according to the preceding studies on expertness, the effect of trust in an expert falls over time. When the consumer himself or herself learns about a product, it is thought that the persuasion effect of an expert falls.

Moreover, similarity also raises trust in word-of-mouth communications on the Internet. According to the latest experience in Japan, although confidence of people from overseas about the safety of a trip to Japan after a nuclear power plant disaster fell greatly, this confidence is recovering gradually. One thing that has contributed to this revival is word-of-mouth information disseminated by foreigners who travel to and live in Japan.

Moreover, it is thought that this similarity has a close relationship with the empathy mentioned above. As mentioned above, empathy and sharing encourage a positive attitude towards a product, and increase the satisfaction level after a purchase. Sharing of information and empathy may take place easily, if language, attributions, taste, etc. are similar between consumers. And it may be easy to expand a favourable view and a high level of satisfaction synergistically by a word-of-mouth network.
Thus, when the level of satisfaction because of personal experience or empathy is autonomously expanded through a social network of high similarity, the power of absorption of the tourist site for tourists may increase cumulatively. If a long-term stay is experienced, the motivation to take up residence may increase, and if the motivation to take up residence increases, the motivation to start a business in the place may also increase.

The following survey hypotheses can be built up based on the considerations set out above.

H1. A stay becomes longer as a tourist has more interchanges with local people.
H2. A stay becomes longer as a tourist has more interchanges with compatriots.
H3. Substantial tourism resources or institutions have no effect on the lengthier stay.
H4. The quality of access to a tourist site has no effect on the lengthier stay.
H5. A stay becomes longer as the surrounding environment of a tourism resource becomes more substantial.
H6. A stay becomes longer if a tourist accesses social networks on the Internet.
H7. A compatriot’s remark on a social network on the Internet can easily be relied on.
H8. A visitor staying for a lengthier period has a high motivation towards residency, and the tourist with a strong residency motivation has a high motivation to start up a business.

4. Verification approach and results

4.1. The region for the case study

In the survey, in order to verify the above-mentioned hypotheses, the Hakuba district (which is one of the ski resorts in Japan) was investigated. The numbers of visitors making lengthier stays and foreign residents in the Hakuba district have been increasing in recent years. It has been a problem that tourist sites in Japan generally have few foreign tourists when compared with other advanced nations, and there are, especially, very few visitors making lengthier stays. Moreover, there is also little direct investment by businesses from overseas when compared with other Asian districts. The background barriers to entry are the very high prices of commodities, the low capability to hold a conversation in a foreign language, a complicated business taxation system, etc. Under such severe conditions, and although the population is less than ten thousand, about sixty thousand foreign tourists visit the Hakuba district per year. One feature of the district is that more than half the foreign tourists’ are Australian. The proportion of Australian tourists is a little more than ten per cent in the whole Nagano Prefecture (which includes the Hakuba district), so it could be said that the Australians are concentrating on the Hakuba district. Moreover, there is much village accommodation that is managed by Australians, and this is increasing every year. Since such a tourist site is very unusual in Japan, it is a suitable object for a survey.

4.2. The verification approach

In order to verify the hypotheses mentioned above, a survey of the attitude of foreign tourists was performed by questionnaire. The distribution approach for the questionnaire was to request responses directly from foreign tourists in the tourist information centre or the refreshment shop. The number of questions was made as small as possible so that it would be easy to give a response in a short time. Questions on the following items were included in the questionnaire:

(Objective variable group)
1. Length of visit (“stay days”) (1 - 3 days, 4 - 6 days, 7 - 9 days, 10 - 12 days, or 15 days or more).
2. Degree of motivation to settle (“residence motivation”).
3. Degree of motivation to start a business (“starting business motivation”).

(Explanatory variable group)
4. Degree of interchange with local residents or culture.
5. Degree of interchange with compatriots.
6. Appraisal of skiing facilities (snow quality etc.).
7. Appraisal of places to eat.
8. Appraisal of airport access.
9. Appraisal of surrounding tourism resources.
10. Degree of use of company or regional government advertising.
11. Degree of use of SNS (social networking sites).
12. Appraisal of trust in SNS.
13. Degree of use of compatriots’ messages on SNS.

Items 1-3 are the objective variables, and items 4 onwards are explanatory variables. After question 2, since this was an attitude survey, five-point Likert-style scales, which are sensitivity scales, were used.

4.3. Basic information on the results

The questionnaire was distributed at a time when many foreign tourists were visiting, between January and March 2013, and 167 effective responses were obtained. The following are the results of conducting statistical analysis, in order to verify the hypotheses. Since the number of questions was small, a pair-wise correlation analysis (Pearson) was conducted. The number in parentheses in what follows is the correlation coefficient, ** as a subscript means a 1% significance level, and * means a 5% significance level. International Business Machines’ SPSS ver. 21 was used for the statistical analysis.

4.4. Verification results

Using stay days, residence motivation and starting business motivation as the objective variables, the correlations with the explanatory variables were analysed one by one (Figure 1.). First, stay days had a significant correlation with compatriot interchange (0.319**), skiing facilities (0.274**), places to eat (0.163*), and the degree of use of SNS (0.219**). Next, residence motivation had a significant correlation with interchange with local residents or culture (0.259**), compatriot interchange (0.206**), and degree of use of SNS (0.196*). Finally, starting business motivation had a significant correlation with compatriot interchange (0.155**), surrounding tourism resources (0.228**), and degree of use of SNS (0.223*).

![Figure 1. the correlations between the objective variables and the explanatory variables](image-url)
Next, the correlation between degree of use of SNS, trust, and having a compatriot addresser was analysed (Figure 2.). First, those tourists with a higher degree of use of SNS had a higher trust in SNS (0.370**). Moreover, SNS messages disseminated by compatriots were relied on (0.289**).

![Figure 2. The correlations between the items related to SNS](image)

Finally, a correlation analysis between the three objective variables was conducted (Figure 3.). First, tourists who had a longer stay had higher residence motivation (0.235**). Moreover, tourists with high residence motivation had high starting business motivation (0.154*).

![Figure 3. The correlations between the objective variables](image)

### 4.5. Consideration of verification results

Each of stay days, residence motivation, and starting business motivation had a correlation with compatriot interchange and degree of use of SNS. As mentioned above, more than half of the foreign visitors to the Hakuba district are Australian, and their visits are comparatively concentrated during the ski-ing season. Therefore, during the ski-ing season, one would imagine that there are more Australians than local residents, and Australians can easily become acquainted with a compatriot in the Hakuba district. Then, a group with high similarity in language, hometown and tastes is formed, and it is thought that such an interchange of foreigners with each other in the Hakuba district means that their satisfaction level increases.

On the other hand, a difference was seen in the items which have a correlation with each objective variable. Appraisal of the facilities had a correlation with stay days. However, it is thought that it needs a tourist to begin to get in touch with local inhabitants and Japanese culture, etc., and to feel empathy for them, rather than just to enjoy the facilities, before he or she has the motivation to reside there. Furthermore, since foreign tourists must live on a comparatively long-term basis extending beyond the ski-ing season if they are to begin a business, so the quality of the surroundings and its attraction becomes important. In order to succeed in a business, an entrepreneur may think that more tourists from his own country can be brought in if he invests in the development of the various natural attractions of the surroundings.

Moreover, the quality of access to the district, and advertising of a company or the local government, did not have a correlation with a lengthier stay, a motivation to remain, or a motivation to start a business. Although advertising information by a company may be useful to draw attention to the Hakuba district, advertising alone does not result in a lengthier stay. The influence of the information on the social media on the Internet, especially if it is posted by a foreign compatriot, is greater than the influence of advertising. It is thought that obtaining access to information from overseas, and making decisions about an overseas trip, have a higher uncertainty than making decisions about a domestic tour to a place that is well known. With this high uncertainty, it is...
thought that the influence of information on social networks from a compatriot who can easily be relied on is great. It is thought that high similarity within a social network improves the reliability of information, raises empathy and raises satisfaction levels by the sharing of information. In starting a business, the businesses are those that are relevant to tourism and generally have compatriots as the main target, such as accommodation, and the exchange of information by social networks is considered to be widely used. Thus, the network of empathy on the Internet may become a catalyst and may be linked to a lengthier stay, a residence, and also starting a business.

The results of the survey verify the hypotheses as follows:
H1 was partially verified. Interchange with the local residents or culture related to the motivation to remain instead of merely taking a trip.
H2 was verified.
H3 was partially verified. The number of days spent on the trip was extended if there were substantial tourism resources. On the other hand, these resources had no influence on the motivation to remain or to begin a business.
H4 was verified.
H5 was partially verified. The environment of the tourist site had an influence, mainly on those who were thinking of starting a business.
H6-H8 were verified.

5. Conclusion
The objective of this study was to analyse, empirically, the factors influencing the lengthier stay and the starting of a business by foreigners, using a model of consumer behaviour in the case of a successfully managed international tourism site. The results show that the creation of a community controlled by the foreigners where there was reliance and empathy, and a network of tourism resources, are clear success factors. On the other hand, neither the expansion of a one-way advertising campaign nor improvements in transportation had a significant correlation. In conclusion, in order to expand the number of travellers and direct investment from overseas, the improvement of tourism resources by inter-regional associations and deregulation by the government, etc. are useful.

The limitations of this study are that it is based on fieldwork at one tourist site. It is subject to the verification of these results by reproducing them, expanding the objects of the survey and making a comparative study in the future.

References
Addison-Wesley.
Hall, S. R., 1924, Retail advertising and selling, McGraw-Hill.


