

MODELLING THE TOTAL SPEND AND TRIP DURATION DECISIONS INVOLVED IN TRAVELLING TO AND ATTENDING MAJOR SPORTING EVENTS

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Abstract

Aim of Abstract

The aim of this abstract is to report empirical findings as to the determinants of total spend and trip duration decisions involved in travelling to and attending major sporting events. This abstract illustrates the determinants of these two decisions and discusses how having a better understanding of total spend and trip duration decision can be achieved.

Theoretical Background

The global growth of sport and major sporting events across the world as tourism and mass entertainment, in both single and multi sport formats, has prompted a desire for a greater understanding of event attendees' and the implications of their motivations and decisions to travel to and attend major sporting events. However, research into major sporting events has generally focused on the Olympic Games and/or attendance of a single major sporting event. Currently, the major sporting event community sees the value of measuring the economic impact of major sporting events but do not fully understand the decisions taken by individuals that travel to and attend major sporting events (Preuss, Seguin & O'Reilly, 2007).

Downward, Lumsdon & Weston (2009) remark that economic impact studies ignore the element of trip duration but continue to model expenditure, this was also found to be the case when specifically considering economic impact at major sporting events. Downward and Lumsdon (2003) have shown that the duration of stay is an important variable that can be linked to spending and that encouraging visitors to increase their duration of stay has favourable economic implications for a destination. This relationship was further empirically tested with cycling tourists by Lumsdon, Downward and Cope (2004), whereby it was shown that the variables of trip duration and income act to determine levels of spending, in the sense that the longer the trip duration and the higher the income level, the greater the level of spending that would occur within the host economy.

Methodology

This research used a positivist quantitative strategy to empirically assess research questions surrounding major sporting event attendance and the associated motivations, total spending and trip duration decisions. Independent variables for analysis were identified through the research literature review and informed the construction of both a conceptual research model and the online research survey. The conceptual research model focused on demographics, event related motivations, major sporting event profile and sporting involvement as the independent variables and modeled their relationship with the dependent variables of total spend and trip duration.

The variable-based data collected from individual respondents on nine different major sporting events underwent a two stage descriptive and statistical analysis. The descriptive analysis consisted of a quantitative breakdown of survey results and the statistical analysis allowed the data to be econometrically modeled and assessed through regression analysis.

Results

This research provides significant findings towards understanding the decisions taken by individuals that travel to and attend major sporting events and in doing so leads to a greater understanding of total spend and trip duration decisions. The econometric models of the results indicate that the demographic variables and event related motivations determined total spend decisions whilst demographic variables, event related motivations and major sporting event profile variables determined trip duration decisions. Directly implicated in these findings were relevant key variables for commercial companies to consider in the packaging and sale of major event sport travel to existing and committed major sport event attendees'.

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