

## An Analysis of Family as a Factor Affecting Purchase Decision Process In Terms Of Travel Agencies's Costumers

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### Extensive Summary

#### Introduction

In order to meet the requirements and desires of individuals and family as well as groups and organizations, the behaviour of consumer analyses how to decide to use products, services, past experiences and ideas, how to purchase, on what criterion to choose, and how to sell off in what circumstances (Kotler, 2000: 160).

In the development of consumer behaviour, psychological, personal and socio-cultural considerations play a fundamental role (Hatiboğlu, 1993: 39; Mucuk, 2004: 72). Of these variables, one of the most remarkable is the family factor which is put into the perspective of social factors and seen as the closest reference group since the family has been regarded as a unit where the most prolonged relations are established and the consumption habits are shaped (Erkal, 1998: 101).

Family, by affinity or affiliated by consanguinity, is the smallest unit in society shaped by co-existence of at least two people (Grønhøj and Ölander, 2007: 218). Karalar (2005) has defined family in the widest sense as a social group consisting of two or more people affiliated by consanguinity or by marriage.

It is seen that the family could be classified according to number of members, types of marriage, the way the lineage is determined, the place among members and the distribution of the authority. In the classification by the number of members, it can be made a reference to a small (nuclear) and an extended family (Odabaşı and Barış, 2004: 103).

- *Small Family*: It is the type of family made up of a mother, a father and unmarried children. There is no question of the authority of the mother and the father. That is an economic family (İşçi, 1999: 19). The number of members is less and limited, which is why it is also known as the Nuclear Family.

- *Extended Family*: Apart from the traditional family model, the number of the members is more. On the whole, it is made up of many small families, e.g. the families in which grandparents and married children live together.

Families have got two distinctive roles in consumer behaviour process. Initially, family is the unit which decides consumer purchase decision process of products and/or services. Secondly, with the effect of being the smallest social group and by criticizing the consumer purchase behaviours, giving advice or making arrangements, family has had an influence over consumer behaviours (Cemalcılar, 1998: 64).

### **Method**

The aim of this research is to ascertain whether or not there is a difference between the family factor (family structure and the number of members in the family) which is considered within the scope of social factors that affect the consumers' purchase behaviours and the kinds of goods and services purchased through travel agencies; as well as the reasons to opting travel agencies and the source of information being effective on the choosing process of travel agencies. Within the scope of these objectives, hypotheses of the paper are as follows:

*H1*: There is a meaningful discrepancy between the family factor and the kinds of goods and services purchased through travel agencies.

*H1a*: There is a meaningful discrepancy between consumers' family structures (nuclear and extended family) and the kinds of goods and services they purchase through travel agencies.

*H1b*: There is a meaningful discrepancy between the number of members in consumers' families and the kinds of goods and services they purchase through travel agencies.

*H2*: There is a meaningful discrepancy between the family factor and the grounds to giving preference to travel agencies.

*H2a*: There is a meaningful discrepancy between consumers' family structures and the reasons to giving preference to travel agencies.

*H2b*: There is a meaningful discrepancy between the number of members in consumers' families and the reasons to giving preference to travel agencies.

*H3*: There is a meaningful discrepancy between the family factor and the source of information being effective on the choosing process of travel agencies.

*H3a*: There is a meaningful discrepancy between consumers' family structures and the source of information being effective on the choosing of travel agencies.

*H3b*: There is a meaningful discrepancy between the number of members in consumers' families and the source of information affecting the choosing of travel agencies.

This research is important because of the fact that it is expected to provide information about consumers' consumption habits and practices of those participated. Moreover, the data that is to be obtained from the research is significant on the grounds that it will provide information proportionately for the travel operations carrying on business or will do so in a given area.

In order for the research to accomplish its purpose, primary and secondary data has been put to use. A survey has been put to use as a primary method of gathering information. The application part of the research has been implemented in cooperation with the The Association of Turkish Travel Agencies Konya Province and District Affiliated Regional Executive Board.

The sample of the research consists of 50 A group travel agencies that are located in downtown Konya and support the research, and of 1009 customers of those agents.

The results obtained have been explicated by calculating the frequencies and per cent values. The relationships between family factor and the related variables of travel agencies has been evaluated by using Chi-Square= $\chi^2$  hypothesis test technique which is considered to be one of the descriptive (nonparametric) statistical techniques, and with respect to 0.05 (5%) level of significance, their tests of significance has been conducted, and obtained results plotted as tables has been received for consideration.

### **Conclusion**

In the research applied to the customers of travel agencies, the kinds of products and/or services obtained from travel agencies, the reasons of why travel agencies are preferred, and the sources of information that are effective in choosing the travel agencies has been determined to demonstrate meaningful discrepancies based on the family structures and members of families.

When family structures and the members of families taken into account, 20.1% of consumers with a nuclear family and 21.3% of consumers with an extended family has been determined to buy “plane tickets” from travel agencies. Participants who have got 4-6 members in their families are observed to make a purchase of “reservation” service from hotels and/or accommodation establishments through travel agencies. While it is stated that consumers with a nuclear family structure prefer “past experiences” as the most effective source of information in their travel agency preferences, it is determined that consumers with an extended family structure prefer “recommendations of friends and relatives” as the most effective source of information in their travel agency preferences. When family structures and members of families are contrasted in the sense of the motivations of preferring travel agencies, there has not been specified an important difference. It is possible to say that consumers prefer travel agencies because of their “providing comfort and convenience”. With reference to everything taking place in a way it is working against the clock, consumers who have limited time do not have the luxury to bookings of means of transportation for travelling and organizations, of reserving places in accommodation services, dealing with visa procedures, all of which require some sort of background knowledge. The most significant services travel agencies provide regarding this point are to carry out these processes on behalf of the customers and to care for the details that will enable their customers every possible comfort and convenience by means of using their expertise and professional knowledge in return for a given price.

As a result of the points made of the research conducted, some suggestions could be made:

Most of the attendants participating in the research are observed to make their decisions on recommendations of friends and relatives as well as past experiences when choosing travel agencies. In line with the results, it appears that previous complacency

level of consumers and the factor of reference group are of sizeable importance. Travel agencies, therefore, bearing in mind these points, should offer quality services based on customer satisfaction. Moreover, other marketing methods should be used effectively in order not to lose customers available and tried to reach new customers via their repeat customers.

Most of the attendants participating in the research are observed to prefer travel agencies because they offer comfort and convenience. That is followed by offering corporate security, easy terms of payment, and attitude and behaviours of the employees. That travel agencies should take every possible measure to ensure customers' comfort and convenience, that they create an atmosphere of trust which will provide customers with positive thoughts and dissemination about the services offered, and that they should take precautions to offer easy terms of payment for the affordability should not be overlooked by agency officers since all these carry the travel agencies one step further in a demanding competitive environment. Not ignoring these conditions together with quality service, prolonged and warm relationships with customers are thought to make a significant contribution to customer satisfaction.

Furthermore, in future research about the matter, by carrying out the research in different areas, and on consumer groups who have different family structures, the effect within the travel sector that is a service-driven sector of consumer behaviour can extensively be revealed. Hereby, both a comparison can be made in terms of families' consumption habits and it can serve as a model for any research regarding this matter yet to be conducted in the future.