

Consumer Behavior Evaluation Model for Marketing Tourist Destinations

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Abstract

The objective focused on designing a consumer behavior evaluation model to enhance the segmentation, positioning, and marketing of tourist destinations. The research employed both quantitative and qualitative methods, which facilitated the development of a model structured in three stages, using tools such as data analysis and specialized software. The sample consisted of 366 tourists, selected through random convenience sampling. Surveys conducted with tourists revealed a majority profile of young and middle-aged men with a high level of education and middle-class background, primarily seeking relaxation, recreation, and cultural experiences. Most expenses were directed toward food and accommodation. The conclusions suggest that, to close the gap between actual and desired behavior, it is necessary to improve the tourism offerings and align services and infrastructure with visitors' expectations to increase satisfaction and destination competitiveness. The proposed model aims to evaluate consumer behavior and design actions that improve the economic and commercial performance of tourist destinations.

Keywords: consumer behavior; marketing; tourist destination; management; Ecuador

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1. Introduction

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), tourism in Ecuador generated revenues of USD 1.551 billion, with a total of 1.542 million tourists, representing 1.5% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2015, the base year for this research. In 2016, revenues decreased by 6.9% and tourist arrivals by 8.1%, with tourism accounting for 1.4% of GDP. This decline resulted from changes in the national economy and earthquakes that caused uncertainty in the country's tourism sector. The situation improved in 2018 in terms of revenue, tourism inflows, and GDP, increasing by 12.91%, 51.57%, and 1.7%, respectively. However, tourist revenue was affected that year, as visitor growth far outpaced revenue growth (UNWTO, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020).

The province of Manabí, with 22 cantons, includes Sucre Canton, which has a population of 57,159, and San Vicente, with a population of 22,025. Both areas have hotel infrastructure typical of the region and a traditional culture that has survived since ancient times (Lemoine et al., 2020). The need to evaluate consumer behavior has led various authors (Kotler, 2003; Roberts, 2003; Blackwell et al., 2002, among others) to develop models for evaluating consumer behavior in general and in tourist destinations in particular. These models assess behavior but often lack a comprehensive framework that includes evaluation, definition, implementation of

actions, and re-evaluation—factors that influence behavior and its impact on marketing outcomes. The destination has a total of 123 hotel facilities, with 57.72% located in the San Vicente Canton and 41.46% in the Sucre Canton. These facilities include hotels, hostels, guesthouses, cabins, and campsites, comprising 5,134 beds and 1,678 rooms across the destination (Lemoine et al., 2021).

Based on existing national laws and policies—such as the Tourism Law (2002); the Strategic Plan for the Development of Sustainable Tourism in Ecuador 2020 (MINTUR, 2012); the Comprehensive Tourism Marketing Plan for Domestic Tourism in Ecuador (PIMTE, 2014); the Organic Code for Production, Trade and Investment (2010); and the National Plan for Good Living (2013)—research projects have been designed in coordination with local governments to achieve effective destination marketing. The objective of this research is to design a consumer behavior evaluation model that contributes to improving the segmentation, positioning, and marketing of the Sucre–San Vicente tourist destinations.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Marketing or Commercial Management

Marketing or commercial management includes functions such as planning, organization, direction, and control of sales. It also addresses two fundamental aspects: customer satisfaction and market share. It ensures that the company, organization, or destination is competitively positioned in the market based on criteria provided by Elshaer et al. (2025) and Agag et al. (2024), which are derived from the customer's perspective. There are several definitions of commercial management or marketing. Marketing is aimed at developing and implementing strategies that allow a product to reach the consumer so that the consumer is aware of it and motivated to acquire it in a feasible manner. They also assert that marketing is oriented toward the product, sales, consumer, competition, and the market.

Marketing is thoroughly discussed in various works by Kotler (2003), who defines it as the activity that manages the exchange relationship between a company or organization and the market, serving as the final phase of the production process. It is worth reflecting on what this “final phase” entails, as it involves directing the company's products and/or services to the market through a complete alignment of marketing variables. When analyzing these definitions, a common element emerges: they describe commercial management or marketing not merely as the last stage of the business process. If viewed solely in this way, it would serve only a sales function. However, commercial management encompasses everything from market research to activities beyond the sale, including product availability for the consumer, sales and positioning strategies, and both sales and after-sales policies within the business environment.

Drosos et al. (2024) analyzed the link between marketing strategies and customer satisfaction in the tourism sector. They emphasize the importance of adapting marketing strategies to enhance customer experience and gain a competitive advantage. Similarly, Elshaer et al. (2024), in their paper developed a conceptual framework exploring how the use of marketing analytics influences customer agility and satisfaction. This study highlights the role of analytics tools in strategic decision-making and improving responsiveness to customer needs.

2.2. Marketing of Tourist Destinations

Marketing of tourist destinations involves strategic activities aimed at attracting visitors by highlighting a destination's unique attractions, culture, experiences, and services (Soteriades, 2012). Effective destination marketing builds a strong brand image that differentiates one place from others in a competitive global tourism market. It requires understanding tourist preferences, market trends, and local assets, and aligning them with targeted promotional efforts (Pike & Page, 2014). These may include digital marketing campaigns, participation in travel fairs, social media engagement, influencer collaborations, and destination storytelling. Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) play a key role by coordinating stakeholders, creating promotional content, and ensuring consistent branding. Their objective is not only to attract tourists but also to encourage longer stays and repeat visits, ultimately contributing to economic development and community

well-being. Marketing strategies are often customized for specific tourist segments such as adventure seekers, cultural enthusiasts, or luxury travelers.

In today's digital age, technology has transformed destination marketing through virtual tours, online booking platforms, data analytics, and real-time communication (Ukaj, 2014). Sustainability and authenticity have also become central themes, as modern travelers seek meaningful and responsible travel experiences. Overall, successful marketing of tourist destinations requires a holistic approach that integrates branding, experience design, and stakeholder collaboration to create memorable and competitive tourism offerings. In a study on tourist destinations, Saraniemi and Kylänen (2011) analyzes them from their conception to their management. He argues that the success of a tourist destination depends on the presence of complementary tourism products that together create an attractive offer for visitors, providing them with new experiences each day. Regarding destination management, Saraniemi and Kylänen describes it as the set of decisions and actions aimed at achieving previously defined objectives. This process is carried out within specific spatial and temporal frameworks that shape its organization and *modus operandi*. The marketing of a tourist destination involves both sectoral aspects (the tourism product) and territorial aspects (support for production and consumption). This requires contextualizing the physical space (geography) according to the processes occurring within it, which leave specific social, economic, and environmental imprints.

From a critical and contemporary perspective, three key authors contribute significantly to the study of tourist destination marketing. First, Agag et al. (2024) propose an innovative approach by analyzing how the use of marketing analytics tools directly influences customer agility and satisfaction. Their work reinforces the importance of data-driven management to optimize commercial strategies in tourist destinations. Second, Sotiriadis (2021) provides a comprehensive review of academic literature on destination marketing, emphasizing the integration of the tourist experiential approach with strategic planning while highlighting gaps between theory and practice in real-world settings. Finally, Moreno-Lobato et al. (2021) offer a perspective centered on tourism intermediaries, underscoring the vital role of experience marketing in the tourism value chain. Their analysis stresses the need to adapt tourism offerings to evolving tourist demands, particularly in the context of digital transformation and sustainability. Together, these three contributions are essential to understanding the current dynamics of responsible and effective tourism marketing.

2.3. Consumer Behavior

Consumer behavior refers to the study of the mental and physical processes individuals undergo when making purchasing decisions, from the identification of a need to the post-purchase evaluation. In other words, it involves analyzing how people think, feel, and act when acquiring goods or services. Numerous authors have contributed to the understanding of consumer behavior, each offering distinct perspectives and approaches. Kotler (2003) defines consumer behavior as the study of how individuals, groups, and organizations select, purchase, use, and dispose of goods, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy their needs and desires. Hawkins et al. (2001) developed a comprehensive model of consumer behavior, emphasizing the influence of internal factors—such as motivation and personality—and external factors—such as culture and social groups—on purchasing decisions.

In contrast, Kanuk and Schiffman (2005) stress the importance of context in consumer behavior. Their approach helps analyze how external elements such as the economy or social trends influence consumer and tourist decisions. Similarly, Solomon et al. (2010) adopted a more experiential perspective, highlighting the role of emotions, sensory experiences, and social interactions in shaping preferences and purchase behaviors. Bindeoué (2021) defines consumer behavior as the manner in which individuals purchase or repurchase products or services, guided by criteria such as personal choice, consumption habits, perceived quality, taste, advertising, and price expectations. Yin et al. (2021) described it as the process by which individuals, groups, and organizations select, acquire, and use products or services to meet their needs and desires. Meanwhile, Carbaché et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of considering the social and temporal context in consumer behavior research, noting that changes in the social environment significantly affect consumer decisions and actions.

3. Methodology

The research is based on a mixed methodological approach that integrates both quantitative and qualitative methods. This combination enables the study to address the complex and diverse aspects of consumer behavior in tourism destination marketing. By gathering both objective and subjective data, this approach allows for an in-depth evaluation of the phenomenon under investigation and contributes scientific innovation to the development of the proposed model. The method of analysis and synthesis was employed to explore and characterize existing knowledge regarding consumer behavior and tourism destination marketing. This process provided a solid foundation for the design of the evaluation model. Through careful analysis and synthesis of relevant information, the theoretical framework was defined and the model structure was established. According to Creswell (2014), this method is essential for integrating information from various sources and plays a critical role in building theoretical frameworks in the social sciences.

The systemic-structural method was used to guide both the internal and external development of the evaluation model. This approach allowed for a clear understanding of the relationships between different stages and phases of the process. It helped ensure that the consumer behavior evaluation model was designed in a way that captured the dynamic interactions among its components. As noted by Bertalanffy (1968), the systemic approach is fundamental in studies requiring a holistic view of structures and processes.

To collect data, a survey was designed based on previously validated instruments. These sources ensured the relevance and reliability of the items included, supporting the collection of meaningful and representative data. For instance, attitudes toward the tourist destination were assessed using items adapted from the scale developed by Lemoine et al. (2021), who emphasized that tourist perceptions influence their purchasing decisions in destination marketing. Consumer motivation was measured using concepts proposed by Lemoine et al. (2023), who identified primary motivations such as relaxation, adventure, and cultural learning. Consumer loyalty was evaluated based on the model by Montesdeoca et al. (2019), which categorizes different levels of loyalty depending on tourist satisfaction and perceived value. These sources were further supported by Kotler's (2003) consumer satisfaction scale, widely recognized for linking satisfaction to repeat purchasing behavior.

The study focused on tourists visiting the destination during the Carnival and Independence Day 2024 holidays in Ecuador. A sample of 366 tourists was selected using random convenience sampling. Data analysis and validation were conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, version 22). Additionally, Decision software, CurveExpert Pro 2.6.3, and Microsoft Excel were used to process the data and generate tables and graphs that supported the findings.

4. Results

The proposed model for evaluating consumer behavior in the marketing of tourist destinations is grounded in a critical review of existing consumer behavior models, as discussed in the previous chapter. This model has been tailored to suit the specific objectives and scope of the present research, taking into account both the advantages and limitations identified in earlier frameworks. Its design seeks to offer a practical and context-sensitive approach that reflects the dynamics of consumer decision-making in tourism settings. To ensure the credibility and rigor of the model, expert selection was carried out through a structured evaluation process. Each potential expert completed a survey, and the collected data was analyzed using the Decision Program. Out of 15 individuals initially considered, 11 were selected based on their qualifications and relevance to the subject matter. These experts contributed valuable insights during the validation phase, enhancing the reliability and applicability of the proposed model.

The core aim of the model is to evaluate consumer behavior from a comprehensive perspective while facilitating the development of strategic actions that influence individual decision-making. These actions are intended to promote behaviors that improve the economic and commercial performance of tourist destinations. Ultimately, the goal is to enhance competitiveness and appeal in both domestic and international tourism markets. This model fulfills several critical functions. Firstly, it provides a methodological framework

for professionals, researchers, and stakeholders interested in analyzing consumer behavior within tourism. Secondly, it supplies a structured set of tools and processes that support evidence-based decision-making. The model also emphasizes objectivity in assessments, ensuring that conclusions and recommendations are grounded in empirical data. Importantly, it aims to improve the attractiveness and effectiveness of tourism marketing strategies, thereby increasing tourist engagement and satisfaction. Structurally, the model comprises inputs, outputs, and three interconnected stages. These components operate within a continuous feedback loop that enables dynamic adjustments over time. This structure ensures that the model remains responsive to real-world changes and new insights, allowing for the ongoing refinement of strategies based on measurable outcomes.

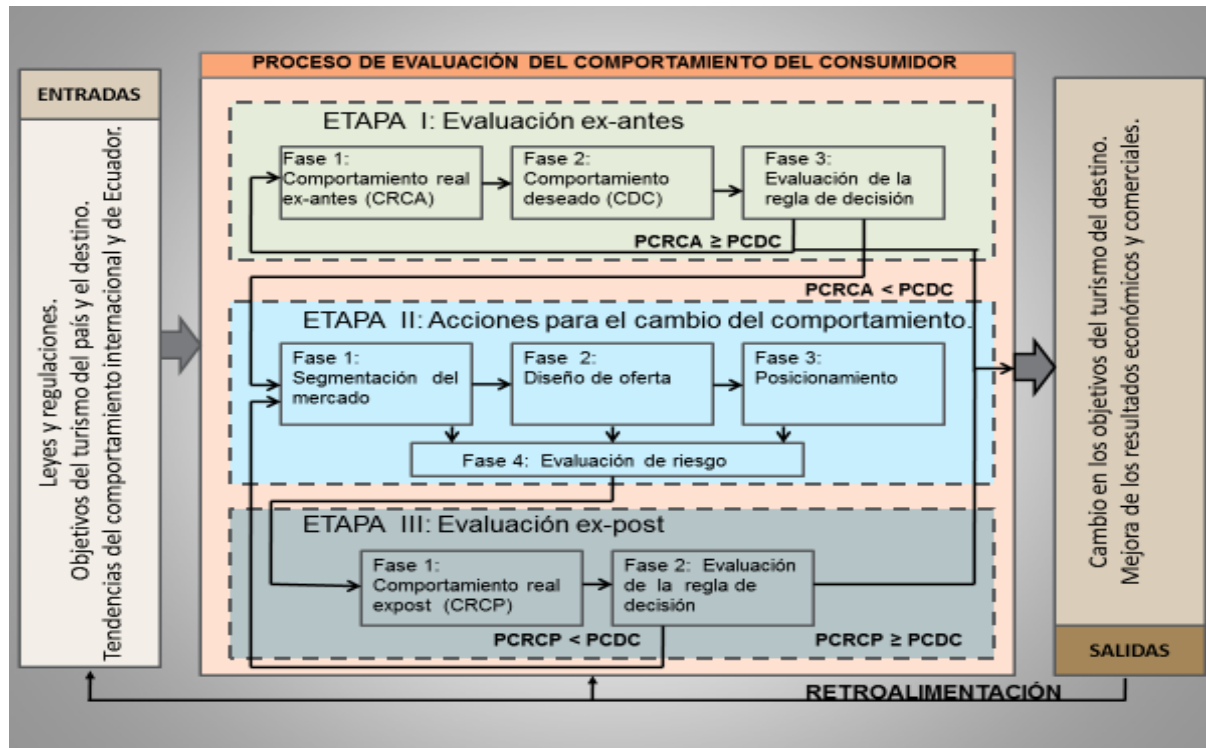


Figure 1. Consumer behavior evaluation model for marketing tourist destinations.

Legend: PCRCA: Profile of real consumer behavior ex-before, PCDC: Profile of desired consumer behavior, PCRCP: Profile of real consumer behavior ex-post.

The proposed model begins with a set of inputs that serve as foundational elements for evaluating consumer behavior in tourism destination marketing. These inputs include the country's tourism laws and regulations, national tourism development objectives, and current trends in both international and Ecuadorian consumer behavior. These factors provide critical context and help define the parameters for the subsequent evaluation process. Once these elements are analyzed, the model proceeds to a structured three-stage process.

Stage I, known as the ex-ante evaluation, comprises three iterative phases: the definition of the actual ex-ante consumer behavior profile (ACCP), the identification of the desired consumer behavior profile (DCBP), and the application of a decision rule to assess the gap between the two. The decision rule determines whether the ACCP meets or exceeds the DCBP. If it does, the process loops back for another review; if the result remains the same in the subsequent cycle, the model exits this stage. However, if the ACCP is found to be lower than the DCBP, the process advances to Stage II.

Stage II, titled Actions for Behavior Change, is designed to implement strategic interventions. It includes four phases: market segmentation, the design of tailored offerings, positioning strategies, and a comprehensive risk assessment based on the outcomes of the previous three phases. This stage aims to align market strategies with consumer expectations and mitigate potential challenges before proceeding to the next phase.

Stage III involves the ex-post evaluation of consumer behavior. This stage includes two key phases: determining the actual ex-post consumer behavior profile (PCRCP) and applying a decision rule to assess the

gap between PCRCP and the desired post-consumer behavior profile (PCDC). If the PCRCP falls short of the PCDC, the model returns to the beginning of Stage II. Conversely, if PCRCP meets or exceeds PCDC, the model concludes its cycle.

The exit from the model reflects two main outcomes: adjustments in the tourism objectives of the destination and measurable improvements in its economic and commercial performance. This feedback loop ensures continuous refinement and strategic alignment based on empirical evidence. To support the evaluation process, a survey was administered to tourists visiting the destination. It included a total of 38 questions: 17 focused on profiling tourism consumers, 18 closed-ended items measured using a Likert scale, and 3 control questions designed to assess the instrument's reliability. The collected data provides the empirical basis for applying and validating the model, with the results summarized in Table 1.

Based on the criteria outlined by Ruis (2019), Cronbach's alpha is a statistical coefficient used to evaluate the reliability of a scale or test. According to this author, results falling within certain thresholds can be interpreted as acceptable or good. In this study, the obtained Cronbach's alpha values of 0.791 and 0.864 based on standardized items indicate strong internal consistency. These values meet commonly accepted thresholds in research, where coefficients above 0.7 are deemed acceptable and those above 0.8 are considered good, affirming the robustness of the instrument.

Table 1. Reliability statistics.

Cronbach's alpha	Cronbach's alpha based on standardized items	Number of elements
.791	.864	20

The results allow us to conclude that the questionnaire or scale utilized in this model demonstrates sufficient reliability for assessing constructs related to consumer behavior within the context of tourism destination marketing. This reliability enhances the validity of the proposed model, supporting its utility in identifying behavioral trends and preferences among tourists. Consequently, the model becomes a valuable tool for designing more effective strategies that align with consumer expectations and improve destination marketing outcomes. In addition to assessing reliability, this study incorporates a cross-tabulation of three key demographic variables—sex, age, and marital status—with the tourist consumer profile.

This analytical step is essential for identifying distinct behavioral patterns that influence travel decisions. Firstly, these sociodemographic variables facilitate market segmentation, enabling tourism destinations to develop tailored offerings and marketing strategies that resonate with specific groups. Secondly, the analysis reveals trends in travel behavior, including preferred activities, accommodation choices, and average spending. This information contributes to the creation of more personalized experiences aimed at increasing tourist satisfaction and fostering destination loyalty. The findings are detailed in the results presented in Table 2. The results reveal that the tourism consumer profile at the evaluated destination is predominantly male (62.3%), with a significant concentration in the 25–44 age group (59.6%), and mostly married (61.5%). These findings highlight a clear demographic trend that should inform destination marketing efforts. Specifically, promotional strategies should be designed to appeal to young and middle-aged men, particularly those traveling with partners or families.

By aligning tourism products and experiences with the preferences of this group—such as family-oriented attractions, romantic getaways, or adventure and cultural activities suitable for couples—destinations can better engage their target market. This targeted approach not only enhances the relevance and appeal of marketing campaigns but also contributes to higher levels of tourist satisfaction. Ultimately, such alignment between market offerings and consumer profiles can strengthen the destination's positioning and competitiveness within the tourism industry. Another important result of the profile is that the cross-referencing of variables related to educational attainment, social status, and occupational status offered a more comprehensive understanding of tourism consumers' purchasing power, expectations, and interests. These socioeconomic indicators allowed for the identification of distinct market segments, enabling the development of tourism offerings that match their financial capacities and cultural inclinations.

Table 2. Cross-referencing variables of sex, age and marital status (n=366).

Parameters		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Gender	Male	228	62.3	62.3
	Female	138	37.7	100.0
	Total	366	100.0	
Age	15-24	66	18.0	18.0
	25-34	112	30.6	48.6
	35-44	106	29.0	77.6
	45-54	28	7.7	85.2
	55-64	25	6.8	92.1
	Over 65	29	7.9	100.0
	Total	366	100.0	
Marital Status	Single	78	21.3	21.3
	Living as a couple	27	7.4	28.7
	Married	225	61.5	90.2
	Separated	21	5.7	95.9
	Divorced	15	4.1	100.0
	Total	366	100.0	

Moreover, the analysis revealed how varying levels of education and employment influence travel motivations and destination choices. This insight is vital for crafting targeted marketing strategies that resonate with the specific needs and preferences of each group. As a result, tourism promotion efforts can be more effectively tailored, increasing the likelihood of attracting and retaining these segments. The detailed findings from this analysis are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Cross-referencing variables of school level, social status and occupational status.

Parameters		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
School level	Without studies	18	4.9	4.9
	Primary	60	16.4	21.3
	Secondary Studies	75	20.5	41.8
	Vocational Training	51	13.9	55.7
	Technique	84	23.0	78.7
	University students	78	21.3	100.0
	Total	366	100.0	
Social status	High	33	9.0	9.0
	Medium-high	147	40.2	49.2
	Medium-medium	75	20.5	69.7
	Medium-low	84	23.0	92.6
	Low	27	7.4	100.0
	Total	366	100.0	
Occupational Status	Dependency relationship	36	9.8	9.8
	Own Business	42	11.5	21.3
	Temporary work	135	36.9	58.2
	Student	84	23.0	81.1
	Available	69	18.9	100.0
	Total	366	100.0	

The results indicate that a significant proportion of tourists possess a high level of education, with 23% holding technical degrees and 21.3% having completed university studies. This suggests a consumer base with substantial academic training, which may correspond to more informed and discerning preferences. Social status analysis shows that the majority of respondents identify as upper-middle class (40.2%) and lower-middle class (23%), reinforcing the dominance of a middle-class demographic with moderate to strong purchasing power and specific service expectations. Employment status data reveals that 36.9% of tourists are temporarily employed, while 23% are students. This profile suggests a preference for budget-conscious tourism options that offer flexibility and value for money. Accordingly, it becomes essential to design tourism products and experiences that maintain quality while remaining affordable, particularly appealing to individuals with limited yet flexible incomes such as students and temporary workers.

Lastly, the study explored key behavioral drivers such as the purpose of visit, motivations for choosing the destination, and primary areas of expenditure (Table 4). Most tourists reported visiting the destination for rest, recreation, or vacation (43.4%), followed by participation in sporting or cultural events (20.5%). The most

common motivations included beaches and tranquility, each cited by 24.6% of respondents. In terms of spending, the bulk of tourist budgets went to food (52.5%) and accommodation (23.8%). These findings imply that tourists prioritize essential services, especially those that enhance comfort and relaxation. Furthermore, visitors drawn by specific events might also show interest in spending on complementary experiences. For tourism planners, this insight underscores the need to strengthen the food and lodging sectors and create supportive event-based offerings aligned with visitor motivations and spending behaviors.

Table 4. Cross-referencing the reason for the visit, the motivation for the choice and its expenses.

Parameter		Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Reason for your visit	Business/Work or study	36	9.8	9.8
	Rest/Recreation/Vacation	159	43.4	53.3
	Honeymoon	9	2.5	55.7
	Visiting family/friends	57	15.6	71.3
	Health treatment	24	6.6	77.9
	Religious	6	1.6	79.5
	Sports/Cultural	75	20.5	100.0
	Total	366	100.0	
Motivation for choosing the destination	Get to know the place	21	5.7	5.7
	Landscape riches	45	12.3	18.0
	Beaches	90	24.6	42.6
	Recommendation	42	11.5	54.1
	Gastronomy	42	11.5	65.6
	Previous experiences	30	8.2	73.8
	Tranquillity	90	24.6	98.4
	Other	6	1.6	100.0
Their biggest expenses were on	Total	366	100.0	
	Accommodation	87	23.8	23.8
	Feeding	192	52.5	76.2
	Internal transport	21	5.7	82.0
	Shopping	3	.8	82.8
	Tourist activities	60	16.4	99.2
	Other expenses	3	.8	100.0
	Total	366	100.0	

These results enabled a comprehensive evaluation of variables corresponding to each consumer behavior profile. It became evident that the Actual Consumer Behavior Profile (ACBP) prior to the visit (ex-ante) falls significantly short of the Desired Consumer Behavior Profile (DCBP), as detailed in Table 5. This discrepancy highlights a misalignment between tourist expectations and the actual offerings and experiences available at the destination. The data analysis confirms this gap, showing that only 8 variables were fulfilled under the ACBP, compared to 31 variables identified in the DCBP. Such a wide divergence underscores serious limitations in meeting tourist needs and desires. The most pronounced disparities were observed in variables such as marital status, age range, motivation for destination choice, food quality, cleanliness of public areas, and overall tourist satisfaction. These gaps suggest that key expectations influencing the decision to visit were not adequately addressed or reflected in the destination experience. This misalignment serves as a critical insight for destination managers and marketers, pointing to the urgent need to redesign service delivery and improve core tourism attributes. Addressing these discrepancies through strategic changes can help align actual experiences with desired behaviors, thereby enhancing visitor satisfaction, loyalty, and destination competitiveness.

These strategic measures reflect a well-structured and data-driven approach to closing the gap between actual and desired tourist behavior, while promoting long-term competitiveness and satisfaction. For destination managers, the findings reinforce the importance of aligning tourism offerings not only with market demand but also with evolving consumer expectations derived from real-time assessments. The implementation of segmentation and customized offerings based on detailed sociodemographic insights allows destinations to move away from generic marketing and towards highly personalized experiences. This fosters stronger engagement by directly addressing tourists' motivations, whether they seek nature, culture, or leisure. Likewise, improving infrastructure and service quality directly targets key dissatisfaction points identified in the evaluation model, such as cleanliness and food service—critical aspects for enhancing perceived value.

Table 5. Evaluation of the variables for each type of behavioral profile.

Variables	Profile of Real Behavior (PCRCA)	Profile of desired behavior (PCDC)
Sex	0.5	0.5
Marital status	0	1
Age	0	1
School level	0	1
Social status	0.5	0.5
Occupational status	0	1
Place of residence	0	1
Reason for your visit	0	1
Knowledge of the destination	0	1
Factors for choosing the destination	0	1
Motivation for choosing the destination	0	1
Means by which I reserve	0	1
Hosting used	0.5	0.5
Season to make your trip	0.5	0.5
The sun and the temperature	0.5	0.5
You consider security and tranquillity	0	1
The natural landscape of the surroundings	0	1
The beach, spa and/or swimming pools on the coast	0.5	0.5
Urban planning aspects of the destination	0.5	0.5
The quality of the food	0.5	0.5
Cleaning of public places	0	1
Transportation within the destination	0.5	0.5
Days spent at the destination	0	1
Range of daily expenses	0	1
Your biggest expenses	0	1
Transportation to reach the destination	0.5	0.5
Quality of bars, clubs and party venues	0	1
Quality of sports and/or recreational facilities	0	1
The quality of the accommodation	0	1
The number of bars and restaurants	0	1
The number of nightclubs and party venues	0	1
Prices for bars, clubs and parties	0.5	0.5
Prices of sports and/or recreational facilities	0.5	0.5
Accommodation prices	0.5	0.5
The prices of gastronomy	0.5	0.5
I had visited the destination before	0	1
I would recommend the destination	0.5	0.5
I would return to the destination	0.5	0.5
Degree of satisfaction with the destination	0	1
Total	8	31

The expansion of activity offerings and focus on diverse experiences ensures that various visitor segments remain engaged throughout their stay, increasing both satisfaction and local economic impact. Furthermore, optimizing communication and reservation channels, especially with multilingual support and responsive digital platforms, strengthens the pre-trip and booking experience—an essential phase in influencing ex-ante behavior. By integrating competitive pricing strategies, destinations can align with the purchasing power of middle-class, student, or temporary-worker tourists—those most prevalent in the current profile—thus improving accessibility without sacrificing profitability. Finally, loyalty programs and word-of-mouth promotion capitalize on positive experiences to generate return visits and new tourist flows through trusted social networks. Collectively, these strategies not only reinforce the practical application of the “Consumer Behavior Assessment Model for Marketing Tourist Destinations” but also provide a blueprint for continual improvement based on behavioral feedback, ultimately guiding more sustainable and consumer-aligned tourism development.

5. Discussion

This comprehensive analysis illustrates the evolution and practical relevance of the "Consumer Behavior Assessment Model for Marketing Tourist Destinations" within a dynamic and uncertain global context. Since its implementation in 2017, the model has not only guided local tourism management but also evolved in

response to unforeseen events such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite operational challenges, continuous monitoring has allowed for data-informed adaptations that reinforce the model's relevance and flexibility.

The integration of consumer behavior styles—active, theoretical, pragmatic, and reflective—has proven to be a particularly insightful method for segmentation, offering a nuanced understanding of how tourists evaluate and decide upon destinations. As emphasized by Lemoine et al. (2020, 2021, 2023), these styles are grounded in psychological theory but adapted to tourism behavior, allowing for a deeper exploration of motivation and satisfaction. While Butler's traditional life cycle theory remains useful, its limitations—particularly in failing to account for crisis events—highlight the necessity of models that accommodate external disruptions and the evolving socio-psychological profiles of travelers.

Comparative studies (Pereira et al., 2020; Jin, 2021) have confirmed that post-pandemic tourists prioritize safety, sustainability, and localized experiences, yet continue to express interest in traditional destinations if adaptations are visible. This creates a dual imperative for marketers: to modernize offerings without losing identity, and to build trust through transparency and responsiveness. In this context, the model's inclusion of factors like social perception, risk adaptation, and emotional resonance positions it as a more complete tool than those that only measure tangible aspects of the visitor experience.

Furthermore, the emphasis on market segmentation and post-purchase behavior aligns with contemporary marketing practices that aim to build loyalty through personalized engagement and emotional value. Studies by Lemoine Quintero et al. (2020) and Moscoso (2012) reinforce the role of tourist imaginaries—the subjective perception and symbolic value of places—in shaping expectations and return intentions. In more mature destinations, as Moscoso suggests, fostering loyalty depends not just on satisfaction but on the continuous reinvention of experiences to keep pace with evolving desires.

The model's strength lies in its multidimensional and integrative nature, incorporating demographic, psychological, emotional, and contextual factors to provide a richer understanding of consumer behavior. By situating this model within both theoretical and real-world contexts—especially under stress conditions like the pandemic—it becomes clear that effective destination marketing must not only address what tourists want, but also anticipate how external forces reshape those desires. This dynamic approach enables tourism managers to create offerings that are relevant, resilient, and deeply aligned with the behavioral realities of contemporary travelers.

6. Conclusion

This study underscores the strategic importance of market segmentation and personalized offerings in achieving effective tourism destination marketing. By tailoring services to the specific preferences and behavioral patterns of different demographic groups, destinations can optimize resource allocation and significantly enhance tourist satisfaction. This targeted approach not only fosters repeat visitation and brand loyalty but also contributes to long-term destination competitiveness in a dynamic tourism environment. The analysis further identifies notable discrepancies between tourists' expectations and the actual experiences offered, highlighting a critical need for improvement. These expectation-reality gaps suggest that tourism destinations must go beyond conventional offerings by investing in infrastructure, upgrading service quality, and diversifying experiential products. A sustained commitment to staff training, facility maintenance, and service innovation is essential to close these gaps and meet the evolving demands of contemporary tourists. Moreover, the study emphasizes that effective communication and accurate consumer profiling are central to attracting and retaining visitors. Understanding tourists' preferences allows for the creation of a "desired tourist profile," which becomes a foundation for data-driven marketing and promotional strategies. This precise alignment between the consumer's expectations and the destination's brand image enhances the resonance and relevance of marketing campaigns. The proposed model has demonstrated its value as a replicable tool for analyzing consumer behavior not only in the studied region but also across similar tourist destinations in Ecuador and Latin America. By offering insights into tourist motivations, satisfaction drivers, and decision-making processes, the model supports destination managers in refining tourism products and

positioning strategies. In a competitive global tourism market, such an integrative and adaptive approach is crucial for ensuring sustained visitor engagement, destination differentiation, and long-term success.

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