



Journal of Tourism&Management Research

ISSN: 2149-6528

2021 Vol. 6, Issue.3

<http://ottomanjournal.com/index.html>

The Influence of Customer-Perceived Values Towards Their Inclination to Use Sports Events Tourism Websites

Abstract

Well managed marketing is essential in the development of a successful sport. Currently, the sports events marketing is tremendously competitive. As a result, customer-perceived value is becoming increasingly critical in the success of a business. Therefore, sports events organizers must be more innovative and creative in planning their marketing strategies. When building sports events tourism websites, the emphasis should be on the customer-perceived values rather than the interests of sports tourism organisations or service providers. This study seeks to ascertain the correlation between customer-perceived values of sports events tourism websites and sports tourists' inclination to use the websites. A quantitative method in the form of survey were used to collect data. The respondents in this study are 530 sports tourists who have attended three big sporting events in Malaysia. A linear correlation coefficient was used to determine the correlations between customer-perceived values and their inclination to use sports event tourism websites. Then, a multiple regression test was carried out to determine the influence of the components of customer-perceived value towards their inclination to use sports event tourism websites. The results indicated that there is a positive correlation between customer-perceived values and their inclination to use sports events tourism websites, albeit a moderate relationship. Moreover, the components of customer-perceived values, flexibility and reliability have been shown to be significant predictors towards their inclination to use sports events tourism websites.

Keywords: *Customer-perceived values, Inclination, Sports events, Tourism websites, Sports tourists*

JEL Classifications: Z30, Z32, Z33

Submitted: 15/09/2021; **Accepted:** 01/12/2021

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Chiu, L.K., Radzuwan, R., Hua, K.P. and Hong, A.L.T.

2021, Vol.6, No.3, pp. 907-925. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.6505419

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1. Introduction

In the current 21st century, the Internet marketing industry has experienced rapid expansion and emerged as a viable technique of achieving marketing strategies due to a huge amount of valuable information available on the Internet. Currently, the tourism is an information-intensive industry that markets products and builds customer relationships via a variety of channels (Ray, 2018). Likewise, there is a rise in public interest in the aspects of online communication and Internet marketing, particularly in relation to the impact of these aspects towards the tourism industry (Best et al., 2014; Radzliyana et al., 2013). Additionally, sporting events have been strongly influenced by trends, which must be examined on a constant basis by organizations in the sport and tourism industries in order to fulfill changing demand from customers. Therefore, it is essential for sport and tourism organizations to provide customer values when developing websites to attract and retain customers. This is in accordance with Zehir et al. (2014) and Asgarpour et al. (2015) who stated that customer value is an aspect that is believed to have a direct and indirect impact on consumers' behavioural intentions. Besides, Nguyen et al. (2018) added that other concepts of marketing such as product and service quality, customers' loyalty, and customers' satisfaction are also regarded to have an impact on customers' behavioural intentions.

In regard to the current trends in tourism marketing, therefore, providing customized information is important because tourism consumers consisted of people with different needs and interests. Through an interactive website, it allows online users to involve in direct communication with related organizations which provide them with immediate feedback (Papacharissi & Rubine, 2000). According to Wober (2003), the Internet hosted a plethora of valuable tourism information which includes hotel reservations, travel, experience, ticket price and packages which are combined and integrated to suit the different needs of sports tourists. However, consumers are frequently overwhelmed by the massive volumes of information available online and consequently are unable to locate the information they want. Moreover, some researchers such as Lim et al. (2010) stated that majority of information provided by tourism websites is not based on the needs of sports tourists. Rather than that, it is accustomed based on the organisations' or service providers' interests as majority of the tourism organisations utilise websites to boost their reputation and generate revenue through advertising. Therefore, it is critical that customer-perceived value is prioritized in the organization's website rather than the self-interests of the organization or service suppliers in general (Suki & Suki, 2013). Without a doubt, once the customer perceived benefits from the developed websites, automatically it becomes a medium for promoting as well as marketing the sports events.

Hence, the Sport Website Acceptance Model (SWAM) developed by Hur et al. (2011) was adopted in determining the attributes of consumer-perceived value of sports events tourism websites. According to Hur et al. (2011), sports website can be classified as a website that offers sport-related products or services. For example, through a sports website, sport enthusiasts can obtain basic information about schedule, statistics, and records, event sites can provide unique content by publishing exclusive news, features, and videos that cannot be found elsewhere (Irwin et al., 2008). These processes of decision-making can be understood by exploring the connection between sports fans' perceptions about attitudes towards and the intentions to use sport websites either to purchase a sports product or get information about sports. Thus, the findings from this study will allow sports tourism providers to understand

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tourists' perception in relation to the benefit values of sports events tourism websites and their inclination to use them.

Furthermore, previous studies on customer-perceived value in relation to tourism websites mainly focus on the product's attributes, repercussions, and desired end states (core value, objectives, and goals) (Asgarpour et al., 2015). In addition, there is a lack of literature about the inclination to use sports events websites particularly in Malaysian context. Thus, this study aims to investigate the correlation between consumer-perceived value of sports events tourism websites and the inclination to use the websites, and also to ascertain the influence of consumer-perceived value of sports events tourism websites towards their inclination to use the websites.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Customer-Perceived Value

Earlier studies have reviewed customer-perceived value in different context such as e-commerce (Woodruff, 1997), information technology (Yadav & Varadarajan, 2005), and dimensions and expressions of customer-perceived value in travel and websites (Lexhagen, 2008). Moreover, two research studies have attempted to measure the hedonic and utilitarian sides of customer value and its effects on customer behaviour and intention. These include customer value perceived from mobile services (Kleijen et al., 2007) and customer value in Internet banking services, online shopping, and websites (Maenpaa, 2000; Steenkamp & Geyskens, 2006). On top of that, previous researchers have also focused on customer-perceived value in a variety of disciplines, including, tourism destinations (Khuong & Phuong, 2017), the behaviour of consumers (Jang, 2004), and barriers to new technology integration (Gilly et al., 2012).

As claimed by Woodruff (1997), customer value can be differentiated based on the appreciation value of a certain product or service or solely for its pure possession value. Customer value is a trade-off between the benefits and drawbacks of a product or service. Thus, customer value is highly context-dependent. As a result, the complexity of customer value can be represented using a hierarchical model of value. It comprised of three stages where the attribute level is the bottom level of the hierarchy. This level is where customers are concerned with defining products in relation to their attributes. The middle level consists of the consequence level where the product usability is defined by customers whereas the highest stage is the desired end-states where it is related to the core values and purpose of consuming the product by the customers.

Online marketing has been practiced the same concepts as interactive marketing since business and its customer used the Internet as "the ultimate interactive medium". This type of marketing is aimed to create value for both parties. Moreover, a study by Radzliyana et al. (2013) indicated the term 'perceived benefits' and 'perceived value' are used interchangeably within sports tourism websites which include accessibility, flexibility, interactivity, and reliability (Peric et al., 2016; Rodríguez-Ardura & Meseguer-Artola, 2015). These findings supported the research conducted by Mircheska and Hristovska (2010) who maintained that the earlier stated benefits of online sports marketing acceptance are similar to the advantages of the Internet as a marketing tool. Likewise, Lexhagen (2008) put forward that interactivity and accessibility which have been recognized as the main characteristics of the Internet are believed to contribute to customer-perceived value. Hence, to suit the context of this study, researcher has added two characteristics of the Internet which are flexibility and reliability.

According to Radzliyana et al. (2013), accessibility is one of the most important components in customer-perceived value of sports events tourism websites. Accessibility is a vital aspect especially in international trade where business is conducted across different time zones. From the tourism perspectives, accessibility of online information allows tourists to plan prior to their travel. According to Lu et al. (2015), tourism websites marketing enables

tourists to obtain required information and allow them to communicate with the respective tourism organization. Indirectly, consumers will feel empowered when they can access information on their own behalf. Given that travel and tourism are information-driven industries, the Internet provides an ideal environment for developing a dynamic platform for information distribution and exchange (Ho & Lee, 2007). Likewise, Perdue (2002) further added that perceived usefulness of the tourism websites enables tourist to plan for their trips by referring to the navigation, technological creativity, and accessibility.

Apart from that, another significant element of sports events tourism websites perceived value is in terms of their interactivity. The hypertext is a feature that enables online users to access information at their own preference. It is used to maximize the interactivity of the tourism websites. Interactive website allows online users to involve in direct communication with related organizations which provide them with immediate feedback (Baruah, 2012). In addition, tourists would get themselves attached to the tourism websites that consisted of complete information as well as pleasant interactive elements such as visual and graphical presentation (Lu et al., 2015).

Flexibility also plays an important role in customer-perceived value of sports events tourism websites. Flexibility allows information to be modified and updated to meet with the current demands. According to Yusof et al. (2010), user-friendly websites with rich, entertaining, and searchable material would eventually earn customers' approval, resulting in increased use and return visits. As referred to McQuitty and Peterson (2000), surfing the Internet and using a website is individual preference attitude and it only affects consumers with existing knowledge about a particular product and/or service.

The fourth customer-perceived value according to the Sports Websites Acceptance Model (Hur et al., 2011) is perceived trustworthiness. The term 'trustworthiness' can be referred as the confidence towards the marketer's reliability and integrity (Belanger et al., 2002). Reliability is derived from the main elements of trustworthiness identified by Mayer et al. (1995) and Lee and Turban (2001). The reliability attributes in this study relates to the provision of comprehensive, secure, and quick information that available from the websites. Hur et al. (2011) also emphasized that the focus an online business should be on the aspect of reliability as consumers may be concerned about the security of financial transactions conducted in a virtual environment. Therefore, even though financial benefits are considered an important factor, trust or reliability in a website (e.g., an online retailer) is without a doubt, a more crucial factor as its main aim is on retaining consumers (Reichheld & Scheffer, 2000).

2.2 Inclination to Use Sports Event Tourism Websites

According to Xiang et al. (2014), the tourism business is one of the main Internet users. Thus, Buhalis (2003) posited that the use of Internet technology has significantly improved the efficiency and efficacy of tourism organisations. Additionally, it altered how tourism organizations operate in the marketplace and how consumers connect with the organisations. While experts recognised the benefits of the Internet, there was a dearth of research on how to best utilise it (Sigala, 2003).

The intention behaviour towards the technology adoption drives the tendency to use sports events tourism websites. Therefore, the inclination to use the websites of a sport event is determined by an individual's will and intention to use technology. It explained the degree to which online consumers' act to achieve their goals of using the Internet. A higher level of inclination to use will indirectly boost the intention of online consumers to continue using the websites. Previous research by Brown (2003) has emphasised the number of sports enthusiasts who seek various information via web services. As a result, it stimulated early growth on how sports events-related websites are designed (Kitchin, 2006). From a Malaysian perspective, substantial research has been conducted on online marketing where it concentrated on characteristics that were associated with consumers and internet marketing.

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The variables examined were identified as those that influence or dissuade customers from engaging in online marketing (Ghani et al., 2001). For example, Khatibi et al. (2006) reviewed on online consumers' demographic profiles whereas Harn et al. (2006) investigated on consumer attributes. Furthermore, prior research indicates that the use of the Internet has change the way on how travel information is disseminated and also the way people look for them (Beldona, 2005; Gretzel et al., 2006; Kahn et al., 2006; MacKay et al., 2005). To further support the notion above, Koumelis (2008) asserted that there exist a strong association of the internet and the tourism industries which has significantly altered the marketing structure of various sectors such as management and marketing.

Numerous researchers depicted that most travel organizations have adopted the Internet in their business practices (Doolin et al., 2002). This situation is significant to determine sports tourists' inclination to use the websites. This is supported by Litvin et al. (2008) when they revealed that more and more tourists are reported to go online and use the websites. Consequently, the sports and the tourism industries must be alert to their consumers' needs. The behaviour of online consumers is influenced by the travel and sports events tourism websites, especially those related to the selling of product and/or service as well as discussion of tourist trips.

2.3 Customer-Perceived Value and the Inclination to Use Sports Events Tourism Websites

In recent years, customer-perceived value has been the object of interest of many researchers in the hospitality and tourism industry. For instance, Muhammad et al. (2012) have conducted research on customer-perceived value in hotel industry in Pakistan. Their research looked at the relationship between service quality, perceived value, satisfaction, and propensity to return. Their results have shown that there is no unanimity regarding the relationship between those four variables. It was due to a complex relationship between the variables involved in the study.

Moreover, research by Paul and Geoffrey (2009) have established a link between satisfaction and repurchase intentions. Customer satisfaction, according to Eggert and Ulaga (2002), is another critical dimension for behavioural intentions. Customer satisfaction is a predictor of perceived value (Eggert & Ulaga, 2002; Kuo et al., 2009; Paul & Geoffrey, 2009) and satisfaction is a predictor of repurchase intentions (Eggert & Ulaga, 2002; Kuo et al., 2009). Perceived value correlates positively with behavioural intentions (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001; Kuo et al., 2009). On the other hand, various research also supported the notion that service quality correlates positively with behavioural intentions (Gonzalez et al., 2007; Ismail et al., 2009; Kuok et al., 2009).

From the sports tourism perspective, it is apparent that the information shown on the websites have significant effect on consumers' decision to attend a particular sport event. No doubt, efficient websites promotion, and effective communication which include social and psychological factors would affect customers' decision whether to participate in an event. This is supported by Funk and James (2001) who stated that website marketing had become a key resource that is capable of changing individuals' awareness towards particular events, as well as attraction through knowledge acquisition.

Likewise, researchers have identified that intention to use service technology was influenced by individual attitudes toward specific self-service technologies (SSTs) (Meuter et al., 2000). Thus, it led to inclination. Consumers' strong inclination for SSTs, as well as increased product knowledge, contribute to the production of commodities goods (convenience and shopping) and services. Companies typically respond by differentiating their products from those of competitors by upgrading or developing important, relevant, and desirable features for customers. Furthermore, current travel-related literatures frequently discuss the customer's perceived value related to a product or service. For example, Yadav and Varadarajan (2005) asserted that product attributes act as a moderator in the relationship

between interactivity and perceived value outcomes by buyers and seller. In travel and tourism, it is very likely that consumer information will need to be varied significantly depending on previous experience and type of travel. Therefore, there is a dearth of thorough literature discussing the correlation between perceived customer value and the inclination to use sports events websites. As such, the following research hypotheses are developed as follows:

Hypothesis 1: There is a relationship between customer-perceived value and the inclination to use sports events tourism websites.

Hypothesis 2: Each component of customer-perceived values influences the inclination to use sports events tourism websites.

3. Method

This cross-sectional study uses the correlational research design to examine variables involved on the inclination to use sports events tourism websites. A total of 530 respondents were involved in the study. 186 respondents (35 percent) were selected from the Standard Chartered KL Marathon and 106 respondents (20 percent) were selected from the Port Dickson International Triathlon through stratified random sampling based on the categories of the competition. On the other hand, 238 respondents (45 percent) were selected through random sampling from the Monsoon Cup Terengganu. A self-administered questionnaire was used as a research instrument to obtain data from sports tourists' who travel to attend and participate in the selected events. The SWAM theory which was developed by Hur et al. (2011) is chosen as the main reference to develop items on customer-perceived value on the inclination to use the websites.

As for data analysis, a linear correlation coefficient was used to determine the correlation between customer-perceived values and the inclination to use sports events websites. Then, a multiple regression test was carried out to determine the influence of each component of customer-perceived values which includes accessibility, flexibility, interactivity, and reliability on the inclination to use sports events websites.

4. Results

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

A summary of the sample demographic characteristics is portrayed in Table 1. It consisted of 530 respondents. The characteristics include gender, age, nationality, race, marital status, academic qualifications, employment status, monthly family income, number of dependants, and frequency of participating in a sports tourism event in a year.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents (N=530).

Characteristics	(N)	(%)
Gender		
Male	315	59.4
Female	215	40.6
Age		
Below 20 years old	47	8.9
20-29 years old	300	56.6
30-39 years old	119	22.4
40-49 years old	46	8.7
50 years and above	18	3.4
Nationality		

Malaysian	502	94.7
Non-Malaysian	28	5.3
Race		
Malay	377	71.1
Chinese	99	18.7
Indian	30	5.7
Others	24	4.5
Marital Status		
Single	365	68.9
Married	158	29.8
Divorcee/Widow	7	1.3
Academic Qualification		
SPM	105	19.8
STPM/Diploma	174	32.8
Bachelor Degree	172	32.5
Master Degree	51	9.6
Doctoral Degree	5	0.9
Others	23	4.3
Employment Status		
Student	209	39.4
Unemployed	34	6.4
Professional	76	14.3
Employed, Full-time	100	18.9
Casual Worker	16	3.0
Employed, Part-time	9	1.7
Business Owner	30	5.7
Self-employed	37	7.0
Pensioner	19	3.6
Monthly Family Income		
Less than RM2000	160	30.2
RM2001-RM2500	70	13.2
RM2501-RM3000	67	12.6
RM3001-RM3500	75	14.2
RM3501 and more	158	29.8
Number of Dependants		
None	271	51.1
1-2 person(s)	128	24.2
3-4 persons	82	15.5
5-6 persons	32	6.0
7 persons and more	17	3.2
Frequency of Participating in Sports Events Tourism in a year		
1-2 time(s)	244	46.0
3-4 times	161	30.4
5-6 times	46	8.7
7 times and more	79	14.9

4.2 Psychometric Properties

Several tests were undertaken on every dimension to validate items in the measurement scale. The first test is to test the variance correlation of the measurement scale followed by the Varimax option with Kaiser Normalization. The method of Principal components using Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization yielded four components of customer-perceived value which are accessibility, flexibility, interactivity, and reliability. The researcher has applied two stages of factor analysis, which was introduced by Green and Salkind (2005). These two stages of factor analysis are factor extraction and factor rotation. All items loaded on respective construct. The Table 2 portrayed factor analysis of customer-perceived value and Table 3 presented the factor analysis on the inclination to use sport event tourism websites. According to Hair et al. (1998), factor loadings greater than .50 when the sample size is 120 are considered as significant. Therefore, the data was feasible for conducting the factor analysis. Then, the Cronbach's Alpha test is conducted to check on the reliability of items in the measurement scale. The results showed that the alpha coefficients for all scales used ranged from 0.825 to 0.867, well above the minimum value of 0.6 as an indication of reliability (Hair et al., 2006).

The results in Table 2 indicate that there are four components extracted through principal component method using varimax option with Kaiser Normalisation. All the 19 items had been allocated to the four factors of customer perceived-values based on the criteria stated in this study. A total of 61.8 percent of variance was explained by the four factors. The eigenvalues for accessibility, flexibility, interactivity and reliability were 8.687, 1.579, 1.107 and 1.000 respectively. Based on factor loadings of each factor subscale extracted, six items in accessibility explained almost 43.3 percent of the total variance and had loadings value (.67 to .77). Five items in flexibility with loadings value (.52 to .79) that accounted for 7.9 percent of the total variance. Whereas four items with 5.5 percent of the total variance that had loadings value (.48 to .69) were allocated in interactivity factor. Finally, four items were allocated in reliability with loadings value (0.44 to 0.72) and accounted for almost 4.9 percent of the total variance. Meanwhile, the results in Table 3 show that five items had loadings values of .66 to .79 were allocated in the inclination to use sports events tourism websites factor. The eigenvalue of the factor is 2.77, and explained 55.5 percent of the total variance.

Table 2: Factor analysis of customer-perceived value (N=530).

Item/Factor	1	2	3	4
Accessibility				
1. The website allows me to access an organized collection of command records related to sports.	.771			
2. The website allows me to generate awareness of particular sporting events and their related organizations.	.749			
3. The website allows me to interact with sports media.	.731			
4. The website allows me to reduce daily tasks into a manageable set of links.	.725			
5. The website allows me to establish interactive channels of sports communication with others.	.721			
6. The website allows me to gain access to previously inaccessible information.	.676			

Flexibility				
1. The website allows immediate response from the organizations.				.786
2. The website provides me with reliable information.				.768
3. The website allows me to buy sports products online.				.652
4. The website allows me to access information at my very own time.				.519
5. The website provides online information which is more attractive.				.518
Interactivity				
1. Free Internet access through WIFI.				.696
2. WIFI reduces the cost of expenses.				.662
3. The website allows me to keep track of my favourite players/teams/events.				.624
4. The website allows me to experience a personal sense of enjoyment.				.483
Reliability				
1. Online information is secured.				.725
2. Online information is available everywhere.				.720
3. Online information is comprehensive.				.713
4. Online information allows quick decision-making.				.436
Eigenvalues	8.687	1.579	1.107	1.000
% of Variance	43.435	7.894	5.533	4.960
Cumulative %	43.435	51.329	56.862	61.823
Note: Extraction Method – Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method – Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.				

Table 3: Factor analysis of inclination to use sportsevents tourism websites.

Item/Factor	1
Inclination to use sports events tourism websites	
<i>I use the sports events tourism websites because it...</i>	
1. influences me to continue seeking information in the future.	.799
2. is my major source of information.	.767
3. allows me to spend more time to search for information.	.763
4. influences me to recommend others to use them in the future.	.720
5. influences me to continue to purchase sports products in the future.	.668
Eigenvalues	2.773
% of Variance	55.464
Cumulative %	55.464
Note: Extraction Method – Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method – Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.	

The first research objective attempted to find out the correlation between customer-perceived value of sports events tourism websites and the inclination to use the websites. A

Pearson correlation analysis was utilized to answer the first research objective. In accordance with that, Table 4 below shows the correlations between customer-perceived value and the inclination to use sports events tourism websites:

Table 4: Correlations between customer-perceived value and the inclination to use sports events tourism websites (N=530).

Variables	Customer-perceived value	Inclination
Customer-perceived value	1.000	.331**
Inclination	.331**	1.000

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The hypothesis predicts that there is a correlation between the customer-perceived value and the inclination to use sports events tourism websites. Based on Table 4, the Pearson Correlation test statistics $r(530) = .331$. The actual p value was shown to be .005 ($r = 0.331$, $N = 530$, $p < 0.05$). This result displays a moderate significant correlation between the two variables. In short, as the customer-perceived value increases, the inclination to use sports events tourism websites also increases, this shows a positive correlation. This result gives the statistical evidence to support the that there is a correlation between customer-perceived value and the inclination to use sports events tourism websites, thus the first hypothesis is accepted. On the other hand, the second research objective examined on the influence of customer-perceived value of sports events tourism websites on the inclination to use the websites. Hence, a multiple regression analysis was used to examine the influence of each component of customer-perceived value which includes accessibility, flexibility, interactivity, and reliability. Therefore, Table 5 and 6 below depict the results of each component.

Table 5: Correlations of customer-perceived value on the inclination to use sports events tourism websites (N=530).

		Inclination	Accessibility	Interactivity	Flexibility	Reliability
Inclination	Pearson Correlation	1	.255**	.269**	.321**	.294**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	530	530	530	530	530
Accessibility	Pearson Correlation	.255**	1	.626**	.680**	.559**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	530	530	530	530	530
Interactivity	Pearson Correlation	.269**	.626**	1	.679**	.678**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	530	530	530	530	530
Flexibility	Pearson Correlation	.321**	.680**	.679**	1	.636**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	530	530	530	530	530
Reliability	Pearson Correlation	.294**	.559**	.678**	.636**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	530	530	530	530	530

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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Table 6: Multiple regression analysis of components of customer-perceived value on the inclination to use sports events tourism websites (N=530).

Model	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>Adjusted R</i> ²	<i>F</i>	Sig.
1	.321 ^a	.103	.101	60.701	.000 ^a
2	.341 ^b	.117	.113	34.751	.000 ^b

Predictors: (Constant), A-F
 Predictors: (Constant), A-F, A-R
 Dependent Variable: Inclination to use sports websites

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i> -value	Collinearity Statistics	
	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Beta</i>			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	4.178E-17	.041		.000	1.000		
A-F	.321	.041	.321	7.791	.000	1.000	1.000
2 (Constant)	1.339E-17	.041		.000	1.000		
A-F	.226	.053	.226	4.251	.000	.595	1.680
A-R	.150	.053	.150	2.828	.005	.595	1.680

The hypothesis stated that the components of customer-perceived value influence their inclination to use sports events tourism websites. These components of customer-perceived value comprised of accessibility, flexibility, interactivity, and reliability. As shown in Table 5, the regression analysis of the components of customer-perceived value indicated that the *F* statistic of the model is 34.751, the associated probability is .000, the value of *R*² = .117 and the adjusted *R*² = .113, *p* = < .05. As such, the results indicated that the customer-perceived value components explained 11.7 per cent of the total variance towards their inclination to use sports events tourism websites. Additionally, based on the four components of perceived value, only the component of flexibility and reliability shown significant results. The component of flexibility has shown to have the highest influence towards the inclination to use the website as it explained 22.6 percent of variance ($\beta = .226, p = .000$), followed by reliability ($\beta = .150, p = .000$). Given this positive correlation on some components of customer-perceived value of sports tourism websites of this study, the hypothesis was supported.

5. Conclusions, Implications, and Limitations

The findings indicated that there is a statistically significant correlation between consumer-perceived value and inclination to use sports events tourist websites, although a moderate correlation. This research indicated that the level of acceptance of a website by sport tourists is dependent on the flexibility offered by the websites. As a result, it leads to the increase in sports tourists’ inclination to use sports event websites. This corroborates prior research which stated that customer-perceived value is influenced by a variety of variables. These variables include the interactivity, flexibility, and accessibility (Gupta & Dugra, 2017; Radzliyana et al., 2013). Additionally, previous research also indicated that online users rated successful websites based on the content offered and the presentation method used to provide a certain information.

Additionally, the vast literatures also indicate that an increasing number of scholars are now defending the importance of the Internet in marketing sports tourism products and services. The concept suggested that successful and significant correlation involves mutual benefit for both the tourism organizations and the targeted users. In this study, a moderate correlation can be seen between sport tourists’ perceived value of sports events websites and

their inclination to use the website. This finding is consistent with some established literature such as Castaneda et al. (2007) who supported the hypothesis of this study, in which, customer-perceived value is dependent on the online services offered to all sports tourism stakeholders. However, this finding is not akin to the research by Deighton (1997). He argued that, regardless of the huge benefits of the Internet, there are still problems being reported, especially when dealing with online users' behaviours in terms of information demand and information flow. In this study, the inclination to use sports events websites among the three selected events is mainly results from a massive exposure towards the Internet application for sports events tourism. The finding of this study indicates an increase of customer-perceived value would eventually lead to an increase on inclination to use sports events tourism websites.

Another possible reason which explains the correlation between customer-perceived value and the inclination to use sports events websites is the online users' attitudes. It is believed that sports tourists' who attend to one of these three events are satisfied with the online information provided on the websites developed by the organization. Some research often used attitudes and behaviours interchangeably. The correlation between a website surfer's attitude and the consequent behaviour has been established in numerous tourism studies. The findings of this present study indeed support findings in a study done by Nadia and Pujani (2014) which resulted in consumers' positive attitude towards the use of travel websites can predict the inclination to adopt travel e-service in the future.

On the other hand, several researchers added that individuals' inclination to use sports events tourism websites is derived by their purpose of using the technology are driven by certain attitudes (Adams et al., 2007; Davis, 1989; Davis et al., 1989). In most instances, the inclination to use sports events tourism websites occurs only when users are satisfied with the information provided and when the websites allow them to communicate with respective stakeholders. In addition, perceived usefulness of the tourism websites enables them to plan for their trips. In other words, individual only use the websites when they are familiar with the Internet technologies and often use them as a medium of communication (Irani, 2000).

McQuitty and Peterson (2000) added that preference attitude or behaviour of an individual is a major key contributor towards online information. The inclination to use sports events tourism websites, on the other hand, is driven by individual attitudes, behaviours, and social pressure (depending on certain circumstances). Obviously, people tend to perform favourable behaviours and avoid unfavourable behaviours. For instance, findings of this study reveal that when individuals perceive the usefulness of the websites, automatically they intend to use the websites. Thus, the relationship exists. However, this situation is thoroughly distinctive to an individual who used to experience fear of technology or technology anxiety which reflects his or her behaviour towards perceived value and the inclination to use sports events websites. Hence, it only influences consumers with existing knowledge to use and visit the same website again in future.

The findings of this study show that there exists a correlation between customer-perceived value and their inclination to use sports events tourism websites. However, the relationship existed was only at the moderate level. This is also probably due to variety of behaviours performed by sports tourists involved in this study. Previous researchers indicated that different users experience different level of website effectiveness depending on their familiarization towards the Internet technologies as well as the time they spend online. There is, however, another justification related to customer-perceived value and the inclination to use sports events tourism websites. Another researcher relates customer-perceived value of motivation, which is not covered in this study. For instance, Yang and Kim (2012) stated that a high self-efficacy among the online users shows a greater perceived of enjoyment than those with low self-efficacy. Thus, the following conclusions could be drawn from this study. It is

recognized that the correlation between customer-perceived value and the inclination to use sports events tourism websites were influenced by many factors.

Besides, it was hypothesized in this study that customer-perceived value which consisted of four components influenced the inclination to use sports events tourism websites. In the context of consumer-perceived value of sports events tourism websites in relation to SWAM, the components of perceived value comprised of accessibility, flexibility, interactivity, and reliability. Based on the four variables of customer-perceived values, only flexibility and reliability appear to be significantly influencing customers' inclination to use the websites. These findings were in line with the findings by Urban et al. (2009) who supported that the flexibility offered by the website will indirectly influence customers' approval, thus encouraging them to revisit a certain website.

The basis of customer-perceived value is on the criteria of the websites. This includes the accessibility of the websites, flexibility of information reached, interactivity of the information communication as well as reliability of the information obtained. One possible explanation for why flexibility became a significant predictor among Malaysian sports tourists is that it enables online information to be modified and updated on a regular basis. The finding obtained would assist the organizers of the three sporting events in this study to develop a more comprehensive sports events tourism websites in the future. This could be a result for the nature of the website which is developed to fulfil the current demands of online consumers towards online information.

Apart from that, this study recognises reliability as a crucial predictor. This could be a result of the online information that appears on websites being directed toward consumers which is comprehensive, secure and easily available via Internet. These findings corroborate those of Dimanche and Andrades (2014) who argued that Internet shoppers only decide to buy a product or service after they have gather sufficient information. As a result, organizations should make an extra effort to provide thorough information that meets the needs of their target consumers where they can search for alternative information, images, and testimonials about desired products and/or services according to their own needs. In other words, the websites should provide content that is interesting enough to keep people coming back. Customers should be able to find what they need or do what they want quickly without becoming frustrated.

Furthermore, researchers believed that there had been some correlations between technical improvement and the tourism business for years (Beldona, 2005; Gretzel et al., 2006; Kahn et al., 2006). They discovered that the utilisation of websites facilitates online contacts and marketing channels. Additionally, they supply information on promotion, product distribution, and management, as well as promote future website development research. From the consumers' perspectives, the inclination to use sports events tourism websites is driven by the features contained on the websites. This is in accordance with the findings of Kleijnen et al. (2007) who revealed that online users' inclination to use websites is influenced by the online service characteristics such as the type of online services offered and cost difficulties. Additionally, it also appears that the online services establish an exchange correlation between users and website retailers.

In a nutshell, the present study summarized that there is a positive correlation between customer-perceived value and the inclination in utilizing sports events websites. Moreover, the components of customer-perceived value namely, flexibility and reliability have shown to have significant influence towards the inclination to use the sports event websites. Therefore, this study can contribute immensely towards the adoption of Internet especially in the field of sports events tourism marketing and management strategy and plan. Moreover, it also extends the researcher knowledge of behaviour related to the Internet technology adoption among sports events tourism customers as this present study was the first to specifically address personal characteristic and sport event tourists' motivation related to websites and the Internet

technology adoption. The information obtained through research findings would be practical and useful for sports tourism organizations in providing distinctive sports events tourism websites in order to market their products and/or services to meet with variety needs of their customers. Furthermore, for managers in the sport tourism industry, this study may provide an insight of how consumers interact with a particular website, therefore allowing for more effective targeting. Indirectly, it will also develop a close relationship with them.

The limitation of this study is in terms of the generalisability of the research findings. As the questionnaire was completed by sport tourists who attended any of the three events stated in this study, they may not be a representation of the whole population of the study. Moreover, there is also limitation in terms of the research settings. This is because this study has selected only three major sporting events out of the many sports events that are conducted in Malaysia throughout the year. For future research, it is suggested that researchers can explore on other components of perceived values or other attributes embedded other theories or models. On top of that, future studies can also employ other quantitative or qualitative approaches to explore on the moderating effect of other factors such as tourists' motivation and personal characteristics which would probably provide additional insight into the study.

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