

COVID-19-based threat vs coping appraisal: effect of psychological risk on customer engagement and behavioral intentions

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Abstract

Purpose – Drawing upon protection motivation theory and service-dominant-logic, the authors develop a model, which examines the influence of perceived psychological risk and social media involvement (SMI) on customer-brand-engagement (CBE), brand co-creation and behavioral intention during COVID-19 outbreak in the tourism context. The current research also explores the mediating effect of CBE, and moderating role of tourism-based threat/coping appraisal in the proposed associations.

Design/methodology/approach – To investigate such issues, the authors deploy a sample of 320 tourism consumers by adopting partial least squares-structural equation modeling or (PLS-SEM).

Findings – PLS-SEM findings revealed that SMI positively impacts tourism-CBE. Secondly, results revealed the customer brand engagement's significant-positive effect on brand co-creation and behavioral intent. Third, results showed the social media's and psychological risk's indirect impact on co-creation and behavioral intent, as mediated through customer brand engagement. Fourth, results exposed a significant/negative moderating effect of threat appraisal and significant/positive moderating role of coping appraisal in projected relationships.

Research limitations/implications – Given the study's focus on pandemic-based SMI, CBE and co-creation, the authors contribute to the existing tourism marketing literature, which also generates plentiful avenues for further research, as delineated.

Practical implications – This research facilitates tourism brand managers to better understand the drivers of CBE and paves the way for managers to develop CBE and threat/coping strategies during pandemic.

Originality/value – Despite the increasing understanding of social media, CBE and co-creation in tourism, limited remains identified regarding the association of these, and associated, factors during pandemic, as thereby explored in the current research.

Keywords Perceived psychological risk, Social media involvement, Customer brand engagement, Threat and coping appraisal, Behavioral intention, COVID-19 tourism pandemic

Paper type Research paper



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