

Is having many travel destinations a good thing?

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Abstract

This research investigates whether and why choice overload occurs when people select a vacation destination. Results suggest that, relative to people choosing from a small destination portfolio, people who choose from a large destination portfolio are less satisfied and more regretful about their choice. Choosing a destination from large choice-sets makes people confused, and then they become less certain about their choice and subsequently have less satisfaction and more regret. Hence, a critical consideration is essential for travel agents when providing destination choices to tourists. The findings add evidence of choice overload effects to the current literature of travel destination choice and contribute to choice overload literature by showing evidence of choice overload effects in complex service contexts, especially in holiday destination choices. This research provides evidence of choice overload effects at early stages of travel decision-making process, use hypothetical destinations in the experiment to avoid potential confounds associated with real destinations, and reflect choice overload effects via post-choice satisfaction and regret. Previously, the only study on choice overload in tourism did not explain why choice overload effects occur; this research extends this research stream by providing the psychological process of the choice overload phenomenon.

Keywords: Choice overload, destination choice, travel decision-making, satisfaction, regret, serial mediation, confusion, uncertain