

APPLICATION OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL SCALING IN THE CONTEXT OF TOURISM MARKETING

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In recent decades, the study of consumer preferences was analyzed based on various disciplines. From Social Psychology and consumer preferences to economics and marketing, they all have tried to explain the consumer's choice behaviors and their loyalty to a particular brand. In this sense, finding the methodologies that allow researchers to study consumer preferences in similarity and in a detailed way becomes a complex task. In this context, the study illustrates the advantages and potential that the use of Multidimensional Scaling (MDS) has for the study of preferences in a sector like tourism currently a preponderant sector in the economy of many countries. Beginning with a matrix of hierarchical data referring to attributes' relative importance at the moment of choosing a tourism product, the authors obtained some consistent results in terms of interpretation. Consequently, the results allowed identifying different segments of tourists. The authors also show the importance of the application of multivariate methodologies in tourism management. Simultaneously, it is also possible to illustrate the similarity of the results obtained with another work in which the authors applied the Conjoint Analysis method to the same sample.

KEY WORDS: *tourism marketing, consumer psychology, multidimensional scaling, consumer preferences, multidimensional scaling, Conjoint Analysis.*