

Relevant Involvement, Symbolic Value, and Status Consumption in Purchasing Wellness Hotels Services

Envolvimento de Relevância, Valor Simbólico e Consumo de Status na Compra de Serviços de Hotéis *Wellness*

Implicación de la Relevancia, valor simbólico y consumo de estatus al comprar servicios de Wellness Hotel

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Abstract: This research aimed to measure how the relevant involvement, the symbolic value, and the status consumption could influence the intention of purchasing wellness hotel services. For this purpose, a quantitative survey was conducted through an online survey. In total 445 questionnaires were answered, and the data were analyzed by multiple linear regression analysis. The results proved that the proposed variables used in the theoretical model had a positive influence on the consumer's intention to purchase wellness hotel services, except for the symbolic value, that is showing to be inversely proportional to the dependent variable, revealing no symbolic characteristics of physical activity for consumer decision. The relevant involvement with the product/service demonstrated that consumers who consider physical activity as an important factor in their lives are more willing to purchase services in this type of hotel. Besides that, there was a confirmation of the influence of status consumption on the consumer's buying decision, highlighting the individual's concern about others' opinions on their image. The main contribution of this research is the identification that the search for wellness hotels has a double appeal, the relevance of the service, and the status provided by this type of consumption.

Key words: Relevant Involvement; Symbolic value; Status Consumption; Wellness Hotel.

Resumo: Esta pesquisa se propôs a mensurar qual influência que o Envolvimento de Relevância, o Valor Simbólico e o Consumo por Status poderiam exercer sobre a intenção de compra de serviços em hotéis wellness. Para tanto, foi realizada uma pesquisa quantitativa por meio de um survey online. Um total de 445 respondentes participaram da pesquisa e os dados obtidos foram analisados com base na análise de regressão linear múltipla. Os resultados comprovaram que os construtos propostos no modelo teórico exerceram uma influência positiva sobre a intenção de comprar serviços em hotel wellness, exceto o Valor Simbólico, mostrando-se, neste estudo, inversamente proporcional à variável dependente, não revelando, assim, características simbólicas da atividade física para a decisão do consumidor. O envolvimento de relevância do produto/serviço demonstrou que os consumidores que têm a atividade física como fator importante em sua vida estão mais dispostos a adquirir serviços neste tipo de hotel. Além disso, houve uma confirmação da influência do consumo de status, evidenciando a preocupação do indivíduo com a opinião de outras pessoas em relação a sua imagem. A principal contribuição desta pesquisa é a identificação de que a busca por hotéis wellness tem o duplo apelo, o de relevância do serviço e o status proporcionado por esse tipo de consumo.

Palavras-Chave: Envolvimento de Relevância; Valor Simbólico; Consumo de Status; Hotel *Wellness*.

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Resumen: Esta investigación tuvo como objetivo medir qué influencia podría tener la Implicación de la Relevancia, Valor Simbólico y Consumo por Estatus sobre la intención de compra de servicios en los hoteles wellness. Para eso, se realizó una investigación cuantitativa a través de una encuesta en línea. Un total de 445 encuestados participaron en la encuesta y los datos obtenidos se analizaron en base a un análisis de regresión lineal múltiple. Los resultados mostraron que los constructos propuestos en el modelo teórico influyeron positivamente en la intención de compra de servicios en un hotel wellness, excepto el Valor Simbólico, mostrándose, en este estudio, ser inversamente proporcional a la variable dependiente, no revelando así características simbólicas de la actividad física por decisión del consumidor. La implicación de la relevancia en relación al producto / servicio demostró que los consumidores que tienen la actividad física como factor importante en su vida están más dispuestos a adquirir servicios en este tipo de hoteles. Además, se constató la influencia del consumo de status, mostrando la preocupación del individuo por la opinión de otras personas en relación a su imagen. El principal aporte de esta investigación es la identificación de que la búsqueda de hoteles wellness tiene un doble atractivo, y el estado que proporciona este tipo de consumo.

Palabras clave: Implicación de la Relevancia; Valor simbólico; Consumo de estado; Hotel de bienestar.

1 Introduction

The importance of practicing physical activity is increasingly evident and present in people's daily life (García-Fernández et al., 2019). Whatever the reasons, health, aesthetic or the expository appeal from the Fitness Influencers' social media, 40% of Brazilians have already included some kind of physical activity as part of their routine (IBGE, 2017). However, during vacation or business trips, exercising is a difficult task. Many times, resulting in the suspension of the exercise routine, because is not easy to maintain a routine of physical activities and personal healthy food habits at hotels. Therefore, there is a rising search for hotels, which offer physical activity options and healthy eating (Chi et al., 2019).

According to Alencar (2013), a market research carried out in the United States asserts that a fitness center in a hotel was essential to attract and retain clients and an item that weighed in the decision and choice in the moment of purchasing an accommodation. In order to keep guests' exercise routines, the idea is to guarantee that they can experiment with new or different physical activities besides their habitual practices (Lee, Guillet & Law, 2016).

Several hotels throughout the United States and some European countries are adapting to attend the current demand for wellness, which according to Voigt and Pforr (2013) and Albayrak et al. (2016), is a combination of well-being and physical fitness. Among the services offered at a wellness hotel, besides the fitness center fully well equipped, are gym-clothing loan, organic food available in room service, running coaches, and running kits (cardiac monitor, water bottle, iPod, and an earphone) with a map of the city and bike rides. In addition, there is an incentive to use step counter wristbands by rewarding those guests who met daily goals, such as, giving gift cards to consume at the hotel's restaurant. Yoga classes, dancing, and other activities are also

offered. Moreover, in case the travelers do not wish to leave their room, wellness hotel rooms offer treadmills, exercise bikes, and other accessories and videos with instructions on physical activities (Fickel et al., 2018).

Considering this new demand for wellness hotel, it is important to understand the tourist's profile who is looking for hotels with wellness offers, since, in a research conducted by Hoteis.com and published in Magazine Globo.com (2017), revealed that the status relates to the consumer's intention to purchase services at these hotels. In the survey, 16% of the respondents said they prefer to post a post-workout picture on social media to one in swimsuits, making it a tendency to show personal fitness images to other people. In this context, it is important to know which decision-making processes influence tourists to choose a wellness hotel over another that does not offer the same services. Considering what was presented on hoteis.com research and taking the principles of consumer behavior research, this investigation focused on the analysis of the tourist's relevant involvement with well-being, the symbolic value of consumption and what it has to do with status and with people's opinions on their image to others to understand consumer's intention decisions.

Involvement is part of the consumer's decision to purchase a product or service. One of the characteristics of involvement is the perception of personal relevance, where the degree of importance given by how a consumer perceives an object or a situation determines the level of involvement (Sharma & Klein, 2020). The personal relevance, according to Celsi and Olson (1988), is the perception related to values, goals, knowledge of product and individual needs, concerning its benefits and qualities. Fonseca and Rossi (1999) state that when this knowledge is relevant, an emotional answer takes place in the consumer's memory, leading the purchasing behavior. Consequently, the involvement level is fundamental to determine consumer's behavior on decision-making (McClure & Seock, 2020). Schiffman et al. (2008) confirmed that involvement has a strong influence on attitudes, perceptions, and consumer's preferences.

In the consumer's choice of service, value has a great influence, being one of the most important variables in services management (Gallarza et al., 2020; Bolton, 2003). In this perspective, according to Ritamaki et al. (2006), consumption value is reproduced in the social act, symbolic meanings that determine the consumer's social identity through the consumption experience, and a result of that an increase of the perception of their image to others. The feeling

of consuming a desired object by a certain social group, which the person is part of, as an accommodation in a wellness hotel, could result in social approval and reinforce the way that people desire others to see them.

The main goal of individual status consumption is to promote an identity within the social group, drawing others' attention, showing a sophisticated image conveyed by richness, especially through purchasing of specific products (Nabi, O'Cass & Siahtiri, 2019). Constantly, on social media, users are pursuing to be always in the spotlight, by posting their image (Jebarajakirthy & Das, 2020). However, few studies have researched the importance of status consumption related to accommodation. Therefore, it is important to evaluate consumer's purchasing behavior, considering this variable, in order to help in the wellness hotel's service strategies.

The relevance of this study is to provide an empirical research about the influence of the product's relevant involvement, symbolic value, and status consumption on the consumer buying decision of hotel service in which the proposal fitness and well-being are applied. This research can also contribute with tourism sector studies, enriching the theoretical field in the wellness accommodation segment, as there is a theoretical researching gap in this new segment. Considering that, this paper presents the following question: How do the relevant involvement with health and well-being activities, symbolic value, and status influence the intention to purchase wellness hotel services?

2 Theoretical reference

2.1 Service purchase of wellness hotel

The individual's well-being can be understood as a full state of mental, physical, and social aspects from a person, involving other aspects as satisfaction and motivation. To achieve this full state of well-being, according to Gonçalves and Guerra (2019), it is necessary to follow healthy lifestyle habits, such as a balanced diet, physical activities, social interaction, and be self-confident, adding also a concern with appearance and personal image.

From this point, a concept of wellness arises, as combination of well-being and fitness (Cunha, 2006). In this context, the services offered in the tourism field, specifically in accommodation, are pursuing to improve and innovate their infrastructure, equipment, and services, attending the travelers' demand for wellness services. Thus, Goodrich and Goodrich

(1987) point out the offer of wellness services as an attempt by hotels to attract tourists by promoting health care services, such as balanced diets on their menu, offering acupuncture services, and other related activities. Currently, there is an important connection between leisure time and health care maintenance from the consumer's perspective, showing a new individual point of view about health and body, related to services (Gonçalves & Guerra, 2019).

Healthy behavior is increasingly popular and reflects equilibrium and personal harmony, combining well-being and tourism in a more complete way, leading to relaxing and socialization (Bitea & Luches, 2018). Thus, following Voigt, Brown and Howat's (2011) observations, the main goal of those looking for tourism services with wellness proposals is linked to psychological, social, physical, and spiritual dimensions. As well as the search for balanced diets and original products/services demanded by this public (Chen, Chang & Liu, 2015). For Mueller and Kaufmann (2001), the main reason for consumers interested in tourism and wellness services is to promote and preserve personal health, requiring physical activities, healthy eating, meditation, and relaxing services.

Since many people are becoming more aware to pursue and maintain personal well-being, the wellness tourism becomes a thriving sector. Along with it, increases the demand for more efforts to hotels offer a fitness experience and remain competitive in this new scenario (Lee, Lee & Cheng, 2019). Luxury hotels quickly reacted to this trend and created different types of services to fulfill the guest's expectations, like spa, beauty treatment, spiritual activity, and gym room (Koncul, 2012).

Besides that, Berg (2008) and Damm et al. (2015) state that it is necessary to increase tourist's expectations with a personalized experience; luxury and quality, simplicity and experiences involving nature, physical activities, and organic food. According to Bitea and Luches (2018), a hotel, which understands well the well-being and identifies its clients' profile linked with their specific wishes, has a great chance to become more modern and well succeeded. Hence, it is important to understand the tourist's interest to purchase wellness hotel services, the involvement level they have with the well-being perspective and the symbolic value they attribute this type of accommodation. Understanding these variables, which influence the customer's purchase intention, help the tourism sector be able to satisfy travelers' expectations and needs.

2.2 Relevance involvement with products

The relevance involvement with products happens when an individual relates their self-image and main personal values to a product (Arora, 1982). Therefore, the consumer believes the level of involvement with specific products, is a way to enhance positively their self-image (Fonseca & Rossi, 1999; Sharma & Klein, 2020). According to Assael's (1998) research, the more relevant a service or product is to the individual's self-image or the interest of their specific social group, there is a greater probability for them to get involved with that service or product.

The way to enhance self-image using products or services has been more evident on social media, space where many people promote their self-image to those connected to their social network. In a tourism context the same happens when tourists choose a specific touristic service, the possibility to link it with the tourist's self-image is relevant to the consumer's decision process. Thus, to understand the involvement means to understand consumer's behavior in a tourism context (Han & Hyun, 2018).

Based on Levy and Gvili (2019), under conditions of low involvement, the importance of the purchase and its expected value is lower. Therefore, it is possible to notice the more involved consumers are, the more likely it is to them to process information and create a purchasing expectation about the products or services (Krishnamurthy & Kumar, 2018).

Involvement is "a person's perceived relevance of an object based on their needs, values and interests" (Solomon, 2016, p. 39). Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (2000), state that the involvement as a level of perceived personal relevance of a product or service in a specific context contributes the most to shaping the consumer's decision-making process. The personal perceived relevance, which, according to Fonseca and Rossi (1999), is the level of involvement according to the degree of importance that the consumer perceives in a situation or an object; identified by its attributes and benefits (Celsi & Olson, 1988). This study has an approach with this point of view, considering consumer's involvement analyzed in the context of well-being and quality of life at wellness hotel services purchasing. Thus, the first research hypothesis is:

H1: The relevance a consumer puts on health and well-being activities influence positively the intention to purchase wellness hotel services.

2.3 Symbolic value

Social acts, which are rich in symbolic meaning, identity, and social relations, are a result of the consumption experience (Ritamaki et al., 2006; Gallarza et al., 2020). Belk (1988) and Solomon (2016) revealed that the experience of consuming a product can determine the consumer's social identity and to represent personal meanings to other participants in the same social group. The meaning resultant from social interactions makes consumers give importance to the desired product (Richins, 1994). In contemporary society is common to observe this kind of consumer behavior.

For Belk (1988) and Richins (1994), symbolic value is composed of a socially shared meaning, through the identity and social approval, that occur when a person appropriates an object, to which there is already is a general agreement about its meaning. Moreover, it is composed of personal user experiences, when the person uses a product under some circumstances, thus acquiring a personal meaning (Richins, 1994; Costa et al., 2017).

According to Chandon et al. (2000), the symbolic value reinforces the way, individuals think about themselves. This way, depending on how consumers feel and desire other people to see them or how they want to see themselves (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001), consumers purchase specific products for that purpose (Sirgy et al., 2000; Paula et al., 2020).

In this construct, the symbolic value can lead individuals to perceive an advantage of buying an object (Toni & Mazzon, 2014), which will represent something important to themselves and others, resulting in a feeling of power (Baumhammer, Silva & Costa, 2017). As observed by Rucker and Galinsky (2008), the consumer, based on this perception, can increase the desire of purchasing services related to recognition before others specially related to fads widely disseminated on social media, shaping the behavior of Internet users.

Considering that, the competition is increasing; service providers need to create symbolic value for their consumers, once there are already other reasons existing, which can lead to consumption. Ritamaki et al. (2006) state that, understanding these individual values, companies can have a better understanding of their client's desires and offer services, that gives meaning to the consumer's purchase experience. Thus, the second research hypothesis is:

H2: The symbolic value, which consumers put on health and well-being activities, influences positively their intentions to purchase wellness hotel services.

2.4 Status consumption

Several factors can influence the consumer's behavior in the decision-making process. Among these factors, the status consumption plays a distinctive role. The meaning of status and power is related to the idea of luxury (Fifita et al., 2019), which results in the capture of each consumer's dreams and aspirations, as a means of self-expression (Bridges, 2018). The individual focuses on what is perceived, such as jewelry, clothing and other props that make him/her think that these products can put him/her in a certain social status (Jebarajakirthy & Das, 2020).

The concept of status, defined by Eastman (1999), is the individual's position in society which is assigned by other people. According to the author, its origins can be: status by definition, inherited by birth; the original, originated from social recognition; and by the consumption of products or services that carry the symbol of status. The approach used in this article is the status consumption focused on fitness services in the hospitality industry.

According to Featherstone (1995), the individual aims at obtaining recognition by the groups in which he/she possesses a certain social position, by acquiring status products. For Nabi, O'Cass and Siahtiri (2019), there is an effort from the consumer to get closer to the consumption pattern that he/she sees as standard, encouraged style and trend matters. If a company offers differentiated services and there is a high cost to be paid, it is necessary to understand how sensitive its consumers are to the intrinsic status relationship to the product or object, in order to predict the behavior of its target audience.

Status consumption theory seeks to understand from the assumption that consumer goods are records of a social position that is relativized among the classes of the same society buying products that show their fulfillment and uniqueness (Bian & Forsythe, 2012) and the will to fit other people's expectations of purchasing decisions (Clark & Goldsmith, 2005).

O'Cass and Frost (2002) state that the consumption of products that symbolize status is part of a motivational process, in which there is an attempt to improve the consumer's social standards. Whenever the consumers acquire a certain product, it can be either to confirm or increase their self-images (Schiffman, 2000). According to Nabi, O'Cass and Siahtiri (2019) the consumer even puts the satisfaction of his/her basic needs aside in order to satisfy his/her psychological needs for self-esteem, friendship and the sense of belonging.

Given that, there is a tendency for a constant need for image exposure, especially by most people that use social networks, in which there is a predominance of content-picture posting. In

addition, there is also the influence of endorsers on fitness products and services in order to promote their consumption. Accordingly, the wellness fashion trend emerged, which covers since the practice of physical activities, food and healthy lifestyle, not to forget the services offered by some hotels so that their guests should not quit their routine of exercises.

However, it is evident that this sort of differentiated service has a higher cost compared to other hotels. In this case, acquiring these products might be beyond the mere involvement with well-being and physical practices. It can also be related to the fad, status and the reaction of other members of a certain social network as an outcome of consumption. If a firm offers products such as luxury goods, it is necessary to understand how sensitive the consumers are to the status messages attached to them, thus it is also necessary to offer alternatives that meet their wishes (Grohmann, Battistella & Radons, 2012). Therefore, the following hypothesis arose:

H3: Status consumption has a positive impact on the consumer's intention to purchase services in wellness hotels.

3 Research method

This research follows a quantitative approach, which, according to Creswell (2010), is mostly carried out by means of a survey in order to gather data regarding trends in attitudes or opinions of a certain population. A bibliographic study was carried out on digital platforms for publication of journals, such as Scopus, Proquest, Scielo and ScienceDirect. The research instrument used was the survey, since it is the most used method in the social sciences area (Babbie, 1999), in order to investigate the independent variables Relevance Involvement, Symbolic Value, Status Consumption and its influence on the variable dependent Intent on purchasing services in wellness hotels.

3.1 Population and Sample

In this study, any individual interested in contributing to the survey was considered as part of its population. Thus, a non-probabilistic sampling was administered for its predictability in estimating a population's characteristic. Furthermore, a snowball sampling technique was carried out in order to randomly select a group of people among the study's overall population

(Malhotra, 2019). The first individuals selected were asked to spread the research questionnaire among other individuals within their social networks.

The initial sample estimate was approximately five respondents for each question in the questionnaire. Thus, the final sample defined for this study was at least 115 valid responses. In total, 463 participants answered the questionnaire, of which 445 were considered valid, being 18 discarded.

3.2 Data collection procedure

A structured questionnaire was administered via Google Forms. Based on the literature review, for the formation of the instrument. Aspiring, in this way, to ensure that the measurement of each question regarding the constructs of this research, was done with rigor.

Based on the constructs addressed in this study, both the scales of involvement with an object (relevance) and of symbolic value, proposed by Fonseca and Rossi (1999), were used. This scale was chosen because it adequately meets the research objectives and also because it is a scale widely used in other studies (for example, Almeida & Dusenber, 2014; Santos et al., 2017; Barros et al., 2018; Baldini & Ponchio, 2018). For the status consumption construct, the scale developed by Eastman (1999) was the one used. Moreover, in order to measure the dependent variable of this research, intention to purchase wellness hotel services, the authors proposed an extra single item. Prior to the data collection itself, it was important to make it clear to the participants the concept of wellness hotel herein.

A 7-point Likert scale was used to measure the variables analyzed. The following Table 1 shows the constructs assessed in this study. As it can be noticed, the questionnaire consisted of a 23-item tool, covering independent and dependent variables, as well as sociodemographic ones.

Table 1
 Data collection instrument

| Construct | Items (dimensions and variables) | Code |
|---|--|------|
| Relevance - Fonseca & Rossi (1999) | - Lifestyle related to health and well-being is essential | RL01 |
| | - Lifestyle related to health and well-being is beneficial | RL02 |
| | - Lifestyle related to health and well-being is unnecessary | RL03 |
| Symbolic Value - Fonseca & Rossi (1999) | - Having a lifestyle related to health and well-being is my face | SV01 |
| | - Having a lifestyle related to health and well-being is good for others to judge me | SV02 |

| | | |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| | - Having a lifestyle related to health and well-being does not convey an image of me to others | SV03 |
| Status Consumption - Eastman (1999) | - I would buy a night at a wellness hotel just because it gives me status - I am interested in new products that give status, such as hotel wellness - I would pay more for products that give more status - The status that the wellness hotel gives me is irrelevant - A wellness hotel is more valuable to me if it has a famous brand | SC01 SC02 SC03 SC04 SC05 |
| Purchase of wellness hotel services - Adaptado de Toni & Mazzon (2014) | - There is a high likelihood that I will buy a hotel night that offers products and activities related to health and well-being - I would recommend a hotel that offers products and activities related to health and well-being to my friends or relatives. - Hotel that offers products and activities related to health and well-being would be a good buy | IS01 IS02 IS03 |

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

After finishing the data collection tool, a pre-test was carried out among 20 individuals. This phase led to the refinement of the questionnaire, as suggested by Leeuw, Hox and Dillman (2008). The questionnaire was accessed through a Google Forms link, spread in different social networks, such as Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp. In addition, it was also hosted in some online travel-related pages.

3.3 Data analysis procedures

In order to describe the participants' sociodemographic profiles, descriptive statistics were used, such as the average, standard deviation and percentage. Furthermore, to guarantee the reliability of the questionnaire items, Cronbach's alpha analysis was used, considering a minimum level of 0.7 as acceptable. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) analysis was used to assess the dimensionality of each item, by using exploratory factor analysis, as well as the Bartlett's sphericity test (Hair et al., 2009). Finally, in order to accept or reject the hypotheses proposed in this research, a multiple linear regression analysis was carried out.

4 Presentation and discussion of results

Initially, a review of the questionnaires was carried out in order to correct failures resulting from the collection. All items in the questionnaire were mandatory and confirmed with the review, thus eliminating the error of non-response (Leeuw, Hox & Dillman, 2008). The final

sample with all valid questionnaires was 445 respondents. In the next moment, data was imported into SPSS, software that helped the analyzes performed.

4.1 Respondents socio-demographic profile

The first analysis of the study was to verify the socio-demographic profile of the respondents, using simple descriptive statistics for this purpose. A percentage survey of the demographic information presented in Table 2 was made. The female gender is present as the majority in this study with 71.7% of the total. The preeminent marital status is that of married people (52.1%), the predominant level of education is postgraduate (45%).

Table 2
 Sociodemographic profile based on frequencies

| Marital status | | Complete education level | |
|----------------|-------|--------------------------|------------|
| Single | 39,6% | High School | 13,5% |
| Married | 52,1% | Undergraduate student | 38,9% |
| Widower | 1,6% | Graduate student | 45% |
| Divorced | 6,7% | Others | 0,7% |
| Gender | | Female 71,7% | Male 28,3% |

Source: Field research (2019).

Still with regard to the sociodemographic profile corresponding to the sample, some variables were extracted on a ratio scale, estimating greater numerical precision from means and standard deviation. Table 3, presented below, summarizes the information. The average age of respondents is 39 years. Family income, the average was 4,831.00 and the average number of people living in the residence is 3 individuals.

Table 3
 Sociodemographic profile based on means and standard deviation

| Variables | Average | Standard deviation |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Age | 39,79 | 11,783 |
| Average monthly income (family) | R\$ 4.831,06 | R\$ 5.376,428 |
| Number of people in the residence | 3,01 | 1,248 |

Source: Field research (2019).

Having outlined the socio-demographic profile of the sample, the next statistical analyzes were directed to check the consistency of the items that were part of the instrument, without

subsequently the dimensionality of the data. The subsequent session will present the results which are necessary to carry out the multiple regression analysis.

4.2 Reliability of items and dimensionality of data

In order to investigate the reliability of the items, Cronbach’s alpha was verified in all items of the referred constructs that were part of the theoretical model of this study, with a value equal to or greater than 0.6 (Hair et al., 2009). In addition, factor analysis was used to verify the dimensionality of the data. With the intention of helping to understand the data, they were condensed in Table 1.

Table 1
 Summary of data reliability and dimensionality

| Variables | C.F. | H ² | KMO | Bartlett | | | V.Exp.* | Cronbach |
|-----------|-------|----------------|-------|----------|------------------|-------|---------|----------|
| | | | | Df | Qui ² | Sig | | |
| RL01 | 0,916 | 0,840 | 0,500 | 1 | 274,108 | 0,000 | 83,977 | 0,780 |
| RL02 | 0,916 | 0,840 | | | | | | |
| SV02 | 0,807 | 0,651 | 0,500 | 1 | 42,302 | 0,000 | 65,097 | 0,563 |
| SV03 | 0,807 | 0,651 | | | | | | |
| SC01 | 0,868 | 0,731 | 0,808 | 6 | 781,574 | 0,000 | 69,820 | 0,850 |
| SC02 | 0,855 | 0,662 | | | | | | |
| SC03 | 0,814 | 0,754 | | | | | | |
| SC05 | 0,804 | 0,646 | | | | | | |
| IB01 | 0,907 | 0,787 | 0,743 | 3 | 715,794 | 0,000 | 80,852 | 0,874 |
| IB02 | 0,903 | 0,815 | | | | | | |
| IB03 | 0,887 | 0,823 | | | | | | |

Source: Field research (2019). * V.Exp. = Variance Explained.

In this phase of the analysis, the items of relevance, symbolic value and status consumption did not reach the estimated value as a parameter, however, with the removal of items RL03, SV01 and SC04, the situation was reversed. However, the symbolic value has not reached the desired index. Then, a factor analysis was performed in order to verify whether the indicators suggested by the scales were in line with the constructs. For this, the KMO and Bartlett sphericity tests were used.

4.3 Analysis of the proposed theoretical model

The items that constituted the constructs of this research, after being treated, were grouped into composite variables, which is necessary to perform the regression. According to Table 2, the average of responses in the constructs, considering the Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), was, in general, intermediate. Only the intention to buy services in a hotel wellness, dependent variable, and the relevant involvement of the independent variable, showed higher values, expressing that the research participants have a higher level of agreement with the statements of these constructs.

Table 2
 Descriptive statistics of the composite variables

| Variables | N | Average | S.D.* |
|-------------------------------------|-----|---------|-------|
| Relevance Involvement | 445 | 6,70 | 0,648 |
| Symbolic value | 445 | 2,68 | 1,669 |
| Status consumption | 445 | 2,05 | 1,573 |
| Purchase of wellness hotel services | 445 | 6,24 | 1,165 |

Source: Field research (2019). * S.D. = Standard Deviation

With the realization of the multiple regression backward method, the results indicated that no variables needed to be removed. Demonstrating that the independent variable composed of the dimensions of relevance and symbolic value; and the consumption variable by status, have a significant influence on the intention to buy services in a wellness hotel. As summarized in table 3, presented below.

Table 3
 Multiple Regression (backward method)

| Model | Variables added | Variables withdrawn | Method used |
|-------|---|---------------------|-------------|
| 1 | Status consumption, Relevance involvement, symbolic value | | Backward |

Source: Field research (2019).

Next, table 4 presents a synthesis of the theoretical model. The value of R, corresponding to 0.389, shows a correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variable. According to Fávero et al. (2009), the coefficient of determination (R^2) is interpreted as the proportion of the total variation in the intention to buy services in wellness hotels, explained by the independent variables. In this research, specifically, the independent variables explain 15.2%

of the intention to buy hotel wellness services, a value measured from R^2 . However, the value that is considered to explain the relationships between the variables is the adjusted R^2 , since it proposes a correction of the determination coefficient in cases where there is more than one independent variable. In this research, the adjusted R^2 value is 0.146, with the standard error estimate of 3.229. The Durbin-Watson value was adequate because it was close to 2.

Table 4
 Model summary

| Model | R | R ² | Adjusted R ² | Estimate of standard error | Durbin-Watson |
|-------|-------|----------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| 1 | 0,389 | 0,152 | 0,146 | 3,229 | 2,209 |

Source: Field research (2019).

To conclude the analysis, Table 5 shows the coefficients of the multiple regression analysis. The constructs Relevance Involvement, Symbolic Value and Status consumption scored according to the defined parameters, confirming their influence on the intention to purchase services in a wellness hotel. It is possible to see in table 5 that the p-value (Sig.) was less than 0.05 for all constructs. However, according to Beta values, only the scores of Relevance and the Status consumption corroborate the positive valence proposed by hypothesis H1 and H3, respectively. The Symbolic Value, in turn, demonstrates a sense contrary to that proposed by H2, rejecting this hypothesis.

Table 5
 Coefficients

| Model | Nonstandard coefficients | | Standardized coefficient | t | Sig. | 95% confidence interval for B | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|--------|-------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| | B | Standard model | B | | | Inferior limit | Upper limit |
| (Constant) | 6,139 | 1,623 | | 3,782 | 0,000 | 2,949 | 9,328 |
| 1 Relevance | 0,923 | 0,118 | 0,343 | 7,805 | 0,000 | 0,691 | 1,156 |
| Symbolic value | -0,122 | 0,051 | -0,116 | -2,403 | 0,017 | -0,221 | -0,022 |
| Status consumption | 0,104 | 0,027 | 0,187 | 3,867 | 0,000 | 0,051 | 0,157 |

Source: Field research (2019).

Only ‘relevance’ had a high average of respondents, as can be seen in table 2, which may lead one to believe that individuals do not evaluate hotels well in terms of symbolic value and status consumption, because the averages were very low. As seen, hypothesis H1 has been

confirmed, corroborating that the constructive driver of involvement (relevance), in fact, has a positive influence on the intention to buy services in a wellness hotel. Inasmuch as, the individual relates the purchase to his self-image and his central values (Arora, 1982). In this case, relating hotel accommodation to health and wellness services is directly linked to its values.

The ‘relevance’ was very well evaluated, demonstrating that it is important for survey respondents to do activities that provide well-being, such as physical activity, healthy eating and/or any other activities related to physical and mental health. A fact that shows the increase in the number of people who devote part of their time in their routine, to exercise and who also changed their eating habits, to a healthy diet (McClure & Seock, 2020). Thus, having a great positive influence on the intention to buy services in hotels that offer this type of service.

H2 is also rejected, as there is a negative influence on the symbolic value of the involvement construct. In this case, this construct would be associated with an advantage in which buying services in a wellness hotel could represent something symbolic for yourself or for others, being associated with a feeling of power (Toni & Mazzon, 2014). The statement being denied in this study, with confirmation opposite to what was expected.

Contrary to what H2 pointed out, for respondents, buying services in hotels that have a well-being service, do not bring symbolic value to their own social identity, nor to the approval of the social group in which they belong. Therefore, the symbolism of this accommodation does not reinforce the way in which the individual thinks about himself or how he would like to be seen by others.

Although the average of respondents is not very high, there was also confirmation of the positive influence of the status consumption construct, confirming H3. This construct expresses the desire to consume a product to obtain status, in order to obtain recognition from social groups (Featherstone, 1995). It is observed that, even with a lower average, a part of the respondents stated that the purchase of daily rates in wellness hotels is a way of obtaining recognition from others about their lifestyle, improving their self-image. It is possible to perceive that in contemporary society, marked by the constant use of social networks, people seek to be in fashion and purchase differentiated products of high financial value and this reflects the social aspirations of how individuals intend to be seen before their social contacts.

5 Conclusion

This research analyzed some of the factors that might precede the intention to purchase accommodation services at wellness hotels. The core contribution of this study was to point out that the individuals consider the fitness services offered by hotels as being relevant. However, they do not consider this sort of service as symbolic-valuable, although it was found that the status consumption has a significant role in the decision-making process. Thus, the search for wellness hotels has a double appeal, the relevance of the service and the status inherent to this consumption.

This business model that offers health and well-being services is not so evident in Brazil. However, it is clear that this type of service has already great acceptance by consumers in the United States and in some European countries. Although the number of people that practices physical activities has been increasing in recent years in Brazil, the outcomes of this study revealed that there was no representative symbolism of these physical activities in the intention to purchase services from hotels that offer this type of service.

The importance of practicing physical exercises stood out when analyzing the product relevant involvement construct, especially in the case of wellness hotels. The results indicated that the users that considered physical exercises an important practice tended to be willing to book an accommodation at a wellness hotel. This can be explained by the fact that many individuals who regularly exercise themselves want to maintain their routine even when they are traveling.

It was also found that the status consumption had a positive influence on the intention to book an accommodation at hotels that offer health and wellness services. Such fact confirms the results of previous market research, highlighting the individual's concern with what others think about him/her. This phenomenon can be observed in the social networks, in which users can check the content published by others on photos and posts showing their lifestyles and preferences. The same can be applied to the object studied herein, since having and showing a fitness lifestyle pattern can be seen as beneficial by someone's followers.

This research sought to analyze a topic that already arouses certain interest in the market field, but still little has been researched in the scientific domain. Bringing up a well-studied construct in the area of consumer behavior, such as involvement, specifically the involvement of

product relevance, and a construct that still needs to be further explored, such as status consumption, since consumerism is currently evident exacerbated and exhibitionism on social networks; and their relationship, with the intention of buying services in a hotel that offers services for well-being.

Thus, asking the following question: health is what matters or what matters is what others think about me? Therefore, contributing to discussions about health care, as it has personal relevance and/or wanting to expose to others that one has a healthy lifestyle, thus being important what other people think about it.

In an academic viewpoint, this study has an innovative character, since this phenomenon had not been analyzed in the tourism literature, as well as in the consumer behavior. In addition, this research focused on the Brazilian market, which does not offer such services to date.

From a practical perspective, this study provides subsidies for hotel managers, helping them understand which attributes are essential for their future customers when choosing a wellness hotel, compared to others that do not offer the same services. Thus, directing the policies aiming at the implementation and adaptation of hotel infrastructure and services. In addition, the outcomes presented herein can also support the managers in terms of marketing decisions, reaching potential consumers by means of promotional tools.

5.1 Limitations and suggestions for future research

Initially, as a limitation of this study, the Brazilian population had its representativeness reduced, since the majority of respondents were from the northeastern region of the country, where the research was carried out. In addition, the fact that many individuals are unaware of the existence of such services, may have generated some doubts about what would or would not be the phenomenon analyzed. Although some information and real photos have been presented in the instrument administered, there was no way to guarantee that everyone could have reached the same level of understanding on the object.

Therefore, some suggestions will be listed for future research. Investigating in a more targeted way the reasons why the symbolic value had no influence on the intention to buy services in a fitness hotel, since the relevance involvement demonstrated a positive relationship. It is also possible to analyze the price issues of this service and the availability of the Brazilian with the

intention of buying it, since, following foreign trends, the amount paid for a night at these hotels is much higher than traditional hotels.

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