

MUSEUM SERVICE QUALITY MEASUREMENT USING THE HISTOQUAL MODEL

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Suzana Marković
Sanja Raspor
Jelena Komšić

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Abstract

The objective of the present study was to explore visitors' expectations and perceptions of museum service quality. The study was conducted using a 24-item questionnaire, based on the modified HISTOQUAL model (Frochot and Hughes 2000; Hui-Ying and Chao-Chien, 2008; Martin-Ruiz et al. 2010). The questionnaires were distributed to visitors of the Krapina Neanderthal Museum, (Croatia) in January 2012. A total of 106 valid questionnaires were obtained. Descriptive analysis, t-test, factor analysis, and reliability analysis were performed to analyze the data. The findings imply that for the majority of service attributes visitors' expectations scores are higher than their perception scores. In addition, museum visitors' expectations could be described by three main service quality dimensions, namely "tangibles and communication", "empathy" and "convenience". On the other hand, museum visitors' perceptions could be best explained by five service quality dimensions named as "tangibles", "accessibility", "exhibition presentation", "empathy" and "communication". The study contributes to both academics and practitioners, since it identified service quality features in the museum sector that could be improved, as well as those that represent strong points of the museum offer and are important to museum visitors in Croatia.

Keywords service quality, HISTOQUAL, statistical analysis, museum, sustainable tourism, Croatia

Suzana Marković, PhD, Associate Professor
University of Rijeka
Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Opatija
Primorska 42, P.O.Box 97, 51410 Opatija, Croatia
Phone: +385/51/294-681
E-mail: suzanam@fthm.hr

Sanja Raspor, PhD, Lecturer
Polytechnic of Rijeka
Trpimirova 2/V, 51000 Rijeka, Croatia
Phone: +385/51/353-740
E-mail: sraspor@veleri.hr

Jelena Komšić, MA, Assistant
University of Rijeka
Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Opatija
Primorska 42, P.O.Box 97, 51410 Opatija, Croatia
Phone: +385/51/294-681
E-mail: jelenak@fthm.hr