

MEASURING TOURIST SATISFACTION OF HOLIDAY: PRACTICE ON THE HOTEL BUSINESS WITH THE HOLSAT SCALE

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Abstract

Tourist satisfaction is an aim that destinations at the macro level and an essential for maintaining the existence of the company at the micro level. Nowadays, customers receiving more informed travel decisions and they have further expectations. They have a right to evaluate any other holiday options although they do not like a tourist product so it causes business, embark on different quests to avoid losing their customers. Satisfaction is a level which generates after satisfying customers' needs and requests also enunciables as a customer is satisfied with the services they have received. Guest satisfaction is one of the most important measure both destinations and the success and continuity of business. The aim of this study is to measure the level of satisfaction of the guests staying in 4 and 5 star hotels in Konya using the scale HOLSAT (Holiday Satisfaction) which is a developed model to compare the positive and negative aspects of vacation experiences and expectations of holidaymakers by Tribe and Snaith (1998). In this case, first of all a literature study was conducted on the subject and then a total of 200 tourists were interviewed using face-to-face interview method. The obtained data were analyzed by SPSS statistical software, according to the results. Differences in holiday satisfaction were studied to determine. What is of special interest in this paper is analysis on surveyed data in using HOLSAT. The original instrument of HOLSAT is consist of six dimensions with 56 items. The findings provide Konya's tourism stakeholders with insights about the level of satisfactions among domestic tourists and call for better improvements strategies for future tourism development in Konya.

Keywords Quality Of Service, Guest Satisfaction, Holsat (Holiday Satisfaction) Scale, Tourist Experience, Tourism Expectation

INTRODUCTION

In today's modern world, the expectations and requirements of the consumers who become wiser and conscious started to change. Especially the advancement of technology and changes in economic life influenced the life styles of individuals and as a result of this consumers start to change their expectations, consumption experiences and their criteria to evaluate this.

Touristic consumer group that is intended to assess their spare times, to have a rest, to entertain and to experience different things, in order to realize their wishes will stay at a place where they will be able to accommodate at the vocational location. Thus, for the touristic consumer group accommodation places which are special spaces are a zone of experiences. When taken into account from this point of view the guest accommodating

at the experimental zone of this accommodation management, is an individual consumer and a single incident triggers his/her experience or makes his/her experience enjoyable. Personal moments that the guests extract out of their experiences are the details which represent satisfaction and value from the point of view of the guests. In this direction the important thing is the detection of customers' continuously changing expectations and giving them the best service and thus supplying the customer satisfaction.

The purpose of this study is to measure the vacation satisfaction levels of the customers' accommodating at 4 and 5 star Hotels in Konya using the HOLSAT (Holiday Satisfaction) scale that is developed by Tribe and Snaith (1998) for comparison of vacation experiences' negative and positive parts and expectations of vacationers.

1. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Hotels; for touristic consumers whose wishes and expectations change nowadays based on the life quality and standards become no more accommodation places where solely accommodation requirements are fulfilled. That's why, in order to the fact that hotelkeepers attract touristic consumer group and to satisfy them, they shall in advance comprehend what their guests are looking for and what sort of experiences they would like to reach (McIntosh and Siggs, 2005: 75).

Each individuals' expectation who are distancing from their daily lives and travel to another environment, and the satisfaction that they aim vary and form according to the characteristics of the place travelled, offered touristic product or service variety and characteristics of the travel. As a consequence touristic experiences of the individuals generate as a result of group of issues and are reflected to their behaviours (Rızaoğlu, 2003: 178-180).

Consumers comprehend shopping and consuming phenomenon as an integral process and desire to participate pre-shopping, shopping and post-shopping stages actively and they additionally desire that the whole process is to be a satisfying, entertaining experience. In current years, consumers that found out the *hedonic* and *experimental* sides of consumption prefer product or services' personal, abstract, sociopsychological benefits instead of their functional benefits (Odabaşı, 2006).

Shaw and Ivens (2002) express the consumer's experience in "Creating Great Customer Experiences"; "The mix of physical performances and emotions aroused as a result of the fact that businesses measured intuitively expectations of consumers and were sensitive to the whole of these expectations.

When the issue is to determine satisfied or unsatisfied tourist, expectations of tourists become a serious factor. Through defining the expectations and experiences of the tourists one can measure the gap easily. To meet the need of aimed segments these kind of information are essential. The disadvantage of not delivering quality expected by tourists also causes a fail in delivering superior value to tourists and therefore to poor

performance (Mcquilken et al., 2000). However, there is still no researcher who is able to set up the demand so customers' satisfaction is very subjective (Baki et al., 2009).

Service quality theory might be described as an integration of quality theory or theories of marketing and services. Increasingly it is being subsumed into a management debate about the provision of quality for clients and the implications for management structures. Thus the terminology of this debate includes not only questions of gaps, but moments of truth (Normann, 1984; Carlzon, 1987), critical incidents (Bitner, et al, 1990) and staff empowerment (Baum, 1997).

SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman et al. (1985, 1988) defined service quality through the gap between customers' perception and expectation of company's service quality performance. During the 1981 period, the gap between customer expectation and perception appears as an important concept in measurement of client satisfaction and service quality. Parasuraman et al. (1985). The first statement of SERVQUAL occurred in 1985. SERVQUAL might be said to be about service quality, but it is closely related to satisfaction (Ryan, 1997).

SERVQUAL has been indigenously managed by consultants and found to be useful in aiding management to analyze areas of strength and weakness. SERVQUAL is based on evaluations of five service dimensions (reliability, assurance, empathy, responsiveness, and tangible assets) and when relying solely on this instrument for quality assessment, some important factors of service encounters at the destination level may be left out of the evaluation process. Hence, most studies use tourism product attributes as a service platform for assessing the quality of tourism products. (Z'abkar et al, 2010).

Truong and Foster (2006) reported that satisfaction with a particular destination is not simply the cumulative evaluation of service quality of a number of individual service providers. There are various activities and experiences that are key to a specific destination. Any measure of satisfaction must therefore include these aspects of the total holiday experience. Visitor satisfaction was measured using a multi-item scale based on an adaptation of the universal scale of Oliver (1999), also applied in other studies (e.g., del Bosque & Martín, 2008), and included four items capturing affective, cognitive and fulfillment components of satisfaction.

Tourist contentment is a function between expectation and experience. Tourists will be disappointed when expectations are higher than experience when vice versus happens tourists will feel happy. Tourist satisfaction happens when their assessment degree of the destination are higher than their experiences (Tribe and Snaith, 1998). For the satisfaction procedure tourism is known as a challenging sector. Customer satisfaction is generally, continuously and remarkably measured in corporate and global hotels. To measure these satisfaction and quality this study may be considered as a guide. HOLSAT, Holiday Satisfaction includes not only the satisfaction with the facility but also the entire holiday process. Customer satisfaction is not simply an outcome but an input variable decisions to repurchase a service, revisit a destination, or repeat a specific type of holiday.

HOLSAT satisfaction compares two levels of satisfaction with expectation and experience. Another important feature of the HOLSAT model is the multidimensional nature and variability of the satisfaction of tourists at a given destination, by comparing a wide range of target attributes with the same expectation of the customers. In addition, the HOLSAT instrument has the ability to deliberate positive additions to negative attributes when making an attempt to describe the key characteristics of a holiday destination (Chan, 2016). In this model, the concept of satisfaction is defined as the degree to which a tourist's evaluation of a destination's attributes exceeds his/her expectations. This model enables tourists to express satisfaction/dissatisfaction by evaluating both positive and negative attributes. Positive attributes are features that convey good impressions of a destination, whereas negative attributes are those that transmit unfavorable impressions (Alegre and Garau, 2009)

The other strand of HOLSAT is that of researching consumer satisfaction with a holiday. This is clearly a logically distinct service experience from say, a restaurant, airline, hotel experience. In this case, the holiday experience provides that reference point around which she or he bases a judgment regarding actual holiday satisfaction.

2. METHODS

Using the HOLSAT (Holiday Satisfaction) scale, which is a model developed to compare the negative and positive aspects of vacation experiences with the expectations of the researchers, to measure the holiday satisfaction of the 4 and 5 star (n =200). It is aimed to show whether they are perceived differently according to their characteristics. HOLSAT scale developed by Tribe and Snaith (1998) was used as measuring tool. Sampling method, population and sample, data collection tool, analysis of data and information about the reliability and validity of the scales used in the research take place in the method part of the research in terms of this aim.

2.1. Sample and Participants

The universe of the research constitutes the visitors of 4 and 5 star accommodation enterprises in Konya. Due to the inconvenience of reaching all of this population, 200 questionnaires representing all the population were applied between the dates the 1st of October 2016 and the 30th of October 2016. Purposive sampling method, one of the non-random sampling methods was preferred as the sampling method.

HOLSAT (Holiday Satisfaction) scale which was developed by Tribe and Snaith (1998) was used in the research. SERVQUAL (Parasuraman et al; 1988) model is not enough to measure the level of satisfaction in tourism sector. In order to determine the level of satisfaction in holiday, the entire process, beginning from the transportation phase and ending with turning back home, should be considered (Ceylan, Özçelik, 2016). By using SERVQUAL, researchers have also developed a new scale called HOLSAT to measure tourist satisfaction and vacation experience. In the development of this scale, the process of developing SERVQUAL has been implemented.

2.2. Dimensions of the Holsat Scale

There are six sub-dimensions in the scale used in the research. Holsat scale's dimensions are consisting of Transfers, Social Life, Physical assets, Ambiance, Accommodation, Heritage and Culture.

Figure 1: Dimensions of the Holsat Scale



In the structured questionnaire there are 56 questions in total. Likert type scale (1= totally disagree, 5= totally agree) was used. The questionnaire consists of three parts. In the first part, there is information about participants (gender, age, education, marital status, income status, income region) and in the second and third part there are HOLSAT scale items. The questionnaires were filled in by hotel visitors in person or were filled in with face-to-face interviews in the research 210 questionnaires were filled in but 10 of them were removed from the application because they were incomplete.

2.3. Reliability and Validity of Scales

There are six sub-dimensions in the scale used in the research. While Physical Assets has the highest average, the Transfers dimension has the lowest average. In this paper, the relation value among the sub-dimensions of the scale used in the research are examined; it is possible to state that every dimension has a positive directional relation with the others.

Reliability coefficient (Cronbach Alpha) of each scale was checked in order to determine whether the scale in the research is reliable or not. The reliability of the scale needs to be 0,70 at least to be reliable (Altunışık et al. 2007). When the results in table 1 is analyzed, it can be stated that Physical Assets and Social Life dimensions are highly reliable, Heritage and Culture dimension is quite reliable. But it is dedicated that the Transfers dimension has a low reliability. It is recommended that the researchers especially test this dimension very carefully. Factor structure of the scale was assessed with Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). Analyses were completed in two main phases. The suitability of data for EFA was evaluated with Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) and Barlett Sphericity test. It was determined that the sample size of the data as the result of the KMO test was sufficient for sample size. The KMO value for this sample calculated as (KMO=0.893) and Barlett Sphericity test assumption, an assumption necessary for the factor analysis, was also provided ($p < 0.05$). These results indicates that data set is

suitable for analysis (Çokluk, Şekercioğlu ve Büyüköztürk, 2012).

Table 1: **Exploratory Factor Analysis Results**

Questions	Heritage and Culture	Accommodation	Physical Assets	Transfers	Ambiance	Social Life
Q34 Phoning home would be easy.	0.438					
Q41 I should be able to communicate and talk with the local people.	0.507					
Q42 I should be able to try local food and drinks.	0.603					
Q43 I should eat at the local restaurants used by the locals.	0.681					
Q44 I should be able to explore the daily life of local people.	0.779					
Q45 I should be able to learn more about the history of local people.	0.714					
Q46 I should be able to listen to local folk music.	0.749					
Q47 I should be able to experience your nightlife.	0.569					
Q48 I should visit museums and archaeological sites.	0.586					
Q49 I should be able to have information about the countries around our geography.	0.598					
Q50 I should be able to use local transport.	0.550					
Q51 I should be able to visit the nearby local towns and countryside.	0.656					
Q52 I should be able to get in and out of shops and shops used by the locals.	0.635					
Q1 The city would be clean.		0.619				
Q2 Water sports would be available.		0.582				
Q3 The resort would be clean.		0.846				
Q4 The resort would be safe and secure.		0.715				
Q6 The resort buildings and layout would be visually pleasing.		0.432				
Q8 The resort would be pretty.		0.517				
Q14* There would be industrial pollution in the resort		0.417				
Q26 The hotel staff would be courteous.		0.500				
Q39 There would be efficient room temperature control.		0.458				
Q10 There would be a lot of building work going on.			0.602			
Q13 There would be regional problems (terrorism, war, migration, etc.).			0.575			
Q31 There would be queing/waiting for service.			0.687			
Q36 There might be shortages of some food and or drink.			0.790			
Q37 There might be shortages of fresh water.			0.794			
Q38 There might be power cuts.			0.741			
Q5 The climate would be mainly sunny				0.485		
Q7 The resort would be built in old colonial style of architecture.				0.510		
Q9 The resort would be unspoiled.				0.462		

Questions	Heritage and Culture	Accommodation	Physical Assets	Transfers	Ambiance	Social Life			
Q12	There would be little drunkenness or rowdiness.			0.531					
Q32	Facilities in the room would function properly.			0.488					
Q33	Hotel meals would be of a high quality.			0.523					
Q35	Laundry service would be good.			0.412					
Q54	The arrival airport would be modern and efficient.			0.449					
Q55	The holiday would be good value for money.			0.438					
S56	In-flight service would be of a high quality.			0.477					
Q11	The beach would be uncrowded.				0.467				
Q19	The resort would have a variety of shops.				0.408				
Q22	Restaurants would be cheap.				0.521				
Q24	Shops would be cheap.				0.673				
Q27	The hotel staff would be friendly.				0.634				
Q28	The room would be quiet.				0.560				
Q29	The room would have a good view.				0.541				
Q18	The resort would have a variety bars.					0.652			
Q20	The resort would have a variety of nightlife.					0.642			
Q21	The resort would be fashionable.					0.560			
Q23	Bars would be cheap.					0.800			
Q25	Nightlife would be cheap.					0.753			
	Eigenvalue	0.889	0.839	0.824	0.744	0.772	0.792		
	Rate of Variance Declaration	12.21	4.104	3.665	2.709	2.377	2.042		
	Rate of Cumulative Declaration	22.62	7.600	6.787	5.016	4.402	3.782		
Q17**	The resort would have a variety of restaurants.			0.230	0.262	0.191	0.313	0.079	0.208
Q30**	The room would have quality furnishings.			0.031	0.525	0.210	0.523	0.095	0.089
Q40**	Cars would mainly be of old classic American style.			0.349	-0.386	-0.286	0.204	0.183	0.089
Q53**	Immigration would be fast and efficient.			0.283	-0.023	-0.236	0.187	0.265	0.103

*: S14 is considered as normal coded (positive) in this study as a result of the factor analysis, whereas S17, S30, S40 and S53 are subtracted from the scale as a result of the factor analysis.

After the necessary assumptions, Varimax rotation was performed to determine which questions were placed under which dimension, and the results of the first analysis of EFA showed that the items were collected in 6 subscales larger than the essence 1. While the original form of the scale is composed of 6 sub-dimensions (Tribe and Snaith (1998), some of the questions are not in the original dimension subscale, whereas the number 14 (There would be industrial pollution in the resort) is reverse coded (negative) (Table 2). S17, S30, S40 and S53 were excluded from the analysis of the proposals as a result of the factor analysis.

While statements 34,41,42,43,44,45,46,47,48,49,50,51 of the statements taking place among the statements used in the survey of this research take place in heritage and culture dimension, statements 1,2,3,4,6,8,14,26,39 take place in accommodation dimension. Statements 10, 13, 31,36,37,38 in the scale take place in the physical assets dimension. There are statements 5,7,9,12,32,33,35,54,55,56 in transfers dimension.

Statements 11,19,22,24,27,28,29 take place in ambiance dimension. 18, 20,21,23,25 expressions on the scale are in the social life dimension. According to the results obtained, the questions on the scales according to all the adjustment criteria can be accepted and the validity of the scales is ensured by showing good adaptation.

2.4. Data Analysis

Reliability and validity analyzes were performed in the study with respect to the variables of the model respectively. The levels of the expressions on the scale were determined by using the main determinant statistics (arithmetic mean and standard deviation) and the relationship between the statistical analysis methods such as correlation and the specified variables in the research model were tested. In addition, Mann-Whitney-U test and Kruskal Wallis tests were performed to determine whether there were differences between groups according to demographic variables.

3. FINDINGS AND RESULTS

3.1. Demographic Variables of Participants

A total of 200 people participated in the research. Demographic variables belonging to participants are given in Table 2. 88.5% of the participants are women, 80.5% are in the age range of 18-25 years, 47% of them are high school graduates, 68% of them have middle level and 74% of them are living in the Central Anatolia region.

Table 2: Demographic Variables of Participants

Demographic Variables	Category	N	%
Gender	Woman	177	88.5
	Men	23	11.5
Age	18-25 Age	161	80.5
	26-33 Age	30	15.0
	34-41 Age	9	4.5
Education	Primary and Secondary	3	1.5
	High School	94	47.0
	Associate Degree	20	10.0
	Undergraduate Degree -	72	36.0
Marital Status	Postgraduate Degree	11	5.5
	Married	19	9.5
Income	Single	181	90.5
	Low	49	24.5
	Middle	136	68.0
Region of Arrival	High	15	7.5
	Mediterranean	24	12.0
	Aegean	17	8.5
	Southeastern Anatolia	3	1.5
	Central Anatolia	152	76.0
	Black Sea	4	2.0

3.2. Discrimination Tests According to Demographic Variables

According to the results of the Kruskal Wallis Test given in Table 3 for determining the difference between the educational status and the Holsat scale dimensions; It seems that there is a difference among the degree of High School degree, Associate Degree and Postgraduate Degree in Transfers dimension.

Table 3: **Kruskal Wallis Test Results According to the Education of the Participants**

	Primary and Secondary (n=3)		High School (n=94)		Associate Degree (n=20)		Undergraduate Degree (n=72)		Post graduate Degree (n=11)		P
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Heritage and Culture	3.94	0.54	4.16	0.62	4.22	0.53	4.10	0.56	3.64	1.23	0.731
Accommodation	4.37	0.25	4.51	0.59	4.54	0.38	4.51	0.54	4.19	1.12	0.522
Physical Assets	4.77	0.38	4.35	0.82	4.35	0.75	4.33	0.88	4.60	0.56	0.744
Transfers	3.76	0.05	4.15	0.53	3.93	0.37	3.94	0.53	3.75	0.94	0.015*
Ambiance	4.33	0.57	4.32	0.65	4.20	0.34	4.33	0.60	3.97	1.05	0.198
Social Life	4.13	0.75	3.95	0.90	4.15	0.60	4.15	0.80	3.50	1.04	0.217
Total	4.22	0.38	4.24	0.43	4.23	0.31	4.23	0.40	3.94	0.87	0.726

*:shows intergroup significant difference statistically. ($p<0.05$), *Kruskal Wallis test*

According to the results of the Kruskal Wallis test given in Table 4 for determining the difference between the region where the participants come from and the dimensions of the Holsat Scale; It is seen that there is a difference in Transfer dimension of Aegean region and Central Anatolia region.

Table 4: **Kruskal Wallis Test Results According to the Region of Arrival of the Participants**

	Mediterranean (n=24)		Aegean (n=17)		Southeastern Anatolia (n=3)		Central Anatolia (n=152)		Black Sea (n=4)		P
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Heritage and Culture	4.14	0.57	3.88	0.84	3.35	1.42	4.15	0.61	4.17	0.34	0.727
Accommodation	4.37	0.82	4.43	0.95	4.33	0.48	4.53	0.51	4.41	0.35	0.604
Physical Assets	4.37	0.83	4.60	0.61	4.88	0.19	4.32	0.85	4.50	0.79	0.426
Transfers	3.85 ^a	0.61	3.55 ^a	0.77	4.06	0.25	4.10 ^b	0.50	4.17	0.12	0.006*
Ambiance	4.33	0.64	4.17	0.96	4.42	0.49	4.29	0.60	4.46	0.21	0.970
Social Life	3.90	0.88	4.21	1.04	3.66	1.15	4.01	0.83	4.45	0.10	0.408
Total	4.16	0.48	4.14	0.71	4.12	0.51	4.23	0.40	4.36	0.27	0.900

*: shows intergroup significant difference statistically. ($p<0.05$), *Kruskal Wallis test*

CONCLUSION

Generally when the results of the study are examined, guests who do prefer to stay at hotels regarding their accommodation choices, it can be stated that the experiences they had concerning the vacational satisfaction are positive. According to the results obtained from this study in choosing hotels of the touristic consumer group, natural and authentic architecture of these places, an original conceptual design, adopting an individually focused service concept, high level quality, cleanliness, luxury and comfort are effective. Especially, the issues such as cleanliness quality in the general zones of the hotel and in rooms and private and individual attention shown to the guests, can be counted among the prominent elements and components of vacational satisfaction.

This study was conducted in Konya 4 and 5 star hotels to measure holiday satisfaction. Firstly, because four of the statements take place in two factors, the statement is removed and Exploratory Factor Analysis was done. When the demographic features of the participants are evaluated, it can be stated that most of the visitors are woman and between the ages of 18-25. Most of the participants are single. There is no difference according to the results of Mann Whitney-U test for determining the difference of participants' gender and marital status and Holsat Scale dimensions. There was no difference according to the results of the Kruskal Wallis test to determine the differences in age and Holsat scale of the participants.

There are statistically significant differences between the region where the participants come from and the dimensions of the Holsat Scale. It is seen that there is a difference in Transfer dimension of Aegean region and Central Anatolia region. Another dimension in which there are significant differences were obtained is availability. In this dimension, there are significant differences among the degree of High School degree, Associate Degree and Postgraduate Degree levels in transfers dimension about education status.

As a result of the expectation and experience of visiting 4 and 5 star hotels in Konya, Physical Assets and Social Life dimensions have been determined to be significant in holiday satisfaction. This research can be considered as a guide for the experience and satisfaction measurements.

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