

Examining The Relationship Between Recreation Marketing And Tourism

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ABSTRACT

Due to the growth of the tourism in Turkey, recreation has gained strength and attention from marketing researchers. This article aims to verify if recreation effects consumer behavior and the possibility hotels may have of managing recreation activities actively to gain the customer. A survey conducted regarding the subject and the results showed that hotel workers' skills and attitudes, physical facilities of hotels and recreational activities in the hotels impact consumers behaviors positively. In the questionnaire study made on tourists who accommodated at the 5-star hotels in Muğla city, it was determined that hotels placed importance on recreational activities and tourists participated in such activities and thanks to this, they spent good time. In this context, tourism enterprises must place more importance on recreational activities in tourism marketing, trained specialists must be employed on this area, and thanks to this, by attracting more tourists to the country, both tourism incomes must be increased and tourists must return their homes happy. In consideration of this study, we may say that recreation marketing has an important place in tourism. It is observed that recreation has positive effects on development of tourism, economy of country and social life.

Keywords: Marketing, Recreation, Tourism, Recreational Activities.

1. INTRODUCTION

Though tourism is a recreation activity alone, it is seen that recreational activities presented (marketed) at touristic enterprises has been expressed with animation concept. In spite of the fact that the relation between tourism and recreation in literature is tried to be defined within this confined concept, this relation is more comprehensive and they complement each other. Recently, in parallel to tourism activities that develop in both our country and the world, the place of recreation marketing in tourism increases day by day.

In tourism marketing, recreation has effects both on economy and social life. The tourism incomes, especially in respect to developing countries, have been neglected because of reasons such as balance of foreign payments and employment. Additionally, tourism creates income effect for people and organizations, provides income to the state as a tax under many items,



establishes a balance in foreign exchange rates and speeds up the super and sub-structuring, especially in touristic regions (Sezgin, 2001; 90). Besides, tourism is an important subject overemphasized by governments that seek a remedy for foreign trade deficit, inflation and unemployment (Baldemir vd, 2011; 243).

The tourism marketing and recreation are elements that affect each other. Though tourism marketing is a fact alone, its effect on increasing and spreading of recreational activities is very big. In this context, tourism marketing and recreation is considered as factors that complete each other. Besides, establishment of 10 new tourism cities is being planned and this is among 2013 year targets of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. It is thought that recreational activity areas to be constructed in such cities for purpose of ensuring benefit in development of tourism will have positive effects on the county in respect of tourism marketing. In the study, it is researched whether recreational activities have an effect on tourism marketing; whether consumers (tourists) take notice of recreational activities and whether recreational activities are effective in preference of the said hotel again. Accordingly, in the first section of the study, corporate infrastructure of the subject is emphasized. With a questionnaire study, an application is performed and consequences and suggestions, with analysis results, are involved. The tourism sector, also containing the marketing, develops every passing day. However, offering of products alone increasingly becomes less important because of big differences in expectation and satisfaction levels of customers. For this reason, companies must review and redefine their strategies in order not to remain passive against changes (Williams, 2006; 485). If a hotel management only tries to sell rooms, it may not be successful. The room service must be supported with catering and entertainment service (Rızaoğlu, 2007; 27). In this context, the companies that have to adapt themselves to changes must consider the recreational activities and places in the changes they will realize. Because the physical facilities such as pool, fitness hall, boat, yacht, canoe, ski, parachute and balloon owned by an accommodation enterprise may be an important factor for preference of that enterprise again.

H₁: There is a positive correlation between physical facilities and repurchasing intend.

Establishment of the most appropriate relation between the amount of production factors and amount of products and services, creating of demand for products and services produced by the enterprise, ensuring competition advantage in the market, transmitting of products and services produced by the enterprise to customers effectively, determination of new target groups, ensuring adaptation of products to the market and competing with competitors in the market are among the targets of tourism marketing in the operating level (İçöz, 1996; 99).

The targets of tourism marketing in the country level are increasing of occupancy rate in accommodation enterprises, making the production system rational in tourism, establishment of the most appropriate relation between the prices and products and services, application of touristic advertisement and promotion efficiently, making of market researches and finding of new markets, application of appropriate marketing strategies and plans, promoting of potential demand for the country, maintaining and increasing of existing market share in the international tourism market and ensuring advantage in international and interregional competition (İçöz, 1996; 102). When the targets of tourism marketing are realized in the operating and country level, the basic macroeconomic targets can be obtained and we may become a more developed country in respect to both economic and social level.



Among the 2023 targets of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, it is planned to establish 10 new tourism cities. These cities are; İğneada - Kiyıköy Eko -Tourism Place, Kilyos Tourism Place, Saros Bay Tourism Place, Kapıdağ Peninsula - Avşa - Marmara Islands Tourism Place, Datça Eko- Tourism Place, Kaş - Finike Tourism Place, Anamur Tourism Place, Samandağ Tourism Place, Maçka Tourism Place and Kahta Tourism Place (TTS, 2007; 58). It is thought that the recreational activity areas to be constructed in such cities to be established for purpose of ensuring benefit to development of tourism will have positive effects on the country in terms of tourism marketing. The domestic and foreign tourists who participate in recreational activities during their free times do not only make sports but also become socialized by having a good time. Tourists who have participated in recreational activities and pleased with the activities may prefer the enterprise they accommodated in next year.

H₂: There is a positive correlation between the recreational services and repurchasing intend.

Recreational activities can be grouped under different titles through different evaluations. For instance, a recreational activity realized in a pool can be performed at different places both as an outdoor and indoor activity. In this context, it is difficult to use definite lines while classifying the recreational activities.

There are common points for recreation and tourism. Though they have different aspects, recreation and tourism exhibit an interconnected structure. Among the recreational tourism, there are sea and beach activities, nature and green tourism activities, social life activities, mountain and winter sports activities and culture and art activities (Hacıoğlu and Gökdeniz, 1998: 68). The personnel who render service to tourists in performance of such activities must be supported with a good hosting service (Rızaoğlu, 2007: 27). In this context, the personnel of tourism enterprises must have both academic and practical knowledge and play an important role in their preference for coming again in next year by hosting them as a guest.

H₃: There is a positive correlation between the abilities and behaviors of personnel and repurchasing intend.

2. METHOD

The core of the study is consisted of tourists visiting the Aegean Region, especially Muğla city. The sample group of the study is consisted of 340 domestic and foreign customers of hotels rendering service in Bodrum and Marmaris districts of Muğla. The data were obtained from total 5-star 34 hotels that are active in Bodrum (21 hotels) and Marmaris (12 hotels) districts. After the questionnaires were distributed to tourists, necessary explanations about the purpose of research and data collecting means were made.

2.1. Data Collection Tool

Sociodemographic questionnaire form consists of the introduction section stating the purpose of questionnaire, of the first section about determination of demographic features and of the second section with nineteen clauses about determination of recreation service quality (animation, spa & wellness) perceived by participants. The questions involved in the second section of questionnaire; the “Servqual Service Quality Scale” developed by Parasuman and his colleagues (1988; 26) was adapted for 5-star hotels by Öztürk (2005; 175). This adapted questionnaire was used as a data collecting means after necessary permissions were obtained.



“Servqual Service Quality Scale”; it is a technique developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry to measure the service quality performance of an enterprise by means of a gap analysis application, depending on the service quality needs of consumers. Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, in the scale they prepared for their researches, tried to develop a model to firstly define the service quality, determine the elements affecting it and make the service quality measurable.

As a result of this research, important information about definition of service quality, service expectations, elements affecting it and dimensions of service quality were obtained. According to these results, the thought of expectations of customers must be met or a service beyond their expectations must be rendered in order to be able to present a high quality service has gained importance.

2.2. Analysis of Data

The data obtained from the study was evaluated with SPSS 22.0 program. The definitive statistics frequency (n) was given in percentage (%). By evaluating whether the variable was in conformity to the normal distribution in meeting of continuous variables; ANOVA test was used in independent groups. The linear relation between variables was evaluated with Pearson correlation test. The statistical materiality level was evaluated in p 95% confidence interval, $p < 0.05$ significance level.

3. FINDINGS

Table 1. Demographic Properties of the Participants

Variables	Number	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Female	177	52
Male	163	48
Marital Status		
Single	44	13
Married	95	28
Married and have Children	201	59
Age		
Under 20	41	12
21-35	163	48
36-45	122	36
46 and over	14	4
Nationality		
England	119	35
Holland	58	17
Russia	51	15
Germany	41	12
France	27	8
Native Tourist	20	6
Others	24	7

Table 1 shows a comparison of the socio-demographic status of the respondents. The respondents consisted of 48% males and 52% females. More than 60% of the respondents were under 35 years old, and 40% were over the age of 35 years. 13% of the respondents were bachelor and 28% of the respondents were married and rests of them were married and have children. 35% of the respondents came from England, 17% came from Netherlands and 15% came from Russia.

While 34% of the respondents of our questionnaire accommodated for a week, 55% accommodated between 8 and 14 days and 11% accommodated for 15 days and above. While



the rate of hotel customers, who contributed in the study and stayed more than once at the same hotel within last two years, was 65%, the rate of customers who stayed at the said hotel for the first time within last two years was 35%.

Table 2: T-Test Results According to the Tourists's Gender Variable

Dimensions	Cinsiyet	N	$\bar{X}$	Ss	t	p
Physical Facilities	Kadın	177	20,43	4,07	2,777	,006*
	Erkek	163	18,69	4,60		
Recreational Service	Kadın	177	15,95	3,70	1,051	,293
	Erkek	163	15,53	3,55		
Personnal	Kadın	177	15,00	3,54	2,813	0,05*
	Erkek	163	13,90	3,60		

When table 2 is examined, a meaningful difference has been determined in favor of woman tourists for physical facilities and personnel sub-dimensions according to gender variable of tourists. ($t=2,77$; $p=0,006 < 0,05$; kadın=20,43 > erkek=18,69 ve $t=2,813$; $p=0,005 < 0,05$; kadın= 15,00 > 13,90).

Table 3: ANOVA Test Results Of Tourists According To Age Variable.

Dimensions	Yaş	N	$\bar{X}$	Ss	F	p
Physical facilities	20 ve Altı	41	19,9756	4,90657	,672	,570
	21-35	163	19,5337	3,99889		
	36-45	122	18,9754	4,67712		
	46 ve Üzeri	14	19,2143	4,45798		
Recreational Service	20 ve Altı	41	16,7561	3,92925	1,941	,123
	21-35	163	15,5521	3,48923		
	36-45	122	15,8525	3,61053		
	46 ve Üzeri	14	14,3571	4,27168		
Personnal	20 ve Altı	41	15,2683	3,78830	2,402	,068
	21-35	163	14,0491	3,42252		
	36-45	122	14,5984	3,74311		
	46 ve Üzeri	14	16,0714	3,56186		

No meaningful difference has been found in all 3 dimensions according to age variable of tourists who participated in the study. $p>0,005$.

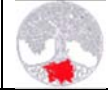


Table 4: The Correlation Coefficients Of Recreational Activities, Physical Facilities, Abilities Of Personnel And Repurchasing Demands Of Tourists

Repurchasing Demands	n	r	p
Recreational Services	100	,74	0,01
Physical facilities	100	,77	0,01
Abilities and behaviors of personnel	100	,79	0,01

In interpretation of correlation coefficients, the scale suggested by Cohen (1988: 78-80) to evaluate the power of correlation coefficients in behavior sciences studies was used ($r=0,10$:Small; $r=0,30$:Medium ve $r=0,50$:Big). According to the results of the study, it was determined that the correlation between the recreational activities presented by the enterprise and accommodation at the relevant hotel again was meaningful and strong ($r=0,74$ ve $p<0,01$).

Similarly, the correlation between the physical facilities of the accommodation enterprise ($r=0,77$ ve $p<0,01$) and positions of the personnel ($r=0,79$ ve $p<0,01$) was meaningful and strong. In this context, H1, H2 and H3 hypotheses have been supported. The consequence here is that if the physical facilities of a tourism enterprise are good, its personnel are skilled and they exhibit positive behaviors and recreational activities are performed with such features, we can say that this will play a big role in preference of the enterprise again. The findings of hotel customers participated in the study related to recreation tourism are; while 95% of participants stated that the hotel they accommodated had sufficient facilities for entertainment and free time activities, 81% characterized themselves as lively, dynamic and participative and 88% of participants expressed that they were happy with the recreational activities realized at the hotel and the personnel who carried out the activities. Besides, according to the questionnaire study, tourists liked participating in animations at the hotel and this ensured them to have a good time. Participants expressed that they might come to the hotel they accommodated because of recreational activities.

The other consequence of the study was that children and elders paid more attention to recreational activities. It was concluded that “Besides to recreational activities made inside or outside of the hotel by the hotel management, facilities in the city/district where the hotel locates (daily boat tours, safaris, activities at entertainment places like night disco-bar, fishing, riding etc) increase the possibility to revisit that country/hotel in the next period”.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONSEQUENCE

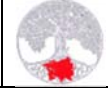
Tourism is a time frame that is benefited from with different activities mainly as entertainment, recreation and sightseeing. Though the expectations of people from a holiday differ, their common point is that they struggle to find attraction centers that can meet their expectations in the maximum level (Manap 2006; 160). In this context, application of recreational activities in the tourism industry will play an important role in increasing of tourism potential in our country. In the study made by Turan (2010; 45-47), it was determined that tourists who satisfied with the animation services extended their staying period at the hotel.



In the questionnaire study made on tourists who accommodated at the 5-star hotels in Bodrum and Marmaris, it was determined that hotels placed importance on recreational activities and tourists participated in such activities and thanks to this, they spent good time. In the study made by Mikulic and Prebezac (2011; 690), while it was stated that the basic factor in ensuring of customer satisfaction at hotels was recreational services, the factor effective on hotel preferences of customers was also recreational services (Albayrak, 2012; 46). Indeed, according to the study made by Borhan and Erkmén (2009; 21-26), it is observed that recreational activities are an important factor in hotel preferences of customers. Besides, the participants expressed that they might revisit the hotel they accommodated because of its recreational activities, in addition to physical facilities and qualified personnel at the hotel. It has been observed that recreational services presented at hotels were also effective on period of accommodation (Tekin, 2004; 317-319). It has been found that families with children and elders paid more attention to recreational activities. As Gaines and his colleagues emphasized their studies, programs for children may cause a positive communication by being rumored.

In this context, tourism enterprises must place more importance on recreational activities in tourism marketing, trained specialists must be employed on this area, and thanks to this, by attracting more tourists to the country, both tourism incomes must be increased and tourists must return their homes happy. In consideration of this study, we may say that recreation has an important place in tourism marketing. It is observed that recreation has positive effects on development of tourism, economy of country and social life. As recreation is a new study area in tourism marketing, we may say that it is effective in creation of employment in tourism area. Besides to recreational activities, it can be said that physical facilities of hotels and abilities and attitudes of their personnel have a strong effect on repurchasing intend of consumers.

This study acknowledges limitations. It is based on the 5-stars hotel customers who accept to fill in the survey in Muğla, Turkey. And future studies should consider the shift in recreation marketing different ways, service quality and consumer perception.



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