

## THE EFFECT OF CUSTOMERS' HOTEL EXPERIENCE ON SATISFACTION: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF MEMORABILITY

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### Abstract

Nowadays, hotels have become places of life and experience areas rather than a place to sleep at night for customers. Customers' experiences during their stay at the hotel can effect their future behavior. Moreover, the memorability of these experiences can also effect these behaviors. However, there is little empirical evidence identifying and measuring the relationship between these variables. Hence, it has been investigated whether memorability plays a mediator role in the relationship between customers' hotel experiences and satisfaction levels in this research. For this purpose, a field survey conducted in Cappadocia region where the cave hotels operate intensively. The data was collected by pollsters in April, 2019. Within the scope of the research, 439 questionnaires were collected from tourists staying in cave hotels. The regression analysis based on Bootstrap method was used to test whether memorability plays a mediation role in the effect of consumer hotel experiences on satisfaction. In the light of the study's findings, it was found that memorability plays an indirect mediation role in the effect of hotel experience dimensions on satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Customer. Experience. Hotel Experience. Satisfaction. Memorability.

## O EFEITO DA EXPERIÊNCIA DO HOTEL DOS CLIENTES NA SATISFAÇÃO: O PAPEL MEDIADOR DA MEMORABILIDADE

### Resumo

Hoje em dia, os hotéis se tornaram um lugar para dormir. As experiências dos clientes durante a estadia no hotel podem afetar seu comportamento futuro. Além disso, a memorização dessas experiências também pode afetar esses comportamentos. No entanto, existem poucas evidências empíricas que identificam e medem a relação entre essas variáveis. Assim, investigou-se se a memorização desempenha um papel mediador na relação entre as experiências dos clientes e os níveis de satisfação nesta pesquisa. Para este propósito, uma pesquisa de campo realizada na região da Capadócia, onde os hotéis das cavernas operam intensamente. Os dados foram coletados por pesquisadores em abril de 2019. No âmbito da pesquisa, foram coletados 439 questionários de turistas hospedados em hotéis-caverna. A análise de regressão baseada no método Bootstrap foi usada para testar se a memorabilidade desempenha um papel de mediação nas experiências de satisfação do consumidor. À luz dos resultados do estudo, verificou-se que a memorabilidade desempenha um papel indireto de mediação.

**Palavras chave:** Cliente. Experiência. Experiência em Hotelaria. Satisfação. Memorabilidade.

## EL EFECTO DE LA EXPERIENCIA HOTELERA DE LOS CLIENTES EN LA SATISFACCION: EL PAPEL MEDIADOR DE LA MEMORABILIDAD

### Resumen

Hoy en día, los hoteles se han convertido en lugares de vida y de experiencia en lugar de un lugar para dormir por la noche para los clientes. Las experiencias de los clientes durante su estadia en el hotel pueden afectar su comportamiento futuro. Además, la memorabilidad de estas experiencias también puede afectar estos comportamientos. Sin embargo, hay poca evidencia empírica que identifique y mida la relación entre estas variables. Por lo tanto, se ha investigado si la memorabilidad desempeña un papel de mediador en la relación entre las experiencias de hotel de los clientes y los niveles de satisfacción en esta investigación. Para este propósito, se realizó un estudio de campo en la región de Capadocia, donde los hoteles cueva operan intensamente. Los encuestadores recopilaron los datos en abril de 2019. Dentro del alcance de la investigación, se recogieron 439 cuestionarios de turistas alojados en hoteles cueva. El análisis de regresión basado en el método Bootstrap se utilizó para evaluar si la memorabilidad desempeña un papel de mediación en el efecto de las experiencias de los hoteles de consumo en la satisfacción. A la luz de los hallazgos del estudio, se descubrió que la memorabilidad desempeña un papel de mediación indirecta en el efecto de las dimensiones de la experiencia hotelera en la satisfacción.

**Palabras clave:** Cliente. Experiencia. Experiencia Hotelera. Satisfacción. Memorabilidad.



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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Consumption is increasingly seen as a subjective image, a value creation activity that produces physical and mental assets (Firat & Dholakia, 2003: 77). It has also been a source of individuals' dreams and happiness (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982).

Although the symbolic and hedonic aspects of consumption are considered as dimensions that reveal the experience, the beginning of the discussion of experience as a concept in the consumer literature dates back to the early 1980s.

Experience can be defined as "a study flow of fantasies, feelings and fun" (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982: 132). Schmitt (1999: 57) describes the experience as "result of encountering, undergoing, or living through situations. According to Pine and Gilmore (1999) postmodern consumers desire more than consumption of products and services; rather, they seek unique occurrences in order to create memorable experience (Güneren & Karakuş, 2015).

During the consumption process there has been a transition from commodities to goods, from goods to services and from services to experiences. Each transition represents an economic development (Furmolly & Kirkulak Uludağ, 2018) and an increase in benefits (Yuan & Wu, 2008). Commodities are measurable, goods are material, services are intangible, experiences are catchy (Pine & Gilmore, 1999; 2000).

Because today's consumers continue to buy products and services, they often desire experiences that will take place in their memories and enjoy them (Kinney, 2003; González-Damián, 2017). In other words, today's consumers are interested in the ability of products and brands to offer attractive experiences for themselves, waiting for things that will touch their hearts, excite themselves and capture them emotionally (Schmitt, 2009).

Therefore, businesses have to offer customers not only goods and services, but also enriched experiences. For this reason, Pine and Gilmore (1999: 1), at the beginning of the book of "The Experience Economy", illustrates the experience of coffee and the change in the tourism sector.

Pine and Gilmore (1999) state that there are four main realms of experience: esthetics, escape, education and entertainment. The authors emphasize that each realm of experience has specific characteristics, and often these realms of experience are intertwined.

These realms of experience are also considered in the literature by some authors as types of experience or dimensions of experience (Oh, Fiore, &

Jeoung, 2007; Çeltek, 2010; Hosany & Witham, 2010; Mehmetoglu & Engen, 2011; Loureiro, 2014; Chang & Lin, 2015; Song et al., 2015). In the literature, it is argued that products that include all four realms of experience will be more successful in creating consumer experience (Williams, 2006; Oh et al., 2007; Hosany & Witham, 2010; Mehmetoglu & Engen, 2011; Song et al., 2015).

In recent years, experience has been frequently researched in the tourism field (Yılmaz & Ardiç Yetiş, 2016; González-Damián ve Ramírez, 2017; Núñez, 2017). It is seen that the tourism experience in the literature is examined through various tourism forms, tourist typologies or places/destinations.

The experience of customer in hotels, which is one of the important areas where tourism service is produced and consumed, is of great importance. Because hotels are life and experience areas rather than being a place to sleep at night for customers.

It is important to ensure that hotel guests have a positive experience for hotel management because positive experiences are an important criterion for the customer to revisit and recommend (Mody, Suess, & Lehto, 2017; Kandampully, Zhang & Jaakkola, 2018).

Many studies have been done related to the hotel experience in the tourism literature (Johnson, Olsen, & Andreassen, 2009; Knutson et al., 2009; Poria, Reichel, & Brandt, 2011; Torres, Fu, & Lehto, 2014; Xiang et al., 2015). Some of these studies focused on determining the dimensions or key drivers of the hotel experience. In some studies, it is seen that the relationship between hotel experience and result-oriented issues such as brand equity, satisfaction, disappointment, etc. are examined.

Kim, Ritchie and McCormick (2012) states that the tourism experience should be memorable and recallable in the mind. Furthermore, Pine and Gilmore (2011) stated that the experience may result in positive behaviors towards behavioral tendencies such as strong memories, satisfaction, recommend to others, and intention to pay more.

At the same time, there are many studies indicating that a hedonic and entertaining hotel experience may result in positive behaviors such as positive memories, repeat visits and recommendations (Kim, 2010; Tung & Ritchie, 2011; Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2012; Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2013; Cetin & Istanbulu Dincer, 2014; Song et al., 2015; Xiang et al., 2015; Ren et al., 2018).

For this reason, it is aimed to investigate the effect of customers' hotel experience on satisfaction and the mediating role of memorability in this process in this study. For this purpose, a field survey conducted in Cappadocia region where the cave hotels operate intensively. As a result of the research,

it was found that memorability mediated indirectly the effect of all dimensions of hotel experience on satisfaction.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Hotel Experience

Tourist experiences constitute the essence of the tourism and hospitality industry. Tourists want to get different experiences in the hotels they stay. In this context, it is assumed that hotel experiences affect the future behavior of tourists.

According to Oh et al. (2007), experiences refer to entertaining, interesting and memorable events and moments. Although there are different definitions, experiences are personal, memorable, involve the perception and participation of customers, engage customers emotionally, and are shared with others (Walls et al., 2011). Besides, Pine and Gilmore (2011) stated that the experience may result in positive behaviors towards strong memories and behaviors such as satisfaction.

Based on previous studies about hotel experience on future behavior intention (Tung & Ritchie, 2011b; Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2012; Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2013; Cetin & Istanbulu Dincer, 2014; Ali, Hussain, & Ragavan, 2014; Song et al., 2015; Xiang et al., 2015; Ali, Hussain, & Omar, 2016; Ren et al., 2018) support that the hotel experience can result in memories and positive behaviors such as satisfaction, loyalty, repeat visits.

Also empirical studies conducted in different hotels indicate that experiences affect future behaviors. Oh et al. (2007) and Hosany & Witham (2010) are stated that there was a significant relationship between the hotel experiences and memorability. It is argued that experience-based services will be more successful in creating consumer experience in some studies (Williams, 2006; Oh et al., 2007; Hosany & Witham, 2010; Song et al., 2015; Ardiç Yetiş, 2015; Cetin & Walls, 2016).

Therefore, tourism industry, which wants to create competitive advantages (Güneren Özdemir & Yılmaz, 2016), should accept as much experience-oriented service approach as possible (Oh et al., 2007).

### 2.2 Customer Satisfaction

Consumer satisfaction has been the subject of many studies both in tourism and in different fields (Alegre & Cladera, 2009; Mendes et al., 2010; Eusébio & Vieira, 2013; Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2013; Cetin & Istanbulu Dincer, 2014; Ali & Omar, 2014;

Sipe & Testa, 2018). The main reason for addressing the concept of satisfaction is trying to understand and explain the future behavior of the consumer.

Kozak, Özel, Karagöz Yüncü (2011) also suggest that businesses that can provide consumer satisfaction can survive and others fail. For this reason, consumers can easily choose another service if they are not satisfied with the service they have purchased. Pine and Gilmore (2011) claim that the positive experiences of tourists provide satisfaction.

Although experience-oriented satisfaction is expanded from the concept of service satisfaction, experience-oriented satisfaction focuses on the overall assessment of consumers' experiences after consumption. Consumers will compare experience with expectations and create cognitive consistency or cognitive inconsistency. Emotional responses, based on cognitive consistency or inconsistency result to satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Kao, Huang, & Wu, 2008).

Previous studies show that consumer satisfaction after experience is an important outcome variable of consumer behavior and there is a significant relationship between them (Oh et al., 2007; Ali, Hussain & Ragavan, 2014; Ren et al., 2016). However, Berry, Carbone, and Haeckel (2002) argue that it is not possible to achieve customer satisfaction by offering products and services without experience.

Therefore, it is very important to examine these outcome variables in detail in order to better understand the purchasing actions of consumers and to enable them to buy the same touristic product again in the future.

### 2.3 Memorability

The concept of memorability, is defined as a situation or feature that can be remembered or worth remembering, is seen as an important feature of tourism experiences (Pikkemaat & Schuckert, 2007: 199). Memorability is important as for the essence of tourism experience (Cornelisse, 2018).

Tourists can have fun in all tourism experiences, but not every experience can be unforgettable or memorable (Kim et al., 2012: 13). Memorability is important for experience because only remembered experiences would influence tourist future decision-making (Kim, 2010: 780; Kim, Ritchie, & Tung, 2010; Sthapit & Coudounaris, 2017).

Therefore, in order to better understand the behavioral intentions of tourists, memorable experiences should be researched. There are three major reason to remember an experience or experience stored in memory; (1) the motivation to purchase is high when the information is drawn from

consumers' experiences; (2) consumers tend to perceive experiences as valuable and reliable information sources; (3) experience has great influencing power on future behavioral intentions (Kim, 2010: 781; Chen & Rahman, 2018: 154).

Previous studies on experience and memorability have shown that experience and memorability are interrelated (Oh et al., 2007; Tung & Ritchie, 2011a; Tung & Ritchie, 2011b; Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick, 2012; Kim, 2013; Ali, Hussain, & Ragavan, 2014; Kim, 2014; Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2015; Campos et al., 2016; Hung, Lee, & Huang, 2016; Ali, Ryu, & Hussain, 2016; Campos et al., 2017; Wei et al., 2019).

Also memorable experiences contribute to short and long term satisfaction (Sirgy et al. 2011; McCabe & Johnson, 2013; Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2015; Barnes, Mattsson, & Sørensen, 2016; Manthiou, Kang, & Chiang, 2016; Torres, 2016; Tsai, 2016; Agapito, Pinto, & Mendes, 2017; Sthapit & Coudounaris, 2018; Semrad & Rivera, 2018).

Accordingly, the hypotheses and research model of the study was developed as stated below:

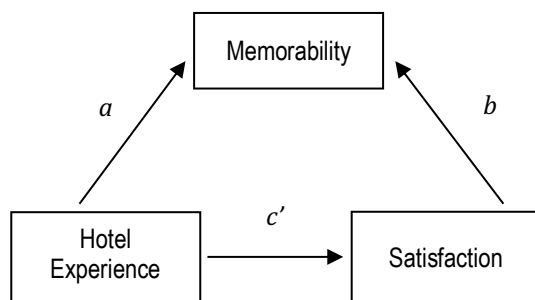
H<sub>1a</sub>: Memorability mediates the relationship between esthetic experience and satisfaction

H<sub>1b</sub>: Memorability mediates the relationship between entertainment experience and satisfaction

H<sub>1c</sub>: Memorability mediates the relationship between escape experience and satisfaction

H<sub>1d</sub>: Memorability mediates the relationship between education experience and satisfaction

Figure 1: Research Model.



Source: proper elaboration.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Instrument

A questionnaire was used as the data collection tool in the research. The first part of the questionnaire contained statements related to hotel experience, satisfaction and memorability of tourists who stayed cave hotels in Cappadocia. Demographic factors featured in the second section.

The hotel experience scale has eighteen statements and is composed of four sub-dimensions: esthetic experience, entertainment experience, escape experience, education experience. Many studies have been used to develop the hotel experience scale (Ardiç Yetiş, 2013; Ali, Hussain, & Ragavan, 2014; Cetin & Istanbulu Dinçer, 2014; Sipe & Testa, 2018; Tezgel, 2018).

The satisfaction was measured using three statements. While determining the satisfaction, the studies of Ali, Hussain and Omar (2016) and Bravo, Martinez and Pina (2019) were taken into consideration.

The memorability perceptions of the participants were measured three statements which was developed by Oh, Fiore and Jeoung (2007). The participants were asked to respond on a 5-point Likert-type scale such as "(1) Strongly Disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neither agree nor disagree; (4) Agree; (5) Strongly Agree".

Initially, the questionnaire was developed in English. Afterwards, it was translated in Turkish. In this way, it is aimed to reach foreign tourist who knows English well and domestic tourists. In order to avoid any mistakes during this process, the back-translation method was used (Brislin, 1976).

It was also reviewed by experts in both languages on the scale. Lastly, a pre-test was conducted with 15 participants from both languages. After the pre-test, it was determined that the questionnaire statements were understandable and clear and that no change was required in the statements.

#### 3.2 Sampling and Data Collection

The population of the research was composed of foreign (knows English well) and domestic tourists who come to Cappadocia region where the cave hotels operate intensively. Cappadocia is an important center of cultural tourism in Turkey (Çoban, 2012; Doğan & Karakuş, 2014) that aims to create a memorable and luxurious accommodation along the more rustic landscape and scenery of the city (AlSagri, 2011). The province of Nevşehir is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Cappadocia region, Turkey (Yılmaz, 2010).

According to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (2019), there are 101 tourism operating licensed, 16 tourism investment licensed and 230 municipality licensed hotels in Nevşehir (MCT, 2019a) It can be said that most of the hotels licensed by the municipality consist of cave hotels.

In 2018, 1.018.744 tourists were accommodated in hotels which have tourism

operating and investment licensed, 757.439 tourists were accommodated in hotels which have municipality licensed (MCT, 2019b).

The data was collected by pollsters through face-to-face interviews in April, 2019. The respondents were selected through convenience sampling. The response rates for the questionnaire forms were 439 out of 550 questionnaires. The questionnaires were gathered at places such as Göreme Open Air Museum, Paşabağı Ruins, Göreme bus station, Göreme city center. Before the questionnaire was applied, participants were asked whether they had stayed in the cave hotel.

### 3.3 Data Analysis

In accordance with the scope of the current study, factor analysis was conducted to determine the dimensions of the hotel experience scale. The correlation analysis was performed to determine the relationship between hotel experience dimensions, satisfaction and memorability.

In addition, the demographic characteristics of the participants were analyzed by descriptive analysis. Lastly, the regression analysis based on Bootstrap method was used to test whether memorability plays a mediation role in the effect of consumer esthetic experiences on satisfaction.

## 4 FINDINGS

### 4.1 Demographic findings

When the participants were investigated according to gender, it was seen that the participation rates of men (48.3%) and women (51.7%) were close to each other's. Exactly half of the participants are between 19-31 years old. This means that Cappadocia is preferred by young visitors. Consistent with this finding, 57.2% of the participants were single. The participants were found to have a wide range of occupational groups. Therefore, 67.8% of the participants were undergraduate and graduate degree. Finally, 57.2% of the participants were foreign tourists while 42.8% were domestic tourists.

### 4.2 Measurement Model

Pine and Gilmore (1999) stated that the "experience scale" consists of four dimensions: esthetics, entertainment, escape and education. Factor analysis was applied to test the construct validity of the scale used in this study. As a result of factor analysis, the 13th statement of the experience

scale was removed from the scale because it was loaded on two factors. Besides, the standard factor loading of this statement was below the recommended value (.50). The model was re-estimated after the statement was removed from the scale.

As a dimension of factor analysis, Barlett's Test of Sphericity and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) tests were used. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was calculated as .885. This means that the adequacy of the sample is above the desired level (Kaiser, 1974). The result for Barlett's test of sphericity was 2361,757 and the statistical significance value ( $p=0.000$ ) indicated that the correlation values were adequate for factor analysis (Bartlett, 1954).

Thus, it was determined that the scale meets the basic assumptions about factor analysis. Eigenvalues were taken as the basis for principal component analysis to determine the factors by exploratory factor analysis. Varimax rotation was performed to rank factor loading (Hair et al., 2009). As can be seen from the exploratory factor analysis findings given in Table 1, there are 4 factors with eigenvalues above 1.

Also, the correlation analysis was used to determine the direction and strength of the relationships between variables in the study. The correlation results are given in Table 1. Analyses demonstrated that all variables were significantly correlated with each other in each sample (all  $p<.001$ ). According to the correlation analysis, a low and medium positive correlation was found between all variables (Alpar, 2018: 409).

The reliability of the scales used in the study was investigated with Cronbach's Alpha. The reliability results can be seen in Table 1. The reliability of the hotel experience scale was determined as 0.886. Besides, the reliability of the scale dimensions was calculated as follows: esthetic experience 0.834; entertainment experience 0.757, escape experience 0.734; education experience.

Lastly, the reliability of the satisfaction scale used in the research was 0.805 and the reliability of the retention scale was 0.816. The reliability values of all constructs exceed the value of .60 recommended by Bagozzi and Yi (1988). Therefore, it can be said that all scales are reliable.

### 4.3 Mediation Analysis

The regression analysis based on Bootstrap method was used to test whether memorability plays a mediation role in the effect of consumer esthetic experiences on satisfaction.

**Table 1:** Measurement Model Results.

Dimensions	Items	Communalities	Factor Loads	Eigenvalue	Variance (%)	Mean	Reliability	Correlation	
Esthetic Experience (EST)	I found the hotel's architectural design very attractive and authentic	,732	,840	5,865	18,815	4,190	,834	EN	,431**
	I found that the architectural design of the hotel is compatible with the natural structure representing the region	,651	,789					ESC	,383**
	I felt a real sense of harmony and pleasure of looking esthetically	,615	,755					ED	,449**
	The architecture design of hotel evoked me to the desire to take pictures	,578	,661					S	,578**
	It was pleasant experiencing the atmosphere	,570	,649					M	,417**
Entertainment Experience (EN)	The attitude and behavior of the employees made me happy	,598	,732	1,966	14,693	4,005	,757	ESC	,535**
	My communication with other guests made me happy	,525	,658					ED	,444**
	I relaxed physically and mentally	,564	,646					S	,572**
	I didn't understand how time passed	,512	,618					M	,565**
	I enjoyed tasting local food and beverages that the hotel offers	,448	,603						
Escape Experience (ESC)	Let me imagine being someone else	,689	,789	1,400	13,690	3,681	,734	ED	,539**
	I felt I played a different character	,684	,719					S	,382**
	I felt like I was living in a different time or place	,613	,691					M	,522**
	I totally forgot about my daily routine	,469	,547						
Education Experience (ED)	I learned a lot about constructions of cave hotels	,750	,820	1,019	12,830	3,750	,751	S	,304**
	The experience has made me more knowledgeable about cave hotels	,698	,769					M	,403**
	It stimulated my curiosity to learn new things	,555	,568						

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy: %88,5; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity X<sup>2</sup>: 2361,757; df: 136, p< ,0001;

Grand Mean: 3,957; Cronbach's Alpha: ,886; Total Variance Explained: % 60,298

Scale: 1: Strongly disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Neither agree nor disagree, 4: Agree, 5: Strongly agree

\*\* p < 0,01, S: Satisfaction, M: Memorability

Source: prepared by the authors.

Lynch & Chen, 2010; Preacher, Rucker & Hayes, 2007). The analyzes were performed using Process macro developed by Hayes (2018). In the analysis, 5000 resampling option with Bootstrap technique was preferred. In order to support the research hypothesis, 95% confidence interval (CI) values obtained from the analysis should not include zero (0) values in the mediation effect analysis with

Bootstrap technique (MacKinnon, Lockwood & Williams, 2004).

For this purpose, the results of regression analysis for this model are given in Table 2. Whether the esthetic experience had an indirect effect on satisfaction was determined according to the confidence intervals obtained with the Bootstrap technique.

**Table 2:** The Mediating Role of Memorability in the Relationship between Esthetic Experience and Satisfaction (N= 436).

Predictor Variables	Result Variables					
	M (Memorability)			Y (Satisfaction)		
		b	Standard Error		b	Standard Error
X (Esthetic Experience)	a	.4.816***	.049	c'	.513***	.510
M (Memorability)	-	-	-	b	.330***	.045
Constant	i <sub>M</sub>	1.950***	.209	i <sub>Y</sub>	.495***	.214
			R <sup>2</sup> = .178			
			F(1; 434)= 94.4572; p < .001			
				R <sup>2</sup> = .380		
				F(2; 433)= 133.1020; p < .001		

Source: prepared by the authors.

Accordingly, it has been found that the indirect effect of esthetic experience on satisfaction is significant, and thus, memorability mediates the relationship between esthetic experience and satisfaction (b = .159, 95% BCA CI [.1000 - .2199]).

The corrected bias and accelerated confidence interval values (BCA CI) do not include 0 (zero) values as a result of Bootstrap analysis. The mediated effect is a completely standardized effect size (K<sup>2</sup>) - .130, which can be said to be an effect size close to the middle value. In the light of these results, H<sub>1a</sub> hypothesis of the study was supported.

A mediational analysis was conducted using a PROCESS (Hayes, 2018) macro to test the

hypothesis that memorability plays as a mediator between entertainment experience and satisfaction. The results of the regression analysis for this model are shown in Table 3. The mediation analysis demonstrated an indirect effect of entertainment experience on satisfaction via memorability (b= .181, 95% BCA CI [.1213 - .2477]). The confidence interval values (BCA CI) generated with bias corrected and accelerated bootstrapping do not involve 0 (zero). The mediated effect is a completely standardized effect size (K<sup>2</sup>) - .180 which is an effect size close to the middle value. Thus, H<sub>1b</sub> hypothesis was accepted as a result of the findings.

**Table 3:** The Mediating Role of Memorability in the Relationship between Entertainment Experience and Satisfaction (N= 434).

Predictor Variables	Result Variables					
	M (Memorability)			Y (Satisfaction)		
		b	Standard Error		b	Standard Error
X (Entertainment Experience)	a	.361***	.041	c'	.059***	.045
M (Memorability)	-	-	-	b	.500***	.049
Constant	i <sub>M</sub>	2.603***	.159	i <sub>Y</sub>	1.747***	.205
			R <sup>2</sup> = .150			
			F(1; 432)= 76.1219; p < .001			
				R <sup>2</sup> = .242		
				F(2; 431)= 68.8181; p < .001		

Source: prepared by the authors.

In the third model, whether the escape experience had an indirect effect on the satisfaction of the tourists was determined according to the confidence intervals obtained with the Bootstrap technique. The results of regression analysis for Model 3 are presented in Table 4.

The point estimate is .241 with 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC-CI) [.1686 - .3194].

The findings show that the escape experience has an indirect effect on satisfaction and memorability mediates the relationship between these two variables. The fact this confidence interval does not contain 0 (zero) provides strong evidence that the indirect effect of escape experience on satisfaction is mediated by memorability.

**Table 4:** The Mediating Role of Memorability in the Relationship between Escape Experience and Satisfaction (N= 435).

Predictor Variables	Result Variables					
	M (Memorability)			Y (Satisfaction)		
		b	Standard Error		b	Standard Error
X (Escape Experience)	a	.496***	.042	c'	.070***	.052
M (Memorability)	-	-	-	b	.485***	.204
Constant	i <sub>M</sub>	2.133***	.159	i <sub>Y</sub>	1.766***	.052
			R <sup>2</sup> = .241			
			F(1; 433)= 138.1632; p < .001			
				R <sup>2</sup> = .238		
				F(2; 431)= 67.3513; p < .001		

Source: prepared by the authors.

The mediated effect is a completely standardized effect size ( $K^2$ ) - .222, which can be said to be an effect size close to the middle value. Thus, the hypothesis  $H_{1c}$  is also supported.

Whether the escape experience had an indirect effect on satisfaction was determined according to the confidence intervals obtained with the Bootstrap technique. The results of the regression analysis for this model are given in Table 5. Accordingly, it has been determined that the indirect effect of education experience on satisfaction is significant, and thus,

memorability mediates the relationship between education experience and satisfaction ( $b = .184$ , 95% BCA CI [.0961 - .2854]).

The corrected bias and accelerated confidence interval values (BCA CI) do not include 0 (zero) values as a result of Bootstrap analysis. The mediated effect is a fully standardized effect size ( $K^2$ ) - .147, which can be said to be an effect size close to the middle value. The final hypothesis of the study,  $H_{1d}$  hypothesis, is also accepted.

**Table 5:** The Mediating Role of Memorability in the Relationship between Education Experience and Satisfaction (N= 435).

Predictor Variables	Result Variables					
	M (Memorability)			Y (Satisfaction)		
	a	b	Standard Error	c'	b	Standard Error
X (Education Experience)	a	.666***	.046	c'	.500***	.060
M (Memorability)	-	-	-	b	.276***	.510
Constant	$\hat{\mu}_M$	1.303***	.187	$\hat{\mu}_Y$	.858***	.210
		R <sup>2</sup> = .324			R <sup>2</sup> = .342	
		F(1; 433)= 207.5608; p < .001			F(2; 432)= 112.0814 ; p < .001	

Source: prepared by the authors.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

When the studies in the literature are examined, it is seen that the concept of hotel experience is tackled in a more complex structure (hedonic, rational, service, environment, benefit, perceived convenience, incentive etc.) and the relationship between behavioral intentions, which is the main output variable of the consumer behavior field, is weakly examined (Knutson et al., 2009; Walls et al., 2011; Pourabedin & Migin, 2015; Cetin & Walls 2016).

One of the main reasons for this situation is that there are many approaches to measuring the tourism experience. Besides, this situation is closely related to the fact that the concept of experience is multidimensional (physical environment, human interaction, personal characteristics and trip-related factors) and subjective (Walls et al., 2011).

However, a small number of studies have examined the effect of hotel experience on behavioral intentions and memorability (Ali, Hussain, & Ragavan, 2014; Ren et al., 2016).

In this study, unlike the other studies in the literature, the effect of hotel experience on satisfaction, which is one of the most important behavioral intention variables and the mediating role of memorability in this effect process, was examined.

The reason why the Cappadocia region where the cave hotels are located intensively is chosen as the research area is the assumption of more memorable that these hotels provide consumers different experiences than traditional hotels. In the studies in the literature, budget hotels, chain hotels,

resort hotels and luxury hotels were chosen as the research area in general (Walls et al., 2011; Ali, Hussain, & Ragavan, 2014; Cetin & Walls, 2016; Ren et al., 2018; Bravo, Martinez, & Pina, 2019). For this reason, the data collection over the tourists staying in cave hotels with a certain characteristic shows the uniqueness of the research.

The factor structures obtained from the study coincide with the studies using the four-faceted scale conceptualized by Pine and Gilmore (1999). It is possible to present these dimensions of experience as 4Es (education, esthetic, entertainment, and escape experiences).

Besides, a low and medium positive correlation was found between all variables according to the correlation analysis. This finding is also supporting the literature (Ali, Hussain, & Ragavan, 2014). As a result of the regression models established in the research, it has been proved that the experiences of tourists in hotels have an effect on their satisfaction levels. These results are consistent with the study conducted by Oh et al. (2007), Hosany and Witham (2010), Ali, Hussain, & Ragavan (2014) and Ren et al. (2016) who investigated a significant effect of hotel experience on future behaviors. Moreover, there is an agreement with Walls (2013), the present study verifies that positive customer experience leads to positive behavior.

Lastly, it was found that memorability plays an indirect mediation role in the effect of hotel experience dimensions on satisfaction. This situation points to the importance of hotel businesses to provide a memorable tourism experience to their customers. It



should be remembered that satisfying merely expectations does not create unique and memorable customer experiences (Cetin & Walls, 2016).

Although the results of the study indicated an important issue, it should be accepted that there are some limitations. The research was carried out by collecting data from the guests staying in cave hotels. Therefore, care must be taken when applying to guests staying at different types of hotels.

It is possible to develop some suggestions for future research. A similar study can be applied in different hotel types. In addition, research hypotheses can be tested integrally by structural equation modeling by diversifying the output variable (intention to revisit, willing to pay more, intention to recommend, etc.).

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