

EXAMINATION OF RECREATIONAL SERVICE QUALITY WITH DIFFERENT VARIABLES: AN APPLICATION ON INDIVIDUALS WHO DO OUTDOOR SPORTS FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES

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Abstract

The present study was carried out in the sample of extreme sports centers in Turkey in order to determine the mediating role of recreational service quality in the effect of leisure motivation on leisure satisfaction. In the research, it was determined that recreational service quality has a mediating effect between leisure motivation and leisure satisfaction. The research findings offer suggestions to academicians studying in the context of recreation literature in different activity types and different sample groups.

Keywords: Leisure Motivation; Leisure Satisfaction; Recreational Service Quality.

EXAME DA QUALIDADE DO SERVIÇO RECREATIVO COM DIFERENTES VARIÁVEIS: UMA APLICAÇÃO EM INDIVÍDUOS QUE PRATICAM ESPORTES AO AR LIVRE PARA FINS RECREATIVOS

Resumo

O presente estudo foi realizado na amostra de centros de esportes radicais na Turquia, a fim de determinar o papel mediador da qualidade do serviço recreativo no efeito da motivação do lazer na satisfação com o lazer. Na pesquisa, foi determinado que a qualidade do serviço recreativo tem um efeito mediador entre a motivação do lazer e a satisfação com o lazer. Os resultados da pesquisa oferecem sugestões para acadêmicos que estudam no contexto da literatura recreativa em diferentes tipos de atividades e diferentes grupos de amostra.

Palavras-chave: Motivação ao Lazer; Satisfação ao Lazer; Qualidade do Serviço Recreativo.

EXAMEN DE LA CALIDAD DE LOS SERVICIOS RECREATIVOS CON DIFERENTES VARIABLES: UNA APLICACIÓN SOBRE LOS INDIVIDUOS QUE PRACTICAN DEPORTES AL AIRE LIBRE CON FINES RECREATIVOS

Resumen

El presente estudio se llevó a cabo en la muestra de centros de deportes extremos en Turquía con el fin de determinar el papel mediador de la calidad del servicio recreativo en el efecto de la motivación del ocio sobre la satisfacción con el ocio. En la investigación se determinó que la calidad del servicio recreativo tiene un efecto mediador entre la motivación del ocio y la satisfacción del ocio. Los hallazgos de la investigación ofrecen sugerencias a los académicos que estudian en el contexto de la literatura recreativa en diferentes tipos de actividades y diferentes grupos de muestra.

Palabras clave: Motivación de Ocio; Satisfacción de Ocio; Calidad del Servicio Recreativo.

1 INTRODUCTION

Sportive activities based on physical activity, games, or recreational leisure activities are important in every period of life (Aran, 2014). The problems caused by today's busy and stressful life are solved with recreational activities as they contribute to individuals physiologically, psychologically and sociologically (Yurcu, Kasalak & Akinci, 2018). While individuals are in a certain flow during their preoccupation with recreational activities (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), they feel happier and freer than in their normal lives.

Since the activities are carried out during the periods when people are not working in general, they have become the primary subject of leisure (Brightbill, 1960; Zuzanek, 2018; Onat, 2021). Nawijn & Veenhoven (2011) found that the activities carried out on people participating in leisure activities increased people's happiness. On the other hand, although leisure activities make people comfortable, some activities are not considered as a healthy leisure activity (Hills, Argyle & Reeves, 2000).

For example, although watching television ranks first as a leisure activity in many studies (Jim & Chen, 2009; Geiger & Miko, 1995). Massimini & Carli (1988) found that although watching television is considered a leisure activity, in the long run, the activity in question causes a high level of boredom in the audience.

The boredom of individuals in their spare time can be stated as a reflection of the meaning of leisure in individuals and the level of focus of individuals towards leisure (Iskender & Gucer, 2018). Iso-Ahola & Weissinger (1990) argue that the perception of boredom in leisure results from individuals having more free time than is needed.

Russell (1996), on the other hand, argues that boredom results from not having enough quality occupations to fill up free time. When evaluated from this point of view, the activities considered in leisure and the quality of these activities are important for the satisfaction of leisure (Birinci & Karakuş, 2020).

Leisure is a need that is met by the production and consumption of people's non-working experiences (Ateca-Amestoy, Rosal & Vera-Toscano, 2008). In addition, leisure



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refers to a satisfying period in which a person participates voluntarily, without the guidance of others (Zuzanek, 2020), in order to satisfy himself (Jenkins & Pigram, 2003).

Although there are findings in the literature that free time is more satisfying than working time (Robert, 2001), in today's world, where individuals have the most free time throughout the history of humanity, the way many people use these times is not satisfactory (Lu & Kao, 2009). Leisure motivation can be stated as an important antecedent in leisure satisfaction (Chen, Li & Chen, 2013).

In addition, the high perception of service quality in leisure activities is not only a result of motivation (Hsieh, Park & Hitchcock, 2015), but also important in terms of providing satisfaction (Yayla & Yaylı, 2019).

Researchers state that more studies from different samples are needed to confirm and determine the strength of the relationship between leisure motivation, leisure satisfaction and service quality variables (Carroll & Alexandris, 1997).

In this context, this research aims to expand the knowledge by testing the relationships between these variables. This will provide up-to-date information for recreation leaders, recreation business managers, politicians and academics working in the literature on leisure and recreation plans and strategies.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Leisure motivation is a concept that is frequently studied in fields such as sociology, psychology or tourism (Kil, Holland & Stain, 2014). Motivation is evaluated in terms of push and pull factors in the leisure and recreation literature (Dann, 1977). Push factors are defined as the efforts that motivate individuals to move away from the environment they live in or for activities they perform outside of their routine activities (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). In other words, push factors consist of internal motives that direct the behavior of individuals.

For example, the motivation to travel to a different destination for the purpose of seeing and discovering new places can be stated as a driving factor (Aktaş, Ay, Yavuz, & Olgaç, 2021). Pull factors expressing the individual's extrinsic motivations are the factors that attract the individual to an event or a destination in order to satisfy the push factors (Yuan & McDonald, 1990). Both the repulsive and attractive motivation of leisure should in essence result in commitment and satisfaction to the activity (Jacobs & Jacobs, 2001).

Iso-Ahola (1982) argues that individuals perceive leisure activities as a potential gratifier as they provide an escape from routine environments. Leisure satisfaction can be expressed as meeting the interests, expectations and needs of individuals as a result of their participation in recreational activities (Mannell & Kleiber, 1997).

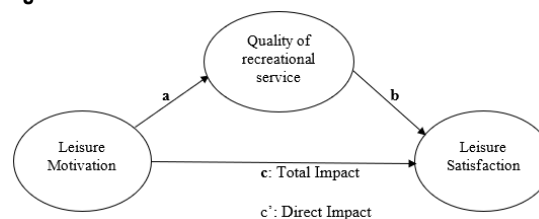
3 METHOD

3.1 Research Design

This research was conducted to determine the mediating role of recreational service quality in the effect of leisure motivation on leisure satisfaction. This research was

designed in relational screening model. In the next section, the theoretical explanations of the hypototic model presented in Figure 1 are given; In this direction, hypotheses are presented.

Figure 1: Research model.



Source: Elaborated by Authors.

Motivation and satisfaction variables are two important basic concepts in understanding the nature of leisure activities that people prefer (Beard & Ragheb, 1983). Although there are studies in the literature that reveal the relationship between leisure and satisfaction (Chen, et al. 2013; Jia, 2018), researchers claim that results from various samples in different time periods are needed. In this context, the research hypothesis was formed as follows:

H1: Leisure motivation affects leisure satisfaction

When the tourism, leisure and recreation literature is examined, it is seen that the concept of motivation is often associated with concepts such as satisfaction (Chen, et al. 2013) and behavioral intentions (Balerio et al., 2022; Lee & Beeler, 2009).

However, the perception of service quality is one of the most important results of motivation (Bhatia and Maidullah, 2022). Davraz & Özperçin (2021) claims that the motivations of individuals participating in the gastronomy festival affect the perception of service quality.

By their turn, Hsieh et al. (2015) found that push and pull motivation factors affect the perceived service quality in their research on museum visitors. However, service quality is also important for recreation businesses as it is for all service-providing businesses (Amazonas et al., 2021; Aguiar et al., 2021; Ko & Pastore, 2004). Based on this information, the research hypothesis was formed as follows.

H2: Leisure motivation affects quality of recreational service

Satisfaction is one of the most important success criteria for businesses. In fact, businesses gain a greater market share with individuals who are satisfied with the service they receive (Lhendup & Bhagirathi, 2020; Praharjo, 2020). For this reason, businesses aim to create customer satisfaction by increasing their service quality.

Because there are findings in the literature that satisfied customers have intentions to receive the same service again (Hsieh, et al. 2015; Wu & Wang, 2020). For example, Bruwer (2014) examined the perception of service quality at festivals and found that the quality of service offered had a very strong effect on satisfaction and repeat visits.

Similarly, it is thought that recreation service quality will affect leisure satisfaction. For this reason, the research hypothesis was formed as follows:

H3: Quality of recreational service affects leisure satisfaction.

Although there are studies in the literature in which motivation, service quality and satisfaction variables are used together (Hsieh, et al. 2015; Davraz & Özperçin, 2021), the mediating role of recreational service quality in the effect of leisure motivation on leisure satisfaction remains unclear. For this reason, the research hypothesis was developed as follows.

H4: Quality of recreational service has a mediating role in the effect of leisure motivation on leisure satisfaction.

3.2 Research Group

The population size of the study cannot be determined. In studies where the population size cannot be calculated and multivariate analyzes are performed, the special conditions in which analyzes are required in terms of sample size should be taken into consideration. In these analyzes, it is recommended to work with a sample of approximately ten times the number of variables (Şencan, 2005).

The sample group of the study was composed of 767 individuals engaged in outdoor sports for recreational purposes between November 2021 and January 2022. Such a restriction on the sample group due to unpredictable uncertainties in terms of time and cost is seen as the main limitation for this research.

3.3 Data Collection Tools

Leisure Motivation, Leisure Satisfaction and Recreational Service Quality scales were used as data collection tools in the research. In this section, the measurement model of each measurement tool was examined separately with Second Order Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). In addition, the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients of the measurement tools were also examined.

3.4 Leisure Satisfaction Scale

The Leisure Satisfaction Scale developed by Beard and Ragheb (1980) consists of 24 questions and 6 sub-dimensions: psychological, educational, social, relaxation, physiological and aesthetic. The scale asks if the survey participant is satisfied with all aspects.

The psychological dimension asks whether leisure activities are of interest to participants and provides mental benefits such as helping to develop self-confidence. The educational dimension is concerned when leisure participants are satisfied with learning new things and acquiring skills. The social dimension questions whether participants are satisfied with establishing relationships with others through leisure activities.

Relaxation involves letting go of stress and emotional well-being. The physiological factor allows participants to measure their satisfaction with the involvement of their leisure, based on the contribution of such activities to physical fitness and health. It measures the satisfaction of the

participants with the entertainment environment that focuses on aesthetic dimension, sanitation and design.

CFA was performed to evaluate the compatibility of the factor structure of the measurement tool with the collected data. CFA result were found as $\chi^2/sd=2,87$, $RMSEA=0,070$, $GFI=0,94$ and $CFI=0,95$. The fit indices obtained showed that the factor structure of the measurement tool was confirmed. When the Cronbach alpha (α) reliability coefficient values of the scale were examined, it was calculated as $\alpha=.89$ for the whole scale.

3.5 Leisure Motivation Scale

A comprehensive list of 48 recreational motivations was developed by Beard and Ragheb in 1983. The content of this list is divided into four subcategories: intellectual, social, competence mastery, and warning avoidance. Later, this scale was applied by Lounsbury and Polik (1992) to find out whether vacationers measure their needs.

A shortened version of the leisure motivation scale was applied by Ryan and Glendon (1998) to 1,127 British day trippers. Starzyk, Reddon, and Friel (2000) used the Leisure Motivation Scale to examine the motivation and psychosocial adjustment of leisure among juvenile delinquents and high school students.

The "Leisure Motivation Scale" was also used in a pilot study by Lloyd, King, McCarthy, and Scanlan, (2007) to measure its effect on the recovery of physical patients. CFA was performed to evaluate the compatibility of the factor structure of the measurement tool with the collected data.

The fit indices obtained showed that the factor structure of the measurement tool was confirmed. When the Cronbach alpha (α) reliability coefficient values of the scale were examined, it was calculated as $\alpha=.92$ for the whole scale.

3.6 Scale of Recreational Service Quality

Service quality is defined as the relationship between customers' perceptions of what they want and receive from a service (Crompton & Lamb, 1986). As the elderly population in society increases, leisure activities become more critical. Because when individuals go to economic restrictions, they participate less in recreational activities at first. In such a situation, individuals expect the activities they participate less in to be of higher quality.

In addition, in line with the increase in education level, their expectations in leisure activities are expected to increase in the same direction (Godbey, 1989: 61). Various scales have been developed to measure the quality of service in the field of recreation (MacKay and Crompton, 1990; Ko and Pastore, 2005).

It was developed by MacKay and Crompton in 1990 to measure recreational service quality appropriately. This developed scale consists of five dimensions. These dimensions are values, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. This scale was used by Taylor, Sharland, Cronin & Bullard (1993) and Ko & Patore (2005).

CFA was performed to evaluate the compatibility of the factor structure of the measurement tool with the collected data (Eren & Balkar, 2021). CFA results show $\chi^2/sd=1,83$,

RMSEA=0.069, GFI=0.91 and CFI=0.95. The fit indices obtained showed that the factor structure of the measurement tool was confirmed. When the Cronbach alpha (a) reliability coefficient values of the scale were examined, it was calculated as $\alpha=0.91$ for the whole scale.

4 DATA ANALYSIS

AMOS 26 program was used to test the factor structure of the measurement tools used in the research. After the factor structure of the measurement tools was verified, regression analysis based on the bootstrap method was applied to test the hypotheses of the research (Hayes, 2022). Analyses were performed using the Process Macro developed by Hayes (2022). In the analysis, 5000 sample options were preferred with the Bootstrap technique.

Before the data were analyzed in the study, extreme value and missing value analyzes were carried out. Then, the suitability of the data to the normal distribution was examined and the relationships between the prediction, outcome and mediator variables in the study were tested with Pearson correlation analysis. The suitability of the data in terms of normal distribution was examined with skewness and kurtosis values. Accordingly, the skewness values of all variables are between -0.15 and 2.22; Kurtosis values were observed to vary between -0.44 and 2.16.

The kurtosis and skewness values showed that the data were in accordance with the normal distribution within the scope of the study (Koydemir, Şimşek, & Demir, 2014). The correlation values ($r:0.54-0.61$) obtained between the variables in the study showed that a mediation model could be established with the variables and that there was no multicollinearity problem between the variables. In addition, tolerance and VIF values obtained from the data gave results confirming that there was no multicollinearity between independent variables (Tolerance > 0.2, VIF < 10).

4.1 Findings

Regression analysis was conducted using Process Macro developed by Hayes (2018) to determine the mediating role of recreational service quality in the effect of leisure motivation on leisure satisfaction. Regression analysis results are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Regression Analysis Results.

Prediction Variables	Result Variables			
	RSQ		LS	
H ₁ (LM→LS (c path))	b	SH	b	SH
R ²	-	-	0,59*	0,014
	-	-	0,68	
H ₂ (LM→RSQ(a path))	0,589***	0,024		
R ²		0,47		
H ₃ RSQ (b path)	0,170**	0,023	0,11	
H ₄ Indirect impa	b=0,100,%95 GA (0,058-0,147)			

Source: Elaborated by Authors. Legend: ***P<0.01 .

First of all, in order to test the H1 hypothesis (LM→LS), the model in which Leisure motivation (LM) is independent and Leisure satisfaction (LZT) is the dependent variable was tested. Regression analysis results showed that LM significantly predicted LS (b=0.590; 95% CI[0.618-0.828]).

This finding means that Hypothesis H1 is accepted. In order to test the other hypotheses of the research, a separate model was established in which RSQ was tested as a mediator variable. According to the current model, it was determined that LM predicted RSQ significantly. In this case, H2 was supported. In addition, it was observed that the mediating variable RSQ significantly affected LS (b=0.170; 95% CI[0.127-0.215]). Therefore, hypothesis H3 was also supported. It was determined that LM together with RSQ explained 70% of the change in LS.

In order to determine whether RSQ has a mediating role in the relationship between LM and LS, a regression analysis based on the bootstrap method was performed. In the bootstrap analysis, 5000 resampling options were preferred (Gürbüz, 2021). In the mediation effect analyzes made with the bootstrap technique, the 95% confidence interval (CI) values obtained as a result of the analysis should not include the 0 (zero) value in order to support the research hypothesis. According to Bootstrap results, it was determined that the indirect effect of LM via RSQ on LS was significant (b=0.100; 95% CI[0.058-0.147]). This finding shows that RSQ has a mediating effect in the relationship between LM and LS. So H4 was supported.

5 RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Theoretical implications

With the help of structural equation modeling, the present study obtained rich and fruitful findings on leisure motivation, leisure satisfaction and recreational service quality. In this study, firstly, the relationship between leisure motivation and leisure satisfaction of individuals engaged in outdoor sports for recreational purposes was examined, and then the mediating effect of recreational service quality in this relationship was examined.

The relationship between leisure motivation and leisure satisfaction of individuals engaged in outdoor sports for recreational purposes has been revealed. Ensuring participation in the activity to be selected and leaving satisfied after the activity reveal the importance of this relationship between these two variables.

It is seen that the leisure motivation of the individuals participating in the activity is in the same direction, the leisure satisfaction results in that direction. Leisure motivation seems to affect leisure satisfaction positively (b=0.590; 95% CI[0.618-0.828]). These findings show similarity in the existing literature (Beard & Ragheb, 1983; Hills et al., 2000; Chen, 2005; Begg & Elkins, 2010; Lee & Lin, 2011; Chen et al., 2013; Choi, 2015; Jia, 2018).

The relationship between the leisure motivation of individuals engaged in recreational nature sports and the quality of recreational service has been researched and revealed. It was found that leisure motivation significantly predicted recreational service quality (b=0.589; 95% CI[0.545-0.633]). These findings show similarities in the existing literature (Clawson & Knetsch, 1966; Hays & Hill, 2001; Greenwell, Fink & Pastore, 2004; Lee & Beeler, 2009; Subrahmanyam, 2017).

In the model where recreational service quality was tested as a mediator variable, recreational service quality

was found to significantly affect leisure satisfaction ($b=0.170$; 95% CI[0.127-0.215]). Although there are no studies that directly support these findings, they can be supported by studies that reveal a relationship on each other. (Oh, 1999; Caruana, Money & Berthon, 2000; Lee, Lee & Yoo, 2000; Olorunniwo, Hsu & Udo, 2006; Mahamad & Ramayah, 2010).

A significant effect was found in the model created to demonstrate that leisure motivation has an indirect effect on leisure satisfaction through recreational service quality ($b=0.100$; 95% CI[0.058-0.147]). Based on the test results of this model, it is suggested that recreational service quality has a mediating effect on the relationship between leisure motivation and leisure satisfaction.

5.2 Practical implications

It is possible to evaluate the research findings from a practical point of view. First of all, it is seen that individuals with high leisure motivation also have high leisure satisfaction. Therefore, it should be taken into account that the leisure motivation of the individuals participating in the recreational activity will be at the same rate as their leisure satisfaction. In this context, recreation policy makers will provide the opportunity to obtain information about leisure satisfaction feelings in advance by taking into account the leisure motivations of individuals.

Secondly, it is seen that an individual with high leisure motivation will have the same rate of perception of recreational service quality. In this context, it is thought that an individual participating in recreational activities will be beneficial in providing services, considering that the recreational service quality perception will be at the same rate as their leisure motivation.

It has been determined that an individual involved in recreational activity will be at the same level of leisure satisfaction in the ratio of recreational service quality perception. From this point of view, it should be considered that the leisure satisfaction of the individual who is provided with a perfect recreational service quality will be reflected in the same way.

In this context, providing a perfect level of service to the guests of the enterprises that provide recreational services will ensure that the guests who come to the establishment leave satisfied, and the individuals who have a full sense of satisfaction will talk about the establishment with good thoughts. This will allow the enterprise providing recreational services to be more popular.

The mediation of recreational service quality in the relationship between leisure motivation and leisure satisfaction has highlighted its presence in service in this relationship. For this reason, it is thought that businesses that provide recreational services will contribute to the increase of leisure satisfaction thanks to perfect service, despite the low motivation of individuals' leisure.

5.3 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Studies

The current research has focused on individuals engaged in outdoor sports for recreational purposes. This limitation may serve as a starting point for future studies.

Considering it in a different sample group can be this starting point. Future research can be conducted on subjects such as sports tourism and adventure tourism, which are both in the service sector and contain the leisure motivation and satisfaction of individuals. Researchers can make positive contributions to the field by testing the model discussed in this study through different activity types.

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Term	Definition	Author	Author 2
Conceptualization	Ideas; formulation or evolution of overarching research goals and aims	X	
Methodology	Development or design of methodology; creation of models	X	
Software	Programming, software development; designing computer programs; implementation of the computer code and supporting algorithms; testing of existing code components	x	
Validation	Verification, whether as a part of the activity or separate, of the overall replication/ reproducibility of results/experiments and other research outputs		x
Formal analysis	Application of statistical, mathematical, computational, or other formal techniques to analyze or synthesize study data	X	
Investigation	Conducting a research and investigation process, specifically performing the experiments, or data/evidence collection	X	
Resources	Provision of study materials, reagents, materials, patients, laboratory samples, animals, instrumentation, computing resources, or other analysis tools	X	
Data Curation	Management activities to annotate (produce metadata), scrub data and maintain research data (including software code, where it is necessary for interpreting the data itself) for initial use and later reuse	X	
Writing - Original Draft	Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work, specifically writing the initial draft (including substantive translation)		X
Writing - Review & Editing	Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work by those from the original research group, specifically critical review, commentary or revision – including pre-or postpublication stages		X
Visualization	Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work, specifically visualization/ data presentation		x
Supervision	Oversight and leadership responsibility for the research activity planning and execution, including mentorship external to the core team	X	
Project administration	Management and coordination responsibility for the research activity planning and execution	x	
Funding acquisition	Acquisition of the financial support for the project leading to this publication		x

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