



TOURISM ECONOMICS, MANAGEMENT AND POLICY RESEARCH

TURİZM EKONOMİSİ, YÖNETİMİ VE POLİTİKA ARAŞTIRMALARI

Vol: 3 Issue:2

Cilt: 3 Sayı: 2

ISSN: 2791-6030



Quality Perception and Satisfaction Levels of Customers on e-Services of Holiday Websites

Halil İbrahim KARAKAN 

Dr. Bağımsız Araştırmacı, Türkiye. hikarakan@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 20.06.2023

Accepted: 21.09.2023

Keywords: Tourists, Quality Perception, Satisfaction, Holiday Websites.

Research Article

ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to explore how different demographic factors affect customers' perceptions of quality and satisfaction with electronic holiday websites. A survey was conducted and 392 participants provided data. Factor analysis identified three factors of customer perception, namely 'informative', 'secure' and 'quality'. In general, participants perceived the quality of holiday websites positively. When examining the effect of demographic factors on quality perception and satisfaction, it can be concluded that gender, age, education and marital status do not make a statistically significant difference.

However, it was observed that customer satisfaction with holiday websites varied according to monthly income. This contrast was particularly evident between low- and high-income respondents. In particular, those with higher incomes reported lower perceptions of the quality of holiday websites.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Internet is a key resource that influences individuals considering traveling purchasing decisions. Thanks to the Internet, people can examine the rooms of hotels, prices, entertainment options, social events, restaurants and food of different countries. At the same time, individuals can sort the features they are looking for in businesses and filter the hotels suitable for their budgets. After having their holiday experiences, people can evaluate and share these experiences with others on the Internet (Peterson & Mario, 2003). Features such as quality information, ease of access and use, functionality, privacy and security are important features that will maximize tourists' satisfaction (Mahadin et al., 2020).

The tourism sector, as a service-oriented sector, revolves around people and attaches great importance to communication. The use of technology is limited in this sector. However, the rapidly changing technological environment, especially distribution systems, the intensive use of the Internet by individuals, and the fact that reservations are now made online have led to the rapid expansion of the Internet in this sector (Çakmak & Demirkol, 2017).

The success of package tours, one of the main activities of travel agencies, is closely related to the tour's content and the guide's effectiveness (Çakmak & Kurnaz, 2020). However, the content presented on the websites of travel agencies is also of great importance. When the websites of travel agencies and traditional destinations, social media platforms, personal blogs and review sites started to be used effectively in the sector, this change was felt by all stakeholders and tourists. In the tourism sector, smart tourism technologies were first used in basic services such as payment and reservation and increased the efficiency of these services (Ceylan & Uzun, 2023). However, tourists who plan to travel now need more comprehensive, accurate and personalized information and prefer businesses that provide this

information while browsing websites to access this information. In particular, websites such as Booking and Tripadvisor share information about hotels and allow tourists to evaluate their experiences, greatly influencing the purchasing decision processes of tourists (Huang et al., 2017).

E-service refers to a self-service process where customers interact with a website supported by technological infrastructure without the direct intervention of service personnel (Çelik & Başaran, 2008, p. 130). In other words, E-Service is a process wherein interaction occurs between the service provider and the demander via a website supported by advanced technological infrastructure (Bayram, 2015, p. 25). E-Service entails the sale of physical goods in the virtual marketplace and the delivery of after-sales service agreements via internet technologies, free of charge (Voss, 2002, p. 13). Rust and Lemon (2001, p:86) argued that the primary purpose of e-services is to offer customers a superior experience in interactive information exchange.

E-services differ from traditional services in many aspects. One of these is the content. For example, while the subject of economic exchange in traditional services is the service itself, the subject of exchange in e-services is service information. The e-service customer needs the assistance of a real service employee. Therefore, he/she participates more intensively in the service process. In addition, the physical environment used as an interface in traditional services is replaced by the website on the computer screen in e-service. Finally, service staff and physical resources, which are important in the fulfillment of traditional services, are replaced by infrastructure consisting of fast service providers (servers), databases and technical personnel in e-service (Çelik and Başaran, 2008:130).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The study "E-Service and the Consumer" by Rust and Lemon (2001) aims to investigate the increasing significance of e-service as a component of customer strategy. It is important to comprehend the relationship between e-service and the consumer to advance the Internet as a trustworthy and efficient business tool. Furthermore, the research has highlighted that several areas require significant investigation. The paper examines the impact of the e-service revolution on consumer behavior, the role of intermediaries in the marketing process and new strategic models and measures.

Birdir and Bal (2003), in their study to measure the satisfaction level of tourists in Antalya, stated that most of the tourists would like to come to Antalya again and would recommend the region to others.

Ali (2016) investigated the impact of the websites of travel agencies and hotel businesses on customers' purchasing decisions and found that the quality of the website has a positive effect on customer satisfaction and the purchasing decision process.

Service-based enterprises have started engaging in digital trade due to the advent of e-commerce. One such sector is that of travel agencies. Bayram and Şahbaz (2017) aimed to investigate consumers' perceptions of e-service quality, satisfaction, and loyalty towards travel agencies that provide services through electronic channels. Additionally, they aimed to identify any differences in these attitudes based on demographic characteristics. The study employed a questionnaire completed by 492 individuals who had previously purchased touristic services from a travel agency's website. The study found that satisfaction levels of participants towards e-services were higher than average, though their averages towards loyalty were lower. Furthermore, a significant difference between gender and customer satisfaction was identified. Analyses indicated that females reported higher satisfaction averages than males.

The globalization of markets obliges businesses to compete (Arslan et al., 2007) and prioritize the quality of their electronic services for a competitive edge. In particular, displaying products and services in digital environments elevates the significance of e-service (Kitapçı, 2006a, p. 121). İlder's (2009) research aims to identify the factors that makeup e-service quality and their impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty. The study discovered three factors, namely "policy," "physical features," and "trust," which determine e-service quality. The study found that "policy" and "physical features" positively influence customer loyalty and satisfaction. However, it was found that the strength of the positive relationship between two service quality factors and customer loyalty was limited.

It is crucial to have a comprehensive understanding of customer expectations and requirements and to enhance the service quality for customer satisfaction. In their research paper entitled "The Impact of Service Quality and Perceived Value on Customer Satisfaction and Repurchase Intention in E-commerce," Düğer and Kahraman (2017) investigated the correlation between the quality of service that online shopping websites offer in Turkey, customers' perceived value, their contentment levels, and the likelihood of revisiting the platforms for future purchases. For the study, data was gathered via personal interviews with clients who have used services from Turkey's biggest online shopping websites and reside in Kütahya. Following the study's conclusion, it was found that e-service quality has a beneficial impact on e-perceived value, e-customer satisfaction, and repurchase intention. The study also determined that e-perceived value positively affects e-customer satisfaction and repurchase intention, while e-customer satisfaction leads to higher repurchase intention.

Prioritizing service quality is crucial in guaranteeing user satisfaction and retaining users. Karimi (2019) examined the impact of perceived e-service quality on e-customer satisfaction for online shopping websites among the Y generation. The study aimed to analyze the significance and effect of e-service quality on customer satisfaction and consumer evaluations of promotional activities. The research found that the perception of e-service quality significantly affects e-satisfaction.

Today, customer satisfaction is regarded as a vital issue in e-services, and it is claimed that it is essential for businesses to gain a competitive advantage. The foundation of customer satisfaction is delivering top-quality service that meets expectations. This study aims to determine customers' quality perception and satisfaction levels concerning e-services offered by holiday purchasing websites.

3. METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

In this study, the survey method, which is one of the most preferred methods (Büyüköztürk et al., 2014, p. 105), was used in data collection. In the prepared questionnaire form, the scale used in the study conducted by Tsang et al. (2010) was used in the e-service quality perception scale, and the scale in the study of Ho, C.I. and Lee, Y.L. (2007) was used for e-service customer satisfaction perception. Responses were received from 392 people using convenience sampling method.

In the first part of the questionnaire, five questions were included for introductory information (gender, marital status, age, educational status, occupation, etc.). In the second part, e-service quality perception and in the third part, e-service customer satisfaction perception scale were included. The scales used in the study are 5-point Likert type. The 5-point Likert-type scale evaluations are as follows; "1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=decided, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree".

In this study, the validity and reliability values of the scales used were examined first. It was found that the alpha value of the e-service quality perception scale was .956, and the alpha value of the e-service customer satisfaction perception scale was .920. According to Özdamar (2004:632-633), the scale with an Alpha value higher than 0,60 is reliable, and scale values higher than 0,80 are highly reliable. Therefore, it can be said that the scales used in the study are highly reliable.

4. RESULTS

In this section, the findings obtained from the analysis of the data collected within the scope of the research by percentage-frequency analysis, Exploratory factor analysis, Independent Sample T-Test, and One-Way ANOVA Test are given.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Gender	N	%
Female	198	50,5
Male	194	49,5
Total	392	100,0
Marital Status	N	%
Married	207	52,8

Single	185	47,2
Total	392	100
Age	N	%
18-25 years old	113	28,8
26-35 years old	166	42,3
36-45 years	83	21,2
46 -55 years	24	6,1
56 and above	6	1,5
Total	392	100
Education Status	N	%
Primary education	30	7,7
High School	102	26
Bachelor's degree	220	56,1
Master's and PhD	40	10,2
Total	392	100
Monthly Income	N	%
Very low income level	72	18,4
Low income level	34	8,7
Middle income level	84	21,4
High income level	72	18,4
Very high income level	130	33,2
Total	392	100

Five questions (gender, marital status, age, education level, monthly income level) were asked to determine the demographic characteristics of the participants, and the findings obtained through the answers given to these questions are given in Table 1.

According to the relevant table, 50.5 percent of the participants in the study were female, and 49.5 percent were male. 52.8% of the participants were married, and 47.2% were single. The age range of the participants was 18-25 years old (28,8%), 26-35 years old (42,3%), 36-45 years old (21,2%), 46-55 years old (6,1%) and 56 years old and above (1,5%). It was determined that 7.7% of the participants were primary school graduates, 26% were high school graduates, 56.1% were faculty/college graduates, and 10.2% were master's and doctorate graduates. While 18.4% of the participants had a very low-income level, 33.2% had a very high-income level.

Table 2. *Participants' Most Recently Used Holiday Website*

Websites	n	%
trivago.com	120	30,61
tripadvisor.com	95	24,23
booking.com	68	17,35
tatilsepeti.com	35	8,93
tatil.com	16	4,08
others	58	14,80
Total	392	100

Table 2 shows the information about the last holiday purchasing website used by the participants. the relevant table determined that 30.6,6% of the participants used trivago.com, 24,23% used tripadvisor.com, 17,35% used booking.com and 8,93% used tatilsepeti.com

Table 3. *E-Service Quality Perception Scale Factor Analysis*

Items	FACTORS		
	Informative	Safety	Quality
	Factor Loadings		
Online holiday websites provide up-to-date information	,561		
Online holiday websites provide accurate and clear information about products and services	,602		
Online holiday websites are a good source of information	,672		
The information I receive from online holiday websites is of the same quality as the information I receive from traditional businesses	,571		
Online holiday websites use uniform colours in the system	,724		
The fonts used in the content of the online holiday websites system are appropriate	,803		
The system of online holiday websites appears to be organized	,716		
Online holiday websites use multimedia content properly in the system	,709		
Online holiday websites do not waste time	,602		
Transacting with online holiday websites is easy and fast	,620		
Easy to book or cancel from online holiday websites	,587		
I have direct, effortless access to what I want to achieve	,655		
The categories of products and services are well organized on the website of online holiday websites	,707		
The system provides a platform for sharing holiday experiences	,685		
When buying holidays online, I feel protected by the system		,759	
I trust online holiday websites not to share my information with other websites without my permission		,788	
I trust online holiday websites not to misuse my information		,795	
I feel safe when making transactions (payment, reservation, etc.) with online holiday intermediaries		,762	
Online holiday websites have adequate security measures		,685	
My questions are answered immediately			,650
Online holiday websites are ready and willing to respond to customer wishes and needs			,804
Online holiday websites customer service staff are always ready to help me			,827
When I have a problem, the online holiday websites deal with me sincerely for a solution			,831
	53,390	7,099	5,046
Total Explained Variance %65,535, KMO 0,878			

Information provide factor analysis can be defined as a multivariate statistic that aims to discover a small number of conceptually meaningful new variables (factors, factors) by bringing together a large number of interrelated variables (Büyüköztürk, 2002, p. 472).

Table 3 shows the results of the factor analysis. According to the table, the factor analysis determined that the scale of customers' quality perception towards e-services of holiday purchasing websites has three factors and twenty-three items. Since the KMO value was found to be 0.878, the sample size was considered sufficient. The eigenvalues and total explained variance values of the factors revealed in the factor analysis were given, and it was concluded that the factor loads of the items took values between 0,561 and 0,831. As a result of these processes, the first factor was named "Informative," and it was determined that this factor had fourteen items. The second factor was named "Safety," and it was determined that this factor had five items. The third factor, named "Quality," was determined to have four items.

Table 4. *Customer Satisfaction Scale Factor Analysis*

Items	Factor Loadings
I would like to use the system again	,877
The last purchase I made from the system was the right decision	,900
I really enjoyed shopping from the system	,910
Shopping from the system was a really wise decision	,905
Total Explained Variance %	%80,655

Table 4 shows the factor analysis results of the customer satisfaction scale. It is determined that the scale has one factor and four items. Independent Sample t-Test and One Way ANOVA results are given in the tables below.

Table 5. *T-Test Results According to Gender*

Factors	Gender	\bar{x}	Standard Deviation	t	p
Informative	Female	3,3297	,62940	-,497	,619
	Male	3,3645	,74045		
Safety	Female	2,9372	,71036	-1,056	,292
	Male	3,0188	,81001		
Quality	Female	3,2642	,76525	,309	,757
	Male	3,2386	,85394		
Customer Satisfaction	Female	3,3406	,74827	-,630	,529
	Male	3,3929	,87415		

In Table 5, it is examined whether there is a significant difference in the quality perception and satisfaction levels of customers towards the e-services of holiday websites according to gender variable. According to the relevant table, it is determined that the quality perception and satisfaction levels of customers towards the e-services of holiday websites do not show a statistically significant difference according to the gender variable ($p \geq 0.05$). When the averages are analysed, it is determined that the averages of both male and female participants are relatively high in all factors ($\bar{x} > 2,93$).

Table 6. *T-Test Results According to Marital Status*

Factors	Marital Status	\bar{x}	Standard Deviation	t	p
Informative	Married	3,3234	,72207	-,799	,425
	Single	3,3794	,62821		
Safety	Married	2,9565	,74201	-,566	,572

	Single	3,0007	,78114		
Quality	Married	3,2885	,86094	,918	,359
	Single	3,2123	,73264		
Customer Satisfaction	Married	3,3388	,84661	-,714	,476
	Single	3,3983	,76004		

Table 6 examined whether there is a statistically significant difference in customers' quality perception and satisfaction levels towards the e-services of holiday purchasing websites according to marital status. According to the relevant table, it was determined that the quality perception and satisfaction levels of customers towards the e-services of holiday websites did not show a statistically significant difference in all factors according to marital status variable ($p \geq 0.05$). When the averages are analyzed, it is determined that the averages of both married and single participants are relatively high in all factors ($\bar{x} > 2,95$).

Table 7. ANOVA Results According to Age

Factors	Age	\bar{x}	Standard Deviation	t	p
Informative	18-25	3,3137	,71959	1,248	,290
	26-35	3,3963	,65234		
	36-45	3,2729	,65808		
	46-55	3,2694	,77469		
	56 years and older	3,7976	,70626		
Safety	18-25	2,9378	,76960	,323	,863
	26-35	3,0197	,77189		
	36-45	2,9362	,72089		
	46-55	2,9792	,79890		
	56 years and older	3,1333	,83586		
Quality	18-25	3,1659	,81258	,611	,655
	26-35	3,3177	,80703		
	36-45	3,2479	,80761		
	46-55	3,2029	,81875		
	56 and older	3,2917	,78129		
Customer Satisfaction	18-25	3,3086	,83459	,730	,572
	26-35	3,4162	,76757		
	36-45	3,3125	,87204		
	46-55	3,3986	,73553		
	56 years and older	3,7500	,88034		

The results of the ANOVA Test for whether there is any difference in the quality perception and The

results of the ANOVA Test for whether there is any difference in the quality perception and satisfaction levels of the customers towards the e-services of holiday purchasing websites according to the age variable are shown in Table 7. According to the relevant table, it has been determined that there is no statistically significant difference in the quality perception and satisfaction levels of the customers towards the e-services of holiday websites according to the age variable ($p \geq 0.05$). It was determined that the averages in the functionality factor, security factor and customer satisfaction scale were high in all age groups ($\bar{x} > 3,00$).

Table 8. ANOVA Results According to Education Level

Factors	Education Level	\bar{x}	Standard Deviation	t	p	
Informative	Primary School	3,1306	,81770	1,423	,236	The results of the ANOVA Test for whether there is any difference
	High School	3,3315	,76713			
	Bachelor's Degree	3,3862	,60329			
	Postgraduate	3,4203	,69138			
Safety	Primary School	2,7417	,81897	1,232	,298	
	High School	3,0408	,73314			
	Bachelor's Degree	2,9876	,75412			
	Postgraduate	2,9888	,77703			
Quality	Primary School	3,0694	,98822	,987	,399	
	High School	3,2423	,80571			
	Bachelor's Degree	3,2713	,76361			
	Postgraduate	3,3979	,84868			
Customer Satisfaction	Primary School	3,1925	,93809	,837	,474	
	High School	3,3436	,82489			
	Bachelor's Degree	3,3916	,75742			
	Postgraduate	3,4854	,85670			

in the quality perception and satisfaction levels of the customers towards the e-services of holiday purchasing websites according to the level of education are shown in Table 8. According to the relevant table, it is determined that there is no statistically significant difference in the quality perception and satisfaction levels of the customers towards the e-services of holiday websites according to the level of education ($p \geq 0.05$). When the averages are analyzed, it is determined that they increase as the level of education increases in all factors. ($\bar{x} > 3,00$).

Table 9. ANOVA Results According to Income Level

Factors	Income Level	\bar{x}	Standard Deviation	t	p	
Informative	Very low-income level	3,2134	,65807	1,731	,142	The results of the ANOVA Test for whether there is any difference
	Low-income level	3,1903	,78585			
	Middle income level	3,4134	,64580			
	High-income level	3,4329	,64280			
	Very high-income level	3,3866	,68845			
Safety	Very low-income level	2,8103	,68198	1,904	,109	
	Low-income level	2,8221	,70638			
	Middle income level	3,0732	,74279			
	High-income level	3,0515	,69760			
	Very high-income level	3,0367	,83958			
Quality	Very low-income level	3,2054	,76995	1,288	,274	
	Low-income level	2,9877	,85727			
	Middle income level	3,2846	,77689			
	High-income level	3,2960	,81369			
	Very high-income level	3,3208	,82051			
Customer Satisfaction	Very low-income level	3,4232	,81818	2,440	,047	
	Low-income level	3,2561	,72087			
	Middle income level	3,2665	,75845			
	High-income level	3,1988	,71967			
	Very high-income level	3,0849	,87279			

The results of the ANOVA Test conducted to determine whether there is any difference in the customers' quality perception and satisfaction levels towards the e-services of holiday purchasing websites according to the income level are shown in Table 7. According to the relevant table, it is determined that there is no statistically significant difference in the functionality factor, customer relations factor and

security factor of the quality perception of the customers towards the e-services of holiday websites according to the income level ($p \geq 0.05$). However, it was determined that customer satisfaction showed a statistically significant difference according to income level ($p \leq 0.05$). It was determined that this difference was caused by participants with very low income and very high-income levels. Accordingly, it was determined that the quality perception of the participants with very high income levels towards these websites was lower.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to determine how customers perceptions of quality and satisfaction levels with the electronic services of holiday websites are shaped by various demographic factors. The findings start by revealing the distribution of the holiday websites preferred by the participants.

The results of this study show that tourists' quality perceptions of holiday websites are concentrated in the dimensions of "informative", "safety" and "quality". It was observed that the participants made evaluations under these dimensions. In addition, it was concluded that the gender factor has not a significant effect on overall quality perception and satisfaction levels. This result of the study differs from the study of Bayram and Şahbaz (2017). Bayram and Şahbaz (2017) found a significant difference between gender and customer satisfaction. The analyses showed that women reported higher satisfaction averages than men.

Our analyses show that demographic factors such as age, education, marital status do not create a statistically significant difference on the quality perception and satisfaction levels towards e-services of holiday websites. These findings suggest that different demographic groups generally have a similar level of quality perception and satisfaction.

However, importantly, analyses based on monthly income level showed that there were significant differences in customer satisfaction with holiday websites. These differences were particularly evident between low and high income respondents. In this framework, it is seen that the quality perception of holiday websites of the participants with high income level is lower. This shows that individuals with higher income levels have higher expectations and evaluate the services offered by these websites from a more critical perspective.

In conclusion, this study aimed to analyze customer perceptions of e-service quality of holiday websites in the context of demographic factors. The findings show that the impact of demographic factors on overall quality perception and satisfaction levels is limited. However, it emphasises that the effect of income level on satisfaction level is an important factor to be considered. These results provide valuable guidance for businesses aiming to develop strategies to provide services that are better aligned with the target audience of holiday websites. In future studies, it is recommended that more comprehensive research be conducted to analyze these factors in more depth and to take into account other possible factors. Based on the results of this study, some recommendations are made.

Recommendations

As a result of the study, customers with higher income levels tend to have lower satisfaction with holiday websites. Therefore, businesses should reassess their marketing strategies and service offerings to cater to this demographic better.

The study identified that tourists primarily focus on the dimensions of "informativeness," "safety," and "quality" when evaluating holiday websites. To improve customer satisfaction, businesses should concentrate on enhancing the quality of information provided, ensuring safety measures, and maintaining overall service quality.

Since demographic factors such as age, education, and marital status did not significantly affect quality perception and satisfaction levels, it might be beneficial for businesses to adopt a more holistic approach in their marketing and service delivery rather than segmenting their audience strictly based on these factors.

Encouraging customer engagement and feedback can help holiday websites better understand their customers' preferences and concerns. This data can be used to tailor services and content to meet the needs and expectations of different income groups.

The article suggests that further comprehensive research is needed to delve deeper into the impact of demographic factors on customer perceptions. Researchers can explore additional factors such as cultural background, travel preferences, or past experiences to gain a more nuanced understanding of customer behavior.

Businesses in the holiday website industry should conduct competitive analysis to stay updated with the latest trends and innovations in the field. This can help them remain competitive and meet the evolving demands of their target audience.

Providing clear and comprehensive information to customers about the services and options available on the website can enhance the "informativeness" dimension and, in turn, improve customer satisfaction.

Consider tailoring services and recommendations based on the income level of customers. High-income individuals may have specific expectations, and understanding these can lead to a more personalized experience.

In conclusion, while demographic factors have limited impact on overall quality perception and satisfaction levels of customers using holiday websites, income level stands out as a crucial factor. To succeed in this competitive industry, businesses should adapt their strategies to meet the diverse needs of their customer base and strive for continuous improvement in service quality. Additionally, conducting further research and staying responsive to changing customer preferences are key for long-term success in the online holiday services sector.

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