



Original Research Article

An evaluation of the factors of tourist satisfaction in the Ionian Islands – an analysis

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Tourist satisfaction plays an important role in the analysis of tourist behavior. The main goal of the survey in question is to investigate the factors which affect tourist satisfaction and how these factors interact with each other. This interaction is achieved through the Structural Equation Models methodology. Namely, an hypothetical tourist satisfaction model will be set down, which will basically include the factors that relate to tourist satisfaction and have already been used in the existing reference models, yet it will assess together the stimuli affecting those who urge tourists to take the trip and also affect the development of their behavior. The hypothetical model after the data collection could be suitably modified validly and reliably with new relations and interactions on factors which form satisfaction. The cluster of the Ionian Islands constitutes the range of inquiry that includes a group of islands with mutual functional dependence and it is an area which is particularly affected by the mainland. The suggestions that are to be put forward will refer to the efficient application of the measuring tool at island tourist destinations similar to the Ionian Islands in regard to the increase of tourist satisfaction.

Key words: Tourist satisfaction, structural equation models, cluster of the Ionian Islands.

INTRODUCTION

In today's age of globalisation each tourist destination acts in a competitive field which is subject to it and the maturity of the market. The market is becoming more and more customer-centered, which means that the tourist destination that seeks distinction should constantly investigate the consumers' changing needs and their satisfaction rate to adapt according to the international tourist reality. Nowadays, customers are not satisfied with purchasing a service or a product; they want to be satisfied with that purchase. Therefore, tourist satisfaction is the most important variable in analysing tourist behaviour which influences the tourist's choice as well as the consumption of products and their future decision to return to the same destination.

In scientific references there are various interpretations for the term of tourist satisfaction and associate it with several factors which affect it. Indicative of that are the researches below: Anderson and Mittal (2000) relate it to the profit or the benefits tourists derive by appreciating the

quality of the tourist product, they were offered (cost/value) with the money they spent. Baker and Crompton (2000) hypothesized that perceived performance quality would have a stronger total effect on behavioral intentions than satisfaction. This hypothesis was confirmed. Results suggested that evaluation efforts should include assessment of both performance quality and satisfaction, but since performance quality is under management's control it is likely to be the more useful measure. In a research carried out by Bou-Liusar et al. (2000) for the exploration of the relationship between the perceived quality and both their satisfaction and their intention of paying another visit. The overall satisfaction was defined as an intermediate variable between the received service quality and the intention of visiting the place again. Also, Petrick (2004) related the satisfaction with perceived value and quality in the prediction of intention to repurchase. Bowie and Chang (2005) tried to identify the variables that are related to customer

satisfaction during a guided package tour service encounter, including the role of the tour leader and the service performance by suppliers – itinerary arrangements, auxiliary support and service delivery. Expectations, customer on-tour attitude, behavior and equity were identified as affecting customer satisfaction during the service encounter. Additionally, the consumption experience of hedonism and enjoyment (excitement factors) on the tour had a significant effect on customer satisfaction. Gallarza and Saura (2006), Chen and Chen (2010) explore the relations among consumer perceptual constructs such as perceived value, satisfaction and loyalty. The results confirm the existence of a quality–value–satisfaction–loyalty chain and illustrate the complexity of value dimensions that have been shown to be highly sensitive to the tourism experience. Chi and Qu (2008) found the existence of the relationships among destination image, tourist attribute, overall satisfaction and destination loyalty.

Bosque and Martin (2008) tried to interpret the consumers' psychological aspect and correlated tourist satisfaction to the expectations, feelings and the picture of the destination. Kim et al. (2011); Meng et al. (2008); Yoon and Uysal (2005) related the consumers' satisfaction with tourist motivations (pull and push), destination attributes, destination loyalty, tourist expectations, tour quality, and tourist complaints. Williams and Soutar (2009) related the consumers' satisfaction and intentions with the proportions given to the meaning of the word (value). These proportions have both financial and emotional viewpoint as well as novelty.

Yuksel et al. (2010) explores the role of attachment in predicting satisfactory holiday experiences and destination loyalty. In Chatzigeorgiou's dissertation (2010) it is claimed that social profile, the consumer's background and their expectations in a specific juncture are factors defining satisfaction. Alegre and Garau (2010) examines the impact of the satisfaction- and dissatisfaction-based evaluations on both the tourists' overall satisfaction and their intention to return to the destination.

It is clear from the above that most researches focus on investigating the relationship between one or two factors in tourist satisfaction and its future conduct. Few researches explore the factors which create dissension in the level of tourist satisfaction. The aim of this research is to explore the factors relating to tourist satisfaction and the way these factors interact with each other. For this purpose, we will attempt to associate all the factors (demographic, social etc) which are considered important and their causal relationship with tourist satisfaction has been proved in a new model, which will include the reasons that affect the factors taken into consideration.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical form of the research is based on Lancaster's rational utility theory (1966), which is used for the interpretation of consumers' behaviour. Lancaster's theory

is based on rational axioms concerning consumers' preferences and is therefore characterised as rational. It considers every set of options to have an expected utility or a subjective value which depends on the features of the option. The consumer has the capability of maximizing in a way, either its utility or its value. Figure 1 presents the changes in tourism demand (Q_d) caused by changes in the personal income of tourists (Y_d) and shows that tourist demand is increasing as available personal incomes increase over time.

In this way consumers get a utility from consuming the products which are available: x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n , limited by the income (Y_d).

Achieving the maximum utility is a conjunction of the product choice under the limitation of income (M) and price (P).

The utility conjunction is: $\max U = f(x)$ under income limitation (Y_d) $= P_1x_1 + P_2x_2, \text{ if } x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n \geq 0$.

The utility conjunction conveys the relation between the quantity of products X (independent variables) and the utility level U (dependent variables), which the consumer gets from the potential consumption of these quantities. Researchers (Rugg, 1972; Papatheothorou, 2001) tried to apply a framework of this theory on tourism, considering utility not to be derived directly from "consumption at a tourist destination", but from "consumption of certain features, peculiarities such as natural or cultural environment". Each destination gives access to different features (services) of the offered tourist product. The choice of destination is proportional to the maximization of utility under the limitation of time and income. In this way, the rational utility theory is used with certain modifications and the utility equation is as follows:

$$\max U = g(z) \text{ st. } z = b \cdot x$$

$$p \cdot x + \sum f_i \leq Y$$

$$\sum (x_i + t_i) \leq T \quad Y, T \geq 0$$

z is a vector of the quantities of j features

x is a vector of the number of i days for each destination

b is the quantity the consumer gets from each feature every day at a destination

Y is the income and T is the price

For each feature we have $Z_j = \sum b_{jx} \cdot x_i$

b is a vector of daily expenses at a tourist destination

f_i is the cost of returning from destination i

Y is the total income available

t_i is the travel time

t is the overall time available

In this study there is an association to the theory of rational utility in the framework of the following factors (Figure 2) which influence tourist satisfaction.

In the framework of the model for the research of tourist satisfaction level and the loyalty of people coming from different countries and visit a specific tourist destination, factors which have empirically been proven to be related to tourist satisfaction are taken into consideration. These factors are: the tourists' motivations, the features of the tourist product- the activities, the estimated value, the perceived efficiency of tourist destination services, and the

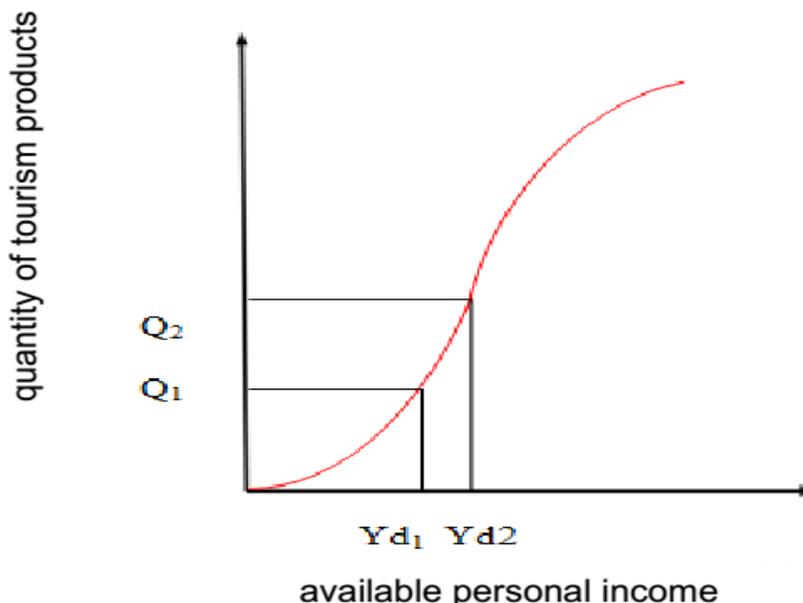


Figure 1: Changes in tourism demand

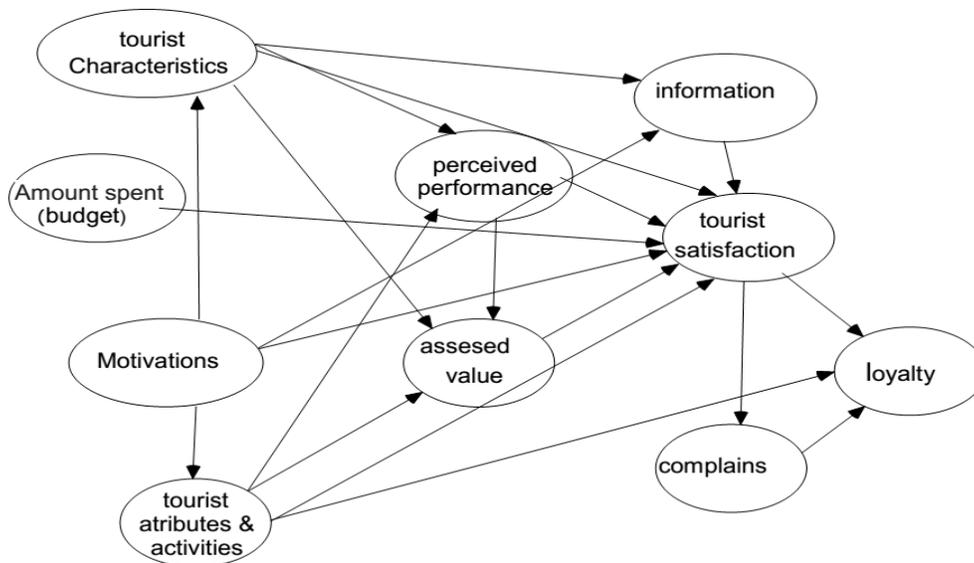


Figure 2 : Models of factors which affect tourist satisfaction

tourist dissatisfaction. Those factors will also include the causes which influence them such as demographic-social and travel features of the tourist and the sources from which he derived information about the tourist destination. All the above make up to a unified model. The results will refer to differentiated preferences which tourists convey depending on nationality, motivation, either their age or/and the kind of accommodation or means of transport etc which can indicate distinct groups of tourists (which specific behaviour and demand) out of the whole, to adopt more targeted policies for their achievement.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Based on the above theoretical framework, one can estimate tourist satisfaction during their stay on the Ionian Islands using the Structural Equation Models methods. Structural Equation Models or SEM is used in several tourist satisfaction researches as a procedure of confirming different assumptions. They reliably estimate the latent notions and their interrelations applying a system of equation among many dependent variables and two or more independent ones. Latent or unclear variables, such

as satisfaction, although existent, cannot be instantly estimated. Initially, in these models the interrelation between variables is estimated, an analyses model is recommended and then the possibility of their evaluation confirmed by the data is investigated. The Path analysis which was created in SEM, allows the study of connection paths of a variable to the dependent variable. This way, they contribute to the acquisition of additional information concerning the validity of interrelation between variables in a satisfaction research.

Furthermore, they can incorporate most of the necessary statistical techniques in order to construct a reliable model so as to offer more extensive and accurate estimation, which is innovative as far the outcome is concerned. One of the techniques widely used in estimating satisfaction is analysis in terms of its factors. This kind of analysis is used in the research in order to impartially estimate first class factors which outline distinguishable and independent variables such as tourist habits or activities or tourist profiles and assess the impact of second class factors that impartially estimate the notions in questions as far as satisfaction is concerned.

The recommended model (Figure 2) tries to depot in a particular way, the latent factors featuring and defining the “final destination” of a tourist. The model comprises an equation system which connects latent variables and noticeable variables using a path diagram. Each of these factors would be composed of a set of variables though the corresponding estimation for the respective factor. The structural model to be settled will therefore have the following initial form: $\mathbf{n} = \mathbf{Bn} + \mathbf{\Gamma \Xi} + \mathbf{\zeta}$ (equation 1).

It comprises a system of multiple linear inconsistencies.

B table outlines the interrelation between the internal variables of the model.

Γ table outlines the impact of external variables on internal ones.

Z table is the table of the system’s leftovers.

Following the Structural Equation Theory for each latent factor included, an equation system must be constructed as follows:

Motivation equations (ξ_1)

In the form of tables, the estimation equation of ξ_1 is:

$X = \Xi * \Lambda + \Delta$ (equation 2) with measurements respectively per columns

X is the vector (1,7) of the observed data from tourists answers

Ξ is the table of measurements {1x1} which estimates the latent variables

Λ is the table of factors that estimate the importance of the observed variables contribution in assessing the factor

Δ is the leftover vector for each of the measurements.

Tourist satisfaction equation (n1)

In the form of tables, the estimation equation of n1 is:

$Y_1 = H_1 * \Lambda_1 + E_1$ (equation 3) with measurements

respectively

$[1 \times 11] = [1 \times 1] * [1 \times 11] + [1 \times 11]$

Y_1 is the vector (1, 11) of the observed data from tourists answers.

Loyalty Equation (η_2)

In the form of tables, the estimation equation of n2 is:

$Y_2 = H_2 * \Lambda_2 + E_2$ (equation 4) with measurements respectively

$[1 \times 3] = [1 \times 1] * [1 \times 3] + [1 \times 3]$

Y_2 is the vector (1, 3) of the observed data from tourists’ answers.

Λ is the table of factors that estimate the importance of the observed variables contribution in assessing the factor and E_2 the leftover vector [1 x 3] for each one of measurements Y_j

Perceived performance (η_4) equation

The perceived performance isn’t directly estimated from tourists’ answers.

In the form of tables, the estimation equation of n4 is:

$Y_4 = H_4 * \Lambda_4 + E_4$ (equation 5) with measurements respectively

$[1 \times 6] = [1 \times 1] * [1 \times 6] + [1 \times 6]$

Y_1 is the vector (1, 6) of the observed data

H_4 is the measurements table [1 x 1] which estimates the latent variable [η_4]

Λ is the table of factors that estimate the importance of the observed variables contribution in assessing the factor

E_4 the leftover vector [1 x 11] for each one of measurements Y_j

Assessed values (η_5) equation

The assessed value will be assessed according to the answers to the observed variables.

In the form of tables, the estimation equation of n5 is:

$Y_5 = H_5 * \Lambda_5 + E_5$ (equation 6) with measurements respectively

$[1 \times 11] = [1 \times 1] * [1 \times 11] + [1 \times 11]$

Y_5 is the vector (1, 10) of the observed data

H_5 is the measurements table [1 x 10] which estimates the latent variable

$H_5 = [\eta_5]$

E_5 the leftover vector [1 x 10] for each one of measurements Y_j

Activities Product attributes (η_6) equation

In the form of tables, the estimation equation of n6 is:

$Y_6 = H_6 * \Lambda_6 + E_6$ (equation 7) with measurements respectively

$[1 \times 18] = [1 \times 1] * [1 \times 18] + [1 \times 18]$

Y_6 is the vector (1, 18) of the observed data $H_6 = [\eta_6]$

E_6 the leftover vector [1 x 18] for each one of measurements Y_j

Information sources (η_7) equation

In the form of tables, the estimation equation of η_7 is:

$Y_7 = H_7 * \Lambda_7 + E_7$ (equation 8) with measurements respectively

$$[1 \times 4] = [1 \times 1] * [1 \times 4] + [1 \times 4]$$

Y_1 is the vector (1, 4) of the observed data

H_1 is the table of measurements [1 x 1] which estimates latent variable

$$H_7 = [\eta_7]$$

E_1 the leftover vector [1 x 7] for each one of measurements Y_j

(Complaints) (η_8) equation

The final variable (complaints) will be assessed with analysis in terms of its factors in two different groups of equations:

A. All different complaints factors will be assessed and grouped, and five factors of this kind will be constructed. Thus, it will be very interesting to assess them and estimate their direct or indirect impact on tourist satisfaction.

B. Low quality services received by tourists on the island will be assessed using a certain scale.

In the form of tables, the estimation equation of η_8 is:

$Y_8 = H_8 * \Lambda_8 + E_8$ (equation 9) with measurements respectively

$$[1 \times 11] = [1 \times 1] * [1 \times 8] + [1 \times 8]$$

Y_1 is the vector (1, 8) of the observed data

H_8 is the table of measurements [1 x 1] which estimates latent variable

$$H_8 = [\eta_8]$$

E_8 the leftover vector [1 x 8] for each one of measurements Y_j

RESULTS

Sample Selection

The sample which was created for the accomplishment of the research was taken on four island tourist destinations that belong to the Ionian Islands cluster that is Kefalonia, Lefkada, Zakynthos and Corfu in 2016. The interviews were conducted from May to October, as there is tourist turnout only during the summer season at those tourist destinations. The questionnaires were filled in by people who had spent at least four nights at the tourist destination in question. The total number of the research samples came to 906 people. For the completion of the research AMOS v7 software package was used. After elaborating the data of the sample, the following facts came to light:

- 45.2% of the tourists come from England, 19.6% were Greek, and 29.4% come from the rest of Europe. Only a small percentage (5.2%) comes from America, Africa and Australia.

- Of the 906 people who participated in the research

499 (55.1%) were women and 407 (44.9%) were men.

- As for their marital status 59.6% were married while 27.5% were single (they had no family commitments).

- 58.8% of the sample go on holiday on their own, 34.6% with a companion while a small percentage 0.8% go on holiday with a group of 3-4 people.

- The majority of tourists (48.8%) belonged to 35-54 age group.

- 59.2% of the sample was of a high educational level.

- The average length of stay at tourist destinations was 9 days.

- The highest percentage of tourists opt for stay in hotels (53.7%), but a significant percentage of 30.2% opt for rented rooms

- 60.1% go on holiday mainly in the summer, while a percentage of 29.7% go all year round.

- Only 10.4% of the sample visited another destination in the same year, whereas the biggest part of 89.6% visited only one.

Then the relation of each factor used in the model above to tourist satisfaction and loyalty is investigated.

The relation of tourists' features to tourist satisfaction and loyalty

The results shown in Tables 1 and 2 arose from the relation between tourists' features and their satisfaction and loyalty. The English are considered to be the most satisfied tourists, which is justified by the fact that they come with all-inclusive packages. On the contrary, people who come from non-European countries seem to be loyal to the same tourist destinations, as the latter entail the potential of free accommodation in relatives' houses.

Women tend to be more satisfied than men. Apparently, there is no difference concerning gender for loyalty at tourist destinations. People who are in a relationship (12.9%) seem to be more satisfied while marital status doesn't seem to play an important role in loyalty. The type of tourists who prefer to go on holiday during the rest of the year, appear to be more satisfied with tourist destinations as they have a wider range of choices. On the contrary, tourist preference doesn't seem to relate to loyalty. People belonging to 55+ age group appear to be more satisfied and loyal than younger people, as well as those of a high education level because they seek relevant information about the specific tourist destinations. However, they are obviously less loyal than those of a lower education level. Those who stay in rented rooms or private residences seem to be more satisfied and loyal because they are offered accommodation of the same quality at a lower price. The type of friends doesn't seem to relate to satisfaction. It relates, however, to loyalty due to the fact that families tend to get used to the same environment and they visit the destination again.

Table 1.The relations between tourists' features and overall satisfaction

Country	United Kingdom (UK)	7.8
Marital status	In a relationship	7.8
Preferences	Group of 3-4	8.7
Accommodation	Private residence	7.7
Age	55+	7.7
Holiday time	All seasons	7.7
Accommodation	Rented rooms	7.6
Education	Tertiary	7.6
Gender	Female	5.2

Table 2. The relations between tourists' features and loyalty

Country	Non-European	6.04
Marital status	Married	5.2
Preferences	Group of 3-4	6.1
Accommodation	Private residence	5.5
Age	55+	5.6
Holiday time	All seasons	5.3
Accommodation	Rented rooms	5.7
Education	Primary	5.7
Gender	Female	5.2

Table 3. The degree of satisfaction and loyalty in tourist choice

tourist choice	Pearson Correlation		Sig. (2-tailed)	
	Total satisfaction	Loyalty	Total satisfaction	Loyalty
pref_places	.070	.009	.034	.775
pref_friends	.031	-.101	.345	.002
pref_shopping	-.002	-.007	.961	.843
pref_dishes	.132	.059	.000	.072
pref_Nonprogrmming	-.031	-.056	.345	.090
pref_New_cultures	.053	-.045	.112	.171
pref_Activities	-.022	.013	.510	.687
pref_Know_people	.087	.010	.009	.774
pref_Fun	.060	.020	.072	.539
pref_organised	-.004	.091	.913	.006
prefer holidays (friends, new dishes)	.087	.021	.009	.517
Prefer place (culture, people, places)	.102	-.012	.002	.723
Prefer actions (fun, shopping, activities)	.040	.046	.234	.168

The relation between satisfaction and loyalty and tourists' choice (incentives) at tourist destinations

Investigation of the interrelation between tourist satisfaction and loyalty and their choices (incentives) at tourist destinations showed (Table 3) that people with certain preferences such as local cuisine or meeting and contacting other people, are most satisfied. Moreover, it is ascertained that the highest percentage of people who organize their holidays in advance, visit the destination again.

The correlation between satisfaction and loyalty and the features of the tourist destination

Investigation of the relation between tourist satisfaction

and loyalty and the offered tourist product (Table 4), it was found that entertainment, natural beauty and sports (activities) which are available at holiday resorts are more relevant features. On the contrary, people who are interested in art, local culture and shopping don't seem to be that satisfied.

The relation between satisfaction and loyalty and the estimated value (Value/money)

The results of the relation between the estimated value (value/money) on basic features of the tourist destination (accommodation, service, transportation, comparison to other places etc) with satisfaction and loyalty showed that all the above facts are equally related (Table 5).

Table 4. The relation between destination features with satisfaction and loyalty

Features of tourist destination	Pearson Correlation		Sig. (2-tailed)	
	Overall satisfaction	Loyalty	Overall satisfaction	Loyalty
import_sports	.107	.141	.001	.000
import_sights	.147	.095	.000	.004
import_sports_extreme	-.042	.094	.205	.005
import_excursions	.034	.066	.305	.047
import_entertainment	.016	.072	.623	.031
import_art	-.035	.079	.293	.017
import_Archaeological	.008	.067	.800	.044
import_folcore	.024	.144	.473	.000
import_shopping	-.011	.002	.731	.952
import_Tourist_info	-.055	-.018	.099	.583
import_Fun	.159	.023	.000	.482
Importance fun	.078	.133	.019	.000
Importance lifestyle	.071	.029	.032	.374
Importance art	.010	.118	.752	.000
Culture	.023	.119	.487	.000
Entertainment	.139	.114	.000	.001
nature	.139	.141	.000	.000
Sports	.142	.167	.000	.000

Table 5. The relation between the estimated value of tourist destination features and satisfaction and loyalty

Characteristics of the tourist destination	Pearson Correlation		Sig. (2-tailed)	
	Overall satisfaction	Loyalty	Overall satisfaction	Loyalty
Visit in general	.332	.203	.000	.000
Stay	.358	.167	.000	.000
Transportation	.395	.184	.000	.000
Service	.350	.178	.000	.000
Compared to other places	.349	.227	.000	.000
ASSESSED VALUE	.349	.191	.000	.000

Table 6. The satisfaction and loyalty degree with perceived performance

perceived performance	Pearson Correlation		Sig. (2-tailed)	
	Overall satisfaction	Loyalty	Overall satisfaction	Loyalty
Overall stay	.505	.230	.000	.000
Overall board	.498	.151	.000	.000
Overall transportation	.410	.066	.000	.046
Overall entertainment	.473	.142	.000	.000
Overall infrastructure	.438	.127	.000	.000
Overall satisfaction	.624	.195	.000	.000

The relation between satisfaction and loyalty and the perceived performance

The tourists perceived performance from board, accommodation, transportation etc is related as a composition factor more with the overall satisfaction than specifically with each factor. That is, if someone is not satisfied with one of the above factors but they are satisfied with all the rest, the overall satisfaction will be positive. On the contrary, loyalty is more related to satisfaction with accommodation and secondly with board and entertainment (Table 6).

The relation between satisfaction and loyalty

The relation between satisfaction and loyalty, although positive and very important, is not very high (Table 7). That is, there are tourists who will definitely not visit the same tourist destination although they are very satisfied.

The relation between satisfaction and loyalty and the activities and expenses at tourist destinations

The results indicated that the amount of money (budget) for holiday isn't directly related to satisfaction and loyalty.

Table 7. The relation between satisfaction and loyalty

Factors	Descriptive means		Correlation with satisfaction	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	correlation	p-value
Loyalty	6.19	2.75	.266	0.000

Table 8. The relation between expenses and activity choices and satisfaction and loyalty

Activities and expenses	Pearson Correlation		Sig. (2-tailed)	
	Overall satisfaction	Loyalty	Overall satisfaction	Loyalty
Total expenses in the area (budget)	.017	.018	.605	.599
Travel duration	-.002	-.038	.968	.329
Number of nights	.057	.055	.110	.118
Personal activities (food, fun, friends)	.177	.004	.000	.911
Activities in the area (Done in the place)	.067	.000	.043	.997
Visiting the area (see the place)	-.004	.092	.902	.005

Table 9. The relation between satisfaction and loyalty and the number of complaints

Factors	Descriptive means		Correlation with satisfaction	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	correlation	p-value
Complaints	5.12	3.28	-0.18	0

The activities which are done by tourists at tourist destinations, such as sports, environmental activities etc boost satisfaction while personal activities such as contact with friends, dining, entertainment etc boost loyalty (Table 8).

The relation between satisfaction and loyalty and the number of complaints

The more the points of dissatisfaction of the people who were asked, the more complaints they have at the specific destinations. Although this factor has a minus sign related to tourist satisfaction (Table 9), the number of complaints isn't enough to make the change noticeable.

Conclusions

Certain conclusions have come out from the results of the analysis of the research data, which verify and disprove the interrelations between factors and their relation to tourist satisfaction and loyalty in the model. The conclusions of the research are summed up below:

- Every model factor is individually related to tourist satisfaction as well as loyalty and affects them both to a different degree.
- The relation between tourist satisfaction and loyalty, although positive, is not big.
- The perceived performance of the offered tourist product and the estimated value are two factors which are of immense importance.

- The tourists' features are on the one hand, related to the perceived performance of the tourist product, the sources of information and the estimated value on the other hand with satisfaction (since there is a different satisfaction degree depending on gender, age, educational level etc). Compared to other factors they have little correlation to tourist satisfaction.

- Several motivations comprise tourist features. The most important ones of those which motivate tourists and cause satisfaction are entertainment, rest, nature, sports and sights.

- Many of the features of tourist destination, as well as the activities contribute to the satisfaction and the loyalty to a different degree. The most important are art-culture, shopping, and local cuisine, meeting other people, sports and local culture.

- Sufficient information contributes to satisfaction
- The sum of money (budget) for holiday is not directly related to satisfaction or loyalty.

- Complaints are negatively associated to satisfaction and there is a relation to the perceived performance.

Based on the results of the research and the relevant conclusion the theoretical model maintains its initial form because most of the existed relations between the variables are verified. It is only differentiated at very few points, which are spotted in the indirect relation of satisfaction and loyalty to the amount of expense for holidays and the reciprocating correlation of complaints to the perceived performance (as the more evaluation points the tourists are dissatisfied with the more complaints they have and vice-

versa). Finally, the relation between the perceived performance and the estimated value is indicated.

Suggestions

Based on the results of the research the following tourist policy suggestions are being made:

- Monuments and attractions of cities should be made known using contemporary scientific methods (interpretation) so as to meet the interests of every group as well as adequate informing about anything having to do with their stay.
- There should be balance between price and quality of the basic tourist product available at the tourist destination (accommodation, board, infrastructure, transportation).
- There should be a collective development strategy. Entry of local leading figures (e.g. hotel owners) into networks providing collaboration and promotion for local products and services may contribute to the development of innovative initiatives which boost the improvement of the services provided. The region of the Ionian Islands, where the tourist destinations belong will have to organise regional projects, structured under a unified command with recognisable identity, clear targeting, adequacy and exploitation of necessary publicity means at international markets which correspond to their features of their regional commodity.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of the paper.

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