

TOURIST SATISFACTION: AN ANALYSIS OF ITS ANTECEDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Trying to understand what comprises tourist satisfaction is one of the most relevant areas of research for the sector (Petrick 2003; Prebensen, 2006), as satisfied tourists tend to transmit their positive experience to third persons as well as repeating their visit (Hallowell 1996; Kozak & Rimmington 2000; Pizam 1994; Alén, Rodríguez & Fraiz, 2007; Operman, 2000). The aim of this study is to offer an integrating vision of the relationships that exist between the antecedents of tourist satisfaction, their motivation, and the activities holiday-makers carry out at their destination, with the hope that these results will aid tourist managers in their task of creating competitive offers. The results obtained in this study provide sufficient empirical evidence to accept the relationship that exists between tourist motivation, the activities they perform at their destination, and their overall level of satisfaction.

KEYWORDS: Tourist satisfaction, motivation, activities, destination.

1. INTRODUCTION

Understanding what drives satisfaction for a tourist is one of the most relevant areas of research for the tourism industry (Petrick 2003; Prebensen, 2006), as satisfied tourists tend to transmit their positive experience to others and to repeat their visit (Alén, Rodríguez & Fraiz, 2007; Hallowell 1996; Kozak & Rimmington 2000; Pizam 1994; Operman, 2000). The literature reveals that the level of tourist satisfaction with a particular trip is the result of different factors (Peter & Olson, 1996) which are generally assessed as a comparison between the tourist's perception of the products and services he receives and the expectations generated before and during his trip (Barsky & Labagh, 1992; Bigné & Andreu, 2004; Chon & Olsen, 1991). As a result of such interest, numerous studies have been carried out to measure the degree of tourist satisfaction, but very few papers have focused on analysing the antecedents behind this variable and the possible relationships between them. In a highly competitive market, being able to offer an attractive tourist destination implies having a deep understanding of (i) the motives that lead a tourist to choose one particular destination among all the alternatives; (ii) the activities available to the tourist at the destination, and (iii) the degree of satisfaction with the product he receives (Jang & Feng, 2007). In this sense, the causal relationship between motivation, activities performed at destination, and tourist satisfaction have only been superficially discussed both conceptually and empirically (Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

Choosing a holiday destination is a rational decision process involving different factors (McGehee, Loker-Murphy & Uysal, 1996): the tourist feels the need to travel and looks for a "product" which initially may offer the greatest satisfaction to fulfil that need. In such a process, the tourist feels 'pushed' by internal and emotional factors, as well as attracted by the characteristics of the destination and the availability of activities (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977; Uysal & Jurovski, 1994). An especially interesting aspect of this argument is whether external sources of motivation have a greater effect than internal sources of motivation on the level of

tourist satisfaction (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). This study contributes to the literature by providing an integrating vision of the relationships that exist between tourist satisfaction and its antecedents.

This paper is structured into the following sections: first, we review the relevant literature, since it poses a theoretical perspective based on arguments concerning the relationship between motivation, activities, distance and tourist satisfaction. Then, in order to analyse such relationships, we present an empirical study conducted out in the Spanish region of Andalusia. Finally we discuss the results and their implications for tourism management.

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The ideas developed on the basis of the literature about tourist behaviour (Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Um & Crompton, 1990; Woodside & Dubelaar, 2002; Woodside & Lysonski, 1989) and the field of services (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Boulding *et al.*, 1993; Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Hallowell, 1996; Rust & Oliver, 1994; Taylor & Baker, 1994; Zeithaml, Berry & Parasuraman, 1996) have led to a sound theoretical body (Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005) aimed at explaining the complex process encompassing the tourist before, during and after his travels (Woodside & Dubelaar, 2002). The fundamental premise behind such ideas is that the thoughts, decisions, and behaviour patterns for one activity bear upon the thoughts, decisions, and behaviour patterns for a host of activities (Wesley *et al.*, 2006).

The literature concludes that tourists' decisions and behaviour patterns depend on a wide range of relationships between different variables, which appear in three distinct stages. The first stage considers those variables that characterise the decision before the journey and which will influence the tourist's behaviour at his chosen destination, such as, for example, the distance to the destination or the reason to make this trip. The second phase – the tourist's experience at the destination – looks at the relevant variables during the consumption of the service. In the third phase, variables regarding the tourist's experience and its future intended behaviour are looked at. The interrelations between the different variables that comprise each of the phases described above lead, in the words of Woodside & Dubelaar (2002), to a “dynamic model of tourist behaviour”, which stands as a significant groundbase for our research.

In a highly competitive market, being able to offer an attractive tourist destination implies having a deep understanding of the motives that lead tourists to make their choice among the different alternatives available, as well as of the degree of satisfaction obtained with the services provided (Jang & Feng, 2007). A review of the tourism literature reveals that very few studies have analysed the causal relationship between these two variables – tourist motivation and level of satisfaction – with the aim of guiding tourist resort management (Prebensen, 2004; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). As mentioned above, these variables form a part of the process that shapes the dynamic model of tourist behaviour.

2.1. SATISFACTION WITH THE DESTINATION

Unquestionably, satisfaction is one of the most relevant variables when analysing tourist behaviour, as it influences the choice of destination, the consumption of products and services, and the decision to return (Jang & Feng, 2007; Kozak & Rimmington, 2000). For this reason, tourist's satisfaction has been a priority subject of research in recent years (Kozak, Bigné & Andreu, 2003; Tsiotsou & Vasioti, 2006).

Different perspectives or theories have analysed this variable in the literature about tourism. Prominent amongst them is the disconfirmation paradigm (Oliver, 1980; Oliver & Desarbo, 1988),

which states that tourists have previous expectations before receiving the service which they compare with the perceived outcome of the service. In this sense, we could quote the works of Barsky & Labagh (1992), Bigné & Andreu (2004), Chon (1989), Chon & Olsen (1991) or Pizam & Milman (1993), among others. Other approach is the equity theory, which reveals that tourist satisfaction can be analysed as a relationship between the sacrifices and rewards he expects in terms of time, cost or effort and value received (Oliver & Swan, 1989). In addition, the normative theory establishes the need for a “norm” to be set as a reference point against which one’s opinion can be measured (Latour & Peat, 1979). Thus, tourists may compare their present destination with other alternatives or past experiences (Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

In any case, assessing the level of tourist satisfaction implies considering multiple dimensions that facilitate the psychological process required to evaluate experience with a particular product or service (Peter & Olson, 1996). Tourist satisfaction with a particular destination may be the result of multiple factors, including the expectations generated before and during the trip, as well as the tourist's perception of the service received. As indicated by Bigné & Andreu (2004), satisfaction reflects both a cognitive and an emotional phenomenon. In this sense, those authors propose a cognitive/emotional integrating model with which to explain satisfaction, since tourists do not only evaluate their consumption experience, but also their purchasing experience (Sánchez et al., 2006).

Giese & Cote (2000) emphasised the need to specify satisfaction levels on the basis of the context in which it is evaluated. They identify three basic elements of context: (i) response to an emotional judgement; (ii) a specific aspect of the service (a particular service encounter); and (iii) a specific moment in time (for example, immediately after the service has taken place). However, despite this general recognition that we are dealing with a sequential process, researchers tend to focus on perception of the service when evaluating satisfaction objectives (Prebensen, 2004). In short, we need to take into account that customer reaction to emotional experiences - as is the case of the holidaymaker’s experience - varies according to the situational context and the complexity of the subject’s interpretation or valuation of the activities he experiences (Gountas & Gountas, 2007).

The literature has analysed tourist satisfaction from a wide range of contexts: cultural trips (Ross & Iso-Ahola; 1991); depending on the characteristics of the tours (Hsieh et al.; 1994); certain aspects of the tourist programme (Heide et al., 1999) and principally, research into tourist satisfaction with the chosen destination (Chon & Olsen, 1991; Danaher & Arweiler, 1996; Joppe et al., 2001; Kozak & Rimmington, 2000). As we can see, a great deal of research focuses on measuring the level of tourist satisfaction. On the other hand, analysis of the causes that generate such a level of satisfaction is much scarcer. In this sense, if satisfaction level is a process linked to need, motivations, and characteristics of the service offering, we need to study in greater depth the antecedents behind such evaluation and not restrict ourselves simply to its assessment, otherwise we would be limiting our capacity to understand the clients' emotional experiences during their interactions with the service providers (Gountas & Gountas, 2007).

Among the different types of antecedents that influence tourist satisfaction, a great deal of analysis has been directed towards the attributes of the service offering, i.e. to identifying those special characteristics that a tourist service needs to be successful (Tosun et al, 2007; Weaver, Weber & McCleary; 2007). In this case, the study of service quality is a clear antecedent of tourist’s satisfaction (Alén et al., 2007; Sánchez et al, 2007; White, 2006). On the other hand, the

study of those variables that influence the decision before it is made and which reflects the individual's own characteristics (Kim et al., 2002; Zins, 2001) – such as his degree of motivation – represent a field of research which still requires more profound analysis (Gountas & Gountas, 2007).

Early research indicates that the motives that drive holidaymakers are what determine the activities that those tourists will do at their destination (Chang-Hung, Eagles & Smith, 2004; Pearce, 1988). However, a recent study conducted in the field of 'nature' tourism (Mehmetoglu, 2007) reveals that motivation and the activities performed by tourists at their destination should be analysed independently. Furthermore, much of early research has taken the independence between tourist motivation and the characteristics or attributes of the destination for granted (Nicolau & Mas, 2006).

Our research intends to demonstrate that the level of tourist satisfaction depends both on the activities available at the holiday destination and on the motives behind the tourist's trip. Separating these antecedents will facilitate to understand why tourists recommend certain destinations and are keen to return, in the context of a dynamic model.

2.2 MOTIVATION

One of the most relevant research issues for the tourist sector is to analyse why people travel and what they expect from their destination (Yoon & Uysal, 2005), i.e. what are the motives behind their choice of trip. Consumer behaviour literature states that need and motivation are interrelated (Witt & Wright, 1992). Generally, motivation implies a dynamic process of internal psychological factors, in which terms such as choice, effort, novelty, or persistence over time are involved (Jang & Feng, 2007). Motivation leads to a behaviour oriented towards a specific objective (Beerli & Martín, 2004; Prebensen & Kleiven, 2006) which, depending on the circumstances, may reveal different degrees and intensities.

Tourism literature defines motivation as a series of needs that predispose a person to participating in a tourist activity (Pizam, Neuman & Reichel, 1979). Several research papers have look at this variable in their effort to concrete the motives behind tourists taking holidays (Fodness, 1994; Kleiven, 1998, 1999; Pearce, 1993; Qiu & Lam, 1999; Ross & Iso-Ahola, 1991; Ryan & Glendon, 1998; Uysal & Hagan, 1993; Witt & Wright, 1992). Some such studies recognize the heterogeneous nature of tourist motivation by considering the relationship between individual personality and tourist activities (Dann, 1977, Gountas & Gountas, 2007). Other authors, such as Pearce (1993), propose that tourists possess limited motivations which change over time.

Each tourist destination offers a variety of services and each tourist has the opportunity of choosing – under the influence of different variables (age, income, cost, risk, distance, etc) from a series of available alternatives (Kozak, 2002). A stream of research has tried to classify the main attributes of any particular destination (Kale & Weir, 1986; Laws, 1995; Sirakaya, McLellan & Uysal, 1996). Such items include climate, culture, architecture, transport, entertainment or cost (Kozak, 2002), whereas attributes such as the destination's image help to strengthen these factors (Rodríguez et al., 2006).

Traditionally, the motivations that lead an individual are classified in the literature as Push-and-Pull factors (Dann, 1977; Uysal & Hagan, 1993; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). 'Push' factors refer to intangible aspects, i.e. the individual's intrinsic desires (Crompton, 1979) linked to internal and emotional factors. Such motivations include the desire for rest, adventure, relaxation, health, social

and family relationships, etc. (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Led by these factors, tourists travel to escape from their routine and to live new experiences. 'Pull' factors relate to the tangible characteristics of the trip, as well as the image or degree of attractiveness that the chosen destination holds (Rodríguez et al., 2004).

Given that motivation is a dynamic concept, it is possible to identify different tourist profiles depending on this variable, profiles which also may change with time (Jang & Feng, 2007). For this reason, motivation has been profusely analysed as a segmentation variable in tourism (Shoemaker, 1994). As Laws (1991), Kim (1999) or Kozak (2002) state, this approach enables tourism managers to promote those attributes that best suit the profile of certain groups of tourists. This approach is in line with the argumentation proposed by Wesley et al. (2006) regarding the different styles of consumer or customer purchasing decision. Concretely, these authors propose that such styles reflect different forms and methods of purchasing and consumption that consequently constitute segmentation criteria useful to business managers.

According to social psychology arguments, the motives that impel an individual to make a decision are closely linked to the expectations behind such behaviour which, in many cases, also result in greater personal satisfaction (Gountas & Gountas, 2007; Ross & Iso-Ahola, 1991). In short, motives are cognitive representations of future states (Deci & Ryan, 1987). As Iso-Ahola (1982) propose, individuals perceive leisure activities as a potential instrument for generating satisfaction, firstly, because of the intrinsic reward they may afford and, secondly, as they represent a means of escaping from daily routine – activities of a hedonic, excitement-producing nature (Bigné & Andreu, 2004). According to these arguments, motivation and satisfaction are positively related (Wesley et al., 2006), bearing in mind that the former occur before the tourist experience takes place and the latter after.

2.3 ACTIVITIES DURING THE HOLIDAY

This research is based on the consumer's behaviour pattern which postulates that the level of tourist satisfaction will depend both on his expectations regarding the attributes expected from the holiday, and from the perception of the outcome of those attributes (Clemons & Woodruff, 1992). The variety and type of activities available throughout the stay at the destination are of the utmost importance for two specific reasons: (i) they facilitate social interaction (Gallarza & Gil, 2006; Ross, 1995; Thomas & Butts, 1998); and (ii) they constitute one of the most influential factors when choosing a holiday destination (Nykiel, 1997). Both elements are crucial for the determination of tourist satisfaction levels. In this sense, Danaher & Arweiler (1996) established that, although the experience associated with items relating to transport and accommodation affect the degree of tourist satisfaction, positive tourist feedback focused mainly on outdoor activities. In this sense, it is essential for the industry to understand that the activities performed during the stay at the holiday destination and the experiences during these activities are clear sources of satisfaction for the tourist. Despite the amount of research focusing on studying the level of tourist satisfaction with the overall trip, very few studies have addressed the level of tourist participation in the activities available at each holiday destination as a relevant antecedent of their degree of satisfaction.

2.4 DISTANCE TO THE DESTINATION

The literature dealing with the choice of holiday destination considers that the distance to that destination may play a dual role: it can represent a dissuasive element for certain holiday options, while others conclude that it represents a factor of attraction (Gallarza & Gil, 2006;

Nicolau & Mas, 2006). Tourists choose more distant destinations depending on their desires and time availability. Therefore, distance to the holiday destination is a key variable in the relationship between the level of a tourist's satisfaction and the motives to make the trip.

Distance to the destination is a clearly relevant variable in the holiday decision process (Nyaupane et al., 2003). However, no clear consensus exists within the literature about its influence. Studies such as those by Schroeder & Louviere (1999) or Adamowicz et al. (1994) suggest that its role is restrictive given its direct effect on variables such as time and cost (Gallarza & Gil, 2006). According to these arguments, tourists would prefer closer destinations. On the contrary, Baxter (1979) indicates that distance in itself has a positive usefulness and therefore, on occasions, longer distances are preferable. This line of research uses arguments based on the marginal analysis of distance and concludes that, once a certain limit has been passed, each further unit of distance meets with less resistance (Nicolau & Mas, 2006). According to these ideas, more distant holiday destinations may be attractive for tourists since they increase the degree of daily routine breaking, and therefore, increases the level of relaxation. Likewise, more distant destinations contribute to the tourist interest in engaging in the activities on offer, which will then affect their level of satisfaction.

Following the same line of thought, McKercher & Lew (2003) refer to the theory of distance reduction, which holds that demand reaches its maximum level at a relatively close distance to a market source, and then descends exponentially as the distance – perceived costs – increases. Indeed, as the theory of social exchange suggests, individuals choose their exchanges - holiday destinations - after contrasting cost with gains (Jurowski & Gursoy, 2003).

Many models about travel-related decision-taking incorporate measurements of the distance between home and potential destinations (Ankomah & Crompton, 1992). However, distance evaluation also has a subjective dimension in which individual, social, and cultural factors come into play (Bailly, 1986; Friedman et al., 2002; Friedman and Montello, 2006; Harrison-Hill, 2001; Oliva et al., 2005). Within tourism, such factors include age, frequency or duration of the visit, and the level of involvement with the holiday experience (Ankomah & Crompton, 1992).

2.5. PROPOSED MODEL AND HYPOTHESIS

The level of tourist satisfaction is crucial for business success in tourism management (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Satisfaction with the trip will depend both on the physical attributes of the destination (supply) and the psychological and emotional interpretation that the tourist makes of the destination (demand). Based on theoretical arguments provided above, this research intends to analyse in depth the causes that determine the level of a tourist's satisfaction (see figure 1). In this sense, we propose that prominent among the relevant antecedents of tourist satisfaction are: (i) variables that define the individual's own characteristics (Kim et al., 2002; Zins, 2001), specifically his motivation; (ii) the variety and type of activities available throughout his stay at the holiday destination (Ross, 1995; Thomas & Butts, 1998; Wesley et al., 2006) (iii) distance to the holiday destination (Gallarza & Gil, 2006; Nicolau & Mas, 2006) as one of its attributes. Furthermore, we consider that distance to the destination bears upon the motives and activities carried out by the tourist, and therefore on his degree of satisfaction. All of this leads us to propose the following research hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: The motives behind the trip have a positive influence on the tourist's satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2: ‘Push’ motives have greater influence on tourist satisfaction than ‘pull’ motives.

Hypothesis 3: The activities performed during the holiday have a positive influence on the tourist's satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4: As the distance to the holiday destination grows, the degree of tourist satisfaction increases.

Hypothesis 5: As the distance to the holiday destination grows, the influence of ‘push’ motives on tourist satisfaction increases.

Hypothesis 6: As the distance to the holiday destination grows, the influence of the activities performed during the holiday on tourist satisfaction increases.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 SCOPE OF STUDY

Our work is a piece of a wider-ranging research on the behaviour of tourists visiting Andalusia. This region of southern Spain is a typical tourist destination throughout the year. It has a warm, Mediterranean climate that enables visitors to enjoy the sun and the beach even in winter months. With its unusual geographical relief, it boasts the highest mountains in Spain, home to the ski resort of Sierra Nevada and yet only one and a half hours by car from the sandy beaches of the Costa del Sol.

The target population of the study is those tourists who visited Andalusia during the months of December 2006 and January 2007. A random sample has been chosen from this population, with proportional grouping by country of origin, sex, and age. Data has been gathered through personal interviews carried out by professional interviewers in public opinion surveys, obtaining a total of 2518 valid questionnaires (see Table 1).

TABLE 1
Sample Distribution

NACIONALITY	Sex		Total
	Men	Women	
Spanish	811	849	1660
Foreigners	451	407	858
Total	1262	1256	2518
EXPERIENCE AT DESTINATION	Men	Women	Total
No experience	222	271	493
Prior experience	1040	985	2025
TOTAL	1262	1256	2518
TYPE OF TOURISM	Frequency		%
Sun & beach	407		16,2
City tours or culture	1103		43,8
Countryside	452		18,0
Business meetings	251		10,0
To play golf	152		6,0
To snow ski	153		6,1
TOTAL	2518		100,0

3.2. VARIABLES AND MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENTS

The model contains the following variables: tourist's reasons for visiting Andalusia, activities carried out during the visit, and satisfaction with the experience. Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviations for these variables.

TABLE 2
Mean and Standard Variations

REASONS	Mean	S.D.
To attend unique 'fiestas'	1.77	1.22
to discover a new places	3.49	1.50
To relax and rest	3.70	1.34
In search of fun and pleasure	3.60	1.33
To visit family and friends	2.21	1.50
To partake of local gastronomy	3.51	1.26
To widen personal culture	3.62	1.41
Family holidays	2.57	1.61
On Business	1.50	1.22
To attend congresses, meetings, etc	1.49	1.21
Two attendant social/sports events	1.38	0.96
For health rehazos	1.27	0.80
To play sports	1.76	1.41
ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT AT DESTINATION	Mean	S. D.
Visits to the nearby towns and cities	3.19	1.53
Visits to historical areas	3.86	1.36
Night life	2.76	1.50
Shopping	2.58	1.41
Tasting gastronomy	3.80	1.12
Playing sports	1.91	1.49
Going to cultural/sports events	1.71	1.20
Going to the beach	1.86	1.45
ASSESSMENT OF THE EXPERIENCE	Mean	S.D.
Satisfaction	4.55	0.55

Tourist motivation or "reasons" are measured by adapting the scale proposed by Fodness (1994), which starts with a classification of basic functions that enables the different tourist motivations to be integrated. This 13-item scale has been successfully tested in other recent works (Beerli, 2002). To analyse the activities carried out at the destination, we initially evaluate the service offerings available at different institutions (travel agencies, etc) through the opinion of a series of experts. Following this review, eight activities have been identified as the principal options available to tourists visiting the region.

Generally, prior studies have measured distance to the destination through two possible indicators: Euclidean distance - in kms or miles - (Adamowicz et al., 1994; Dellaert, Borgers & Timmermans, 1997; Fesenmaier, 1988; Moutinho & Trimble, 1991; Schroeder & Louviere, 1999) and travelling time to the destination (Dellaert et al., 1997; Kemperman et al. 2000). Given that distance is mainly used as a moderating variable, in this research we decided to classify tourists into two large categories, depending on whether they came from Spain or from abroad.

In order to measure customer “satisfaction”, we follow the disconfirmation approach comparing expectations and results or, in specific situations, just measures the perception of the service received (Bigne et al. 2001; Oliver, 1980). Moreover, the level of customer satisfaction can be directly appreciated by means of specific attributes of the service or as an overall measurement. In this study, we estimate tourist satisfaction with a single item, in accordance with prior research in this field (Bigne et al. 2001; Fornell, 1992; Spreng et al. 1996).

4. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

We conduct different regression models in order to identify the influence of motivation and the intensity of activities performed at the destination on the level of tourist satisfaction, as well as to analyse the role of distance to the destination in such relationships. Then, in order to analyse the relationship between dependent metric variables (tourist satisfaction) and independent categorical variables (distance to destination), the most suitable approach is to apply methods related to variance analysis (ANOVA). The ANOVA test performs a mean equality contrast, which is developed by analysis and decomposition of the total variability in the sample observations in additive components (Ferrán, 1997; Hair et al., 1999). In our case, the research objective is to assess the incidence of distance on tourist satisfaction levels. Prior to analysis, we examine the kurtosis (-0,391) and asymmetry (-0,724) coefficients, as well as the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test ($p \leq 0,000$). According to these values, the distribution of the observations for satisfaction is not normal. However, the non-fulfilment of this requirement does not appear to decisively affect the F test, which is key to analysing the variance conclusions when applying the central limit theorem (Balluerca, 1999; Ferrán, 1997; Hair et al., 1999; Luque & Ibáñez, 2000; Lizasoain & Joaristi, 1998). In addition, the results of Levene’s test (Levene = 0,791; $p \leq 0,374$) indicate compliance with the supposition of variance homogeneity. Results of the Anova test are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3
Analysis of Variance

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	,593	1	,593	1,961	,162
Within Groups	719,436	2379	,302		
Total	720,029	2380			

As can be seen, there is no significant incidence of distance on tourist satisfaction. Concretely, mean satisfaction among Spanish tourists stands at 4.56, while for foreigners the figure is 4.52. Given the non-fulfilment of the supposition of normality, these results are verified by using a non-parametric test, namely the Kruskal-Wallis test. The application of this test generates a p value of 0,135, confirming that distance has no significant incidence on tourist satisfaction.

Next we conduct an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) in order to reduce the number of variables relating to motivation and activities carried out at the destination, before running the regression models. The EFA identifies 5 factors relating to tourist motives (65.39% explained variance), and 4 factors regarding the activities performed (72.01% explained variance).

As can be seen in Table 4, the leading motivation factor, identified as FM1, refers to visits to the destination for professional reasons, i.e. attendance at congresses and business meetings. FM2

encompasses the culture of the area and its idiosyncrasic characteristics as the most relevant variables. FM3 covers relaxation and rest as the tourist’s essential motivation. FM4 refers to attendance at sporting and social events at the chosen destination, while FM5 reflects the influence of personal relations (family and friends) as the fundamental factor. Bearing in mind that the literature classifies the reasons impelling an individual as either *push*, that is relating to internal and emotional aspects, or *pull*, relating to tangible characteristics of the trip (Dann, 1977; Uysal & Hagan, 1993; Yoon & Uysal, 2005), we conclude that the results we obtained for FM3 and FM5 are situated within the first possible type of motivation, whereas FM1, FM2 and FM4 correspond to the latter *pull* motives.

On the other hand, the activities performed at the destination converge into four groups: activities relating to visits to historical monuments and sites, in which the relevant role of the particular gastronomy of the area (AF1) is also prominent; sporting and social activities (AF2); activities geared towards tourist leisure, and finally activities relating to exploiting one of the most notorious local resources: making use of the natural resources (beach) at the holiday destination. As far as this last activity is concerned, it should be remembered that the data has been collected in winter, a time of year which, even though the temperatures to allow for visiting the beach, is not the most suitable season for this activity.

TABLE 4
Exploratory Factor Analysis

REASONS	FM1	FM2	FM3	FM4	FM5
To attend unique ‘fiestas’					0.509
to discover a new places		0.745			
To relax and rest			0.629		
In search of fun and pleasure			0.733		
To visit family and friends					0.822
To partake of local gastronomy			0.575		
To widen personal culture		0.796			
Family holidays					0.643
On Business	0.877				
To attend congresses, meetings, etc	0.892				
Two attendant social/sports events				0.665	
For health reasons				0.706	
To play sports				0.620	
K-M-O : 0.679; Bartlett test: 8024.02 (0.000); Explained variance: 65.39%					
ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT AT DESTINATION	AF1	AF2	AF3	AF4	
Visits to the nearby towns and cities	0.704				
Visits to historical areas	0.785				
Night life			0.815		
Shopping			0.671		
Tasting gastronomy	0.633				
Playing sports		0.866			
Cultural/sports events		0.692			
Going to the beach					0.884
K-M-O : 0.609; Bartlett test: 2593,938 (0.000); Explained variance: 72.01%					

The results of the different regression models are shown in Table 5. Model 1 corresponds to a study of the influence of the reasons identified through prior factor analysis on the degree of tourist satisfaction. As independent variables, Model 2 uses the different groups of activities in order of their intensity. Models 3 and 4 replicate the previous ones that include the variable of distance as a moderator in these relationships. For this purpose, we select the foreign tourists as the reference category, i.e. those that have to travel a greater distance to reach the chosen destination.

TABLE 5
Regression Models

Independent variables	Model 1 (R: 0,197)	Model 2 (R: 0,139)	Model 3 (R: 0,204)	Model 4 (R: 0,149)
β	4,550 (0,000)		4,557 (0,000)	
FM1	0,030 (0,119)		0,065 (0,106)	
FM2	0,085 (0,000)		0,067 (0,050)	
FM3	0,141 (0,000)		0,079 (0,020)	
FM4	-0,011 (0,558)		-0,043 (0,133)	
FM5	0,103 (0,000)		0,106 (0,002)	
β		4,550 (0,000)		4,560 (0,000)
AF1		0,133 (0,000)		0,084 (0,029)
AF2		-0,009 (0,632)		-0,013 (0,663)
AF3		0,036 (0,067)		0,061 (0,078)
AF4		-0,016 (0,423)		-0,066 (0,034)
distFM1			-0,031 (0,431)	
distFM2			0,016 (0,668)	
distFM3			0,074 (0,028)	
distFM4			0,044 (0,126)	
distFM5			-0,002 (0,959)	
distAF1				0,060 (0,119)
distAF2				0,010 (0,750)
distAF3				-0,023 (0,505)
distAF4				0,067 (0,030)

With regard to Model 1, it is noteworthy that factors FM2, FM3 and FM5 are the ones that reach significant values. This means that the attractiveness of cultural enrichment, as well as family relationships and personal relaxation, are the variables that account for more level of tourist's satisfaction. The analysis of activities carried out at the destination (Model 2) demonstrates that only historical visits and sightseeing in different towns and cities helps to account for the degree of tourist satisfaction, while the other activities analysed are not significant.

Model 3 addresses the possible influence of distance to the destination on the relationship between motives and satisfaction. As can be seen, the results coincide with those for Model 1, where the moderating variable of distance is only significant for FM3. Finally, Model 4 analyses the influence of distance to the destination on the relationship between activities performed and tourist satisfaction. In this model, different results are obtained from those in Model 2, as both the group of activities classified as AF1 and AF4, as well as the moderating variable of distance with regard to this last activity, are found to be significant.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study provide sufficient empirical evidence to accept the relationship that arises between tourist motivation, the activities performed at the destination, and tourist's satisfaction. Although tourism literature has paid much attention to these variables, there are few works that analyse the causal relationship between them as part of the process that determines the tourist's dynamic behaviour model in order to serve as guidance to holiday resort managers (Prebensen, 2004; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Thus, this study is capable of establishing significant implications for managers of holiday destinations.

The first contribution of this study is that the visitors to this region of Andalusia acknowledge five main reasons for travelling there: two of them linked to internal and emotional questions (*push*) and three are more related to tangible characteristics of the trip itself (*pull*). These results provide information for holiday destination managers, who should be aware of the practical implications that these reasons hold, as they can be fundamental factors for increasing satisfaction with their services offerings. Thus, they should pay special attention to people visiting for professional reasons (conferences and business meetings); to visitors interested in local historic culture and idiosyncratic characteristics; to those who come in search of rest and relaxation; to those who are visiting for sporting and social events; and finally, to the influence of personal relationships (family and friends).

The second contribution of this paper consists of identifying 4 groups of activities that should be available at the holiday destination: historical sightseeing, in which the particular gastronomy of the area also plays a significant role; sporting and social activities; activities geared towards tourist leisure; and finally activities based on exploiting one of the most noteworthy resources in the area: the beach. Again, these results can guide tourism managers with regard to what aspects should be highlighted in their offer. In this sense, a suitable range of activities constitutes one of the main assets to making the destination attractive and therefore more competitive.

The first contribution is to confirm that motives (H_1) and activities carried out at the holiday destination (H_3) - although this variable to a lesser extent - account for the level of a tourist's satisfaction. We are unable to compare whether distance to the destination bears directly upon the degree of tourist satisfaction (H_4), although we are able to discuss the role of this variable on the preceding relationships (H_5 & H_6).

In order to increase the level of tourist satisfaction with the holiday experience, tourism managers should consider two possible types of motivation: *push* and *pull*. The results of this study underline the strong influence that *push*-type motives have over *pull* motives with regard to tourist satisfaction levels. In this case, both the search for rest and relaxation, as well as the influence of personal relationships (family and friends) attain significant values in the proposed relationship, where their coefficients are higher than the only *pull* factor identified (culture and gastronomy). These results demonstrate that tourists, pushed by these factors, travel to get away from their routine and to encounter new experiences (Yoon & Uysal, 2005), and that their satisfaction is most geared by fulfilment of these expectations (Gountas & Gountas, 2007; Ross & Iso-Ahola, 1991). The search for relaxation, fun, and pleasure are the most influential motives on their degree of satisfaction. Following that, other internal and emotional factors – friends, family, etc... – help to explain this variable. Finally, the attractiveness of the destination – with its particular historical sights and monuments – also helps to account for this model. These results confirm H_2 . Moreover, they stand as guidance to holiday destination managers, who should be aware of the role of *push* motivations on tourist satisfaction and, as seen in prior research, how these emotional reasons bear upon the tourist's intention to return and, above all, on the possibilities of him making positive recommendations about the destination.

The literature indicates the influence of the activities available at the destination on tourist satisfaction levels. As far as this particular region is concerned, only one of the groups of activities identified – visits to historical sites and monuments – helps to account for tourist satisfaction. Therefore we cannot state openly that the variety of activities on offer is a reason that accounts for satisfaction levels. However, we can state that offering different activities from those that are usually available to the tourist at home represents one of the most influential factors for him when choosing his holiday destination (Gallarza & Gil, 2006; Nykiel, 1997; Ross, 1995; Thomas & Butts, 1998). In this case, the historical sights in the geographical area, as well as local gastronomy, clearly differentiate the offer from other holiday destinations. Both items are crucial to determining the level of tourist satisfaction.

The results of the ANOVA do not enable us to state that distance to the destination is an explanatory variable, as had been established beforehand. However, we can discuss its influence on the relationships under analysis. Thus, including distance as a moderating variable on tourist motivations is positive and significant as far as the search for fun and pleasure is concerned. Taking into account how our variable is classified, we may conclude that Spanish domestic tourists, i.e. those that have to travel the least distance to the destination, are those that feel 'pushed' by these factors when choosing their holiday product. With regard to the other motives, the results are similar to those mentioned above. Furthermore, we cannot corroborate that distance to the destination increases the weight of "push" motivations.

The analysis of distance on the relationship between activities and satisfaction does reveal more wide ranging results than the previous cases. Thus, another of the specific characteristics of the destination, in this case the exploitation of its natural resources (sun & beach), represents another component that influences the level of tourist satisfaction. In this case, the variable of distance shows that domestic tourists increase their satisfaction levels with this activity. On the contrary, the relationship is negative for foreign tourists. A plausible explanation of this 'a priori' anomalous result lies with the tourists' expectations. In this sense, many foreign tourists expect to find the opportunity to do this activity throughout their entire holiday, firm in their belief that fine sunny weather is almost a permanent feature of this geographical area. Bearing in mind that this study was performed during winter - when the number of days that are suitable for sunbathing decreases -, it is easy to understand the reason behind these results. It is a further indication of the importance of catering to the tourist's expectations in order to influence his degree of satisfaction with the products and services he receives. Again we are led to reject the proposal that tourists travelling from further a field are involved in a higher number of tourist activities.

In conclusion, this study analyses some of the elements involved in the dynamic tourist behaviour model and reveals the relationship that exists between (*push and pull*) motivations, the activities carried out at the holiday destination and the degree of satisfaction that the tourist has with the chosen product. Analysis of the proposed relationships helps holiday destination managers to specify their product and to know the reasons why clients opt for their offer and not for that of other market competitors. In this sense, the individual's personal and intrinsic motivations, focused on finding a place to relax and to enjoy personal relationships, are aspects that strengthen his satisfaction. Furthermore, it has been seen that knowing how to exploit those activities that differentiate one holiday product from another is one of the essential requisites to attaining success.

Logically the results obtained are not free of limitations, as they were taken from a study in a specific geographical area at a specific time of year. Further research is required in this direction to understand how tourist satisfaction with the chosen destination can be achieved.

6. REFERENCES

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