

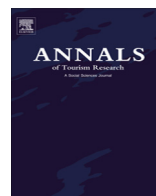


ELSEVIER

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

## Annals of Tourism Research

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/atoures](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/atoures)



# A quantitative valuation of tourist experience in Lisbon

Annalina Sarra<sup>a</sup>, Simone Di Zio<sup>b,\*</sup>, Marianna Cappucci<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Department of Economics, Viale Pindaro, 42-65127 Pescara, University "G.d'Annunzio", Italy

<sup>b</sup> Department of Legal and Social Sciences, Viale Pindaro, 42-65127 Pescara, University "G.d'Annunzio", Italy

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received 25 May 2014

Revised 11 February 2015

Accepted 8 April 2015

Available online 27 April 2015

**Coordinating Editor: J. Tribe**

#### Keywords:

Tourist satisfaction

Lisbon

Item response theory

Mixed model

Spatial questionnaire

### ABSTRACT

The increasing value of tourist satisfaction for tourism promotion has led to a substantial increase in research into the process of measuring the satisfaction of tourists, and various approaches and theories have been developed.

This paper proposes an Item Response Theory (IRT) approach to ensure the measurements of perceptions and satisfaction of tourists. Data were collected by means of a questionnaire administered to tourists who had visited Lisbon. The formulation of the IRT models allowed us to determine the influence of some demographic and travel behaviour characteristics on a number of given destination attributes. We also specified georeferenced IRT models to attain geographically differentiated measures of tourist satisfaction. The main findings from the models are compared and discussed.

© 2015 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

## Introduction

Understanding what drives satisfaction for a tourist is one of the most relevant areas of research for the tourism sector given its impact on the future of any tourism products and services. The influence of tourist satisfaction is not limited to the consumption of products and services. It is commonly acknowledged that an enhanced level of satisfaction for tourists can lead to positive future behavioural outcomes, such as intention to revisit the destination, improved reputation, increased loyalty

\* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: [asarra@dmqte.unich.it](mailto:asarra@dmqte.unich.it) (A. Sarra), [s.dizio@unich.it](mailto:s.dizio@unich.it) (S. Di Zio), [marianna.cappucci@unich.it](mailto:marianna.cappucci@unich.it) (M. Cappucci).

and positive word of mouth (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Oppermann, 2000). Tourist satisfaction is deemed a multifaceted and hybrid experience because tourist behaviour patterns depend on a wide range of relationships between different variables that occur in the complex process encompassing the tourist before, during and after his travels. Various frameworks and theories have been developed and advocated to explain satisfaction in tourism. An intensive literature review of tourist satisfaction is provided by Chon and Olsen (1991). One of the most widely accredited models in accounting for tourist satisfaction is based on the expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm (Oliver, 1980). According to this theory, customers develop expectations about a product before purchasing and afterwards compare the actual performance with those expectations (Chon, 1989; Pizam & Millman, 1993). Following Oliver's perspective, satisfaction can be viewed as a function of an initial standard and some perceived discrepancy from the initial point. As a result, positive disconfirmation occurs if the performance exceeds expectations. Alternatively, negative disconfirmation arises if the actual performance is worse than expectations, which means the customer is dissatisfied and will likely look for alternative products for the next purchase. Finally, a customer's expectations are confirmed if the service or product perceptions exactly meet expectations. Thus, the expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm supports the need to contemplate two different evaluations of the expectations and performance. It follows that, in the tourism sector, satisfaction is "the result of a comparison between tourist previous images of the destination and what he/she actually sees, feels and achieves at the destination" (Chon, 1989).

In general, the measurement of an individual's perceptions is a difficult task, and this issue becomes most challenging in tourism because of the nature of the product. In fact, in the tourism and recreation field, the employment of the disconfirmation paradigm has been thoroughly criticized. Although it is widely accepted that expectations affect satisfaction, there is no real, indisputable confirmation that the probability of being satisfied increases as expectations decrease (LaTour & Peat, 1979). Another critical point for an explicit acceptance of the disconfirmation paradigm is related to the measurement of tourist satisfaction through a pool of the destination attributes, which are assigned to the dimensions of a construct measuring tourist satisfaction. Generally, tourists are unable to establish objective evaluations of each characteristic of a product's offering. This is particularly evident when the tourist's attributes are to be compared with some standards set to begin prior visiting the destination (Assaker, Vinzi, & O'Connor, 2011). An additional inconsistency with the expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm is that even if tourists may have prior expectations of tourist services or products, their reference standard may change during their experience. Other studies have utilized models of equity theory which assumes a relationship between the sacrifices and rewards the tourist expects in terms of time, cost and effort and the value perceived with the satisfaction occurring when they receive the benefits (Fisk & Young, 1985; Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988). Several contributors have sought to examine satisfaction via the norm theory, suggested by the LaTour and Peat (1979). The norm theory is believed to be quite similar to the expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm, in that the norms are the reference point for evaluating the product/service and the satisfaction occurring when the norms are confirmed. The norm theory uses some form of a comparison standard with other products. With respect to the tourism context, tourists are likely to use past experiences to form a norm (reference point) to evaluate their experiences at the new destination to determine whether their new experience was a satisfactory experience.

Tse and Wilton (1988) developed a perceived performance theory, in which customers' satisfaction can be assessed only by examining their evaluation of the perceived performance, disregarding customers' expectations. Later, Bloemer and Kasper (1995) postulate the existence of manifest and latent satisfaction, with the former occurring when an explicit comparison is made between expectation and performance and the latter characterized by the lack of an explicit comparison between expectations and perceived performance.

This paper adopts the perceived performance theory and sustains the perspective that the primary determinant of customer satisfaction should be the perceived performance. Accordingly, the Tse and Wilton model provided a conceptual framework for this study, allowing us to overcome all of the methodological problems related to the evaluation of expectations. In addition, we propose the Item Response Theory (IRT) models as a tool for evaluating tourists' satisfaction.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1006996>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1006996>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)