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Recreation Management in Winter Tourism Hotels

Kış Turizmi Otellerinde Rekreasyon Yönetimi

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ABSTRACT: Recreational activities, which are a service tool in tourism enterprises, are known to have an important place. In this study is to aims evaluation from the managerial aspect of recreation services that offer of the firms in business in the field of winter tourism in Turkey. The sampling of the study consists of individuals employing as manager in 16 winter tourism resort hotels in Turkey. Interview technique was used as data collection method. As a result of the interviews; it is to be understood that hotel facilities do not include enough recreational activities, the activities to be performed are usually determined by the operating manager, different organizations do not support such activities, the preferred activities generally consist of similar and limited activities. As a result, it is seen that winter tourism accommodation companies do not give enough importance to recreation services. It has been concluded that individuals who buy services should spend their leisure time more effectively and efficiently and give importance to qualified recreation experts and recreational activity diversity in order to protect their customer potential.

Keywords: leisure, planning, management, organization.

ÖZ: Turizm işletmelerinde bir hizmet aracı olan rekreasyonel faaliyetlerin önemli bir yere sahip olduğu bilinmektedir. Bu çalışma, Türkiye'de kış turizmi alanında faaliyet gösteren firmaların sunduğu rekreasyon hizmetlerinin yönetsel açıdan değerlendirilmesini amaçlamaktadır. Araştırmanın örneklemini Türkiye'deki 16 kış turizmi konaklama (4-5 yıldızlı) işletme oluşturmaktadır. Veri toplama yöntemi olarak görüşme tekniği kullanılmıştır. Görüşmeler sonucunda; otel tesislerinin yeterince rekreasyonel aktivite içermediği, yapılacak faaliyetlerin genellikle işletme müdürü tarafından belirlendiği, farklı kuruluşların bu tür faaliyetleri desteklemediği, tercih edilen faaliyetlerin genellikle benzer ve sınırlı faaliyetlerden oluştuğu anlaşılmalıdır. Sonuç olarak kış turizmi konaklama işletmelerinin rekreasyon hizmetlerine yeterince önem vermediği görülmektedir. Hizmet satın alan bireylerin boş zamanlarını daha etkin ve verimli geçirmeleri, müşteri potansiyelini korumak için nitelikli rekreasyon uzmanlarına ve rekreasyonel aktivite çeşitliliğine önem vermeleri gerektiği sonucuna varılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: boş zaman, planlama, yönetim, organizasyon.

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1. GİRİŞ

Mountains have specific qualities that are conducive to health and wellness tourism and activities that focus on contemplation and meditation. There are also the inherent dangers that attract some daring tourists, and particular mountain arenas for specific sports and leisure activities (*Schorner, 2011*). In many parts of the world, mountain tourism is driven by outdoor recreation activities such as snow festivals, downhill skiing, snowmobiling, backpacking etc. (Fredman, 2008). Individuals who prefer winter tourism hotels may not be able to perform some activities such as skiing for some reasons as bad weather condition, injury, fatigue. It is possible to have fun times by recreation activities for individuals who experience these problems as well. The lack of a variety of these activities and not being carried out by experts may affect the enterprises negatively. Iso-Ahola and Weissinger (*1990*) ve Russell (*1996*) point out that the main source of the perception of boredom in the free time is due to the idea that people have more free time than they need, but individuals have insufficient occupations to fill the free time that they own. The animation services at the hotel play a very important role in product quality of the hotel, where the responsibility of ensuring that tourists spend their time in the best way (*Vogt & Fesenmeier, 1995*). The divisions within recreation services are continually evolving. New methods and conditions are adopted by the different participation groups, driven by search for new and original experiences and a distinctive identity (*Bourdeau et al., 2004*). Recreational activities considered as a side-service product in tourism can be considered as having a very important place to choose the same hotel again of guests with qualified employees and rich activity diversity.

In contemporary tourism, sport and recreation are increasingly becoming the dominant motives for undertaking the journey, and as a result of modern living, active holidays are more frequent. Mountain areas have always been attractive to deal with the various sports activities. Winter sports were the initiators of the development of mountain resorts (*Markovic & Petrovic, 2013*). Growth of international competition in the hospitality sector makes it necessary to measure and to understand how customers can be satisfied with the services offered in hotels. However, some of the service encounters are still not explored yet in the content of service quality and customer satisfaction. In particular, recreation activities in hotels and their roles on customer satisfaction from the hotel have to be investigated since the existing studies are still limited (*Albayrak et al., 2017*).

Therefore, we aimed to identify and to evaluated the management of recreation services (animation, and spa & wellness) in 16 winter ski hotels (four-five star), in Turkey. this study contributes to the literature as well by clarifying the increasing role and importance of recreational activities for hotels located in mountain resort destinations. The fact that mountain tourism hotels are more attractive, and should have increased the qualifications of recreational activities and recreation experts, it has led us to do this work.

2. METHOD

The research was carried out with the semi-structured interview technique, which is one of the qualitative research methods. Interview is about collecting information about facts and asking questions to individuals to learn their views. Interview should be done with the most appropriate, competent, knowledgeable and experienced people (*Schlapp, 2000; Kaptan, 1999; Kasım, 2008*).

The qualitative data of the study is composed of the opinions/statements of the managers (working group) on the implementation of the recreation programs. In a study using the qualitative analysis technique, explaining the results of the research by direct quotations from the interviewed individuals is considered as an important strategy to ensure validity (*Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008*). The aim of the qualitative research is to systematically identify, understand and define the subjective thoughts and feelings of the person by directing questions about the research topic to the target person (*Türnüklü, 2000*). The universe of the study is comprised of winter tourism resort hotels' managers in Turkey. The sampling of the study consists of individuals employing as manager in 20 winter tourism resort hotel. However, 4 hotel managers were not included in the sample because they did not want to answer the questions. Therefore, the sampling group of the study consists of individuals employing as manager in 16 winter tourism resort hotel.

The data obtained were analyzed with the content analysis method. Frequency analysis was performed as the analysis method and the results were interpreted. The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by Faculty of Sport Sciences Ethics Subcommittee Ataturk University. The participants provided their written informed consent to participate in this study.

3. RESULTS

Table 1. Manager opinions on recreation activities

Planning of The Recreation Events	**n**	**%**
By Hotel Management	16	100
Recreation Expert	0	0
Budget	0	0
External Institution Support		
Yes	4	25
No	12	75
Budget Planning for Recreation Activities		
Yes	16	100
No	0	0
Manager Knowledge About Recreation		
Yes	4	25
No	12	75

When the manager opinions on planning of the recreation activities are taken into consideration in table 1, it can be seen that 100 % of planning of the recreation events are by hotel management. External Institutions' support for the hotels' on recreational activities, it can be seen that 25% of them are supported, 75 % of them aren't supported. Considering the Budget Planning for Recreation Activities, it can be seen that have budget planning of all hotels. Also, it can be seen that 25% of hotel managers have a special training in the recreation field and 75% of them don't have.

Table 2. Diversity of recreational activities in hotels

Spa	**n**	**%**
Yes	10	62.5
No	6	37.5
Fitness / Wellness		
Yes	7	43.8
No	9	56.2
Culture and Arts Activities		
Yes	3	18.8
No	13	81.2
Kids Club		

Yes	14	87.5
No	2	12.5
Live Music / Party Events		
Yes	4	25
No	12	75
Daily Animation Events		
Yes	3	18.8
No	13	81.2

When looking at the variety of recreational activities offered by the hotels, it can be seen that It is seen that 62,5 % of the hotels offer spa, 43,8 % Fitness / Wellness, 18,8 % Culture and Arts Activities, 87,5 % Kids Club, 25 % Live Music / Party Events and 18,8 % of them Daily Animation Events.

4. DISCUSSION

The tourism sector and alternative tourism options, which have become an important source of income day by day, are important to increase the attractiveness of the destination and to spend a pleasant time. Private and public enterprises can meet this need by developing and offering new alternatives. When considered factors such as traveling, having fun and getting away from stress the tourism and recreation are among the most important alternatives. These two concepts are two important alternatives in the responses to the needs of individuals. Recreation services activities have become an important element in order to ensure guest satisfaction, continuity and economic gain in hotel businesses. Recreational services which are very important need good planning, management and organization in order to achieve the determined goals.

In this study, which was conducted in order to examine the recreation management of hotel enterprises serving in winter tourism, the following results are reached.

When the manager opinions on planning of the recreation activities are taken into consideration in table 1, it can be seen that planning 100 % of the recreation events by hotel management. In order to provide a good recreation service, it is thought that activity planning should be done by recreation experts and hotel management should work in coordination with these experts. Kahveci (*1994*) in his study of animation and entertainment activities in hotels that do not run an animator was carried out by other departments; as a result of this, he stated that there were problems and negative results. Gülcan and Ayvacı (*2017*) stated that the staff should be employed with various specialties in order to organize recreational activities programs in tourism. In another study, Karaman et al. (*2016*) stated that planning and implementation of recreational activities in tourism should be carried out with the support of Ministry of Culture and Tourism. In addition, İnceöz (*2018*) stated that the tasks given to the experts in tourism are very important for the reputation of the enterprise.

External Institutions' support for the hotels' on recreational activities, it can be seen that 25% of them are supported, 75 % of them aren't supported. When the data are analyzed, it can be concluded that the recreation services given in the winter tourism hotels do not receive any external organization or organization support, and that the qualifications of the services provided are amateur. Korgavus (*2017*) stated that the diversity of the activities is more attractive on the ski resorts in Europe and winter tourism; such as Palandöken Skiing Center at Turkey places they should be enriched with recreational activities except skiing.

Considering the Budget Planning for Recreation Activities, it can be seen that have budget planning of all hotels. Despite budget planning, it is seen that offered activity types and variations are not much. This can be interpreted as not having enough budget for recreational activities. According to findings; it can be seen that 25% of hotel managers have a special training in the recreation field and 75% of them don't have. In the above findings, it is seen that the people who plan the recreation activities in the winter tourism hotels are the hotel managers. However, it was found that most of the people who planned these activities did not have any specific training in the field (%75). Similarities in activities and non-employment of expert individuals may be caused by managers who do not have the knowledge of recreation. As a result of investigating at the variety of recreational activities offered by the hotels; It is seen that winter tourism hotels do not contain enough variety of recreational activities, recreational services offered in winter tourism hotel services are limited to activities such as spa, fitness / wellness etc., indoor activities are not given enough importance.

As a result, it is concluded that the recreation services offered at the winter tourism hotels are not given much attention and should be acted more professionally. It is seen that the organized of recreation activities by recreation specialists trained in the field of recreation is important for the sustainability of tourism and recreation.

5. ETHICS STATEMENT

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by Faculty of Sport Sciences Ethics Subcommittee Ataturk University (document number 70400699-000-e.2100023729, date 07.01.2021). The participants provided their written informed consent to participate in this study.

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