

International Tourists' Selection Criteria for Choosing All-Inclusive Package Tours: An Application in Istanbul

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Abstract

The objective of this study was to determine the reasons why foreign tourists travelling to Istanbul for cultural purposes prefer all inclusive package tours. The sample group consisted of foreign tourists who visited Istanbul on an all inclusive package tour between May and July of 2013. Data were obtained from 397 tourists for the study by using a survey to measure the preference for all inclusive package tours. Descriptive analyses such as mean, standard deviation as well as statistical tests such as factor analysis, reliability analysis, t-test and variance analysis were used to analyze the obtained data. The study revealed that the main reasons why foreign tourists coming to Istanbul preferred all inclusive package tours were tour arrangements & service quality, attractions, hotels & airlines. In other words it was evident that when foreign tourists preferred all inclusive package tours when coming to Istanbul they prioritized issues such as the experience of the travel agency, its reputation and the service quality of the tour. Furthermore it was determined that in their preference for all inclusive package tours foreign tourists also underlined the importance of historical and cultural attractions as well as natural attractions, the quality of hotels and the amenities they provided.

Keywords: International tourists, All-inclusive package tours, Tourist choices, Istanbul

Introduction

After the 1950's the rapid development in transport and communication technologies accelerated the development of international tourism activities. Particularly the

developments in civil aviation and airline transport accelerated the development of mass tourism.

Package tours play an important role and are used extensively in the tourism industry. Consumers prefer package tours because they are more affordable, safe and practical to use compared to separate procurement (Rewtrakunphaiboon and Oppewal, 2008). According to TÜROFED (2013) the percentage of tourist who come to Turkey on a package tour comprises 46 % of the total number of tourists. Accordingly, it is safe to say that package tours hold a significant place in the development of the Turkish tourism industry.

Istanbul has been a prominent point of commerce and culture for centuries. In the present day it maintains its economic and cultural values. The fact that Istanbul is both a seaside city as well as the city which unites Europe and Asia in highway transport where people from different cultures meet makes it an attraction center. Istanbul was the European Capital of Culture in 2010 and attracts people from different places in the world for trade as well as social areas (Önay and Çetin, 2012). In 2013 a total of 9.381.670 foreign tourists visited Istanbul. This equals about 29% of the foreign tourists who visited Turkey. The foreign tourists come to Istanbul mainly from Germany (11,4%), the Russia Federation (5,7%) and the USA (5,2%) for various reasons (holiday, work, meetings, haj/umrah, visa, ticket) (Istanbul Provincial Directorate of Culture & Tourism, 2012).

Depending on their form of travel and accommodation all inclusive package tours are classified as sejour (long term lodging) holiday tours and itinerant culture tours (Hacıoğlu, 2000:98). Culture package tours are aimed at touring and sightseeing and are usually tours to Anatolia which are linked to Istanbul. These tours include multi-center accommodation while the day programs are carried out in different regions and cities (Tuncer, 1998).

According to Atay and Akyurt (2007) efficient management of tourism destinations consists of elements such as a thorough investigation of the characteristics of the destination, coordination of the resources and being marketable enough to create the desired level of demand (cited from Ersun and Arslan, 2011). On the European market Istanbul has some serious competition in terms of culture tours (such as Rome, Prague, Paris, Vienna, Budapest). This situation necessitates that marketing managers must develop necessary strategies to make a stronger impact on the decision making processes of consumers. For this reason both the tourist typology (Decrop and Zidda, 2008) as well as the characteristics of the destination (Ersun and Arslan, 2011) must be well known.

Since a package tour is an abstract product the operational success of the tour operator is mainly dependent on the image of the company, word of mouth advertising by repeat customers and recommended sales (Bowie and Chang, 2005). Efficient tourism marketing strategies and development plans need marketing managers who not only understand what people do on holiday but how they make their holiday decisions. (Josiam and Hobson, 1995; Lang, O'Leary and Morrison, 1997; Wong and Kwong, 2004). Thus customer satisfaction can be achieved and they will probably come again and recommend the company through word of mouth (Wong and Kwong, 2004).

Currently the number of studies pertaining to the preference criteria of package tours is insufficient. Most of the executed studied concern all inclusive accommodation systems for holiday purposes (Özdemir, 2001; Demir and Demir, 2001; Gürkan, 2002; Menekşe, 2005; Barak, 2006; Üngüren and Cengiz, 2009), the number of comprehensive-complex cultural purpose package tours is limited (Lo and Lam, 2004; Wong and Kwong, 2004; Wang, Chen and Chou, 2007; Rewtrakunphaiboon and Oppewal, 2008). According to the previous studies the preference reasons of tourists in terms of all inclusive package tours have focused mainly on

(Wong and Kwong, 2004; Wang, Chen and Chou, 2007; Heung and Chu, 2000; Bresler, 2011), information sources (Rewtrakunphaiboon and Oppewal, 2008), satisfaction (Bowie and Chang, 2005), travel risks (Roehl and Fesenmaier, 1992; Tsaor, Tzeng and Wang, 1997) and decision makers within the family (Wang, Hsieh, Yeh and Tsai, 2004).

The objective of this study was to determine the reasons why foreign tourists travelling to Istanbul for cultural purposes prefer all inclusive package tours. The findings from the study will contribute to the sales and marketing of package tours for cultural purposes and the determination of the expectations from such tours as well as contribute in developing marketing strategies for Istanbul in terms of international tourism.

A Review of Literature and Theoretical Framework

Package Tours

Package tours are complex service products in which numerous product components converge (Bowie and Chang, 2005). The tourism product includes special service characteristics such as seasonality, abstractness, degradability, they are integrable, variable and consumable on production (Bowie and Chang, 2005; Kotler, Bowen and Makens, 2006:42). In any case a package tour consists of the five basic elements of all tourism products (attraction centers and their periphery, attraction center activities and services, attraction center access, the image of the attraction center and the price to the consumer). Furthermore the value of the tour operator (brand, availability, price guarantees and contracts based on the product) can be included (Bowie and Chang, 2005).

Package tours are divided into two groups based on their preparations and the services they contain. These groups are basic –normal package tours, complex – comprehensive package tours. Basic – normal package tours include only accommodation and transport services (Hacıoğlu, 2000; Wong and Kwong, 2004), complex – comprehensive package tours include accommodation, transport, food & beverage, entertainment, guiding, daily tours, etc. services) (Hacıoğlu, 2000:94; Wong and Kwong, 2004). This study focuses on the selection criteria of consumers regarding complex – comprehensive package tours and basic – normal package tours have been omitted.

A study of relevant package tour literature reveals that according to Tuncer (1998) package tours are defined as organized travel which fulfills all needs and generally includes transport, accommodation, food & beverage, city tours and transfers. Öner (1997:108) defines package tours as a touristic product which covers all services included in touristic travel from the start to the finish (seats, beds, food & beverage, transfers, tours, guiding, etc.). Package tours are repeatable standardized tours sold for a single price for a large group of consumers and include at least two or more features such out of accommodation, food & beverage, places of attraction and other services and activities (for example travel insurance) (Lo and Lam, 2004; Wong and Kwong, 2004). According to Enoch (1996) a package tour is a smart and efficient way for all tourists to see more places in a short time, travel safely in far away countries with a different culture, avoid dubious hygiene standards and problematic transportation and pay less than it would cost to take the same on an individual basis (cited from Wong and Kwong, 2004).

Package Tour Choice

People who share similar tour choices when traveling together also reflect their personality characteristics (Bresler, 2011). For example Chinese tourists usually prefer package tours and prioritize prestige. Tourists from Hong Kong particularly give prominence to courtesy,

common sense and reliability and prefer respectable tour operators and five-star hotels (Wang, Hsieh and Chen, 2002; Wong and Kwong, 2004; Bresler, 2011). According to Lai and Graefe (2000) tour activities and safety are the most important selection criteria for Taiwanese tourists and attractions, facilitated accessibility and quality are other selection criteria. The studies of Wong and Lau (2001) revealed that tourists on package tours were particularly interested in authentic attractions and wanted to see highly rated places of attraction, visit historical places, taste local food, participate in sports activities and see and experience other cultures in the periphery during tours. The main reason why tourists preferred package tours was that the cost was known beforehand, reasonable price, guaranteed organizations, participation in activities was guaranteed, experience and knowledge, time, assurance, status, romance and the availability of tours which were appropriate to their age groups (İçöz, 1998:176-178).

According to Goodrich (1977) on their travels tourists look for four basic elements which are natural landscapes, a positive attitude of the local people, appropriate accommodations and relaxation. Studies carried out regarding the choice of package tours by people reveal that the reasons of selecting a particular holiday package type is determined by the offered route, price, recommendations by friends and suitable starting dates (cited from Heung and Chu, 2000). Hsieh, O'Leary and Morrison (1993-94) indicated that package holiday users as well as individual travelers going abroad on their travels want to experience and see lifestyles which are as different as possible (cited from Heung and Chu, 2000:53).

Literature Review

Heung and Chu (2000) studied the selection criteria which influenced tourists from Hong Kong in selecting their all inclusive holiday package tours from their travel agencies. As a result of the factor analysis applied in their study they determined six factors (the interactive quality of the agency, official communication, overall convenience, pricing, product characteristics, image). In terms of priority the selection criteria of the participants consisted of the prominence of the agency, word of mouth communication, the attitude of personnel, the monetary value of the tour and previous personal experience. The authors determined significant differences between the demographic and travel behavior of the participants and the factor dimensions.

Wong and Kwong (2004) carried out a study on the selection criteria of all inclusive package tours of tourists from Hong Kong. As a result of the study eight dimensions in the selection of package tour criteria were determined (tour organization & service quality, attractions, hotels and airlines, customer services, tour route, personal interest, word of mouth advertising and time). In the selection of package tours it was determined that the primary most important five factors were safety, guaranteed departure, service quality of the travel agency, flexibility of the route and the air conditioning system on the bus. Furthermore some significant differences were determined between the travel behavior of the participants (number of tour participants, traveling partners, number of traveling partners and number of children) and factor dimensions.

Bresler (2011) studied the decision criteria for domestic package tours organized in South Africa. 46 criteria were determined in the studies. The most important criteria perceived by the participants in terms of decision making was the possibility of the tour being cancelled, appropriate price and safety the least important criteria were determined as radio commercials, railway transport and proximity.

Lo and Lam (2004) endeavored to determine the selection criteria of tourists from Hong Kong when choosing a short and long distance all inclusive package tour abroad. The study revealed

that 'guaranteed return on promised date' and 'personal safety' were considered the most important criteria. When Hong Kong tourists were choosing long distance package tours they prioritized the characteristics of the product and the quality of the guide while they appeared to be rather indifferent to the price of short distance tours.

Methodology

Sampling

The target population of this study which endeavored to determine the reasons why foreign tourists coming to Istanbul for cultural purposes selected all inclusive package tours consisted of foreign tourists who visited Istanbul between the months of May and July 2013 on all inclusive package tours. Convenience sampling method was used to determine a sample to represent the characteristics of the study target population. Accordingly the size of the sample was calculated with $(N > 10000)$ for large populations and with the recommended $n = \sigma^2 \cdot Z_{\alpha}^2 / d^2$ formula for quantitative studies (Özdamar, 2003:116-118). The parameters used to establish the formula were standard deviation $\sigma=1$; maximum allowable difference between target population and sample impact level $d=0,10$ and significance level $\alpha=0,05$ and corresponding theoretical value $Z_{0,05}=1,96$ and the minimum sample size was calculated as 385 with the formula. In this context by taking into consideration the incomplete, incorrect and unreturned questionnaires in the survey which was used a data collection technique a total of 397 questionnaires were evaluated out of the 425 questionnaires which were distributed. Persons 16 years of age and over were included in the survey. The participants were asked to fill out the survey forms during the tour process through tour leaders and guides deputized in Istanbul. The survey forms were prepared in English.

Data Collection

The survey technique was used for data collection in the study. The study survey consisted of two parts. The first part consisted of information regarding the individual characteristics of the participants and the reason they had participated in the trip (gender, marital status, age, education, income level, number of children, which market they belonged to, how many times they had participated in package tours, who accompanied them to Istanbul) while the second part consisted of 30 statements why tourists preferred all inclusive tours. These statements were taken from a study executed by Wong and Kwong (2004). The participants graded each statement in this part according to the five point likert scale as "unimportant", "of little importance", "moderately important", "important" and "very important" to reflect their opinions.

Data Analysis

The reasons why tourists preferred all inclusive package tours were studied with a factor analysis which explained the structural validity. According to Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson and Tatham (2009:116) factor loads which are less than 0.40 are assessed as low factor loads. Therefore low load 8 was removed from the statement scale in the assessment of the reasons tourists preferred all inclusive package tours in both the pilot study which was applied to 50 people as well as the study carried out with the 397 target population.

According to the assumptions of parametric hypothesis tests the data must be spaced or proportional and they must correspond to normal distribution and the group variances must be equal (Kalaycı, 2009:73). The basic data used in this study were obtained with an interval scale (quinary attitude scale). The kurtosis and skewness values of the data were around -1 and +1 and thus corresponded to normal distribution. The variances of the factors correspond to each other in the equation of group variances. For this reason since the data in this study carry the particular characteristics they have been subjected to parametric tests.

In order to describe the reasons why the participants preferred all inclusive package tours the arithmetic average and standard deviation values were calculated. In addition the factors which were determined regarding why all inclusive package tours were preferred were analyzed with parametric tests to see whether there was a significant difference according to the demographic characteristics of the tourists. The 't-test' was applied to groups with two variables (gender, marital status) and the 'Single factor analysis of variance for independent samples (Anova)' was applied to groups with multiple variances (age, nationality, level of education, income, how many times they had participated in package tours, who accompanied them and the number of accompanying children) to compare the groups in terms of demographic characteristics of the tourists for preferring all inclusive package tours. Furthermore in order to discover which groups differed from each other the 'Multi comparison – Tukey HSD-Analysis' was carried out for multivariate groups. In addition a factor analysis was applied for the structural validity of the scale for tourists preferring all inclusive package tours and Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated to test the reliability of the internal consistency. The obtained data were analyzed with IBM SPSS 20.0 for Windows package program.

Research Questions

The general objective of this study was to determine the reasons why foreign tourists coming to Istanbul for cultural purposes preferred all inclusive package tours. Answers were sought for the following questions to fulfill this objective:

Q 1: Why do foreign tourists coming to Istanbul for cultural purposes prefer all inclusive package tours?

Q 2: Is there a significant difference between tourists preferring all inclusive package tours in Istanbul for cultural discoveries which are due to demographic and traveling characteristics (gender, marital status, age, education, income level, number of children, the relevant market they belonged to, how many times they participated in package tours, who accompanied them to Istanbul)?

Study Findings

The distribution of the individual characteristics of the tourists in the study sample group is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of the participants according to demographic characteristics

| Variable | Group | Number (f) | Percentage (%) |
|----------------|---|------------|----------------|
| Gender | Male | 232 | 58,4 |
| | Female | 165 | 41,6 |
| Marital status | Married | 241 | 60,7 |
| | Single | 156 | 39,3 |
| Market | Middle East Market | 85 | 21,4 |
| | West, Central and North European Market | 116 | 29,2 |
| | East European Market | 36 | 9,1 |
| | North and South American Market | 41 | 10,3 |

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|------------|--------------|
| | Asia, Far East and Australian Market | 99 | 24,9 |
| | Other | 20 | 5,0 |
| Age | 20 and under | 59 | 14,9 |
| | Age between 21-30 | 102 | 25,7 |
| | Age between 31-40 | 84 | 21,2 |
| | Age between 41-50 | 47 | 11,8 |
| | Age between 51-60 | 40 | 10,1 |
| | 61 and over | 65 | 16,4 |
| Education | Elementary school | 11 | 2,8 |
| | High school | 96 | 24,2 |
| | Associate degree | 59 | 14,9 |
| | Bachelor's degree | 91 | 22,9 |
| | Postgraduate degree | 137 | 34,5 |
| | Invalid | 3 | 0,8 |
| Income level | 1000 € and less | 97 | 24,4 |
| | between 1001-2000 € | 104 | 26,2 |
| | between 2001-3000 € | 91 | 22,9 |
| | between 3001-4000 € | 33 | 8,3 |
| | between 4001-5000 € | 27 | 6,8 |
| | 5001 € and over | 38 | 9,6 |
| | Invalid | 7 | 1,8 |
| How many times have you taken an all inclusive package tour? | Once | 230 | 57,9 |
| | Twice | 90 | 22,7 |
| | 3 and more | 72 | 18,1 |
| | Invalid | 5 | 1,3 |
| Who accompanied you to Istanbul? | Alone | 79 | 19,9 |
| | My family | 159 | 40,1 |
| | My friend | 156 | 39,3 |
| | Invalid | 3 | 0,8 |
| How many children accompanied you? | 0 | 235 | 59,2 |
| | 1 child | 39 | 9,8 |
| | 2 children | 66 | 16,6 |
| | 3 and more | 50 | 12,6 |
| | Invalid | 7 | 1,8 |
| Total | | 397 | 100,0 |

According to the findings in Table 1 29,2% of the tourists were from west and central Europe, 24,9% were from Asia, the Far East and Australia and 21,4% were from the Middle East. 58,4% of the tourists were male and 41,6% female. 60,7% of the respondents were married, 61,8% 40 and less, 72,3% had associate and higher degrees in education. The incomes of the respondents appeared to be prevalent in the 1001–3000€ (49,1%) monthly income group. 40,8% of the responding tourists indicated that they had taken more than one package tour and most of them (79,4%) were traveling with friends or family and it was evident that 59,2% of the travelers were not accompanied by their children.

The results of the factor analysis applied for the scale of reasons why all inclusive package tours were preferred and reliability analysis (Cronbach's Alpha) and mean and standard deviation values in terms of the opinions are given in Table 2. As a result of the factor analysis the Barlett Test turned out to be 3292,202 and p significance value ($p < 0,000$). This value signifies that there are high correlation values between the variables. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sample value is 0,796. The level of this value is sufficient to apply factor analysis (Kalaycı, 2009:322).

As a result of the factor analysis it was determined that eigenvalue scale of why tourists preferred all inclusive package tours was greater than 1 and the total variance was 69,595% and gathered under sever factors. All the factors load values and item-scale correlations regarding the items were above 0,50. Furthermore it was determined that the calculated Cronbach's Alpha values for the scale and sub-scales were all close to 0,70 or above. These values show that the internal consistency levels of the scales was sufficient.

Table 2. Factor analysis of the reasons why foreign tourists coming to Istanbul prefer all inclusive package tours

| Factor Labels & Items | Factor Loading | Eigenvalues | Variance Explained | Cronbach's Alpha | Means (1-5) (\pm SD) |
|--|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Tour Arrangement & Service Quality | | 5,942 | 14,149 | 0,833 | 4,31\pm0,87 |
| Service quality of travel agency | 0,812 | | | | 4,42 \pm 0,78 |
| Escorts, tour-guides quality & experience | 0,789 | | | | 4,32 \pm 0,86 |
| Guaranteed departure | 0,726 | | | | 4,30 \pm 0,98 |
| Reputation of travel agency | 0,722 | | | | 4,14 \pm 0,86 |
| Safety of the tour | 0,677 | | | | 4,36 \pm 0,89 |
| 2. Hotels & Airlines | | 2,279 | 10,714 | 0,870 | 4,11\pm0,93 |
| Hotel's quality & grading | 0,889 | | | | 4,18 \pm 0,90 |
| Hotel's facilities | 0,885 | | | | 4,11 \pm 0,95 |
| Airlines used | 0,725 | | | | 4,06 \pm 0,94 |
| 3. Time | | 2,027 | 10,632 | 0,832 | 4,00\pm0,99 |
| Number of days tours | 0,849 | | | | 3,81 \pm 1,09 |
| Time for traveling | 0,810 | | | | 4,05 \pm 0,94 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|
| Choice of destination | 0,787 | | | | 4,16±0,94 |
| 4. Routing & Tour Program | | 1,578 | 9,933 | 0,726 | 3,89±0,98 |
| Flight schedule | 0,759 | | | | 3,89±0,91 |
| Non-repeated routing | 0,753 | | | | 3,91±0,96 |
| Freedom to join / not join self-paid activities | 0,660 | | | | 3,75±1,10 |
| Personal interests | 0,563 | | | | 4,00±0,95 |
| 5. Attractions | | 1,256 | 9,350 | 0,719 | 4,12±0,88 |
| Visiting natural environments | 0,822 | | | | 4,19±0,89 |
| Visiting cultural characteristics | 0,789 | | | | 3,97±0,95 |
| Sightseeing points included | 0,667 | | | | 4,20±0,82 |
| 6. Word-of-Mouth | | 1,126 | 7,658 | 0,752 | 4,03±0,95 |
| Traveling partners' opinions & interests | 0,746 | | | | 4,00±0,96 |
| Family's & friends' word-of-mouth recommendations | 0,724 | | | | 4,05±0,95 |
| 7. Price | | 1,103 | 7,159 | 0,683 | 4,06±0,96 |
| Price of the tour | 0,861 | | | | 4,12±0,96 |
| Items included in the tour price | 0,800 | | | | 3,99±0,97 |
| Total Variance Explained (69,595) | Note: Basic components factor analysis with varimax rotation KMO sampling sufficiency=0,796. Barlett's test of sphericity: $p < 0.000$ (chi-square 3292.202 : df=231). | | | | |

The means in Table 2 show that the reasons why tourists preferred all inclusive package tours ranked as "tour arrangement & service quality" ($\bar{x}=4,31$), "hotels & airlines" ($\bar{x}=4,11$), "time" ($\bar{x}=4,00$), "routing & tour program" ($\bar{x}=3,89$) and "attractions" ($\bar{x}=4,12$), "word of mouth" ($\bar{x}=4,03$) and "price" ($\bar{x}=4,06$) while the most positive opinions were calculated for "tour arrangement & service quality", "attractions" and hotels airlines". These findings indicate that foreign tourists who prefer all inclusive package tours to come to Istanbul prioritize elements such as the quality and experience of the travel agency, its reputation and service quality when choosing their tours. Furthermore foreign tourists also pay attention to historical and cultural richness and natural beauties, the quality of hotels and the services available when

they select their tours. Although the factor for “routing & tour program” on the scale it averaged as the lowest among the factors in the analysis.

The results of the t-test to determine whether there was a significant difference of 0,05 between the gender and marital status of foreign tourists coming to Istanbul on an all inclusive package tour are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Comparison of factors in the gender and marital status of tourists preferring all inclusive package tours (t-test)

| Factors | Variable | Number (n) | Mean (\bar{x}) | S.D. | t-value | p-value |
|---|----------|------------|--------------------|------|---------|--------------|
| Tour Arrangement & Service Quality | Male | 223 | 4,26 | 0,68 | -1,472 | 0,142 |
| | Female | 152 | 4,37 | 0,67 | | |
| Hotels & Airlines | Male | 216 | 4,10 | 0,85 | -0,361 | 0,718 |
| | Female | 144 | 4,13 | 0,79 | | |
| Time | Male | 224 | 4,00 | 0,83 | -0,261 | 0,794 |
| | Female | 156 | 4,02 | 0,90 | | |
| Routing & Tour Program | Male | 211 | 3,87 | 0,72 | -0,502 | 0,616 |
| | Female | 141 | 3,91 | 0,74 | | |
| Attractions | Male | 215 | 4,04 | 0,75 | -2,686 | 0,008 |
| | Female | 144 | 4,25 | 0,63 | | |
| Word of Mouth | Male | 222 | 3,92 | 1,04 | -1,884 | 0,06 |
| | Female | 153 | 4,11 | 0,81 | | |
| Price | Male | 219 | 4,02 | 0,88 | -1,054 | 0,293 |
| | Female | 149 | 4,11 | 0,77 | | |
| Tour Arrangement & Service Quality | Married | 229 | 4,31 | 0,71 | 0,030 | 0,976 |
| | Single | 146 | 4,30 | 0,63 | | |
| Hotels & Airlines | Married | 219 | 4,17 | 0,75 | 1,625 | 0,105 |
| | Single | 141 | 4,03 | 0,94 | | |
| Time | Married | 233 | 4,00 | 0,81 | -0,274 | 0,784 |
| | Single | 147 | 4,02 | 0,92 | | |
| Routing & Tour Program | Married | 213 | 3,93 | 0,67 | 1,209 | 0,227 |
| | Single | 139 | 3,83 | 0,80 | | |
| Attractions | Married | 218 | 4,22 | 0,65 | 3,153 | 0,002 |
| | Single | 141 | 3,98 | 0,77 | | |
| Word of Mouth | Married | 227 | 4,06 | 0,93 | 1,517 | 0,130 |
| | Single | 148 | 3,91 | 1,00 | | |
| Price | Married | 225 | 3,96 | 0,87 | -2,777 | 0,006 |
| | Single | 143 | 4,21 | 0,77 | | |

A

significant difference ($p>0,05$) was found at the 0,05 significance level in terms of gender and marital status of the respondents regarding their reasons for choosing all inclusive package tours which are indicated in Table 3.

When respondents who were women ($\bar{x}=4,25$) were choosing an all inclusive package tour they were more inclined than men ($\bar{x}=4,04$) to take history, cultural and natural attractions

into consideration. Similarly married people ($\bar{x}=4,22$) were more likely than singles ($\bar{x}=3,98$) to take history, cultural and natural attractions into consideration when choosing an all inclusive package tour. All inclusive package tours for cultural purposes are particularly attractive to women and married people because they include a certain plan and program and they can see many places in a short time.

The results for the 'one-way ANOVA' carried out to determine whether there was a significant difference in terms of 0,05 significance level regarding the age of foreign tourists in Istanbul, their markets, education level, income, the number of times they bought all inclusive package tours, who accompanied them to Istanbul and how many of their children accompanied them and the results of the 'Multi comparison – Tukey HSD-Analysis' executed to discover the differences in the groups with more than two variables are presented in table 4.

Table 4. Comparison of demographic and travel characteristics of foreign tourists as determining factors in the preference of all inclusive package tours (ANOVA)

| Factors | Variables | Number (n) | Mean (\bar{x}) | S.D. | f-Value | p-value |
|------------------------|----------------|------------|--------------------|------|---------|--------------|
| Time | 20 and under | 57 | 4,08 | 0,83 | 2,696 | 0,021 |
| | 21-30 | 96 | 4,01 | 0,90 | | |
| | 31-40 | 79 | 3,74 (a) | 0,96 | | |
| | 41-50 | 46 | 4,17 | 0,73 | | |
| | 51-60 | 40 | 3,92 | 0,77 | | |
| | 61 and over | 62 | 4,20 (a) | 0,75 | | |
| Routing & Tour Program | 20 and under | 56 | 3,68 (a) | 0,82 | 2,299 | 0,045 |
| | 21-30 | 91 | 3,86 | 0,80 | | |
| | 31-40 | 72 | 3,87 | 0,69 | | |
| | 41-50 | 41 | 4,07 | 0,61 | | |
| | 51-60 | 35 | 3,82 | 0,63 | | |
| | 61 and over | 57 | 4,07(a) | 0,62 | | |
| Hotels & Airlines | Once | 213 | 4,01 (a) | 0,87 | 4,705 | 0,010 |
| | Twice | 73 | 4,30 (a) | 0,70 | | |
| | 3 times & more | 69 | 4,27 | 0,79 | | |
| Routing & Tour Program | Once | 210 | 3,78 (a) | 0,74 | 5,541 | 0,004 |
| | Twice | 71 | 4,07 (a) | 0,69 | | |
| | 3 times & more | 66 | 4,02 | 0,68 | | |

Note: There are significant differences in groups with the same letter in group comparisons ($p<0,05$).

According to the findings in Table 4 there is a significant difference between "Time" and age groups on a 0,05 significance level as factors in the preference of all inclusive package tours. As a result of the variance homogeneity test between the time factor and age variable it was

observed that because the p value (sig.) was bigger than 0,05 (0,187) the variances were homogenous. According to Table 4 the people in the 61 years of age and more group ($\bar{x}=4,20$) prioritized the time factor more than those in the 31-40 age group ($\bar{x}=3,74$) when choosing their all inclusive package tour. This result shows that the time factor is more effective in choosing all inclusive package tours for the 3rd age group.

There is a significant difference in the 0,05 significance level of the "Routing & Tour Program" and age groups in choosing their all inclusive package tour. As a result of the variance homogeneity test between the Routing & Tour Program factor and age variable it was observed that because the p value (sig.) was bigger than 0,05 (0,201) the variances were homogenous. According to Table 4 the people in the 61 years of age and more group ($\bar{x}=4,07$) prioritized the Routing & Tour Program factor more than those in the 20 years of age and less ($\bar{x}=3,68$). This result shows that the tourists in the 3rd age group are more likely to prioritize the tour program when making their all inclusive package tour selection.

There is a significant difference in the 0,05 significance level of the "Hotel & Airlines" factor in choosing all inclusive package tours. As a result of the variance homogeneity test between the Hotel & Airlines factor and the number of times participated in all inclusive package tours variable it was observed that because the p value (sig.) was bigger than 0,05 (0,525) the variances were homogenous. According to Table 4 people who participated for the second time in all inclusive package tours ($\bar{x}=4,30$) prioritized the hotel & airlines factor more than those who participated for the first time ($\bar{x}=4,01$). This result shows that people who have participated in all inclusive package tours give more importance to accommodation and airlines which have a significant role in the contents of package tours.

There is a significant difference in the 0,05 significance level of the "Routing & Tour Program" factor in choosing all inclusive package tours. As a result of the variance homogeneity test between the Routing & Tour Program factor and the number of times participated in all inclusive package tours variable it was observed that because the p value (sig.) was bigger than 0,05 (0,952) the variances were homogenous. According to Table 4 people who participated for the second time in all inclusive package tours ($\bar{x}=4,07$) prioritized the routing & tour program factor more than those who participated for the first time ($\bar{x}=3,78$). This result shows that people who have participated in all inclusive package tours for the second time give more importance to the package tour program and contents.

Conclusion and Discussion

Technological, social and economic developments have made the use of package tours by people going on holiday rather common (Hacıoğlu, 2000:96). In all inclusive package tour literature there can be a confusion of concepts particularly with all inclusive hotel bed and breakfast systems. All inclusive package tours are particularly advantageous for consumers and are preferred for both facilitated consumption as well as price and safety issues.

This study has determined the dimensions of seven factors which are reasons why all inclusive package tours are preferred (tour arrangement & service quality, hotels airlines, time, routing & tour program, attractions, word of mouth and price). In a study carried out by Heung and Chu (2000) they determined 6 agency selection factors which were essential for consumers selecting an agency for the package tour (interactive agent quality, formal communication, overall convenience, pricing, product features and image). A study carried out by Lo and Lam (2004) about selecting all inclusive package tours determined the dimensions of 7 factors (communications, quality of counseling, price, product features, company image, competitiveness and physical evidence). Wong and Kwong (2004) determined 8 factors in

their study about the criteria of tourists from Hong Kong in the selection of package tours (tour arrangement & service quality, attractions, hotels & airlines, TV promotion & customer care, routing, personal interests, word-of-mouth and time).

The respondent indicated that they prioritized “service quality of travel agency”, “safety of tour” and “escorts, tour-guides quality & experience” when selecting their all inclusive package tours. First the respondents pay attention to the service quality of the product they have purchased. Secondly respondents give important to the safety factors particularly for international tours. Since the study took place in 2013 when the Gezi incidents were ongoing and the period when Turkey had some issues in the Southeast and Syria could have contributed to the prominence of the safety factor. Thirdly the respondents think it is important that there is a tour leader or tour guide who can assist and accompany them throughout the package tour. A study carried out by Heung and Chu (2000) determined that the most important elements for selecting a travel agency for an all inclusive package tour were the agency reputation, word-of-mouth and attitude of staff. The study carried out by Lo and Lam (2004) determined that the most important all inclusive package tour selection features consisted of personal safety, guarantee of promised departure date and quality of accommodations. The results of the study carried out by Wong and Kwong (2004) showed that most important all inclusive package tour selection criteria were safety of the tour, guaranteed departure and service quality of the travel agency. The studies of Murphy, Mascardo and Benckendorff (2007) indicated that the recommendations of close relatives and word of mouth from friends were quite important factors in the travel related decisions of the tourists. This study also confirmed that verbal recommendations were significant factors in preferring all inclusive package tours.

The study revealed that women and married persons gave more important to natural and cultural attractions when they choosing an all inclusive package tour. Singles prioritized the price factor more than married people. Furthermore the time and tour program factors were more important to tourists in the 3rd age group. In addition those who were taking an all inclusive package tour for the second time gave more important to the airlines & hotels and the tour program due to their previous experiences.

Tour operators include all 5 basic elements of tourism in every package tour (destination attractions and environment, destination facilities and services, accessibility of the destination, images of the destinations and price to the consumer) and add their own values to the package (such as branding, convenience, price guarantees and contractual agreements) (Bresler, 2011). These values are customer focused and gain tour operators an advantage in terms of competition on the international package tour market.

It has emerged that the time factor is also a rather important factor in destinations such as Istanbul which are rich in historical and cultural attractions. On cultural tours respondents are particularly interested in seeing many places in a short time which requires a strict time scheduling for all inclusive package tours. The marketing planners in Istanbul should assess the richness of tour programs and the tour times in addition to the product qualities and prices of all inclusive package tours.

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