

STUDY OF TOURISM QUALITY IN TURKEY

KILIÇ MEHMET¹, GÜNGÖR EMRE CAN¹, AKIN BUSE¹,
MARTIN ANAMARIA ROXANA*², BALAN IOANA MIHAELA²

¹*Erciyes University – Kayseri, Turkey, Faculty of Tourism*

²*University of Life Sciences "King Mihai I" from Timisoara,
Faculty of Management and Rural Tourism, Romania*

*Corresponding author's e-mail: anamaria.martin@usvt.ro

Abstract: Total Quality Management (TQM) in tourism is a managerial approach aimed at improving the quality of services offered in the hospitality and tourism industry. The main purpose of TQM in this context is to meet customer needs and expectations, to ensure operational efficiency and to continuously improve processes and services. By applying TQM principles, tourism industry has the opportunity to provide high quality services, to retain its customers and to increase their competitiveness in the market. This paper presents different aspects regarding the tourism in Turkey such as its income, the number of visitors, the purpose of the visits, the tourists' expenditure and many others.

Key words: *quality management, tourism industry, visitors, income*

INTRODUCTION

Many definitions have been made regarding the concept of quality. While Crosby defines quality as "the characteristics of products that provide consumer satisfaction by meeting consumer needs" as "compliance with requirements", Deming emphasizes that quality is "the measure of performance in meeting expectations". Although the definition of quality does not change for tourism as a part of the services sector, some differences appear to stand out depending on the intangible characteristics of the product produced [4]. Quality in tourism businesses it is expressed as meeting the needs of the guests and satisfying them. Tavmergen defines quality in terms of tourism businesses as "a strategic tool used to produce products and services that will meet the current or emerging needs of tourists, to increase the operating efficiency of the business and to reduce costs with the help of an effective cost control process"[7]. Service quality is the ability of an organization to meet or exceed customer expectations, and what is important in service quality is the quality perceived by the customer. Therefore, regarding service quality, it can be said that quality is the level of performance perceived by the consumer or the level of satisfaction of the service to the consumer [13]. In order to improve quality in businesses, senior management must ensure that services are provided in a way that increases customer satisfaction [1]. Therefore, regardless of the sector, the product or service produced must be of high quality for continuous success in a business. Continuous development towards perfection in tourism businesses brings quality with it. Quality in the tourism sector is not about finding faults or deficiencies in the service offered, but about performing it completely and without errors [3].

Principles of Total Quality Management

Customer Focus

Customer is the name given to people who benefit from products and services, inside and outside the company. In TQM, customers are divided into two: internal customers and external customers. Internal customers are employees, and external customers are people who want to benefit from the product or service, provided that it is of high quality. Therefore, the success of a business largely depends on understanding and satisfying customer needs [12].

Senior Management Leadership

Leaders contribute to the continuous development of the management system by developing duties, views and values, and activate and motivate people working in the organization. During the transition to total quality management, managers should actively lead the total quality management philosophy and ensure the formation of a total quality management culture. For this, leaders should observe and appreciate the efforts of individuals and teams [6].

Continuous Improvement (Kaizen)

The word "kaizen", which is used in the sense of development, improvement and especially the continuous carrying out of these operations, is formed by the combination of the Japanese words "kai", meaning "change", and "zen", meaning "good". It means "better" in Turkish. Masaaki IMAI, known as the person who first introduced the Kaizen philosophy, defined this philosophy as "an umbrella covering many management practices (productivity increase, total quality control, quality control circles or relations with workers) that developed in Japan and later spread all over the world." defines it as [11].

Team work

In TQM, it is important to ensure the participation of all business employees in development activities. The most important element of teamwork is when a group of people see each other as colleagues in a mutual effort for deeper understanding and clarity. In TQM, control of a single person is not sufficient due to the complexity and scope of the processes. The problems of these processes can only be solved by teams working in cooperation and harmony. Therefore, TQM sees everyone as a member of a team and allows arrangements that facilitate team formation and teamwork [18].

Zero Error/Error Prevention

Although zero error seems like a basic goal, it is actually the name given to an action. Zero error is all the efforts made to identify errors and factors that cause errors and to prevent errors from occurring. On the basis of TQM, it is important not to "debug errors" but "not to make mistakes". Providing goods and services right the first time is among the most important goals of TQM. Unlike traditional management, TQM does not accept the concept of "acceptable error rate" [9].

Full Participation

In the periods when the classical management approach was dominant, workers were only involved in the work to be done during the implementation phase of the decision. Nowadays, employees actively participate in the discussion and finalization of all kinds of decisions, express their thoughts and demand their opinions on these issues. In line with these demands, it is necessary to share responsibility well for the functioning of full participation [2].

The development of studies on the management of service quality and the development of tools for measuring service quality have brought dynamism to quality management in the field of tourism [8]. Quality management in tourism businesses is based on production and presentation within the framework of customer needs and requirements. In fact, the close coordination between the businesses that make up the tourism sector and the fact of producing different aspects of the common product, such as package tour production, strengthen this approach [16]. In the tourism sector, increasing the quality to a certain level is directly related to the continuous improvement of service production and the qualification of those who produce the service [3]. According to today's TQM approach, not only those working in the quality group or quality circles, but also everyone working in the business is responsible for quality. Since tourism is a labor-intensive sector, reasons such as changes in service quality over time and place, and service standardization

problems make the implementation of total quality management a necessity in tourism enterprises [15].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study presents a research based on external data, pertaining to the tourism quality in Turkey, provided by Turkish Statistical Institute (TURKSTAT). The authors used recognized techniques for analysis and interpretation to examine and make sense of those third-party external facts.

The main purpose of the study is to identify the level of tourism in Turkey such as its income, the number of visitors, the purpose of the visits, the tourists' expenditure and many others.

RESEARCH RESULTS

It is crucial that public institutions and organizations, the business community, non-governmental organizations, and the general public adopt the strategy and work cooperatively toward the shared goals in order for the Turkey Tourism Strategy - 2023 to be realized in all of its dimensions and achieve its objectives.



Figure 1. Tourism Strategy of Turkey - 2023

Source: [14]

It is being attempted to create an effective, transparent, and responsible process at the level of political and administrative management, decision making, programming, resource allocation, application, coordination, and supervision in order for this harmony to be realized at the highest level. By outlining the rights and obligations of shareholders under the principles of governance, an atmosphere of active collaboration and coordination will be created [14].

The roles and duties of inter- and intra-organizational players will be prepared in this framework for the strategy's implementation, the institutional structuring model, as follows:

- National Tourism Council: This body will be responsible for providing data, implementing, evaluating, and guiding policies for the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, as well as for making decisions at the highest level during the implementation of Turkey's Tourism Strategy through 2023.
- State Planning Organization (State Planning Organization): will take full accountability and, as a member of the National Tourism Council, will play a proactive

role in achieving the goals of both the Tourism Strategy of Turkey - 2023 and the Ninth National Development Scheme.

- Ministry of Culture and tourist: The Ministry of Culture and Tourism will take on the responsibility for the design, execution, documentation, and guidance of tourist education in addition to playing a regulatory role. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism will serve as a body that is in charge of regulations, oversight, and direction. The following duties within the Ministry of Culture and Tourism are to be established and upheld.

- National Tourism Certification Service: This role will assist in the creation of national and international standards as well as their specialization.

- The Department of Research and Steering for Domestic Tourism is responsible for conducting all types of research, evaluations, and policy-making related to domestic tourism.

- Tourism Education Guidance Service: The unit will monitor changes in the tourism industry and undertake the necessary work to outline the key elements, the content, and the plan for broadly applicable tourism education policies. It will then present its recommendations for how training should be updated to reflect current trends and the needs of the industry to the Ministry of National Education, The Higher Education Council, and industry establishments.

- The National Tourism Data Repository Service: It will perform the tasks required to gather, analyze, and assess field research data, measurements, and statistics pertaining to tourism.

- City tourism Councils: The Council will participate in representing all regional stakeholders by submitting its requests, opinions, and suggestions to the National Tourism Council on tourist development. This will help the Council make informed decisions [14].

The Turkish Tourism Strategy 2023 has been developed with the goal of finishing in 2023, but it also makes its goals more concrete starting in 2013.

Before the goals can be met and the most economic and social advantages can be obtained in the shortest amount of time, a rigorous preparatory phase must be completed.

The timeline has been organized into distinct action breakdowns based on implementation priority and anticipated timeline returns. Actions were prioritized with consideration for concerns about national tourism activity and diversification of tourism products [14].

The amount spent on tourism-that is, the money spent by Turkish nationals who live in Turkey and travel abroad-rose to \$1 billion, 933 million, 781 thousand dollars, a 74.8% rise over the same quarter last year. Package trip expenses accounted for 441 million 848 thousand dollars of the overall tourism expenditures, while individual spending made up 1 billion 491 million 933 thousand dollars.

The number of Turkish nationals who traveled overseas during this quarter rose to 2 million 978 thousand 418, up 43.7% from the same period last year. Per capita spending was 649 dollars on average. (Fig. 2)

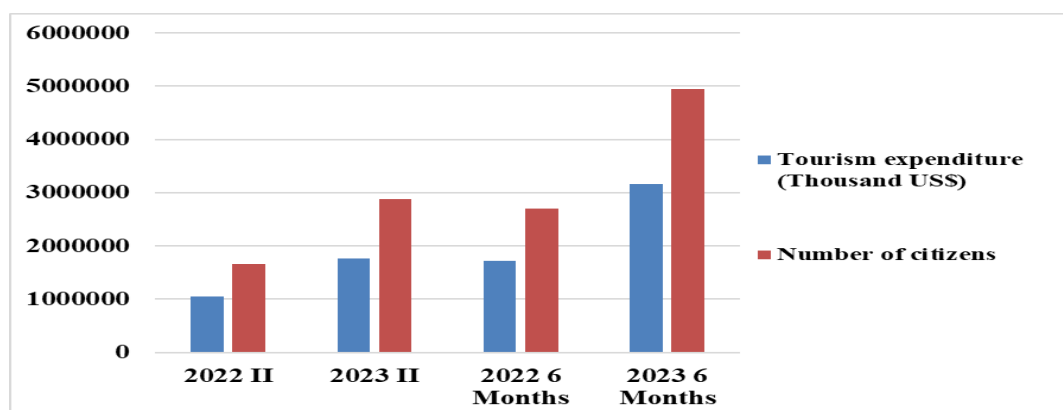


Figure 2. Tourism expenditure and number of citizens

Source: Authors own adaptation by [15]

The tourism industry generated 20 billion 225 million 317 thousand dollars in revenue during the third quarter of 2023, which is July, August, and September. This represents a 13.1% rise. 16.5% of tourism revenue came from Turkish nationals living overseas.

Travelers either plan their own travel or use pre-arranged tours. Package tour expenses accounted for 5 billion 580 million 686 thousand dollars of the overall tourism profits, while individual spending made up 14 billion 644 million 632 thousand dollars. (Fig. 1)

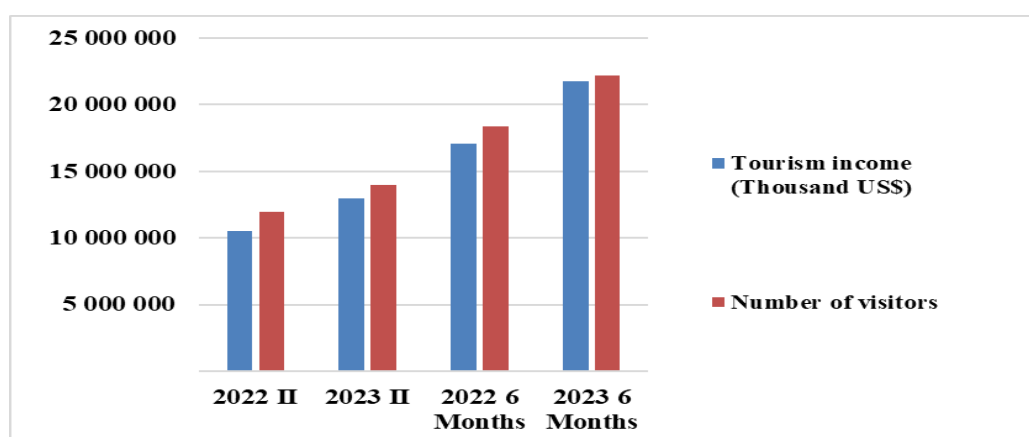


Figure 3. Tourism income and number of visitors

Source: Authors own adaptation by [15]

In the context of the tourism industry in Turkey, TQM can have a significant impact on the tourist experience and overall performance of the sector, because of some aspects:

- **Quality of tourism services:** The implementation of TQM in the tourism sector in Turkey can help improve the quality of services offered to tourists. By identifying, evaluating and correcting processes, organizations can ensure a more satisfying experience for visitors [7].

- **Continuous feedback and improvement:** TQM encourages the regular collection of customer feedback. In tourism, this can be valuable for identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the services offered. By adopting a process of continuous improvement, organizations can quickly respond to changes in the preferences of tourists and maintain a solid reputation [12].

- Employee engagement: TQM involves employees at all levels in decision making and improvement. In tourism, motivated and engaged employees can significantly contribute to the quality of service and customer satisfaction.
- Compliance with international standards: TQM encourages adherence to international quality standards. This can increase tourist confidence in tourist services offered by Turkey and facilitate access to international markets [7].

In conclusion, the implementation of Total Quality Management in the Turkish tourism industry can bring significant benefits, including improved service quality, operational efficiency and customer satisfaction [12].

CONCLUSIONS

Tourism, a labor-intensive service sector, is a rapidly developing and growing sector whose socio-economic importance is recognized internationally. The tourism sector is a sector that integrates people with the environment, protects the peace of individuals and society, unites individuals and societies with each other, and on the other hand, has high economic returns [14]. For this reason, it is one of the most competitive sectors. Since it is one of the sectors most affected by competition at national and international levels, it requires businesses in the tourism sector to pay more attention to quality. Since tourism businesses try to sell the invisible and generally meet the demands of tourism product consumers with high expectations, they need to offer quality products to consumers and achieve optimum costs to survive under competitive conditions. On the other hand, employees' satisfaction (motivation and opportunities) and satisfaction at work is another important factor that creates success. Success; This can occur when the quality perceived by employees and customers exceeds the expected quality [3].

Quality in tourism is achieved by achieving the total quality standards determined by the businesses, that is, by the satisfaction of the customers. Satisfaction for the business is achieved by increasing occupancy rates, revenue and profitability, and customer loyalty. Customer satisfaction also manifests itself to the extent that the business can meet the expectations of consumers. Quality standards consist of procedures that include everyone in the business and the process of every work done, and are directly related to the internal dynamics of the business [17]. For example, a waiter's job description, the description of his job, his responsibilities, his place in the organization and management hierarchy, the materials he uses for his job, etc. Everything is determined in writing and accepted as the principle of the business. In addition, there are professional ethics and business regulations that all employees must comply with, and together with the laws of the state, they constitute the rules that the personnel must comply with. Total Quality Management is a combination of these [18]. The success of TQM (ensuring profit maximization, increasing quality and ensuring continuous development) depends on everyone's acceptance, implementation and coordinated work of business standards with the same awareness and enthusiasm, from the manager to the lowest-level personnel, against the changing external environment [5].

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