The relationship between customer experience and customer satisfaction, recommendation behaviour, and revisit intention in accommodation businesses: The case of Istanbul

Konaklama işletmelerinde müşteri deneyimi ile müşteri memnuniyeti, tavsiye davranışı ve tekrar ziyaret niyeti arasındaki ilişki: İstanbul örneği

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Abstract

This study explores the relationships among customer experience perceptions, customer satisfaction, revisit intention, and recommendation behaviour in accommodation businesses operating in Istanbul. It also examines whether perceptions of customer experience vary significantly across demographic characteristics. The research employed a quantitative approach, and data were collected via a structured questionnaire from 605 participants. The analyses were conducted using regression analysis, t-tests, and one-way ANOVA. The results reveal a strong, statistically significant positive relationship between customer experience and customer satisfaction, with high explanatory power. Similarly, customer experience was found to be a key predictor of both revisit intention and recommendation behaviour. These findings indicate that customer experience plays a critical role in shaping both emotional and behavioural outcomes. Moreover, the study identifies significant differences in experience perceptions across demographic groups. Generation Z participants reported more positive experiences than participants in other age groups. Male respondents also had a more favourable perception than female respondents. The highest experience scores were observed among participants with a high school education or lower, while the lowest were found in the associate degree group. In terms of income, those who described their financial situation as "poor" reported lower experience perceptions, whereas those in the "very poor" category surprisingly reported higher scores. In conclusion, the findings highlight the strategic importance of customer experience in the hospitality industry. Beyond increasing satisfaction, customer experience also drives loyalty and positive word-of-mouth. In Istanbul's accommodation sector, these results suggest that a well-designed customer experience strategy can significantly influence customer behaviour and strengthen a competitive position.

Keywords: Customer Experience, Customer Satisfaction, Revisit Intention, Recommendation Behaviour, Accommodation Businesses

Jel Codes: L83, M31, D12

Öz

Bu çalışma, İstanbul'da faaliyet gösteren konaklama işletmelerinde müşteri deneyimi algıları ile müşteri memnuniyeti, tekrar ziyaret etme niyeti ve tavsiye davranışı arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektedir. Ayrıca müşteri deneyimi algılarının demografik özelliklere göre anlamlı farklılık gösterip göstermediğini de araştırmaktadır. Araştırma nicel bir yaklaşıma dayanmakta olup, veriler yapılandırılmış bir anket aracılığıyla toplam 605 katılımcıdan toplanmıştır. Analizler regresyon analizi, t-testleri ve tek yönlü ANOVA kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Sonuçlar, müşteri deneyimi ile müşteri memnuniyeti arasında güçlü ve istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir pozitif ilişki olduğunu, yüksek düzeyde açıklayıcı güce sahip olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Benzer şekilde, müşteri deneyiminin hem tekrar ziyaret etme niyetinin hem de tavsiye davranışının önemli bir belirleyicisi olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Bu bulgular, müşteri deneyiminin hem duygusal hem de davranışsal sonuçları şekillendirmede kritik bir rol oynadığını göstermektedir. Ayrıca çalışma, demografik gruplar arasında deneyim algılarında önemli farklılıklar olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Z kuşağı katılımcıları diğer yaş gruplarına göre daha olumlu deneyimler bildirmiştir. Erkek katılımcılar da kadın katılımcılara göre daha olumlu bir algıya sahipti. En yüksek deneyim puanları lise ve altı eğitim düzeyine sahip katılımcılarda gözlemlenirken, en düşük puanlar ön lisans grubunda bulunmuştur. Gelir açısından, mali durumlarını "kötü" olarak tanımlayan katılımcılar daha düşük deneyim algıları bildirirken, "çok kötü" kategorisindekiler şaşırtıcı bir şekilde daha yüksek puanlar bildirmiştir. Sonuç olarak, bulgular müşteri deneyiminin konaklama sektöründeki stratejik önemini vurgulamaktadır. Memnuniyeti artırmanın ötesinde, müşteri deneyimi aynı zamanda sadakati ve olumlu ağızdan ağıza iletişimi de teşvik etmektedir. İstanbul'un konaklama sektörü bağlamında, bu sonuçlar iyi tasarlanmış bir müşteri deneyimi stratejisinin müşteri davranışını önemli ölçüde etkileyebileceğini ve daha güçlü bir rekabet pozisyonuna katkıda bulunabileceğini göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Müşteri Deneyimi, Müşteri Memnuniyeti, Tekrar Ziyaret Niyeti, Tavsiye Davranışı, Konaklama İşletmeleri

JEL Kodları: L83, M31, D12

Introduction

The service sector has undergone a significant transformation in recent years, redefining customer experience as a strategic resource for competitive advantage rather than merely an operational outcome. Within the hospitality industry specifically, customer experience extends beyond physical services. It encompasses a personal collection of experiences shaped by emotional, cognitive, and behavioural responses. Customer experience thus reflects both tangible service delivery and the emotional impressions formed by the meanings attached to these services. This complex, multi-dimensional concept sits at the crossroads of marketing, psychology, sociology, and service management, requiring thorough analysis.

The concept of experience gained prominence in the social sciences during the latter half of the 20th century. Maslow (1964) noted that special, meaningful moments contribute to self-actualisation, distinguishing them from ordinary events. Building on this foundation, Carù and Cova (2003:268-271) described experience as a series of intensely emotional moments that bring meaning to life. The tourism industry, with its focus on emotion, pleasure, and meaning-making, has become a key domain for creating and consuming experiences. A tourist's experience transcends simple service consumption; it becomes a series of memorable moments woven into their personal life story.

The simultaneous nature of production and consumption processes inherent in tourism products further elevates the importance of experience. A tourist not only consumes a service but also collects memories, forms emotional connections, and generates meaning throughout the process. As emphasised by Quan and Wang (2004:298-301), the touristic experience is formed through the integration of core and supporting elements. Accordingly, accommodation establishments are no longer merely places offering lodging services; they become stages where memorable experiences unfold in visitors' minds. On this stage, every detail contributes to the experience: from the friendliness of the staff to the room's ambience, from the hotel's physical comfort to the uniqueness of the service.

Customer experience not only provides momentary satisfaction but also fosters emotional bonds that serve as the foundation for long-term customer–business relationships. Customising experiences, enriching them with emotional touches, and delivering them authentically are among the key drivers of customer loyalty. As Bowen and Shoemaker (1998:13-21) pointed out, seemingly simple yet meaningful gestures such as addressing the guest by name or remembering personal preferences can be highly effective in reinforcing customer loyalty in the hospitality sector. These types of interactions elevate the customer relationship from a purely transactional level to a more human and emotional dimension.

At this point, the concept of customer satisfaction represents the general evaluative process that follows the experience. According to Oliver (2010), satisfaction is not merely a cognitive comparison of whether the service met expectations, but also a reflection of emotional responses. Therefore, a satisfied customer is not only pleased with the service but also translates this satisfaction into behavioural tendencies, developing a strong motivation to revisit and to recommend the service to others. In this regard, satisfaction serves as a critical bridge in transforming experiential quality into behavioural intentions.

Customer recommendation behaviour holds a prominent place in the marketing literature as one of the most effective forms of word-of-mouth communication. In today's digital environment, the visibility of individual experiences has increased; through platforms such as social media, online review sites, and blogs, experiences can now reach thousands of people. This indicates that customer experiences carry strategic value not only for individual gratification but also for corporate reputation, brand image, and marketing performance. Recommendation intention becomes a measurable and manageable output of this strategic value.

The main aim of this study is to examine the impact of customer experience perceptions on customer satisfaction, recommendation behaviour, and revisit intention among guests staying in accommodation establishments in Istanbul. This research offers a holistic approach to understanding the underlying dynamics of customer behaviour by focusing not only on the functional but also on the experiential quality of hospitality services. Istanbul's international appeal to both domestic and international tourists enhances the generalizability and applicability of the study's findings at both local and global levels. In this context, the study aims to contribute to academic knowledge and offer concrete, actionable insights for sectoral practice by empirically analysing the "customer experience–satisfaction–loyalty triangle," which remains underexplored in the literature, with a specific focus on Istanbul. Accordingly, the central research question guiding this study is: "How do customer experience perceptions influence customer satisfaction, recommendation behaviour, and revisit intention in accommodation establishments in Istanbul?" Ultimately, the findings are expected to support the more effective design

of strategies to manage customer experience, foster loyalty, and sustain competitive advantage in the hospitality industry.

Theoretical framework

Customer experience in accommodation businesses

At its simplest, experience is defined as a dynamic process through which individuals gain knowledge and meaning by observing or directly engaging with events (Merriam-Webster, 1993). This definition positions experience not merely as a lived event, but as a meaningful whole shaped by emotional, cognitive, and behavioural interactions often retained in one's memory. By its very nature, the concept of experience is multidisciplinary and has been explored from various angles in fields such as business, psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, and philosophy. As such, definitions and interpretations of experience vary across contexts. For instance, philosophical approaches associate experience with one's existential search for meaning, while behavioural sciences relate it to emotionally intense events that influence a person's life (Carù & Cova, 2003:268-271). On the other hand, contemporary service marketing literature defines experience as a process emerging from customer interactions with a business, encompassing both emotional satisfaction and symbolic meaning (Verhoef et al., 2009:32-36). This multi-dimensional perspective has led to growing academic interest in the concept of experience, particularly in industries where customer experience is viewed as a key source of strategic value.

Maslow (1964) referred to experiences that deeply impact an individual's inner world as "peak experiences," while Thorne (1963) used the term "low-level experiences" for events that leave negative impressions and are generally unwelcome. Epiphany experiences are considered transformative events that mark turning points in one's life and lead to a profound shift in perspective (Denzin, 1992). Flow experiences, by contrast, are characterised by intense focus and intrinsic motivation, during which individuals lose their sense of time and space (Abrahams, 1986; Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). Thus, experiences are not confined to cognitive processes; they also involve emotional intensity, physical engagement, and heightened awareness (Schmitt, 1999). Such holistic experiences can influence not only momentary satisfaction but also long-term attitudes and behaviours. Extraordinary experiences, in particular, are brief yet intense moments that touch a person's life meaningfully (Arnould & Price, 1993:25-35).

The importance of experience in marketing has become more pronounced in modern economies, where services, rather than products, take centre stage. The intangible, variable, and non-storable nature of services has made consumer interaction increasingly significant (Parasuraman et al., 1985:42-46). With the rise of the experience economy, firms have shifted their value-creation strategies from delivering tangible outputs to designing experiences that leave lasting impressions on consumers' minds (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Since services are inherently performance-, process-, and experience-based, perceptions of quality are subjective and context-dependent (Berry, 1980; Shostak, 1977). Given that production and consumption occur simultaneously in service delivery, the customer becomes one of the primary determinants of service quality (Carmen & Langeard, 1980; Grönroos, 1978). This makes the interaction between the service provider and the customer a defining element of the overall experience.

Customer experience is therefore considered a strategic element in creating differentiation and value in service contexts (Pine & Gilmore, 1999; Mossberg, 2007). Especially in labour-intensive services, the customer experience is shaped by several factors, including employee attitudes, personal interactions, the moment of service delivery, and the physical setting (Zeithaml, 1981; Booms & Bitner, 1981). However, customer experience is influenced not only by physical touchpoints, but also by psychological elements such as emotional responses, expectations, and perceived value (Verhoef et al., 2009:32-36). In services with limited capacity, disruptions during peak periods, such as room, table, or staff shortages, can directly affect the customer experience and lead to fluctuations in perceived service quality (Kotler et al., 2010).

The tourism industry sits at the heart of experience-driven consumption. Tourist experience is not simply the result of a physical journey, but a multifaceted process involving meaning-making, escape from routine, and opportunities for personal transformation (Cohen, 1979). In this context, the expectations of the modern tourist go beyond basic service delivery and instead focus on experiences that are personalised, authentic, and emotionally resonant (Neuhofer et al., 2014:341-346). Such experiences unfold across three stages: before, during, and after the trip (Matovelle & Baez, 2018:134-140). Andersson (2007) argued that touristic experiences cannot be purchased; rather, they are constructed in the tourist's mind. Indeed, tourists do not merely engage with a destination's physical features; they create experiences through emotional and cultural interactions with them.

In this context, accommodation businesses play a central role in the tourist's experiential journey. In particular, small-scale establishments such as boutique hotels have a direct impact on the quality of the experience through their personalised service approach, authentic environments, and opportunities to engage with local culture (McIntosh & Siggs, 2005; Monty & Skidmore, 2003; Johnston-Walker, 1999). As experiential consumption continues to rise, accommodation facilities are increasingly seen not just as providers of physical services but as stages where meaningful experiences are created (Walls et al., 2011). These properties, which go beyond mere lodging, also serve as experience hubs that reflect the destination's character. For this reason, many leading hotel chains enhance customer experience through personalisation, building loyalty by addressing guests by name, exceeding expectations, and offering tailored services (Bowen & Shoemaker, 1998:13-21).

The Ritz-Carlton, for example, offers a model in which accommodation is presented as a staged value, and where staff members do more than carry out tasks; they accompany the guest throughout their journey, turning service delivery into a human interaction (Oh et al., 2007:120-125). These kinds of interactions go beyond meeting functional expectations, contributing instead to emotional satisfaction and the creation of meaning. The staging of service and the active involvement of the guest as a participant are among the key elements that strengthen experiential differentiation (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). As such, accommodation businesses gain a significant advantage by focusing on individualisation rather than standardisation in their service delivery.

In conclusion, the tourism experience is not merely the result of a physical activity; it is a multi-dimensional, personal, and contextual phenomenon. This process, which encompasses emotional, cognitive, and social dimensions of the individual, relies on meaning-making that goes beyond the spatial environment. At this point, accommodation businesses emerge as key actors in shaping the tourist experience, constructing service quality not only through how it is delivered, but also through the meanings, values, and interactions it offers. Indeed, the notion that value in tourism is created through the consumption experience is increasingly accepted (Volo, 2009:112-120). In this sense, experience is the essence of the tourism product, and accommodation is its stage.

Customer satisfaction

Today, one of the most fundamental factors determining the sustainability of service-oriented sectors is undoubtedly customer satisfaction. The customer is defined as an individual who is directly or indirectly affected by a product or service and who forms perceptions as a result of this interaction (Eroğlu, 2005:8-15). Historically, the concept has been classified into internal and external customers, encompassing not only the end-user who consumes the service but also employees within the organisation (Sprague et al., 1992; Toy, 2013; Demirtaş, 2022). In recent years, satisfaction has been increasingly associated not only with the technical quality of the service but also with emotional fulfilment, expectation management, and the overall integrity of the service experience (Namkung & Jang, 2008:143-148). Accordingly, ensuring customer satisfaction depends not only on service quality but also on how the service is delivered, the atmosphere in which it is provided, and the quality of interaction with the customer.

Customer satisfaction is a cognitive evaluation that arises when there is a positive gap between service expectations and perceived performance (Duman, 2003; Oliver, 1997). This definition also highlights that satisfaction is a key variable influencing post-service behaviour. In fact, satisfaction levels can directly affect outcomes such as a customer's future purchase intention, loyalty, and willingness to recommend the business to others (Söderlund, 1998:170-175). While Day (1984) conceptualises satisfaction as a post-choice evaluation, Howard and Sheth (1969) define it as the customer's assessment of whether the reward received is adequate in return for their sacrifices. In the hospitality and food & beverage sectors in particular, even minor details in service delivery can significantly influence satisfaction levels (Namasivayam & Mattila, 2007:4-10).

At this point, the experiential marketing approach has introduced a new dimension to customer satisfaction. Tunç (2017) found that experiential marketing modules positively influence both satisfaction and loyalty. Elements such as aesthetic service presentation, sensory details, and emotional engagement are crucial for today's consumers, who not only want to receive a service but also wish to "live" it. Schmitt (1999) also argued that experiential marketing, unlike traditional utility-based approaches, appeals to customers' emotions, imagination, and lifestyle, thereby fostering deeper satisfaction. Similarly, Pullman and Gross (2004:152-160) demonstrated that when hotel guests' experiential expectations are met through environmental stimuli and service design, both satisfaction and behavioural loyalty are significantly enhanced.

International studies further confirm these patterns. A survey by Del Bosque and San Martín (2008:152-160) revealed that destination experiences have a meaningful impact on emotional satisfaction and loyalty intentions, and that perceived value strengthens this relationship. Forozia, Zadeh, and Gilani (2013:4330-4332) found that service quality has a greater influence than customer expectations in shaping satisfaction. Research by Han and Yang (2017) on cafe environments in South Korea showed that visual and emotional elements affect customer happiness, although these effects do not always align with cognitive satisfaction. Kılıç and Pelit (2004:114-120) found that demographic factors significantly affect satisfaction levels, with short-stay and group travellers reporting higher satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction has thus been recognised as a strategic element that directly influences behavioural intentions. Anderson and Sullivan (1993:126-134) emphasised that higher satisfaction levels increase repurchase intentions. Getty and Thompson (1994), along with Söderlund and Ohman (2005), found direct links between satisfaction, loyalty, and recommendation behaviours. Maxham and Netemeyer (2002) similarly found that satisfied customers are more likely to engage in positive word of mouth and recommend the business to others. These findings are supported by Stevens et al. (1995) in their study of restaurant patrons. However, Weiss (2003) pointed out that satisfied customers do not always explicitly express their intentions, underscoring the importance of closely monitoring behavioural indicators.

In conclusion, customer satisfaction has become not just an outcome but a strategic input for sustainability, reputation, and competitiveness in the hospitality and service industries. With the rise of experiential marketing, customer satisfaction is now linked not only to service quality but also to aesthetic, emotional, and social values. Kandampully, Zhang, and Bilgihan (2015:380-390) found that in the hotel industry, customer satisfaction is directly associated with relationship quality and brand loyalty and that this link is particularly strong in experience-focused service models. Empirical findings in the literature consistently show that satisfaction strongly influences behavioural intentions and underpins long-term customer relationships. For accommodation businesses, offering not just comfort but also differentiated, meaningful, and personalised experiences is the key to transforming satisfaction into lasting loyalty.

Recommendation and revisit intention

In the literature, recommendation intention is defined as a forward-looking behavioural tendency exhibited by consumers following a positive experience (Keskin et al., 2020). In this context, visitors who have had a favourable experience at a destination are more likely to revisit and share their knowledge with others, thereby increasing the likelihood of recommending the destination. Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996:32-40) emphasised that customer satisfaction and perceived value are key determinants of consumers' intentions to engage in positive word-of-mouth and to recommend products or services to others. According to the Turkish Language Association (TDK, 2025), "recommendation" refers to the act of suggesting, advising, or endorsing something, while "intention" denotes a declaration of will directed toward planning, considering, or wanting to act. Therefore, recommendation intention is a cognitive and emotional inclination triggered by experience.

Recommendation behaviour is essentially word-of-mouth communication, where consumers share their experiences with products or services verbally or in writing (Harrison-Walker, 2001:61-70). This communication serves as both an effective tool for customer acquisition and a strategic asset that enhances brand credibility and corporate reputation (Keiningham et al., 2007:361-370). In today's digital landscape, recommendations on social media and online review platforms amplify traditional word-of-mouth by making customer experiences publicly accessible (Gruen, Osmonbekov & Czaplewski, 2006:350-352). In service industries, particularly, the intention to recommend, shaped by personal experience, stands as one of the clearest indicators of customer satisfaction (Prayag & Ryan, 2012:343-349).

Recommendation intention reflects whether consumers find their experience satisfying enough to share with others (Westbrook, 1987). This shared information may come from personal sources, such as family and friends, or from impersonal sources, such as the media and the internet (Duhan et al., 1997). Personal recommendations are more influential when the source is perceived as credible and expert (Bansal & Voyer, 2000:167-170), with the literature confirming that personal sources are more reliable than impersonal ones (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). For recommendation intention to develop, experiences must be satisfying, emotionally positive, and valuable (Bigné et al., 2001; Adongo et al., 2015), reinforced by consumer-brand identification. Positive emotional experiences strongly trigger recommendation behaviours (Chitturi, Raghunathan, & Mahajan, 2008:49-55). Recommendation intention serves as both a key performance indicator for businesses (Zhang et al., 2018:151-160) and an indirect measure of customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

In the tourism sector, in particular, satisfied visitors recommending a destination to their social circle plays a highly influential role in marketing. Reid and Crompton (1993) noted that highly satisfied visitors often assume the role of opinion leaders within their families, social networks, or professional environments, effectively serving as reference groups. In this regard, word-of-mouth communication stands out as a low-cost yet highly effective tool for destination branding and tourist attraction strategies (Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan, 2008:460-462).

In destination marketing, behaviours such as recommendations and revisit intentions, based on visitor satisfaction, are critical for long-term sustainability (Mancı, 2022:345-350). Satisfied visitors not only tend to return but also share their experiences with others, directly influencing the destination's reputation. Experiences shared via digital platforms can reach broader audiences and foster perceptions of trustworthiness more effectively than traditional communication channels. Gretzel and Yoo (2008) found that online user reviews significantly influence destination image and visitor intentions, showing that electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) has become a powerful guide in tourism decision-making. Especially with the advent of digitalisation, word-of-mouth communication has shifted into online spaces, and digital reviews, ratings, and social media posts have become major determinants of travel preferences.

In this regard, blogs, forums, and social media platforms are three times more effective than traditional advertising and serve as primary sources of information during decision-making. Visual and written content on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter powerfully influences travel intentions. Munar and Jacobsen (2014) demonstrated that social media content affects destination choices by creating emotional connections and perceived authenticity. User-generated content proves more credible and influential than conventional promotion methods. Conclusion, recommendation intention stems from customer satisfaction, service quality, and experiential fulfilment. This multi-layered concept impacts both consumer decisions and organisational performance. Reichheld and Sasser (1990) noted that satisfaction-driven loyalty and recommendations directly affect business profitability. In hospitality and tourism, converting satisfaction into a competitive advantage requires encouraging these behaviours.

Revisit intention refers to the desire to choose a previously experienced product or service again (Çavuşoğlu & Bilginer, 2018:73-78). In tourism, this concept reflects a visitor's intention to return to a destination they have already visited, connecting their past experiences with future decisions. Baker and Crompton (2000) discovered that satisfying experiences enhance revisit intention by improving perceived value and destination image. This represents genuine satisfaction and emotional attachment rather than simple repetition (Kahraman, 2019; Um et al., 2006).

Revisit intention serves as one of the strongest indicators of visitor satisfaction in tourism and plays a key strategic role in building destination loyalty. Oppermann (1997) highlighted that return visits offer economic efficiency and lower marketing costs. Repeat visitors are easier to persuade and adapt to services more readily than first-time visitors. Alegre and Juaneda (2006) further noted that loyal tourists are more likely to revisit and become valuable sources of word-of-mouth promotion. These returning visitors strengthen the destination's image by sharing positive opinions within their social circles (Bişkin & İdikut Şahin, 2021).

From a destination marketing perspective, retaining existing visitors is less costly and more profitable than acquiring new ones (Gitelson & Crompton, 1984). Revisit intention is therefore examined in the context of long-term customer relationship management and is closely associated with satisfaction levels (Petrick et al., 2001; Mancı, 2022). Yoon and Uysal (2005) showed that visitor satisfaction, through the mediating effects of destination image and perceived value, directly influences both revisit and recommendation intentions. Visitors who are satisfied with their experience not only develop a favourable attitude toward the destination but also tend to display similar behaviours in future travel decisions.

The literature identifies a broad range of variables that influence revisit intention, including visitor satisfaction, perceived value, service quality, destination image, safety, intensity of experience, electronic word of mouth (eWOM), additional services, and cultural compatibility. Prayag, Hosany, Muskat, and Del Chiappa (2017) found that emotional experiences, along with perceived satisfaction and destination image, significantly affect both recommendation and revisit intentions.

Revisit intention is closely related to both the attitudinal and behavioural dimensions of customer loyalty. Attitudinal loyalty reflects a visitor's favourable perception of a destination, while behavioural loyalty involves the concrete action of choosing that destination again (Uşaklı, 2022:965-968). Similarly, Oliver (1999) stated that loyalty is not only a repeated purchasing behaviour but also a lasting preference

supported by a strong psychological commitment. Visitors who experience high satisfaction and positive emotions are more likely to return to the same destination and recommend it to others.

Moreover, repeat visitors often exhibit lower price sensitivity, are more familiar with service providers, and integrate more easily into the service process. Serving such customers reduces operational costs and enables a more efficient service cycle. Reichheld and Sasser (1990) noted that loyal customers significantly lower marketing, training, and operational costs, while also generating higher profit margins over time. Therefore, revisit behaviour is not just desirable but a strategically targeted outcome for businesses aiming for sustainable growth.

From a destination management perspective, offering continuously improved services that are responsive to visitors' expectations and needs is key to increasing revisit intention. Tourist motivation, expectations, satisfaction, and the degree to which this satisfaction translates into behaviour are among the main predictors of revisit behaviour (Yazıt & Bayram, 2022:104-110). Chi and Qu (2008) found that tourist satisfaction directly affects both revisit and recommendation intentions, and that this relationship is further strengthened through destination image and perceived value.

In recent years, the growing variety of destinations and intensifying global competition have made gaining visitor loyalty both more challenging and strategically more important. Destinations today must not only make a strong first impression but also deliver high satisfaction and sustainable attachment. Zhang, Fu, Cai, and Lu (2014) argued that destination loyalty extends beyond revisit intention and includes positive word of mouth, destination advocacy, and emotional attachment. Repeat visitors represent not only numbers but also significant value in terms of profitability, reliability, and brand ambassadorship for tourism businesses.

Research methodology

The primary aim of this study is to examine, in a multi-dimensional manner, the effects of guests' experiences in accommodation businesses on customer behaviours. Within this scope, the study analyses the determining role of guest experience on customer satisfaction, intention to revisit, and the tendency to recommend the establishment to others. Among the secondary objectives is to explore whether guests' perceptions of their experiences in Turkish accommodation businesses differ significantly according to demographic variables such as generation, gender, education level, and income. The study's findings aim to contribute to the academic literature and provide actionable recommendations for businesses in the hospitality sector seeking to enhance customer-oriented service processes. Accordingly, it is expected that the results of this study will serve as a valuable reference in both academic and industry contexts.

A quantitative research approach was adopted in this study, and the research process was structured within a causal research model. A comprehensive literature review was conducted to identify appropriate measurement tools, and previously developed, valid, and reliable scales were preferred. Three different measurement scales were utilised to assess the study variables. To evaluate customer experience in accommodation businesses, the scale developed by Knutson et al. (2009) was employed. Customer satisfaction was measured using the single-dimensional, three-item customer satisfaction (CS) scale developed by Han and Ryu (2009). Additionally, to measure guests' intentions to revisit and to recommend the business to others, the scale developed by Artuğer (2015) and Hosany et al. (2015), and adapted into Turkish by Karakul (2024), was used. These scales were selected to ensure the valid and reliable measurement of the variables investigated in this research.

The survey form used in the study consists of four main sections. The first section includes items assessing guest experiences in accommodation businesses. The second section contains items related to customer satisfaction. The third section addresses participants' intentions to revisit and recommend the establishment. The fourth and final section includes questions about participants' demographic characteristics (generation, gender, education level, and income). All scale items in the questionnaire were structured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree).

Considering the time and cost limitations of the study, the research was conducted with a specific sample group. A nonprobability sampling method, namely convenience sampling, was employed. Data were collected via an online survey conducted in 2025 among guests staying at five-star accommodation businesses in Istanbul. The questionnaire was distributed voluntarily to guests aged 18 and above who were actively staying at the selected hotels. Data obtained from a total of 605 participants were included in the analysis. Ethical approval for data collection was obtained from Doğuş University under reference number E-42435178-050.04-81687.

Before beginning the data analysis, normality tests were conducted to assess whether the dataset was suitable for statistical analysis. Subsequently, validity and reliability tests were applied to evaluate the measurement quality of the scales used. After confirming that the data were appropriate for analysis, regression analysis, independent-samples t-tests, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and frequency analyses were conducted to test the research hypotheses. All statistical analyses were performed using IBM SPSS.

Normality, reliability, and validity analyses

To determine whether the data collected to measure customer experience perception in accommodation businesses exhibited normal distribution, descriptive statistics were examined. Based on the findings, the mean (Mean = 3.7727) and median (Median = 3.8889) values of the customer experience scale were found to be quite close to each other, and the skewness (Skewness = -0.680) and kurtosis (Kurtosis = 0.222) values fell within the acceptable range of ±1. Similarly, for the customer satisfaction scale, the mean (Mean = 3.8909) and median (Median = 4.0000) were consistent, and the skewness (Skewness = -0.820) and kurtosis (Kurtosis = 0.365) were within acceptable limits. For the scale measuring revisit and recommendation intention, the mean (Mean = 3.8160) and median (Median = 4.0000) were similarly close. At the same time, the skewness (Skewness = -0.712) and kurtosis (Kurtosis = 0.055) values met the requirements for parametric testing. Based on these results across all scales, the dataset was considered to conform to a normal distribution, and parametric tests were deemed appropriate for the relational analyses.

The reliability of the scales was examined using Cronbach's alpha, a widely accepted statistical measure of internal consistency for psychological measurement instruments and questionnaires. Values above 0.70 are generally considered indicative of high internal consistency, indicating that the items within each scale measure the same construct (Büyüköztürk, 2013; Nunnally, 1978). All scales used in the current study exceeded this recommended threshold, demonstrating high internal consistency and providing confidence in the reliability of our measurements. This suggests that the items within each scale, as a group, are closely related and effectively measure the targeted constructs. Table 1 presents detailed reliability analysis results for each scale used in the study.

Table 1: Reliability Analysis Results of the Scales

Customer Experience Scale in Accommodation Businesses	
Cronbach's Alpha	**Items**
0.952	18
Customer Satisfaction Scale	
Cronbach's Alpha	**Items**
0.872	3
Revisit and Recommendation Intention Scale	
Cronbach's Alpha	**Items**
0.929	5

Factor analysis was employed to enhance the dataset's explanatory power and interpretability. The study revealed discrepancies in factor loadings for constructs related to customer experience, satisfaction, revisit intention, and recommendation intention compared with the original scale structures. These variations can be attributed to context-specific perceptual patterns among participants and cultural determinants. Examination of eigenvalues and explained variance ratios indicated that the identified factors accounted for a substantial proportion of the total variance, thus validating the robustness of the factor structures. Comprehensive factor analysis results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Factor Analysis Results of the Scales

Customer Experience Scale in Accommodation Businesses Items	Factor Loadings
I did not encounter any surprises in the services or products offered at the hotel.	0.483
The services and products provided at the hotel were extremely safe to use.	0.775
The consistency in service and product performance made me happier.	0.791
The hotel adopts an outgoing service attitude that allows me to find what I am looking for.	0.778
Information about the services and products is always presented in a way I can understand.	0.773
The services and products at the hotel are consistently available for use.	0.799
There is no disorganisation in the services and products provided at the hotel.	0.782
Purchasing the services and products was very simple.	0.774
Accessing the services and products was easy for me.	0.807
Promotions and incentives offered by the hotel were designed to encourage future visits.	0.818
The promotions offered by the hotel are important in my decision-making process.	0.723
Discounts offered alongside hotel services were a plus for me.	0.737
The hotel was surrounded by entertainment experiences.	0.772
The hotel's music changed my perception of the product and service.	0.726
The environmental elements around the hotel provided a sensory simulation.	0.760
These environmental elements encouraged me to make more purchases.	0.708
The hotel's surroundings motivated me.	0.760
The surroundings of the hotel should entertain me.	0.634
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO): 0.972 **Total Variance Explained: 56.001%**	

Customer Satisfaction Scale Items	Factor Loadings
Overall, I feel positive emotions toward this hotel.	0.832
I felt quite happy during my stay at this hotel.	0.778
I intend to return to this hotel in the future.	0.782
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO): 0.733 **Total Variance Explained: 79.719%**	

Revisit and Recommendation Intention Scale Items	Factor Loadings
I will speak positively about this hotel.	0.881
I plan to travel to this hotel again in the future.	0.861
I will recommend this hotel to my friends and close contacts.	0.898
I intend to revisit this hotel in the future.	0.881
This hotel will be my first choice when planning a vacation.	0.891
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO): 0.878 **Total Variance Explained: 77.877%**	

Data suitability for factor analysis using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The KMO values were 0.972 for the Customer Experience Scale, 0.733 for the Customer Satisfaction Scale, and 0.878 for the Revisit and Recommendation Intention Scale. According to Kaiser (1974), KMO values above 0.90 are excellent, above 0.80 very good, and above 0.70 good. These values

confirm our sample is highly suitable for factor analysis. Bartlett's Test yielded statistically significant results for all scales ($p < 0.001$), confirming sufficient correlation among the variables and the appropriateness of factor analysis. As Hair et al. (2014) note, a significant Bartlett's test result indicates that the data are suitable for multivariate statistical techniques. Furthermore, the high levels of total variance explained across all scales support strong factor structures and confirm construct validity. These findings provide a solid statistical foundation for reliable interpretation of the results. All factor loadings exceeded 0.60, demonstrating that each item contributes meaningfully to its respective construct. This result confirms the internal consistency and construct validity of the scales used in the study.

Analysis and findings

This section presents the detailed results of the descriptive and relational analyses conducted within the scope of the research. In line with the study's main objective, the statistical relationships and effects of guests' experience perceptions in accommodation businesses on customer satisfaction, revisit intention, and recommendation tendency were examined. Additionally, the study investigated whether these variables differed significantly across participants' demographic characteristics. These analyses aim to reveal the determining role of customer experience on customer behaviours and to provide strategic insights for hospitality businesses. Accordingly, a research model was developed, and hypotheses were formulated to test the significance of the relationships within it. The research model and the corresponding hypotheses are presented below.

Table 3: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Participants' Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
	Traditionalists	15	2.5
	Baby Boomers	88	14.5
Generation	Generation X	120	19.8
	Generation Y	160	26.4
	Generation Z	222	36.7
	Total	605	100
	Male	302	49.9
Gender	Female	303	50.1
	Total	605	100
	High school or less	129	21.3
	Associate degree	163	26.9
Education Level	Bachelor's degree	236	39
	Postgraduate	77	12.7
	Total	605	100
	Very low	41	6.8
	Low	114	18.8
Income Level	Medium	302	49.9
	High	129	21.3
	Very high	19	3.1
	Total	605	100

The demographic characteristics of the 605 participants included in the study are presented below. An examination of the generational distribution reveals that the largest proportion of participants belongs to Generation Z, accounting for 36.7% of the sample. This is followed by Generation Y (26.4%), Generation X (19.8%), and the Baby Boomer generation (14.5%). The Traditionalist generation is the smallest segment, accounting for only 2.5% of the sample. In terms of gender, the distribution is nearly equal, with 49.9% identifying as male and 50.1% as female. This balanced distribution provides a suitable basis for gender-based comparative analyses. Regarding education level, 39.0% of the participants hold a bachelor's degree, 26.9% an associate degree, and 12.7% a postgraduate degree, while 21.3% have completed high school or a lower level of education. Regarding income level, more than half of the participants (49.9%) identified themselves as belonging to the "medium" income group. The remaining participants reported their income levels as "high" (21.3%), "low" (18.8%), "very low" (6.8%), and "very high" (3.1%). This indicates that the sample reflects a broad spectrum of income levels, providing a comprehensive basis for analysis.
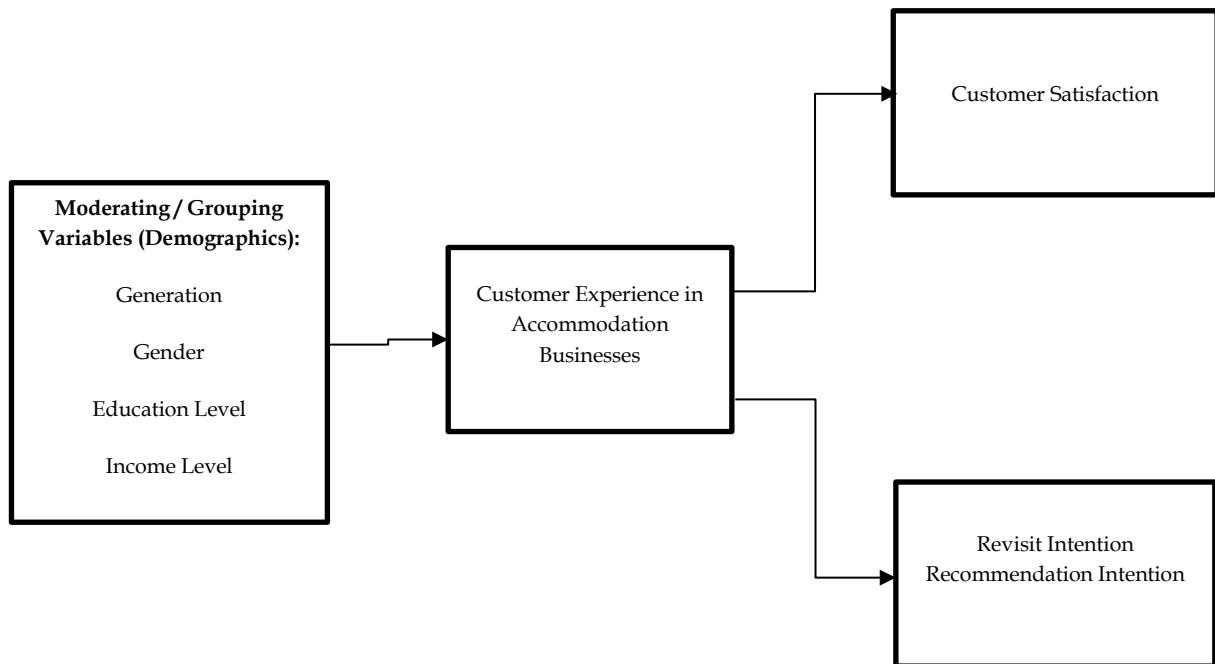
Figure 1: The Research Model

H1: Guests' perception of experience in accommodation businesses has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.

H2: Guests' perceptions of their experience in accommodation businesses positively influence their revisit and recommendation intentions.

H3: Guests' perception of experience in accommodation businesses significantly differs according to demographic variables.

Sub-Hypotheses (Related to H3):

- H3a: Guests' perception of experience significantly differs by generation.

- H3b: Guests' perception of experience significantly differs by gender.

- H3c: Guests' perception of experience significantly differs by education level.

- H3d: Guests' perception of experience significantly differs by income level.

In line with these hypotheses, the relationships among customer experience, customer satisfaction, revisit intention, and recommendation intention were examined. Furthermore, the study analysed how these relationships vary based on demographic characteristics. The results of the hypothesis tests and corresponding interpretations are presented in detail in the following section.

Table 4: Regression Analysis on the Effect of Customer Experience Perception on Customer Satisfaction in Accommodation Businesses

Regression Model Summary					
Model	**Sum of Squares**	**Sd**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**P**
Residual Sum of Squares	332.976	1	332.976	1485.619	0.000
	135.152	603	0.224		
	468.129	604			
Regression Coefficients					
Model	**Unstandardised Coefficient (B)**		**Standardised Coefficient (Beta)**	**T**	**P**
	B	**Standard Error**	**Beta**		
Mean Value	0.195	0.096		2.021	0.044
	0.972	0.025	0.843	38.544	0.000
Effect Test (Model Fit)					
Model	**R**		**R Square**	**R Square (Adjusted)**	
	0.843		0.711	0.711	

Based on the regression analysis, a strong positive relationship was found between customer experience perception and customer satisfaction in accommodation businesses (r = 0.843). This high correlation indicates that customer experience plays a key role in determining satisfaction levels. Furthermore, the model's explanatory power (R^2) was 0.711, indicating that 71% of the variance in customer satisfaction is explained by customer experience. In light of these findings, Hypothesis H1 was statistically supported and accepted within the scope of the study.

Table 5: Regression Analysis on the Effect of Customer Experience Perception on Revisit and Recommendation Intentions in Accommodation Businesses

Regression Model Summary					
Model	**Sum of Squares**	**Sd**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**P**
Residual Sum of Squares	374.260	1	374.260	1629.863	0.000
	138.465	603	0.230		
	512.725	604			

Regression Coefficients					
Model	**Unstandardised Coefficient (B)**		**Standardised Coefficient (Beta)**	T	P
	B	**Standart Hata**	**Beta**		
Mean Value	-0.096	0.098		-0.985	0.325
	1.031	0.026	0.854	40.372	0.000

Effect Test (Model Fit)			
Model	**R**	**R Square**	**R Square (Adjusted)**
	0.854	0.730	0.729

According to the regression analysis, there is a strong, positive relationship between guests' perceptions of the customer experience and their intentions to revisit and recommend in accommodation businesses (r = 0.854). This high correlation indicates that a positive customer experience significantly influences behavioural intentions. Furthermore, the model's explanatory power (R^2) was 0.730, indicating that 73% of the variance in revisit and recommendation attitudes is explained by customer experience perception. In light of these results, Hypothesis H2 was statistically supported and accepted within the scope of the study.

Table 6: ANOVA Analysis of Differences in Customer Experience Perception in Accommodation Businesses According to Generational Groups

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
3.409	4	600	0.009

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Between Groups	19.106	4	4.777	8.605	0.000
Within Groups	333.049	600	0.555		
Total	352.155	604			

To examine experience in accommodation businesses by generational group, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. Before the analysis, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested. The Levene's test result indicated that the data did not meet the homogeneity assumption (p = 0.009). Nevertheless, since the assumption of equal variances was violated, Dunnett's C post hoc test, commonly used under such conditions, was employed for multiple comparisons. The ANOVA result yielded a statistically significant p-value (p = 0.000), which is below the commonly accepted significance threshold of p < 0.05 in the social sciences. This indicates that there are statistically significant differences in customer experience perceptions across generational groups. Post hoc comparisons indicated that members of Generation Z reported significantly higher levels of customer experience perception than members of other generations. While the perception level of Generation Z was found to be similar to that of the Traditionalist group, it differed significantly and more positively from those of Generations Y, X, and the Baby Boomer generation. Based on these findings, Hypothesis H3a was statistically supported and accepted.

Table 7: Independent Samples t-Test Analysis of Differences in Customer Experience Perception in Accommodation Businesses Based on Gender

	GENDER	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
CEPMEAN	Male	302	3.8668	0.68476	0.03940
	Female	303	3.6256	0.81829	0.04701
Independent Samples Test					
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			**T-test for Equality of Means**	
	F	**Sig.**		**t**	**df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
CEPMEAN	10.316	0.001		3.931	603	0.000

To determine whether there were significant differences in customer experience perceptions across accommodation businesses by gender, an independent-samples t-test was conducted. Before the analysis, Levene's test was used to assess variance homogeneity. The results indicated that the variances were not equal (p = 0.001 < 0.05). Despite violating the homogeneity assumption, the t-test revealed a statistically significant difference (p = 0.000), which falls below the commonly accepted significance threshold of p < 0.05 in the social sciences. This result indicates that perceptions of customer experience differ significantly by gender. When comparing the group means, male participants reported a higher average perception of customer experience (M = 3.87) than female participants (M = 3.63). Based on these findings, Hypothesis H3b was statistically supported and accepted.

Table 8: ANOVA Analysis of Differences in Customer Experience Perception in Accommodation Businesses Based on Participants' Education Level

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
7.325	3	601	0.000
ANOVA			
	Sum of Squares	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Between Groups	8.767	3	2.922	5.114	0.002
Within Groups	343.388	601	0.571		
Total	352.155	604			

To determine whether participants' perceptions of the customer experience in accommodation businesses differ by education level, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. Before the analysis, Levene's test was used to assess variance homogeneity. The result showed a statistically significant value (p = 0.000 < 0.05), indicating that the assumption of equal variances was violated across the groups. Therefore, Dunnett's C test, which does not assume homogeneity of variances was employed for post-hoc comparisons. The ANOVA test yielded a statistically significant result (p = 0.000), which falls below the commonly accepted significance level of p < 0.05 in the social sciences, indicating that customer experience perceptions differ significantly by education level. According to the post-hoc comparisons, the highest perception of customer experience was observed in the "high school or less" education group. In contrast, the lowest was observed in the "associate degree" group. The other two groups (bachelor's and postgraduate degrees) reported similar mean scores; however, a statistically significant difference was identified, particularly between the "high school or less" and "associate degree" groups.

Table 9: ANOVA Analysis of Differences in Customer Experience Perception in Accommodation Businesses Based on Participants' Income Level

Levene Statistic	df1		df2		Sig.	
14.795	4		600		0.000	
ANOVA						
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square		F	Sig.
Between Groups	27.548	4	6.887		12.730	0.000
Within Groups	324.606	600	0.541			
Total	352.155	604				

To determine whether participants' perceptions of customer experience in accommodation businesses differed by income level, a Levene's test was first conducted to assess variance homogeneity. The test yielded a significant result (p = 0.000 < 0.05), indicating that the assumption of equal variances across groups was violated and the classical ANOVA assumptions were not met. As a result, Dunnett's C post hoc test, appropriate for unequal variances, was used to identify group differences by income level. The ANOVA results showed a statistically significant effect (p = 0.000), which is below the commonly accepted threshold of p < 0.05 in the social sciences, confirming that customer experience perceptions differ significantly by income level. According to post hoc comparisons, participants who reported their income level as "poor" had significantly lower perceptions of customer experience than those in higher-income groups. Interestingly, individuals who identified their income as "very poor" exhibited higher customer experience perceptions. This may be attributed to the relationship between lower expectations and perceived service quality.

Conclusion and recommendations

This study aimed to comprehensively examine the impact of customer experience perception on customer satisfaction, revisit intention, and recommendation behaviour within accommodation businesses in Istanbul. It also investigated whether perceptions of the customer experience differed across demographic variables. The findings clearly reveal that customer experience is a multi-dimensional phenomenon that not only shapes the service process but also significantly influences customer behaviours. The first regression analysis showed a strong, statistically significant positive relationship between customer experience and customer satisfaction (r = 0.843). The model's explanatory power (R^2 = 0.711) indicates that 71% of the variance in customer satisfaction is accounted for by customer experience. This result demonstrates that experience management is not merely a supporting factor but a central determinant of satisfaction in accommodation businesses. The confirmation of hypothesis H1 also underlines the critical role of experience-based strategies in building customer loyalty.

Similarly, the results revealed a strong, positive relationship between customer experience and behavioural intentions, such as revisit and recommendation (r = 0.854). The model's explanatory power (R^2 = 0.730) is notably high, indicating that customer experience perceptions can explain 73% of the variance in these intentions. This suggests that a positive experience not only increases the likelihood of return visits but also encourages guests to recommend the facility to others. These findings reinforce the idea that customer experience functions as an organic form of marketing and growth, independent of promotional budgets, thus strongly supporting hypothesis H2.

Findings from demographic analyses have revealed significant generational differences in customer experience perceptions; notably, Generation Z evaluated their experiences more positively compared to Generations X and Y. This finding aligns with the work of Seyfi, Vo Thanh, and Zaman (2024), which emphasises that Generation Z, characterised by high expectations, openness to interaction, and aptitude for digital solutions, prefers personalised, technology-supported, and sustainable services. The support for hypothesis H3a once again underscores the importance of participatory, adaptable service models capable of addressing the changing needs of younger generations.

Meanwhile, male participants reported significantly higher customer experience scores than females, indicating that gender may play a determining role in service evaluations and strongly supporting hypothesis H3b. As demonstrated in Juwaheer's (2011) study conducted in Mauritius, men tend to focus on more functional aspects, while women place greater importance on relational elements such as empathy and communication with staff. When considered alongside Salleh et al. (2016), it becomes clear that women adopt a more detailed and critical approach when evaluating service quality; therefore,

hospitality businesses need to develop gender-sensitive service strategies that meet women's expectations for safety, hygiene, personal attention, and attention to detail.

Analyses based on educational level revealed that individuals with high school or lower education rated their customer experiences more positively than those with an associate degree. As noted in Chen's (2022) research conducted during the pandemic period, individuals with lower education levels tend to evaluate even basic services quite positively when their expectations are met; conversely, as education level increases, individuals develop a more critical perception by evaluating services with a more knowledgeable, comparative, and detail-oriented perspective. In this context, the relatively low experience scores of the middle education group should be interpreted as reflecting the delicate balance between expectations and perceived service. Therefore, hospitality businesses should differentiate their service strategies by education level: providing simpler, clearer communication for those with lower levels of education, while providing transparent, informative, and detailed explanations to more educated individuals.

Analyses by income level showed that, despite the low-income group generally reporting lower customer experience scores, individuals in the "very low" income category reported higher perceptions of experience, suggesting that when expectations are low, even basic services may be perceived as satisfactory or exceeding expectations. Service value is shaped not only by the content provided but also by an individual's social, economic, and psychological conditions; however, given the limited empirical studies directly focusing on this relationship, further research across diverse samples is needed. In conclusion, hospitality businesses must diversify their service strategies based on differences in income levels, focusing on accessibility, satisfaction, and expectation management.

Research shows that customer experience in hospitality works on both operational and strategic levels, giving businesses a competitive edge. Implementing thorough experience design and management methods is essential for success. Effective designs go beyond physical spaces, including sensory elements, emotional connections, and social interactions at all customer touchpoints. Different approaches are needed for various generations. Digital solutions work best for Generation Z, who need quick access to information, while trust-based, personal interactions are more effective for Generation X and Baby Boomers. For female guests, attention must be paid to security, cleanliness, and detail, as staff communication styles and safety factors greatly affect their satisfaction. Education level also influences expectations for detail, requiring service providers to adjust information presentation, either simplified or detailed, to improve the guest experience.

Income level influences value perception, underscoring the importance of providing accessible yet satisfying experiences for price-sensitive customers. Developing flexible service packages enhances social inclusivity and brand loyalty. Customer experience affects not only immediate satisfaction but also behavioural intentions such as repurchase, recommendation, and brand loyalty. This necessitates strategic planning of post-experience processes. Practices like loyalty programs, personalised offers, thank-you messages, and special privileges strengthen long-term customer relationships. For the sustainability of all these strategic approaches, performance systems that continuously monitor customer experience with both qualitative and quantitative criteria need to be established; through indicators such as satisfaction scores, digital interaction level, contact frequency, and revisit rate, both improvement areas are identified, and rapid adaptation to changing expectations can be achieved. In this direction, customer experience management should be considered not only during service delivery but also as an integral part of data-based organisational learning and development processes.

Although this study is limited to Istanbul, it has made significant contributions to the field by revealing the relationships among customer experience, customer satisfaction, revisit intention, and recommendation behaviour in accommodation businesses. However, considering the multi-dimensional and contextual nature of customer behaviour, more comprehensive studies are needed to increase the generalizability and depth of these findings. The study's limitation to a single metropolitan area may be insufficient to reflect customer profiles and service perceptions across different destinations. Therefore, future research should be conducted across various geographical regions and tourism types (e.g., coastal, nature-based, cultural, or rural tourism) to enhance the diversity and representativeness of findings.

Moreover, this study utilised quantitative methods to collect cross-sectional data from a large sample group. Yet, customer experience is inherently subjective, emotional, and context-dependent. Integrating qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews, focus groups, and customer diaries, into future studies would deepen understanding of the multi-layered nature of the customer experience. In addition, beyond its direct effect on behavioural intentions, future studies should incorporate mediating

variables, such as service quality, perceived value, and brand loyalty, as well as moderating variables, such as personality traits, cultural background, and prior experiences.

Another critical gap in the literature is the lack of longitudinal studies examining the sustainability of customer experience over time and its evolving impact on behavioural tendencies. Employing longitudinal research designs would provide valuable insights into the dynamic nature of customer loyalty and enable the development of more sustainable experience management strategies. Furthermore, the current research is limited to the customer perspective; however, employee experience, as a direct component of service delivery, is also a crucial factor influencing customer satisfaction. Thus, there is a need for holistic, bidirectional studies focusing on the interaction between employee and customer experience. Finally, in the context of rapidly advancing digitalisation in the tourism sector, it is essential to investigate further the impact of digital touchpoints (e.g., mobile applications, online booking systems, digital concierge solutions) on customer experience. Interdisciplinary and comparative studies that explore how technological interactions transform experience perceptions would offer valuable insights not only to academic literature but also to practical industry applications.

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