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## **CONFERENCE CHAIR MESSAGE**

**Dr. Sukri Palutturi**

International Conference of Akademika Nusa Internasional Association of Social Sciences and Humanities} is a platform that thrives to support the worldwide scholarly community to analyze the role played by the multidisciplinary innovations for the betterment of human societies. It also encourages academicians, practitioners, scientists, and scholars from various disciplines to come together and share their ideas about how they can make all the disciplines interact in an innovative way and to sort out the way to minimize the effect of challenges faced by the society. All the research work presented in this conference is truly exceptional, promising, and effective. These researches are designed to target the challenges that are faced by various sub-domains of the social sciences and applied sciences.

I would like to thank our honorable scientific and review committee for giving their precious time to the review process covering the papers presented in this conference. I am also highly obliged to the participants for being a part of our efforts to promote knowledge sharing and learning. We as scholars make an integral part of the leading educated class of the society that is responsible for benefitting the society with their knowledge. Let's get over all sorts of discrimination and take a look at the wider picture. Let's work together for the welfare of humanity for making the world a harmonious place to live and making it flourish in every aspect. Stay blessed.

Thank you.

**Dr. Sukri Palutturi**

Conference Chair

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## A Preliminary Study about the Impact of Destination Websites' Persuasiveness on Perceived Risk and Purchase Intention

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**Abstract.** Destination websites are visited by potential tourists for information search and destination selection purposes. In particular, persuasiveness of destination websites is important for attracting users and also providing necessary information about the destination. In this study, a conceptual model which indicates destination websites' persuasiveness influence on online tourist behaviour in terms of perceived risk and intention to purchase is proposed. As a preliminary study, this research is hypothesized to clarify the relationships amongst these variables.

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*Keywords*— Destination, Websites' Persuasiveness, Perceived Risk, Purchase Intention

### INTRODUCTION

Information and communication technologies opened a new realm of possibilities for tourism and travel sector. For tourist destinations, official websites are now quite important information, marketing, promotion, and communication instruments. However, destination authorities and website content creators should consider the necessities for generating well-designed, highly qualified, and successful websites; and for identifying the factors that have influence on tourists' online search and purchase behaviours. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the antecedents of online tourist information search and purchase behaviour through conceptual and empirical research.

The thinking behind this paper comes from a desire to contribute the previous literature on information and communication technology usage behaviour of tourists and to propose a research model which investigates the relationships amongst destination websites' persuasiveness, perceived risk, and purchase intention. In the following sections, a literature review about the variables that are examined in this paper, aim of the research, method and discussion of the prospective theoretical and managerial implications are presented.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Latest developments in information and communication technologies, both increased the synergistic interaction between tourism companies and tourists (Frew, 2000), and also enabled people to obtain information much more easily, accurately, and timely. Especially the Internet has made a great contribution to marketing practice in tourism and travel industry (Luque-Martínez et al., 2007). Online marketing of tourism products or services, and even destinations are now practicable. Several platforms and content creators are available nowadays that offer information to tourists for mainly marketing and communication purposes. Burgess et al. (2011) categorize these suppliers as independent expert, consumer, and seller (Table 1).

Moutinho (1987) defines information search as "an expressed need to consult various sources prior to making a purchasing decision". Whether obtained from internal sources such as memory and personal experiences, or from external sources such as marketplace, tourism and travel related destination information is a need for potential tourists at the destination choice process (Perdue, 1985).

Particularly, official destination websites (called as government tourism websites, in Table 1) are seen as one of the most reliable external information sources by increasing number of people. These websites are considered independent and credible sources which provide tourism-related and destination specific information to website users. Besides, destination websites meet the needs of tourists about destination offerings as well as minimize the possible risk anticipations.

A destination website should persuade tourists about the responsiveness, accuracy, and honesty of its content; generate positive impressions about its design; and motive tourists to visit the subject destination. Since many of the tourism products or services, and travel packages are perceived risky by potential tourists which are not available to test before the purchase, they tend to "engage in information searches prior to purchase decisions in order to minimise risks" (Jacobsen & Munar, 2012). At this point, destination websites are reliable and facilitator search engines that tourists generally use at the destination selection process.

**Table 1.** Different Content Creators of Online Tourism Information

<b>Content Creator</b>	<b>Description/Features</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Independent Expert	Information is created by what people perceive to be independent bodies or entities that allow the published information to embrace elements of objectivity and credibility.	Government tourism websites  Travel agents
Consumer	Information that embodies User-Generated-Content that can be viewed as forms of electronic word-of-mouth (or eWOM)	Weblogs  Social networking sites  Third party tourism websites such as Tripadvisor
Seller (Tourism Operators)	Promotional marketing of an operator's products through a review in the traditional media or on a website recommending a particular product.	Email promotion based on a commercial mailing list  Tourist operators own website

(Source: Burgess et al., 2011)

In this study, therefore, the persuasiveness of official destination websites has been the focus of research interest. Principally, persuasive destination websites should “have the ability to evoke favourable impressions toward the site” (Kim & Fesenmaier, 2008), and “can influence the attitudes of website visitors” (Lee & Gretzel, 2012). For being successful in the tough international market competition, as Loda, Teichmann, and Zins (2009) stated, tourism providers should understand how they may maximize the persuasiveness of their websites. Because, tourists who become satisfied with a destination website's content, aesthetic, functions etc., are expected to generate positive image, intention to purchase and to visit toward the subject destination. Mitchell and Boustani (1994) also note that “consumer information processing in the pre-purchase context plays an important role in reducing perceived risks”. Therefore, persuasive characteristic of a destination website may enable content creators to decrease the perceived risks of the potential tourists.

In the tourism literature, perceived risk has been a widely investigated topic (Mäser & Weiermair, 1998; Mitchell et al., 1999; Slevitch & Sharma, 2008; Fuchs & Reichel, 2011) and various risk dimensions or destination attributes were offered so far by the academics. For Yeung and Morris (2006), risk perception can be defined in terms of “concerns about potential consequences, long-term adverse impacts and the involuntariness of exposure” at the decision making process. In earlier studies (Bauer, 1960; Cox, 1967), researchers conceptualized perceived risk under two dimensions as: uncertainty and consequences. Destinations need to offer online and offline information resources and availabilities, since lack of information implies uncertainty in the eye of tourists (Slevitch & Sharma, 2008). In terms of consequences, the academics identified the factors such as “functional, performance, or psychological goals and the money, time, and effort invested to achieve those goals” related to perceived risk (Lin, Jones & Westwood, 2009).

Persuasive destination websites may influence website users' (tourists') attitudes. Because, empirical evidences obtained from the previous studies show that highly qualified and well-designed destination websites have impact on user behaviour such as trust, satisfaction, and purchase intention (Wen, 2012). Moreover, Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) argue that intention is solely predictor of actual behaviour, while there is a strong and significant correlation between these variables.

#### RESEARCH QUESTION

To understand and predict online tourist behaviour, a research model is proposed which examines the importance of website persuasiveness for decreasing perceived risk and increasing purchase intention of the users'. In Figure 1, the research model which demonstrates these relationships is shown.

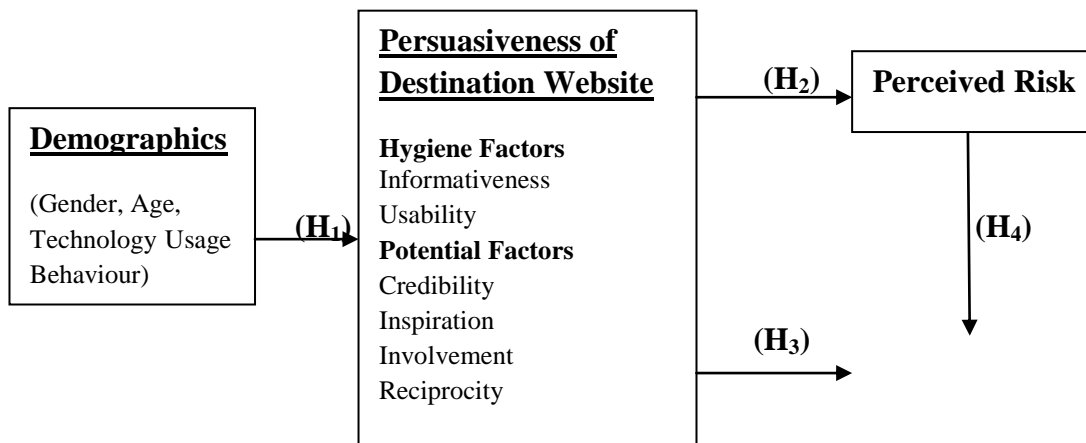


Figure 1. Research Model

These are the hypotheses that should be tested:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Participants’ demographic characteristics influence on their perception about persuasiveness of destination website.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Persuasiveness of destination website negatively effects (reduces) perceived risk.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Persuasiveness of destination website positively effects (increases) intention to purchase.

**H<sub>4</sub>:** Perceived risk negatively effects (reduces) purchase intention.

#### METHODS

This is a quasi-experimental research which is going to be conducted by following stages. Firstly, a survey will be performed for measuring the participant perceptions about website persuasiveness, risk perception, purchase intention variables. Demographics of the participants, such as gender, age, technology usage behaviour are also be identified by additional questions. Nineteen items of the website persuasiveness, which conceptualize that the variable contain hygiene and potential factors, are obtained from Kim and Fesenmaier’s (2008) study. Four items that measure perceived risk are adapted from Chan and Lu (2004). All items will be measured by using 7-point Likert type of scale with a range from ‘strongly disagree’ (1) to ‘strongly agree’ (7). Purchase intention is going to be examined by two items obtained from Bai, Law and Wen (2008), where participant intentions in the near future (6 months) and longer term (2 years) are determined by 7-point Likert type scale ranged from (1) being ‘very unlikely’ to (7) being ‘very likely’. The variable ‘‘Purchase intentions’’ was examined in a two-item 7-point Likert type scale ranged from ‘‘7’’ being ‘‘Very likely’’ to ‘‘1’’ being ‘‘Very unlikely’’ that reflects online visitors’ behavioral intentions in the near future (6 months) and relatively long term (2 years). The variable ‘‘Purchase intentions’’ was examined in a two-item 7-point Likert type scale ranged from ‘‘7’’ being ‘‘Very likely’’ to ‘‘1’’ being ‘‘Very unlikely’’ that reflects online visitors’ behavioral intentions in the near future (6 months) and relatively long term (2 years).

By using convenience sampling method, data will be collected from the university students. Because, the university students are ‘‘useful surrogates when modelling underlying consumer behavioural processes’’ (Sweeney, Soutar, & Johnson, 1999). Tourism Faculty students of Akdeniz University, Antalya-Turkey, as the sample of the study, will be asked to complete a pre-structured survey while they are searching Antalya destination’s official website at a laboratory. Following, the obtained data will be analyzed for testing the research model by using Structural Equation Modelling technique and for identifying the demographic differences.

#### CONCLUSION

With appropriate data collection and empirical testing, results of this study may enable the academics to offer important theoretical and managerial implications. For example, sector authorities may collaborate with professional website designers with the aim of enhancing the attractiveness, effectiveness, and persuasiveness of destination website. User opinions and critiques about their website experiences; sufficiency of various website functions for meeting the information needs of users; and impact of website’s overall quality on users’ risk perceptions and purchase intentions can be measured and developed by continuous monitoring. In addition, persuasiveness of a subject destination’s website can be benchmarked with market leader destination’s website. If destination risk factors and their importance in the eye of tourists may also be identified by user feedbacks, authorities may consider including additional information about these issues. Investigation of the relationships amongst website

persuasiveness, risk perception, purchase intention, like this study, is expected to enlarge the scientific perspectives about online information search behaviour in the tourism and travel literature.

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## The Effect of Mood on Tourists' Service Quality Perceptions

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**Abstract.** In the tourism industry, numerous variables may affect service quality perceptions of tourists such as personality, cultural background, and mood. Therefore, it is important to consider the effect of these variables for understanding and assessing the service quality perceptions of tourists. In the literature, for example, mood has been one of the ignored and rarely investigated psychological determinants by the academics. Thus, the aim of this research is to examine the effect of mood on service quality perception by using 436 data obtained from tourists who were accommodating in five-star hotels in Antalya-Turkey. Firstly, sub dimensions of service quality were identified as “tangibles”, “reliability and responsiveness”, and “assurance and empathy”. Then, the participants were clustered as ‘good mood’ and ‘bad mood’ tourists so that the effect of moods on each service quality sub dimensions would have been tested by independent t tests. The results showed that good mood tourists had higher service quality perceptions for all sub dimensions than bad mood tourists.

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*Keywords*— Service Quality Perception, Mood, Hospitality, Antalya

### INTRODUCTION

Service quality is one of the most important determinants of customer satisfaction which further increase profitability of the businesses. Thus, many academics focus on service quality perception of the customers. However, recent studies show that customers' mood also affect customer experiences and perceptions (e.g. Homburg, Koschate, and Hoyer, 2006). Unfortunately, there are limited researches that investigate the role of mood on tourists' service quality perceptions in the tourism industry, especially in the hospitality sector. Therefore, the objective of this research is to examine the effect of mood on service quality perception. More specifically, this study aims to identify whether service quality perception of tourists visiting Antalya-Turkey differ according to their moods.

The paper is structured as follows: after a literature review about service quality and mood, research methodology is presented. Afterwards, the results of the analyses are summarised. The paper is concluded with the discussion of findings and future study recommendations.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Service Quality

Delivering higher service quality than the competitors' is one of the most effective differentiating strategies of service firms (Kotler, Bowen, and Makens, 2014). Thus, researchers have been widely investigated service quality in different settings such as banking (e.g. Zhu, Wymer, and Chen, 2002), health care (e.g. McGlynn, Asch, Adams, Keeseey, Hicks, DeCristofaro, and Kerr, 2003), hospitality (e.g. Saleh and Ryan, 1991), travel (e.g. Ho and Lee, 2007) industries. Early research specifically focused to define service quality concept. For example, Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985) described service quality as “a global judgment, or attitude relating to the superiority of a service”. They denoted that the perceived service quality was a reflection of the degree and direction of discrepancy between consumers' perceptions and expectations. Similarly, Zeithaml (1988) defined service quality as “the customer's assessment of the overall excellence or superiority of the service”.

The academics proposed different models for measuring service quality. For example, Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985) argued that service quality could have been measured by comparing customers' service quality perceptions and expectations. Therefore, they proposed SERVQUAL instrument which consists of 22 items. By using this scale, expectations of the customers are measured before the service experience. Then, service quality perceptions of the customers are measured by using the same scale. Finally, the gap scores are calculated by comparing customers' service quality perceptions and expectations. Contrary to SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, 1985), Cronin and Taylor (1992) showed that performance only approach (i.e. customers' service quality perceptions) exhibited a stronger correlation with service quality. Thus, they offered SERVPERF model consists of same 22 items, which solely measures service quality perceptions.

There are many studies that examine the relationship between service quality and various variables like customer satisfaction and behavioural intention. For example, Taylor and Baker (1994) who examined the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in transportation (airlines), health care, recreation (amusement park) service, and communications (long-distance telephone) industries, showed that higher level of perceived service quality resulted in increased consumer satisfaction. Similarly, Andreassen and Lindestad (1998) who collected data from 600



package tour participants in Norway, denoted that service quality was an important antecedent of both customer satisfaction and loyalty.

## 2.2 Mood

While the terms of emotion and mood are frequently used interchangeably, most of the academics agree that they are closely related but distinct phenomena (e.g. Beedie, Terry, and Lane, 2005). On the one hand, emotion is a temporary and intense feeling caused by a specific event or object. On the other hand, mood is a permanent and mild feeling. In addition, behavioural influences and consequences of emotion and mood are not completely understood yet. Table 1 shows the main differences between emotion and mood (Huang, Scott, Ding, and Cheng, 2012). In this study, mood is defined as "a consumers' affective state that is relatively global in nature, as opposed to emotions, which tend to have a specific cause" (Rusting, 1998; Martin, 2003).

**Table 1. Differences between Mood and Emotion**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Mood</b>	<b>Emotion</b>
Cause	Cause is less well defined.	Caused by a specific event or object.
Duration	Permanent	Temporary
Intensity	Mild	Intense
Timing	Rises and dissipates slowly	Rises and dissipates quickly
Consequences	Largely cognitive	Largely behavioural and expressive
Control	Controllable	Not controllable
Stability	Stable	Fleeting and volatile
Display	Not displayed	Displayed
Experience	Thought	Felt

Adapted from Beedie, Terry and Lane (2005)

Limited number of researchers has investigated the role of emotion in consumer behaviour. For example, Mano and Oliver (1993) documented strong relationships between product satisfaction and product-related emotions. In addition, Oliver (1994) suggested that positive and negative emotions had direct impacts on customer decision process. Similarly, Homburg, Koschate, and Hoyer (2006) argued that customer satisfaction was influenced by cognitive and affective consideration of purchase experience. Moreover, they explained that customers with positive feelings might ignore service failure incidents. Liljander and Strandvik (1996) argued that negative emotions had a stronger effect than positive emotions on satisfaction. In one of the recent studies, White (2006) investigated the relationships among mood states, emotions, service quality perceptions, and consumer loyalty by a comprehensive model. They found that mood states and emotions had influences on consumer loyalty.

## METHODOLOGY

A pre-structured questionnaire was used in this study for data collection. The first part of the questionnaire consists of 20 personality items derived from Glazer (1985). The second part measures participants' mood by 4 items adapted from Swinyard (1993), Mattila and Enz (2002), and White (2006). The third section captures 22 items which measures respondents' service quality perceptions (Cronin and Taylor; 1992). The next section contains 3 items for evaluating respondents' satisfaction. All items were measured by 7 point Likert type of scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). In addition, 7 questions related to demographic characteristics were included to the survey. The questionnaire which was originally in English, translated into Russian language, since the target sample was the British and Russian tourists visiting Antalya-Turkey.

Data used in this study is a part of a research project about personality, mood, and service quality perception relationships. 800 questionnaires were collected from 2 five-star hotels located in Antalya-Turkey in the period of July, August, and September, 2015. After eliminating incomplete questionnaires, 436 useable data were remained for the analyses.

## RESULTS

The demographic characteristics of the participants that include gender, age, occupation, nationality and marital, educational status information are shown in Table 2. Of the 436 participants, 59.6 percent were females, 55 percent were singles. In addition, most of the participants were Russian tourists (57.6%). The majority of respondents had college or university level of education (39%). Considering the age, most of the participants were between 21-30 years old (28.2%). Furthermore, 19.5 percent of the participants were retired followed by company employees (18.8%) and students (18.1%).

**Table 2. Sample Characteristics (N=436)**

Characteristics		N	%
Gender	Male	176	40.4
	Female	260	59.6
Marital status	Married	196	45.0
	Single	240	55.0
Occupation	Retired	85	19.5
	Company Employee	82	18.8
	Business Owner	56	12.8
	Government Sector	35	8.1
	House wife	55	12.6
	Student	79	18.1
	Other	44	10.1
Age	20 and below	47	10.8
	Between 21-30 years	123	28.2
	Between 31-40 years	70	16.1
	Between 41-50 years	86	19.7
	Between 51-60 years	86	19.7
Nationality	61 and above	24	5.5
	Russian	251	57.6
	British	185	42.4
Educational Status	Primary School	14	3.2
	High School	100	22.9
	College or University	170	39.0
	Postgraduate	78	17.9
	Other	74	17.0

Hierarchical Clustering Analysis (with Ward method) was conducted by using mood items' means for clustering participants. Two clusters were obtained and named as the "good mood" and "bad mood" tourists. The mood levels of each cluster are shown in Table 3. Good-mood participants are more happy and comfortable than bad-mood participants. In addition, good-mood participants are not stressful.

**Table 3. Mood Means Differences by Groups**

Items	Good Mood f: 115		Bad Mood f: 321	
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD
Currently, I am in a good mood	6.22	0.70	3.5 4	1.31
As I answer these questions I feel cheerful	5.84	0.97	3.0 9	1.48
For some reason I am not comfortable right now*	5.95	1.45	3.8 4	1.55
At this moment I feel edgy or irritable*	6.72	0.62	3.9 5	1.46

f: Frequency,  $\bar{X}$ : Average, SD: Standard deviation, \* reversed items

Following, factor analysis was used in order to determine dimensional structure of the service quality scale. 22 items which measure participants' perceived service quality were assessed by explanatory factor analysis with varimax rotation. The Bartlett test of sphericity value (15653.104) showed that there was a relationship between these variables. In addition, KMO (Kaiser Meyer Olkin) value (0.96) reflected that sample size was adequate for conducting factor analysis.

Results of factor analysis offered 3 factors with an eigenvalue greater than 1.0 and explaining 88.3% of the total variance. Table 5 shows the factor loadings, average means, explained variance, and reliability coefficients. Factors were named considering the items that they captured.

Factor 1 includes 5 items, which explain 22.79% of the total variance and was named as "tangibles".

Factor 2 includes 9 items which explain 34.53% of the total variance was named as "reliability and responsiveness".

In addition, factor 3 which captures 8 items and explains 34.53% of total variance was named as "assurance and empathy".

**Table 4. Service Quality Dimensions**

Items	Tangibles	Reliability and Responsiveness	Assurance and Empathy
The hotel has modern looking equipment.	0.942		
The physical facilities at the hotel are visually appealing	0.916		
Staff at the hotel appear neat	0.911		
Materials associated with the service are visually appealing	0.925		
The hotel has opening hours convenient to all of its patrons	0.775		
When the hotel promised to do something by a certain time, it did it		0.835	
When patrons have problems, the hotel shows a genuine interest in solving them		0.875	
The hotel performs the service right the first time		0.875	
The hotel provides its services at the time it promises to do so		0.879	
The hotel insists on error-free service		0.872	
Staff at the hotel were able to tell patrons exactly when services would be performed		0.868	
Staff at the hotel give prompt service to the patrons		0.763	
Staff at the hotel are always willing to help patrons		0.752	
Staff of the hotel are never too busy to respond to patrons		0.729	
The behaviour of staff instils confidence in its patrons			0.776
Patrons of the hotel feel safe in their transactions			0.758
Staff of the hotel are consistently courteous with patrons			0.781
Staff of the hotel have the knowledge to answer patrons			0.794
The hotel gives patrons individualized attention			0.894
The hotel has staff who give its patrons personalized attention			0.904
The hotel has the patrons' best interests at heart			0.890
The staff of the hotel understand the specific needs of their patrons			0.893
Average	4.96	3.88	4.05
Cronbach Alpha	0.969	0.976	0.982
Variance (%)	22.79	34.53	30.98

Total variance explained: 88.31%; KMO:0.96; Bartlett's test for sphericity:15653.104 (p<0.01)

In order to determine whether participants' mood levels affect their service quality perceptions, independent samples t tests were conducted (Table 5). Analyses results revealed that service quality perceptions of good-mood participants were higher than bad-mood participants.

**Table 5. Service Quality Perception Differences by Groups**

Service Quality Dimensions	Good Mood f: 115		Bad Mood f: 321		P
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	
Tangibles	6.06	1.16	4.57	1.79	0.00* *
Reliability and Responsiveness	4.21	1.34	3.76	1.38	0.03*
Assurance and Empathy	5.44	0.83	3.55	1.72	0.00* *

f: Frequency,  $\bar{X}$ : Average, SD: Standard deviation, p: Significance, \*\*p<0.01, \*p<0.05

## DISCUSSION

The aim of this research was to examine the role of mood in service quality perception. For achieving this purpose, data obtained from the British and Russian tourists who were accommodating in 2 five-star- hotels in Antalya were used. Participants were grouped into the good-mood and bad-mood tourists, by relying on their mood levels. By using exploratory factor analysis, "tangibles", "reliability and responsiveness", and "assurance and empathy" were identified as the underlying dimensions of service quality. While five-dimensional structure of SERVPERF has been proved by number of researchers (Devebakan and Aksaraylı, 2003; Carrilat, Jaramillo, and Mulki, 2007; Landrum, Prybutok, and Zhang, 2009), in this study three dimensions were obtained, similar to Zhou's study (2004).

Then, independent sample t test results showed that mood level of the participants affect their service quality perceptions. In other words, service quality perceptions of good-mood participants were higher than bad-mood participants. To conclude, the results of the study indicate that mood is an important determinant of service quality perception. In the future studies, it is recommended by the authors that the academics should examine the role of mood in different service settings for testing the sample, sector and research area differences. This will both enable researchers to enlarge the literature about mood and also to clarify the influence of mood on customer behaviour.

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