TOURISTS' PERCEPTIONS ON SATISFACTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISTS' DESTINATIONS

Eleni C. Gkika
Special Research & Education Personnel
Technological Educational Institute of Athens
Department of Business Administration
ghelena@teiath.gr

Abstract

The aim of this study is to explore the contribution of different characteristics of tourist destinations to tourists' satisfaction. The study held at a mountain tourist destination and at an island in Aegean Sea. 236 tourists participated at the study. Quantitative data were analyzed in factor analysis and regression analysis. Results indicate that there are five factors influencing tourists' satisfaction and the most important of them is the Cost of Staying at the destination. Other factors are: the Quality of services and products, the Entertainment variety, the Safety and the Reputation of the area and finally the Special Local Characteristics that make a holiday experience unique. Further the study attempts to discover interrelationships among tourists' perceptions and satisfaction and how these are related to the different destinations.

Keywords: *tourist satisfaction, mountain tourism, island tourism, sustainable development, cost of living, tourist perceptions*

Introduction

Greece is an internationally recognized tourist destination. There are more than 16,000 kilometers of coastline and more than 6,000 islands but only 117 are inhabited. 393 beaches are characterized with "blue flag" an indicator of excellent quality. From the multitude of sunny islands and beaches to the snowy peaks, rivers, gorges and forests, Greece offers an unlimited variety of attractive destinations for year-round holidays. UNESCO has recognized 17 monuments in Greece as World Heritage sites. During 2016 there were more than 22 million international arrivals at Greece. Tourists prefer Greece among others due to residents' famous philoxenia and the Mediterranean Cuisine. Tourism industry is well-established in Greece with more than 650.000 people employed. Tourism offers to the economic growth by increasing the employment, by attracting foreign exchange and generally by improving local social infrastructures.

Tourism as a product consists of the information services supplied, the transportation availability, the ease of access, the local and general transportation means, the accommodation offered, the highlights of local attractions, the friendliness of local people and the emotions that tourism experience offers (Suanmali, 2014). Tourists' emotional reaction may predict their future behavioral intentions to revisit the destination and to repeat the experience. Satisfaction and positive emotional reaction occurs when basic human needs are satisfied. When a customer is satisfied one maintains long-term relationships and exhibit repurchasing behavior.

Satisfaction refers to the variation between prior expectations and perceived performance after consumption. The dissatisfaction occurs when performance and perceptions differ (Fu & Chen, 2010). Enhanced tourists' satisfaction leads to increased profits and revenues for service and product providers. Providing high quality services and ensuring customer satisfaction leads

tourism industries to success. The social environment of host society thus is important in the fulfilling of tourists needs and expectations (Bazneshin, 2015). Loyalty as behavior includes patronage and recommendations. Tourists' loyalty is considered as an extension of customer loyalty to tourism destinations and settings. Loyalty has two definitions: an attitudinal and a behavioral one. Attitudinal loyalty refers to customers beliefs about the value they receive leading to their overall attitude toward a product or service. It is a decision to repurchase or not (Fournier, 1994). Loyal customers tend to spend more time on a place, revisit and recommend to others (Hongmei, 2014). Tourists may choose to revisit or recommend to friends and family members.

There is relevant tourism literature indicating factors influencing tourists' perceptions on destination satisfaction but there is none –to our knowledge- comparing characteristics of two different destinations and their contribution to tourists' satisfaction. The current research examined two very different in properties but incomparable in natural beauty tourist destinations: an island and a mountain-village.

The island: Rhodes is an island with golden beaches, green hills and valleys. In Rhodes live 150.000 inhabitants according to 2011 census amounts. Rhodes Island has total surface of 1.401 km and a coastline of 253 km. The main area is flat and is covered either by forest or by agriculture areas, which has been gradually abandoned. 2 million foreign tourists arrived ονλυ by plane at Rhodes during 2016. The majority of them came from Great Britain, Germany, Russia, Sweden, Israel, Poland and Italy. The island offers a great variety of traditional and cosmopolitan facilities. There are numerous cultural and archeological sites to visit. Although Rhodes is a popular Greek tourist destination the absence of tourism development planning has led to overexploitation of resources and to gradual environmental degradation.

The mountain village: Metsovo is located at the physical environment of Epirus a district at the NW Greece at Ioannina Prefecture. It is a picturesque mountain village surrounded by virgin forests, untamed slopes, mountain lakes and impressive rivers with gorges. There are many archeological sites, monasteries, churches, arched stone bridges, wineries and great mansions attracting tourists' attention. Metsovo is attracting visitors from Balkan countries, Germany, England, Sweden, Romania, Italy and Cyprus. In Metsovo live 2.500 inhabitants according to 2011 census amounts. Metsovo has an altitude of 1,160m and is a mountainous region. Only 4.8% of its land is arable, while 26.5% is covered by forests and thickets (NSSG 2003). The region has a remarkable tourist potentiality consisting of natural environment and cultural heritage and offer opportunities for tourist development that have been partially achieved but without ensuring sustainable growth.

These two destinations have very different characteristics but are among the first preferences of tourists visiting Greece. Sustainable development planning could add to both destinations further growth and prosperity. The article aims at providing insight of tourists' satisfaction as they perceived it while visiting these two destinations. These results may introduce tourist policy makers with some elements of destination image important to tourists. This information may further exploit new marketing practices and tailor-making strategies in tourism advertisement.

Literature Review

The purpose of the study was to identify factors influencing tourists' satisfaction while visiting two different in attributes tourists' destinations. Research on tourists' motivation allows understanding the special features that attract tourists in a destination. "The services provided include the friendliness of local people, the public dealing, the cleanliness of the area, the quality of communications, the easiness of access, the climate conditions" (Hultman et al., 2015). Tourist's fulfilling expectations are considered as a measure of the **quality of the**

services provided. Tourists' preferences are affected by their personal traits but also by the special characteristics each destination area has. The services provided include the friendliness of local people, the public dealing, the cleanliness of the area, the quality of communications, the easiness of access, the climate conditions. These properties are responsible for the return of the tourists and also their recommendation of the tourism destination to others.

H1: Tourists visiting the island are more satisfied by the service quality offered.

One of the best ways to assess the **quality** of tourist destination is to measure tourists' satisfaction about the local environment (Bazneshin, et al., (2015). The success of tourist destinations depends on its quality profile or its special attractive characteristics which create tourists' strong intention to revisit (Agrawal, 1997, Chen, 2016). Overall tourist satisfaction and their intention to return are also determined by negative factors that prevent tourists from taking the trip such as the unsustainability due to excess carrying capacity as over-development or congestion (Alegre and Garau, 2010). Balance should be imposed between natural environmental requirements and development requirements. (Bazneshin, 2015). According to Zahedi (2006) policy makers and local authorities should aim at developing tourism while preserving the compatibility with local environmental conditions, the compatibility with future needs and required goals and the protection of human life saving systems such as water, soil, weather, etc. This is a sustainable development of tourism destinations which refers to answering the needs of current generations without spending next's generations' capacities (Zolfaghari, 2010). Bazneshin, et al., (2015) attempted to evaluate criteria on tourists' satisfaction with recreation services. They studied tourists while they visited a mountain area in North of Iran resulted in that conservation of natural resources increase tourists satisfaction. Also balance should be imposed between natural environmental requirements and development requirements. Kaynak, Bloom and Leibold (1994) distinguish natural from artificial environment. They support that both should be carefully planned, promoted and preserved so as to improve travelers' satisfaction. Stable tourism should apply so as to manage all the resources maintaining life support systems, environmental processes and diversity while respecting local cultural values. Natural environment is the corner stone for the development of the tourist sector. Bazneshin, et al., (2015) concluded that nature has the greater impact on satisfaction and that tourists prefer to spend time with their friends and family in conditions of fine weather in a peaceful environment.

H2: Tourists visiting the island are more satisfied by the local special characteristics as environmental conditions.

According to Pizam et al., (1978) there are nine factors influencing tourists' satisfaction on a sea-side resort. These factors are: "Beach opportunities, cost of goods and services, hospitality, eating and drinking facilities, campground facilities, environment and extend to commercialization". Also a research in Balearic Islands examined satisfaction based on evaluations that covers attributes as "climate, beaches, scenery, quality of hotels, safety at destination, …, cleanliness, hygiene, accommodation, historic places and activities, interaction with other tourists, nightlife, sports activities, easy access, prior visits to destination, facilities for children and elderly, easy access to information, easy trip to arrange, local cuisine, affordable prices and inexpensive destination" (Alegre and Garau, 2010). According to Mclntosh (1972) there are five barriers in opposing the decision to travel: expense, lack of time, physical limitations, family stage, and lack of interest. Since tourists tend to spend a lot of time in their hotels or in the restaurants of the destination they visit; they consider that the quality and the prices of housekeeping services, hotel food and beverages are influencing their loyalty (Kandampully and Suhartanto, 2000). Generally the price and the quality of food (Soriano, 2002) and the cost of staying (Suanmali, 2014) are considered important.

H3: Tourists visiting the island are more satisfied by the cost of their vacations.

Tourists' satisfaction from visiting a rural environment or from performing mountain activities concluded to six motivational dimensions such as: risk and challenge, psychological Catharsis, recognition of one's self, creativity, capacity to make decisions, and contact with the environment (Ewert, 1985). According to Caber and Albayrak (2016) the motivations of rock climbing tourists in Turkey were the physical setting, the challenge, the novelty seeking, and the climbing infrastructure. Devesa et al., (2010) also shed light on the relationship between motivation and tourist satisfaction in a rural environment in Spain. They used a motivation scale and a satisfaction scale and by cluster analysis they concluded four factors: tourists looking for tranquility and contact with nature; cultural visitors; tourists looking for easy accessibility and finally gastronomy and tourists that return periodically. They concluded that tourists "make different evaluations of certain factors, activities and destination attributes depending on their relation to the reasons that motivated or determined the trip". Also important factor for tourists' satisfaction is shopping opportunities and the development of local handicrafts, small souvenirs one may bring back home for friends and relatives (Lunyai, Run, Atang, 2008).

H4: Tourists visiting the island are more satisfied by the entertainment opportunities offered.

Other factors influencing tourists' satisfaction are safety, cultural experiences and convenient transportation (Clen and Gursoy (2001). According to Arasli & Baradarani (2014) local cuisine, environment and safety are among the factors having significant effect on satisfaction of European tourists visiting Amman.

H5: Tourists visiting the island feel more secured and safe

Methodology

The aim of the study is to seek the possible existence of differences in satisfaction among tourists visiting different destinations, the Greek island of Rhodes and the village of Metsovo at Pindus Mountains. Some practical data analysis techniques were applied such as descriptive statistics analysis, regression analysis and analysis of means to obtain respondents' responses to the dimensions of competitiveness of both destinations. In addition t-tests and One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) are applied to distinguish the differences among demographic groups and factors influencing satisfaction.

A questionnaire was developed and distributed to tourists in both destinations. Likert scales (1–5), with anchors ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" were used for all perception items to ensure statistical variability among survey responses for all items measured. The items of the questionnaire were self-built based on previous destination literature, content analysis of tourism literature, promotion brochures and websites of the destinations chosen. The self administered survey consisted of two sections: the first section comprised of demographic variables to determine visitors' demographics, such age, marital status, annual income, country of origin, etc. The second section of the questionnaire was designed to determine the vacation preferences and decision making of the tourists including travel arrangements, cost of travel, motivation. To determine tourists' satisfaction two surveys were conducted to visitors at the island of Rhodes during June 2016 and to visitors at the mountain village Metsovo during September 2016. In order to maintain the technical and conceptual equivalence of instruments, a translation and back-translation strategy was applied. At first the structure and the content of the questionnaire were tested in a pilot study and a factor analysis was performed on the data collected. The results were satisfactory, resulting in five factors. All factors' Cronbach's alpha values were well above the commonly accepted threshold value of 0.70. In order to figure the factors that affect tourists' satisfaction we

randomly selected a sample of 244 visitors (120 visitors at the island of Rhodes and 124 visitors at the mountain village Metsovo). Raw data were encoded, imported and analyzed using the Microsoft Office Excel and they were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22. Preferences of the survey respondents' are presented at Figures 1 to 6.

Statistical Data & Results

The sample was split between 49.6% males and 50.4% females. Respondents' age groups were as follow: 21-30 years old (27.9%), 31-45 years old (38.5%) and 46-65 years old (25.8%) and above 66 years old (7.8%). Respondents were all educated with 35% of them holding graduate or postgraduate degrees and 56.6% having at least senior higher school degrees. Also (60.7%) were married. In terms of nationalities five groups were identified: from Balkan countries (2%), Scandinavian countries (9.8%), European Countries (27.5%), and Greece 60.7%. The sample had high proportion of first time visitors (61.9%). The annual income of 57.8% of the tourists was more than 20.000 Euros. Together with their family or with their spouse travels (72.1%).

Figure 1-6: Tourists profile according to location preferences
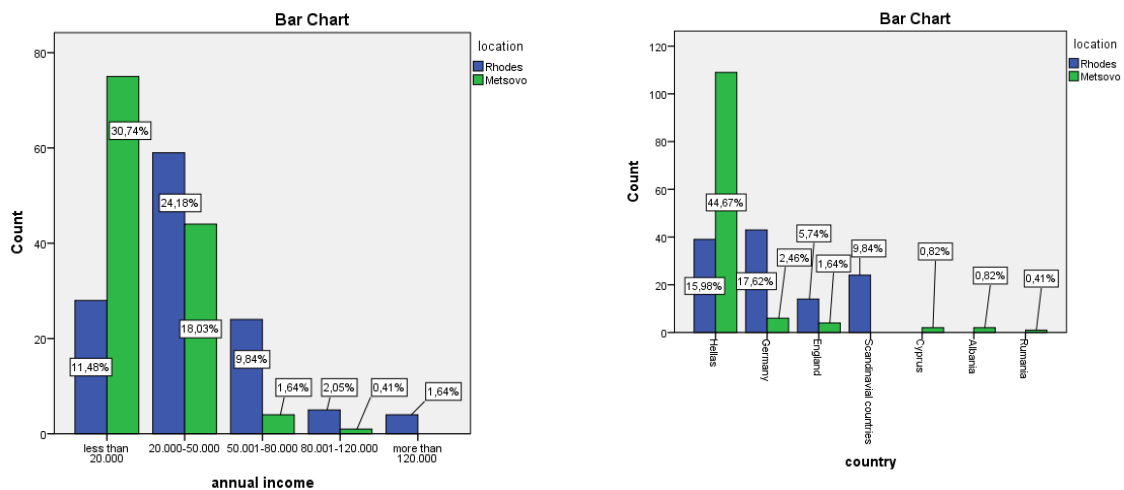
31% of visitors at Metcovo have annoual income less than 20.000€. Tourists visiting Rhodes are wealthier since more than 24% have income 20.000 or more.

Almost half of tourists (45%) visiting Metsovo are Greeks while Rhodes is mostly chosen by tourists from Germany, Greece, Scandinavian countries and England.
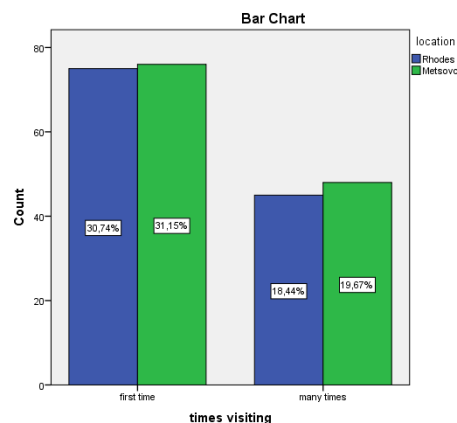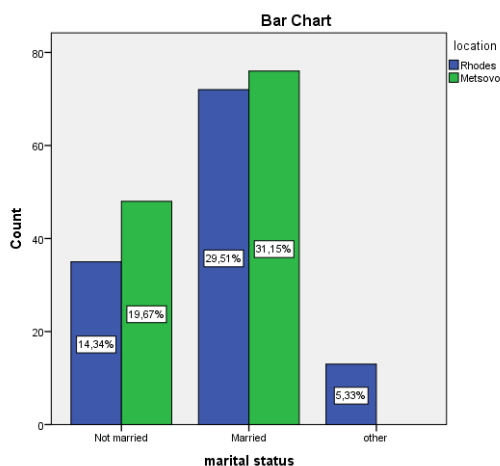
The majority of visitors at Rhodes (29.5%) and at Metsovo (31%) are married.

Rhodes and Metsovo are destinations with high tourist appeal and the majority of tourists are first time visitors (62%).
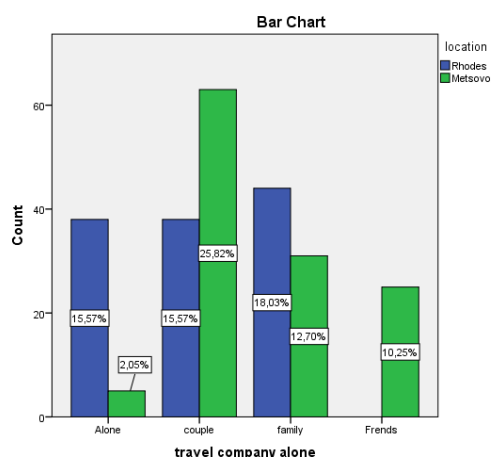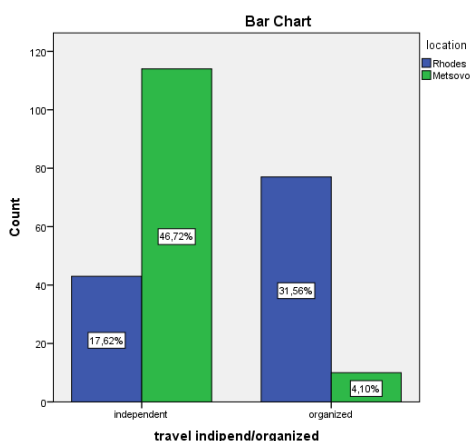
Tourists at Rhodes prefer to travel organized while almost half of tourists visiting Metsovo are travelling independently.

Rhodes is a family tourist destination (33%) but tourists feel comfortable to visit alone (16%). Tourists do not prefer to visit Metsovo alone.

In order to perform a factor analysis the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) was examined, an indication that the variables are able to group to smaller set of underling factors. The Barlett's Test of Sphericity is an indicator that there are relationships between the variables since its value is significant. Principal Component Analysis and orthogonal Rotation with Varimax method was applied to increase the explanatory ability of the model. Varimax method, attempts to minimize the number of variables that have high loadings on each factor. Each variable should loading strongly on only one component, and each component is represented by a number of strongly loading variables (Hair et al., 1998). In order to determine the number of factors extracted, the Kaiser's criterion was applied, where the eigenvalue of a factor represents the amount of the total variance explained by that factor and eigenvalue should be greater than one. Other criteria examined were scree plot, percentage of variance, item communalities and factor loadings (Hair et al., 2010). Items were eliminated when they had loadings less than 0.4 and also items with loadings higher than 0.4 on more than one factor.

According to the findings factor loadings of the variables ranged from 0.478 to 0.901 above the suggested threshold of 0.30 for practical and statistical significance (Hair et al., 2010). The Crombach's alpha for the five factors varied from 0.619 to 0.868 just at the generally agreed upon lower limit of 0.60 for research at exploratory stage (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994) indicating internal consistency among the variables within each factor. The factor analysis resulted at Kaiser Meyer Olkin Measure of sampling adequacy KMO=0,782. According to Pallant (2006) this measure is acceptable since Pallant gives KMO test equal or greater than 0.60. Also the Barlett's Test of Sphericity, is statistically significant (χ^2 =1780.708; p<0.001). Therefore the factor analysis is feasible. The analysis reveals five factors with eigenvalues greater than 1. After elimination of items with low factor loadings and significant cross loadings a clean factor structure emerges explaining a satisfactory 66.69% of total variance. The first factor explains 20.64% of variance, second factor explains 13.55%, the third factor explains 12.6%, the fourth factor explains 10.32% and the last factor explains 9.10% of variance.

Determinants (18) are grouped into five factors affecting tourists' satisfaction (See Table 1). These factors are: Service quality, Entertainment, Cost of Staying, Safety & Reputation, and Local Characteristics.

Table 1. Results of Factor analysis

Factors	Factor loadings	Eigenvalue	Variance Explained (%)	Crombach's Alpha
Service quality (SQ)		4.69	20.637	.865
Accommodation Services	.843			
Cleanliness of Accommodation	.801			
Accommodation facilities	.775			
Accommodation food & Beverages	.763			
Accommodation value for money	.745			
Accommodation location	.584			
Entertainment (E)		2.63	13.546	.720
Variety of shops	.795			
Nightlife	.795			
Pleasant weather	.736			
Good value for money	.478			
Cost of Staying (CS)		2.10	12.58	.722
General cost	.901			
Cost of accommodation	.812			
Days spent	.738			
Safety & Reputation (SR)		1.47	10.32	.637
Safety and security	.799			
Reputation	.678			
Quality of Accommodation	.554			
Local Characteristics (LC)		1.11	9.080	.619
Natural Environment	.753			
Local Cuisine	.696			

Note: Each item is measured at a five point Likert Scale. Coefficient alphas for all dimensions exceed 0.60. Total scale reliability is 0.782.

In order to apply a regression analysis we examined some basic assumptions which are easily violated. Regression analysis works better with the absence of multicollinearity, shown by the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) which should not exceed 10 (Kutner et al., 2004). Multiple regression analysis predicts the relationship between dependent and independent variables since they are linear (Osborne et al., 2002). We apply regression analysis on findings of the previous factor analysis in order to determine the importance of each factor to tourists' satisfaction. Satisfaction is the dependent variable and results indicate that five factors significantly influence tourists' satisfaction (See Table 2). The 80% of the total variance of Satisfaction is explained by the factors: Service quality, Entertainment, Cost of Staying, Safety & Reputation, and Local Characteristics. The *F*-ratio shows that the independent variables statistically significantly predict the dependent variable, (F (5, 230) = 188.744, *p*< .0001). All independent variable coefficients are statistically significantly different *from 0 (zero)*. The Durbin–Watson (DW) is always between 0 and 4 and the values of $1.5 < DW < 2.5$ show that there is no auto-correlation in the data (Durbin –Watson=1.856) (Garson, 2012). After removing 8 outliers from the sample all VIF values are less than 10 and Tolerance in Coefficients is greater than .01. The normal P-Plot as shown in Figure 7 shows that the data are plotted against a theoretical normal distribution so that the points indicate an approximate straight line. Departures from the straight line are indicators of departure from normality (Chambers, 1983). Data for this study indicate a relative normal distribution.

According to regression analysis results:

Y= 0.80 (SQ) + 0.156 (E) + 0.900 (CS) + .0106 (SR) + .100 (LC) - 1.406

Table 2. Regression Results: Factors affecting Tourists' satisfaction

Factors	Beta Unstandardized coefficients	Beta Standardized coefficients	t-value	VIF
Service quality (SQ)	.075	.071	2.405	1.009
Entertainment (E)	.157	.153	5.224	1.004
Cost of Staying (CS)	.896	.879	30.049	1.005
Safety & Reputation	.092	.085	2.905	1.009
Local Characteristics	.090	.083	2.845	1.009

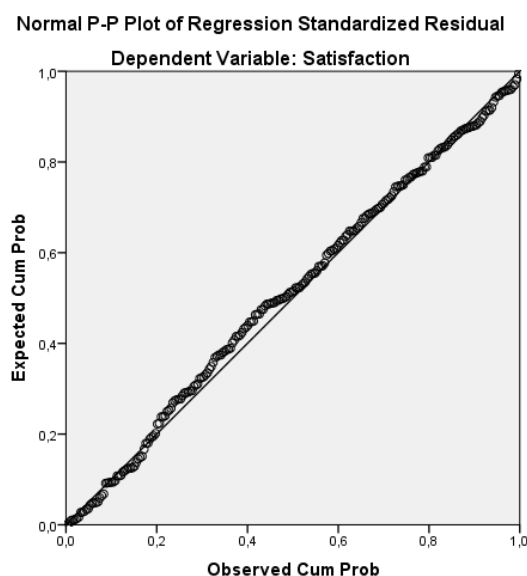Adjusted R^2 =0.800 and F=200.932 p=0.000.

Figure 7. Normal P-Plot of Regression Standardized Residual Dependent variable: Satisfaction

In order to reveal the impact on Tourists' Satisfaction from different destinations we used inferential statistics (as t-tests and ANOVA tests of Statistics). According to these tests:

Equal variances assumed (F=7.393, p=0.007<0.05) tourists visiting Rhodes island are more satisfied than tourists visiting the mountain village in entertainment activities such as nice weather, the shopping opportunities and night life attractions (t=7.548, df=234 & p=0.000<0.05). Mean satisfaction from accommodation at Rhodes is (mean=0.438) higher than mean satisfaction from Metsovo (mean= -0.4350). So the hypothesis that "Tourists visiting the island are more satisfied by the entertainment opportunities offered" is supported.

Equal variances assumed (F=27.747, p=0.000<0.05) tourists visiting Rhodes island are more satisfied than tourists at the mountain village from the prices on goods and services provided (t= 10.180, df=234 & p=0.00<0.05). Mean satisfaction resulting from the cost of staying at Rhodes (mean=0.57) is higher than mean satisfaction from the cost of staying at Metsovo (mean= -0.597). So the hypothesis that "Tourists visiting the island are more satisfied by the cost of their vacations" is supported.

Equal variances assumed (F=8.530, p=0.004<0.05) tourists visiting Rhodes island are more satisfied than tourists visiting the mountain village from the local special characteristics of the destination (t= 2.131, df=234 & p=0.034<0.05). Mean satisfaction from the local special characteristics at Rhodes is (mean=0.1788) higher than satisfaction from the local characteristics at Metsovo (mean= -0.794). So the hypothesis that "Tourists visiting the island are more satisfied by the local special characteristics as environmental conditions of the destination" is supported.

The hypothesis that tourists visiting Rhodes' island feel more secured and safe that the accommodation offered is better in Rhodes than in the mountain village (t= 0,112, df=234 & p=0.911>0.05) is not supported.

The hypothesis that tourists visiting Rhodes' island are more satisfied by the services quality offered than tourists visiting the mountain village in (t= -1.451 df=234 & p=0.148>0.05) is not supported.

Conclusions

Satisfaction from travelling to a tourist destination determines tourists post holiday behaviors. Since tourists are satisfied with their choice for leisure they will be more likely to return to the destination and recommend it to others. There are many different factors affecting tourists' perceptions. According to the findings of our study these factors are:

Cost of staying is the first factor that influences most the satisfaction of tourists. It includes cost of accommodation, cost of transportation, the duration of the vacations and the total amount of money spent. Tourists participants at the survey that visited the mountain village were less wealthy (mostly Greeks) than tourists visited the island (mostly foreigners). So the results indicate that tourists at the mountain village are not satisfied with the cost of their vacation unlike tourists visiting the island who thought that the destination was "value for money". Also according to Suthathip (2014) the cost of staying was the most important factor influencing tourists' decision on visiting Chiang Mai.

The second factor is the entertainment varieties in each destination. During holidays tourists have an opportunity to relax themselves, having good time with leisure activities. They are having fun in nightlife attractions, and in shopping activities. They delight the fine weather and they feel satisfied from the services and the products that worth their money and their time. Shopping opportunities are important and provide to tourists' satisfaction since they can bring back home souvenirs and symbols of the certain culture or religion. Costa and Ferrone (1995) also agree that shopping opportunities plays important role to the development of new market

for tourism. Tourists at Metsovo perceive the destination as less appealing probably due to weather conditions frequent during September while the survey performed.

Visitors at the mountain village seem less satisfied with local special characteristics offered at this destination such as tourists' attractions and entertainment. The environment and the local cuisine are considered important factors in building tourists' satisfaction in our survey. To this conclusion also came up Gyimothy (2000) who stated that more than half of tourist respondents pointed out the importance of restaurant facilities as essential factor in making a destination attractive to visit. The important connection between local cuisine, shopping opportunities, environment and safety as well as tourists attractions are significant dimensions of tourists' satisfaction according to Arasli, and Baradarani (2014).

One of our findings is the importance of service quality as a predicting factor of tourists' satisfaction. According to Hankinson (2004) quality of the services provided is among other factors that contribute to tourist satisfaction. In our findings in both destinations tourists perceptions about the quality of services offered did not differ.

The factor security and safety includes also the quality of accommodation offered. It is recognized as a factor important for the satisfaction of visitors to a destination. The findings of the study about tourists' perceptions in quality accommodation on both destinations did not differ. Also Poon & Low (2005) conclude that a safe environment is fundamental condition to guarantee successful tourism experiences.

Local authorities need to identify the unique features each destination offers to tourists' satisfaction, cultivate them and evolve them. According to Hultman et al., (2015), it is the strong destination's personality and the unique image of the area that draws tourists and uses them as ambassadors of their positive experiences. Results suggest that destinations' unique characteristics are determinants not only to tourists' satisfaction and positive word-of-mouth but also to tourists revisit intentions. A determinant factor building tourists' satisfaction is the prices of goods and services. Quality in products and services add to tourists' satisfaction. Conserving resources contributes to the appealing image of each destination. Local authorities should contribute to the education of residents on services provided, to the protection of the local monuments and attractions, to the cleanliness of the area, to the preserve of the local characteristics and to the prevention of overuse of resources.

One of the limitations the present study has is that data were not collected at the same period at both destinations but there was a difference of 2 months period between them. Future research should validate a framework that is applicable to a wider range of tourists' destinations.

References

➢ Agarwal S., (1997). The resort cycle and seaside tourism: An assessment of its applicability and validity "Tourism Management", 18 (2) 65–73

➢ Alegre, J., & Garau, J. (2010). Tourist Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction. "Annals of Tourism Research" 37 (1), 52-73.

➢ Arasli H., & Baradarani S., (2014). European Tourist perspective on destination satisfaction in Jordan's industries, "Procedia-social and behavioral sciences" 109, 1416-1425.

➢ Bazneshin S.D., Hosseini S.B., & Azeri A.R.K., (2015). The physical variables of tourist areas to increase the tourists' satisfaction regarding the sustainable tourism criteria: case study of Rudsar Villages, Sefidab in Rahim Adad, "Procedia- social and Behavioral Sciences" 201, 128-135.

➢ Chambers J.M., Cleveland W.S., Kleiner B., & Tukey P.A., (1983). "Graphical Methods for Data Analysis", Wadsworth International Group, 1983

➢ Chen C-M., Chen S-H., Lee H-T., Tsai T-H., (2016). Exploring destination resources and competitiveness- A comparative analysis of tourists' perceptions and satisfaction toward an island of Taiwan, "Ocean and Coastal Management", 119, 58-67.

➢ Clen J., & Gursoy D., (2001). An investigation of Tourists loyalty and preferences, "Int. Journal of contemporary Hospitality management" 13 (2), 79-85.

➢ Cohen E., (1972). Toward a sociology of international tourism, "Social Research" 39 (1), 164-189.

➢ Costa J., Ferrone L., (1995). Socio-cultural perspectives on tourism planning and development, "International Journal of contemporarily Hospitality management" 7, 27-35.

➢ Devesa M., Laguna M., & Palacios A., (2010). The role of motivation in visitor satisfaction: Empirical evidence in rural tourism, "Tourism management" 31, 547-552.

➢ Ewert A., (1985). Why people climb: The relationship of participant motives and experience level of mountaineering, "Journal of Leisure Research" 17 (3), 241-250.

➢ Fournier S., (1994). "A consumer brand relationship framework for strategy brand management", unpublished thesis, University of Florida

➢ Fu Chen C., Shian Chen F., (2010), Experience quality, perceived value, satisfaction and behavioral intentions for heritage tourists, Tourist Management, 31, 29-35.

➢ Garson G.D., (2012). "Testing Statistical Assumptions", Blue Book Series (2012)

➢ Gyimothy S., (2000). "The quality of visitor experience: A case study of peripheral Areas in Europe". PhD. –Afhandling. Bornholmes, 2000.

➢ Hair J.F Jr., Black W., Babin B., Anderson R., (2010). "Multivariate Data analysis" Prentice Hall College 7th edition, 2010.

➢ Hankinson G., (2004). The brand images of tourism destinations: A study of the saliency of organic images, "Journal of Product and Brand management" 13 (1), 6-14.

➢ Hultman M., Skarmeas D., Oghazi P., & Beheshti H., (2015). Achieving tourist loyalty through destination personality, satisfaction and identification, "Journal of Business Research" 68, 2227-2231.

➢ Kaynak E., Bloom J., & Leibold M., (1994).Using the Delphi Technique to Predict Future Tourism Potential, "Marketing Intelligence and planning" 12 (7),18-2

➢ Kutner M., Nachtsheim C., & Neter J., (2004). "Applied Linear Regression Models", 4th Edition, New York, McGraw-Hill/Irwin, 2004.

➢ Lunyai J., Run E., & Atang A., (2008) Why tourists purchase souvenirs, "Proceedings of applied International business conference", Malaysia.

➢ M. Kutner, C. Nachtsheim, and J. Neter Applied Linear Regression Models, 4th Edition, New York, McGraw-Hill/Irwin (2004)

➢ Mclntosh R.W., (1972). "Tourism: Principles, practices, philosophies", Columbus Ohio: Grid, 1972.

➢ Nunnally, J. C., & Bernstein, I. H., (1994). "Psychometric theory" (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill

➢ Osborne J.W., Waters E., (2002). Four Assumptions of Multiple Regression That Researchers Should Always Test, "Practical Assessment, Research and Evaluation" North Carolina State University and University of Oklahoma 8(2), (http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?n=2&v=8)

➢ Pallant J., (2006). "SPSS Survival Guide: A step by step guide to data analysis using SPSS", Open University Press: McGraw-Hill Education.

➢ Perussia F., (1989). An introduction to the social psychology of tourism, In: Schmidt di Friedberg P., editor, "Tourism, employment and environment in post-industrial society", Final Report of the study for the European Economic Community, Contract n.85/B6600/11/040-11- S, October 1986.

➢ Pizam A., Neuman Y., & Reichel A., (1978). Dimension of tourist satisfaction with a destination area, "Annals of Tourism Research" 5(2), 314-322.

➢ Poon W. C., & Low K.L.T., (2005). Are travelers satisfied with Malaysian hotels? "International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality management" 17 (3), 217-227.

➢ Suthathip Suanmali, (2014). "Factors Affecting Tourist Satisfaction: An Empirical Study in the Northern Part of Thailand", SHS Web of Conferences, 12, 2014.

➢ Zahedi Sh. S., (2006). "Tourism and stable development. Necessity of using environmental protection in tourism development policies", 1st ed., University of Allameh Tabatabai Publication, Tehran.

➢ Zhang Hongmei., Fu Xiaoxiao, Liping A., & Cai, Lin Lu, (2014). Destination image and tourist loyalty: a meta analysis, "Tourism management" 40, 213-223.

➢ Zolfaghari H., (2010). "Tourism climatology" Agah publication, 2010.

➢ UNESCO, http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/GR/ access at: 16/3/2017

➢ EOT, http://www.gnto.gov.gr/ access at: 16/3/2017

➢ http://www.visitgreece.gr/ access at: 16/3/2017

➢ NSSG, (2003) Initial Census Results, Athens.
(https://www.statistics.gr/documents/20181/1215267/A1602_SAM07_DT_DC_00_2011_01_F_EN.pdf/fb71f487-c113-4f0e-8055-e301c68377b4) access at: 16/3/2017