ANALYSES OF FAMILY VACATIONING BEHAVIOR

Öğr. Gr. Dr. Ayfer AYDINER BOYLU*

Prof. Dr. R. Günsel TERZİOĞLU**

Abstract

This research was planned and carried out for the purpose of analyzing the effects of family size and income level on family vacationing behavior, which is one of the indicators of quality of life. The research was carried out on a total of 230 families by Hacettepe University, using the “Stratified Random Sampling Method.” Results show that family size and monthly income level affect vacationing behaviors.

Keywords: Quality of life, vacation, family size, income

Öz

Bu çalışma ailelerin yaşam kalitelerinin göstergelerinden olan tatile ilişkin davranışları üzerinde aile büyüklüğü ile ailenin gelir düzeyinin etkisini incelemek amacıyla planlanmış ve yürütülmüştür. Araştırma Hacettepe Üniversitesinden Tabakalı Rasgele Örnekleme Yöntemi ile seçilen toplam 230 aile üzerinde yürütülmüştür. Araştırmadan elde edilen sonuçlar, aile büyüklüğünün ve aylık gelir düzeyinin ailelerin tatile ilişkin davranışları üzerinde etkili olduğunu göstermektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Yaşam kalitesi, tatil, aile büyüklüğü, gelir

*H.Ü. İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Aile ve Tüketicili Bilimleri Bölümü 06100 Sıhhiye/ANKARA aaboylu@hacettepe.edu.tr

**H.Ü. İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Aile ve Tüketicili Bilimleri Bölümü 06100 Sıhhiye/ANKARA gterziog@hacettepe.edu.tr
INTRODUCTION

To continue to occupy their place at the core of life in society, families have to provide a satisfactory quality of life to their members. Research indicates that one of the criteria of a family’s quality of life is its choice of free time activities (Papageorgiou, 1976; Fergusson, Horwood & Beautrais, 1981; OECD, 1982; Bittman, 2002; Jones & Riseborough, 2002; Poston, Turnbull, Park, Manan, Marquis & Wang, 2003; Stevens, 2004; Quality of Life Indicators, 2004; Yaşam Kalitesi, 2004). In Turkey, social problems and limitations caused by monotonous, disciplined and audited life styles are day by day increasing the need for getting away for a while, having a rest and enjoying the time (Berber, 2003).

Free time activities can help to strengthen relations and family ties among spouses, parents and children by providing a better quality of life. Therefore, in terms of satisfaction and happiness with life, the way free time activities are performed (shopping, eating out, going to cinemas and concerts, vacations, games, activities, trips, etc.) is critically important (Papageorgiou, 1976, p.179; Stevens, 2004, p.450; Quality of Life Indicators, 2004; Hornig, 2005).

A vacation is one of the main free time activities that determine family satisfaction and happiness with life. Before the development of tourism, the traditional concept of a vacation mostly suggested that families spend their vacation time in their hometowns. In Turkey, starting from the 1980’s, changes and development in tourism (besides technology, communication, transportation, and social and economic factors) have transformed the concept of a vacation (Tosun, 2001).

These developments in tourism occurred in parallel with people’s needs and expectations about a vacation; they led to an increase in the capacity, variety, and number of accommodations, including motels, holiday villages, pensions, camping, apart-hotels, hostels and hotels (T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2002, 2008).
Some hypotheses about factors that affect vacation decision-making pointed to personal limitations (family size, income level), socio-demographic factors (age, gender, education, marital status, family life) and psycho-graphic factors (having the idea of a vacation). The personal limitations of family size and income level are the most influential variables affecting vacation decision-making (Nicolau & Mas, 2004; Yusuf & Naseri, 2005).

Family size affects vacation behavior. An increase in the number of family members limits vacation behaviors. Accordingly, as the number of family members decreases, vacation behaviors expand. The number of members also affects a family's choice of accommodations. Since expenses increase in parallel with the number of family members, large families tend to choose accommodations with lower standards (Caswell & McConnell, 1980; Hagemann, 1981, p. 228; Jacobs & Shipp, 1990; Walsh, John, McKean & Hof, 1992; Eymann & Ronning, 1992, 1997; Kotler, 1995; Collins & Tisdell, 2002).

Income level is one of the most significant indicators of spending. Also it has been shown that income level is effective on vacation behaviors and have positive correlation between spending on a vacation and income level. Results from several research studies imply that the higher the family income, the greater the range of options available to the family. Low-income families will consider accommodations that meet only basic needs such as eating and sleeping, while high-income families can choose comprehensive packages that include a variety of social activities as well as services to meet a variety of needs. Generally, high-income families demand luxurious touristic goods and services. On the other hand, low income levels must be satisfied with lower standards of goods and services (Hay & McConell, 1979; Thompson & Tinsley, 1979; Hagemann, 1981, p. 228; Dardis, Derrick, Lehfeld & Wolfe, 1981; Dardis, Soberon & Patro, 1994; Crawford & Godbey, 1987; Olalt, 1990; Walsh, John, McKean & Hof, 1992; Davies & Mangan, 1992; Crouch, 1994; Cai, Hong & Morrison, 1995; Witt & Witt, 1995; Fish & Waggle, 1996; Erdoğan, 1996; Mudambi & Baum, 1997; Cai, 1999; Agarwal & Yochum, 1999; Kozak, Kozak & Kozak, 2001, p. 46; Cannon & Ford, 2002; Berber, 2003; Mergoupis & Steuer, 2003).
1. **AIM**

The family unit has existed as a cornerstone of society in all ages and societies. From this point of view, quality of life for a family is critically important for societies and should be prominent in any vision of the future. This research was planned to identify the effects of family size and income level on family vacationing behavior, which is among the indicators of quality of family life, and to advance a proposal to enterprises and institutions who do research about this subject.

2. **HYPOTHESES**

The aim of this research is to identify the effects of family size and monthly income level on family vacationing behavior, which is one of the indicators of quality of life. For this aim, 4 questions were asked and 2 hypotheses for each question were developed.

**Question 1: Do you vacation?**

H1: The conditions of family vacations differ according to family size.

H2: The conditions of family vacations differ according to monthly income level.

**Question 2: How often do you vacation?**

H1: The frequency of family vacations differs according to family size.

H2: The frequency of family vacations differs according to monthly income level.

**Question 3: Where do you stay when on vacation?**

H1: Accommodations for families on vacation differ according to family size.

H2: Accommodations for families on vacation differ according to monthly income level.

**Question 4: How do you pay for your vacation expenses?**

H1: Means of payment for vacation expenses differs according to family size.

H2: Means of payment for vacation expenses differs according to monthly income level.
3. METHOD

Hacettepe University Central and Beytepe campuses are used as research locations. In selecting families as research subjects, the university personnel list of Hacettepe University Personnel Directorate, including employees in various service levels, was used. The “Stratified Random Sampling Method” was used to calculate the sampling range, which was found to be N=230 (Çingi, 1994).

When forming the survey sheet, which aimed to identify the effects of family size and monthly income level on vacationing behavior, the researchers reviewed similar research papers (Hagemann, 1981; Cai, 1999; T. C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2001; Davis & Mangan, 1992; Hellström, 2002; Mergoupis & Steuer, 2003; Nicolau & Mas, 2004; Yusuf & Naseri, 2005; Wang, Rompf, Severt & Peerapatdit, 2006; Alegre & Pou, 2006). The research data were collected through face-to-face interviews with families, depending on the survey sheet.

Family size and monthly income level were taken as variables. The options related to family size were “2,” “3,” “4,” and “5+.” Monthly family income was calculated by taking the total income from all sources and from all family members. The options related to income levels were “500 YTL or less,” “501 YTL-1000 YTL,” and “1000 YTL or above” (YTL=New Turkish Liras).

The statistical evaluation of data were performed by Chi-Quare analysis using the SPSS WIN program. This analysis cannot be performed when expected frequency in the cross tables is less than 5.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. General Information about Families

More than half of the families (55.2%) comprising the research have 500 YTL or less for monthly income; 30.9% have 501-1000 YTL; and the rest have 1001 YTL or above.
Of the families studied, 35.6% have 3 family members; 34.8% have 4 members. Among spouses in the families, 30.0% had 5 years or less experience in marriage, while 24.0% had 6 to 10 years experience. In slightly more than half of the families, 54.3% of women and 55.2% of men are in the 28-37 age group; in 33.0% of the families, the women are in the 38-47 age group, and in 23.5% of the families the men are in 38-47 age group.

4.2. Conditions of Family Vacations

A majority of the families (93.9%) go on vacation. When the number of family members decreases and the monthly income increases, the percentage of families who say they go on vacation increases, as seen in Table 1. None of the families who say they do not go on vacation are among the two-member families or among families in the “501-1000 YTL” and “1000 YTL or above” income levels (Table 1).

As the number of family members decreases, the percentage of families who go on vacation increases; therefore, as supported by various other research studies, an increase in the number of family members has a negative effect on the conditions of vacations (Caswell & McConnell, 1980; Hagemann, 1981; Walsh, John, McKean & Hof, 1992; Eymann & Ronning, 1992, 1997; Collins & Tisdell, 2002; Nicolau & Mas, 2004; Alegre & Pou, 2006). These results show that additional family members limit vacation expenses and thus detract from the conditions of the family’s vacation.

Several research studies also indicate that income level is directly proportional to the conditions of a family vacation (Hay & McConell, 1979; Walsh, John, McKean & Hof, 1992; Hagemann, 1981; Davis & Mangan, 1992; T.C. Başbakanlık Aile Araştırma Kurumu, 1998; Nicolau & Mas, 2004; Alegre & Pou, 2006).

Because statistical analyses could not apply about the question “Do you vacation?” (Question 1), it is not possible to refuse or accept related hypotheses (H1: The conditions of family vacations differ according to family size, H2: The conditions of family vacations differ according to monthly income level).
4.3. Frequency of Family Vacations

Among families who say they go on vacation (216 families), most (58.3%) go once a year.

In all groups of family size, most families go on vacation once a year. In descending order of magnitude are 2 and 3 member families who go twice a year or more, 4 member families who go less than once a year, and 5 or more member families who go in equal ratios both less than once a year and twice a year or more (Table 2). The results of this survey indicate that there is a correlation between family size and frequency of family vacations. Research conducted by Alegre and Pou confirms this correlation.

Table 2 shows that the highest percentage of families with a monthly income of 500 YTL and less and 501-1000 YTL go on vacation once a year, and the highest percentage of families with an income of 1001 YTL and more go on vacation twice a year. As monthly income level increases, the percentage of families who say they go on vacation twice or more than twice a year increases. Research conducted by T.C. Prime Ministry Family Research Institution(1998, p.161), T.C. Prime Ministry State Institute of Statistics (2005,
p.10), and Aydner Boylu & Terzioglu (2007, p.129) also confirm that an increase in family monthly income is directly proportional to the frequency of family vacations. Statistical investigations show that the hypotheses “The frequency of family vacations differs according to family size” and “The frequency of family vacations differs according to monthly income level” (Question 2: \( H_1 \) and \( H_2 \)) are confirmed (\( P<0.05 \)).

Table 2. Distribution of Families According to Frequency of Vacations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of vacations</th>
<th>Family size</th>
<th>Monthly income level</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than once a year</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a year</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twice or more than twice a year</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = 16.574 \quad p<.05. \quad df=6 \quad \chi^2 = 47.138 \quad p<.05. \quad df=4 \]

4.4. Places Where Families Go on Vacation

Most families say that they take their vacations in their hometown, and this suggests that these families are continuing traditional values about vacations (Table 3).

As seen in Table 3, as the number of members in a family increases and monthly income level decreases, the percentage of families who vacation in their hometown increases while the percentage of families who vacation in various accommodation facilities decreases.

In research conducted by Cai (1995), Agarwal & Yochum (1999), types of accommodation and income level have a positive correlation. Agarwal & Yochum's (1999) research shows that hotels are more expensive compared to rented accommodations or the
houses of acquaintances. As the number of members in a family increases and income level decreases, families look for less expensive accommodations. Statistical investigations confirm the hypotheses “Accommodations for families on vacation differ according to family size” and “Accommodations for families on vacation differ according to monthly income level” (Question 3: H1 and H2) \( (P<0.05) \).

Table 3. Distribution of Families According to Vacation Places

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vacation places</th>
<th>Family size</th>
<th>Monthly income level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hometown</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer house</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday villages</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motels/Pensions/</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camping/Apart hotels/Hostels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[\chi^2 = 51.143 \ p<.05, \ df= 12\]

\[\chi^2 = 104.108 \ p<.05, \ df= 8\]

4.5. Means of Payment for Vacation Expenses

As Table 4 shows, most families, regardless of family size and monthly income, say they pay for their vacation expenses in cash. However, in terms of family size, the difference is smaller as groups close up and it is bigger as groups diverge. Most families at the lowest income level say they pay for their vacation expenses in cash. This suggests that a discount for payment in cash is important for the family budget, and therefore families think they should take advantage of the discount and avoid installment plans, since these plans could
cause a problem later, in the repayment process. The results also suggest that families behave rationally when using their higher income to advantage. The percentage families making cash payments is lower in the higher income levels; this suggests that these families prefer to pay by installments instead of cash so that they can use their money in other profitable ways. Statistical investigations confirm that the hypotheses “Means of payment for vacation expenses differs according to family size” and “Means of payment for vacation expenses differs according to monthly income level” (Question 4: H₁ and H₂) (P<0.05) (Table 4).

Table 4. Distribution of Families According to Means of Payment for Vacation Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family size</th>
<th>Monthly income level</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5+</th>
<th>500 YTL and less</th>
<th>501-1000 YTL</th>
<th>1001 YTL and more</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>32 76.2</td>
<td>71 89.9</td>
<td>69 94.5</td>
<td>21 95.5</td>
<td>109 96.5</td>
<td>57 80.3</td>
<td>27 84.8</td>
<td>193 89.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By installments</td>
<td>10 23.8</td>
<td>8 10.1</td>
<td>4 5.5</td>
<td>1 4.5</td>
<td>4 3.5</td>
<td>14 19.7</td>
<td>5 15.6</td>
<td>23 10.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>42 100.0</td>
<td>79 100.0</td>
<td>73 100.0</td>
<td>22 100.0</td>
<td>113 100.0</td>
<td>71 100.0</td>
<td>32 100.0</td>
<td>216 100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

χ² = 10.580  p<.05.  df= 3  
χ² = 12.973  P<.05.  df= 2

CONCLUSION

According to the results of this research, it can be said that monthly income level has a positive effect on the conditions of family vacations, frequency of vacations and accommodations, while the number of family members has a negative effect. Larger families at a low income level may vacation in their hometown or in less expensive places like self-catering accommodations for various reasons, mainly expense, or they may abstain from vacations altogether. Thus, the quality of life for these families is not enhanced by vacations, and this situation has adverse effects on domestic tourism. The clients of tourism are people, particularly families, and the source of income for tourism is supplied by families. To ensure
their satisfaction, based on these results, it seems necessary to identify and analyze factors that influence family buying and to set service standards according to family characteristics and preferences. Travel agencies, managers of accommodation facilities and relevant enterprises and institutions should take action to provide better vacation options for large and low income families. More research should be carried out to understand factors that affect family vacationing behavior, mainly personal limitations (family size, income level) as well as socio-demographic factors (age, gender, education, marital status, family life) and psychographic factors (having the idea of a vacation).

REFERENCES


http://www.curs.bham.ac.uk/pdfs/COMPARING%20QUALITY%20OF%20LIFE.PDF.


Nicolau, J.L., & Mas, F.J. (2004) **Simultaneous Analyses of the Decisions to Go On Holiday And Vacation Expenditures**,  
dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/fichero_articulo?codigo=2471384&orden=0 -


