

DETERMINING HOLIDAY REFERENCES OF CONSUMERS WITHIN GENERATIONS¹

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Abstract

Researches on generations especially help businesses to make the right decisions in their marketing strategies. In this context, the aim of the study is to determine consumer holiday preferences within the scope of generations. The research is a descriptive type study. The main sample of the study consists of baby boomers, X, Y and Z generation members residing in Antalya. In this context, questionnaires were applied to the baby boom, X, Y and Z generations. Another criterion taken as a sample is that the participants must have holiday experience. In addition, people under the age of 18 in the Z generation were excluded from the sample. The research was carried out with a total of 655 questionnaires. It has been determined that all generations learn most about the holiday from social media advertisements. As the most preferred accommodation choice during the holiday, all generations of participants mostly prefer to stay in hotels. All generations prefer the first highway, and the second airline, as the most preferred mode of transportation when going on vacation and returning. In addition to the contribution of the study to the literature, it is aimed to benefit tourism businesses and marketing experts.

¹ This study is an expanded version of the paper titled "Determining Vacation Preferences of Consumers Within the Scope of Generations" presented at the Congress of Understanding the Future in Tourism: Smart Tourism, Preparations, and Solutions held on 25-27 June 2021.

1. INTRODUCTION

In terms of social and economic movements taking place in the world, generation classification was made based on the certain time intervals. Thus, the behaviours, values, and cultural codes of each generation vary (Kırık and Köyüstü, 2018). The consumer behaviour of each generation is influenced by their demographics, values, lifestyles, expectations, and experiences. The reason for this is the great effects of social shocking events such as scientific progress, economy, technology, politics, terrorist attacks, or assassinations that form generational groups (Williams and Page, 2011). Therefore, it is important to determine the services offered within the scope of generations formed with certain age groups in terms of consumer behaviour (Bezgin, 2016).

Studies carried out on generations especially help businesses to make the right decisions in their marketing strategies. Studies on generations also reveals how consumer behaviour changes between generations (Toröcsik et al., 2014). Multi-generational marketing strategies are developed within the scope of marketing, because businesses need to respond to the needs and expectations of each generation (Williams and Page, 2011). So, it can be said that purchasing behaviour from tourism enterprises is affected by demographic variables such as generations (Grimm et al., 2009). In other words, generations are one of the main factors for determining tourism demand (Yeoman et al., 2013). In this context, service delivery and marketing strategies can be developed by determining touristic consumer preferences for generations. It is stated in the literature that tourism experiences, travel behaviours, and purchasing behaviors need to be examined within the scope of generations (Benckendorff et al., 2010).

The decision-making process of tourists is a multifaceted and complex process and includes a number of elements. These elements are whether to travel, where to travel, what to do in travel, when to travel, whom to travel with, how long to stay, and how much money to spend (Hyde, 2008; Woodside and MacDonald, 1994). For example, Bansal and Eiselt (2004), in their study examining tourist motivations, determined that motives such as relaxation and adventure affect holiday preferences of tourists. In the tourism sector, it is important to determine the characteristics, preferences, needs, habits, expectations, and values (Florya, 2014), and differences (Reeves and Oh, 2007) related to generations. In the study conducted by Pekyaman et al. (2018) on academicians, they determined the factors affecting holiday preferences of academicians. As a result, they determined that academicians take vacations in the summer, choose to stay in hotels, prefer the all-inclusive holiday concept, prefer vacations for recreation, and search for information on the Internet. Baran et al. (2020) conducted a study to determine the holiday preferences of the generation Z. According to the results, generation Z tourists mostly prefer 4-6 days and stay in hotels. Tourists of generation Z prefer road for transportation to the holiday destination and also tend to go to the entertainment establishments in the destinations they visit. Therefore, it is important to conduct study in the field of tourism within the scope of factors such as intergenerational differences, similarities (Reeves and Oh, 2007), generation-specific characteristics, expectations, values, needs, preferences, and habits (Chiang et al. 2014). Therefore, the aim of the study is to determine consumer holiday

preferences within the scope of generations. In addition to the contribution of the study to the literature, it is aimed to benefit tourism businesses and marketers.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Since the aim of the study is to determine the holiday preferences of consumers in the intergenerational context, the theoretical basis of the study is the Generation Theory developed by Karl Mannheim in 1952. The generational theory of Karl Mannheim was developed by Strauss and Howe (1991) by considering the historical and social events in five cycles starting from the 1700s and within an average of twenty years. There are different generation definitions in the literature, whose dates are close to each other on average. In general, although the date ranges are different in some studies, when the generation definitions that are close to each other are examined, six generations can be mentioned today (Strauss and Howe, 1991; McCrindle and Wolfinger, 2009; Pendergast, 2010; Lub et al., 2012).

- Silent generation: Those born between 1925 and 1942,
- Baby boom generation: Those born between 1943 and 1960
- Generation X: Those born between 1961 and 1981,
- Generation Y: Those born between 1982 and 1995
- Generation Z: Those born between 1995 and 2010
- Alpha generation: Those born in 2010 and later.

Generational differences, which were of interest to sociologists in the beginning, became the focus of marketers along with their influence in the business world (Seçkin, 2000) since each new generation has different needs and desires compared to other generations (Fields et al., 2008). According to the generation theory, in addition to the historical events, emotional events, economic events and crises, the differences between the generations are also affected by the places where they grew up, the common ideas and values they create as a result of experiencing certain things (Smola and Sutton, 2002). If members of a generation are alive, this generation is known as the living generation (Pendergast, 2010). Since the data in the study were collected through a questionnaire, the study was carried out with baby boom generation, and generations X, Y and Z. Therefore, only the baby boom generation and generations X, Y and Z were examined in the theoretical framework.

The baby boom generation consists of those born approximately between 1943 and 1960 (Roberts and Manolis, 2000). Members of this generation have witnessed the scars of the two world wars, which represents approximately one billion babies born after the World War II. Members of the baby boom generation have experienced the American civil society movement, the Vietnam War, the Quebec crises, the Cold War, and the Cuban crises. Since it coincided with the post-war years, the baby boom generation witnessed events in which the traces of the war were tried to be erased and at the same time technological and economic developments accelerated (İzmirlioğlu, 2008). The most important feature of that generation is their individual effort and dislike of bureaucracy (Ayhün, 2013). Personal development, cooperation, ambition, and significant events are among the attitudes and values of the baby boom generation (Kovary and Buahene, 2012). In this period, the concept of equal pay for equal work emerged (Dwyer, 2009). If the baby boom generation believes they are gaining value, they are less price sensitive

to products and services. Therefore, marketers must develop strategies and policies to create value for the baby boom generation. Health is the biggest concern for that generation and they do not want to be reminded of this (Wong, 2010).

Generation X is those born between 1961 and 1981. Generation X is known as the lost generation because it coincides with the period of social problems and economic crises (Başgöze and Bayar, 2015). The members of the X generation are also called the fear generation because they experience the threat of nuclear war and unemployment (Solomon, 2014). Despite problems such as the economic crisis and unemployment, generation X is in a better time than the members of the baby boom generation (Foot & Stoffman, 1998). Generation X witnessed the events of women's rights movements, institutionalization, personal computers, and energy crisis (Zemke et al., 2000). Generation X adapts to computer systems and technology and is a highly work-motivated members. This generation believes that they will be promoted in their jobs and behaves patiently in business life (Öztürk, 2014). Generation X has experienced difficulties in their families due to unemployment and economic crises. Therefore, they are committed to their jobs and tend to work in the same job and workplace for long periods of time (Terzi and Boylu, 2019). Generation X members respond well to challenges, feedback, and emerging opportunities (Eyoum et al., 2020). Generation X members also tend to buy from value-driven businesses, like baby boomers. Generation X approaches marketing activities with suspicion and sometimes resists marketing activities. Thus, marketers should develop a balanced policy and strategy for the personal, family, and business life for the X generation (O'Donohoe and Tynan, 1998). That generation loves initiatives that make things practical and useful, on the other hand, they show disloyalty towards businesses and brands (Williams, 2005). The areas where X generation spend the most are on food, entertainment, shelter, and clothing. X generation women have started to enter business life and traditional family structures have begun to change (Mengi, 2009).

Generation Y consists of those born between 1982 and 1995 (Brosdahl and Carpenter, 2011). Generation Y members, considered the first generation born into the digital world, coincided with the era of video games, compact discs, and mobile phones (Hatfield, 2002). Generation Y has grown up with technology. Generation Y coincides with globalization, global citizenship, and global warming (İzmirlioğlu, 2008). This generation was a speed-lover, fast-consuming, result-oriented, self-confident, individualistic, entrepreneurial, self-indulgent, relationship-oriented, independent, and impatient (Yüksekbilgili, 2013). Terrorist events such as government scandals and the 9/11 attacks have affected the lives of the generation Y (Kovary and Buahene, 2012). Due to the crises experienced, the parents of the generation Y members were dismissed from their jobs and faced economic problems (Dwyer, 2009). Generation Y differs from other generations both socially and culturally (Tulgan and Martin, 2001). The motivator of this generation is to be successful, but they do not want to be guided by anyone. They can question the management decisions in the institutions and businesses they work for. Therefore, they show disloyalty towards their jobs (Öter, 2010). Generation Y members are attracted to marketers because they are selfish, live for the present, and like to spend money. Most members of this generation were university educated and joined the workforce. They are learning-oriented and can quickly adopt new concepts and developments. The traditional marketing approach does not work for the X generation (Sisk, 2010), because this generation

uses the Internet, social networks and new technologies (Smith, 2011). Therefore, marketers should monitor rapid changes and develop strategies and policies that always highlight the trend for the generation Y (Terzi and Kızgın, 2017). Marketers need to engage in marketing activities for the generation Y by highlighting the image rather than the text, because generation Y members follow social media closely and are influenced by social media advertisements (Chen and Li, 2020).

Generation Z consists of those born between 1995 and 2010 (Posnick-Goodwin, 2010). Generation Z is known to be fond of computers and the Internet, because this generation was born into technology and the Internet and actively uses smart phones, tablets, and computers. It can be said that this generation is not one that plays on the street or grew up in touch with nature. Generation Z members spend less time outside and generally prefer online communication. They prefer the computer to reading and texts to speaking (Taş et al., 2017). Therefore, they tend to consume faster than other generations (Öztürk, 2014). Since generation Z members are in constant connection with the Internet and smart devices, they can access information in a short time, and their main information sources are the Internet and social media (Terzi and Boylu, 2019). This generation is the educated, mobile, and connected consumer generation (Babin and Harris, 2016). They are more sensitive to inequality, social injustice, economy, environment, technological developments, and social events (Taş et al., 2017). The members of this generation are socially and technologically knowledgeable and seek innovation and change. They are very tolerant as well as self-confident. Generation Z generally has a creative, instant-consuming, multiple decision-making, technology-addicted, and hasty profile (İzmirlioğlu, 2008). Generation Z is consumer who is very thoughtful and selective regarding what to buy. They shop on their own and always want better quality products and services (DePaula, 2003).

The studies carried out within the scope of generations in the literature were carried out in the fields of marketing (Başgöze and Bayar, 2015; Huang and Petrick 2010) and management (Eyouun et al., 2020; Göksel and Güneş, 2017). Those studies are generally aimed at determining the differences between generations X and Y. For example, Başgöze and Bayar (2015) discussed the differentiation between generations X and Y regarding purchasing services from eco-hotels. As a result, they determined that the generation X is more likely to purchase services from eco-hotels compared to the generation Y.

3. METHOD

The research is a descriptive-survey type study. In order to achieve the aim of the study, the following questions were asked to the participants;

- From which source do you learn the information about the holiday the most?
- What source do you buy holiday the most from?
- Do you find it safe to buy a holiday online?
- With whom do you go on holiday the most?
- How long is the holiday period suitable for you?
- Which type of tourism do you prefer to participate in?
- Where would you prefer to stay on holiday?

- Which mode of transportation do you prefer most when going on holiday and returning from holiday?
- Which catering business do you prefer most on holiday?
- Do you make plans for a certain amount of time before you go on holiday?
- Do you pay for the holiday yourself?
- Do you usually buy souvenirs that reflect that region on holiday?
- Do you usually go to entertainment establishments at the holiday resort?
- Do you participate in guided tours conducted at the resort or go on a holiday as part of an organized guided tour?

The main population of the study consists of baby boomers, generations X, Y and Z members residing in Antalya. According to TURKSTAT data, the total population of Antalya in 2020 is 2,548,308. In the case of a large population, the sample group (n) representing the population with a sampling error of 0.05 is 384 (Yazıcıoğlu and Erdoğan, 2004). In the study, voluntary participation was based on convenience sampling method. In this context, surveys with convenience sampling were applied to the baby boomers, generation X, Y and Z members between September and November 2020. Another criterion taken as a sample is that the participants must have holiday experience. In addition, people under the age of 18 in the generation Z were excluded from the sample. The study was carried out with a total of 655 questionnaires.

In the study, literature review was carried out as secondary data. Quantitative data were collected as primary data. In the study, data were collected with a questionnaire. In the first part of the questionnaire, questions about gender, marital status, year of birth, education level, monthly income, and occupation were asked. In the other part of the questionnaire, a total of 14 questions were asked about holiday preferences. The answers to these questions are multiple choice and structured. Quantitatively obtained data were analyzed in SPSS 22 package program. The frequencies and percentages of the data were determined. The variables are generally categorical, as the questions for profiling are directed to the participants. Therefore, parametric and non-parametric analyzes could not be performed with the data (Hopkins et al., 2018).

4. FINDINGS

Demographic characteristics of the participants are given in Table 1. In terms of gender, females constitute 56.6% of the participants and males do 43.4% of the participants. 44.7% of the participants are married and 55.3% are single. In terms of generations, 8.9% of the participants are baby boomers, 15.1% are generation X, 36.7% are generation Y and 39.2% are generation Z. 45.4% of the participants are undergraduate, 22.4% associate degree, 16.9% high school, 7.7% graduate, 5% secondary school, and 2.6% primary school. While 28.4% of the participants have a monthly income of "1000 and lower", 11% have an income of "between 1001-2000". In terms of occupation, 31.9% of the participants are students, 24.4% are public employees, 19.1% are private sector employees, and 11% are self-employed.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Gender	f	%
Female	371	56.6
Male	284	43.4
Marital Status	f	%
Married	293	44.7
Single	362	55.3
Generation	f	%
Baby Boom	58	8.9
X	99	15.1
Y	241	36.7
Z	257	39.2
Educational Status	f	%
Primary School	17	2.6
Secondary school	33	5.0
High School	111	16.9
Associate Degree	147	22.4
Undergraduate Degree	297	45.4
Graduate Degree	50	7.7
Monthly Income	f	%
1000 or lower	186	28.4
Between 1001-2000	72	11.0
Between 2001-3000	105	16.0
Between 3001-4000	74	11.3
Between 4001-5000	96	14.7
5001 and more	122	18.6
Occupation	f	%
Student	209	31.9
Public employee	160	24.4
Private sector employee	125	19.1
Self-employed	72	11.0
Not Working	89	13.6

The results of the frequency analysis performed to determine the holiday preferences of consumers in the context of generations are given in Tables 2 and 3. The results given in Tables 2 and 3 can be summarized as follows;

- When the answers given to the question "From which source do you learn the information about the holiday the most" are analyzed, it has been determined that all generations learn about holidays mostly from social media advertisements. Similarly, it was revealed that all generations have learned the least information about the holiday from message advertisements such as SMS.
- In the context of most holiday purchase sources, it was determined that the baby boom participants had not purchased a holiday before. Therefore, it can be said that the holidays of this generation are bought by other people. It was determined that the generation X participants mostly buy from the website of the holiday destination, the generation Y participants mostly buy from the travel agency's website, and the generation Z buys the most vacation from the resort's website.
- While the baby boom generation participants have not bought a vacation online before, the generation X and Y participants find it safe to buy online. However, the generation Z participants are undecided about whether they find it safe to buy a holiday online.

Table 2. Holiday Preferences for Generations 1

Question	Answer	BB	X	Y	Z
From which source do you learn the information about the holiday the most?	From social media ads	23	46	119	154
	From other Internet ads	11	34	78	65
	From TV, radio etc. ads	16	17	38	28
	From message ads such as SMS	8	2	6	10
What source do you buy holiday the most from?	I buy it from the travel agency's website	7	22	75	34
	I buy it from the resort's website	6	19	45	63
	I buy it by phone with the resort	13	14	40	54
	I haven't bought a vacation before	16	18	32	53
	I buy it going directly from the resort	10	9	31	32
	I buy it by phone with the travel agent	6	17	18	21
Do you find it safe to buy a holiday online?	Yes	7	43	108	74
	Undecided	16	19	65	86
	No	17	25	42	54
	I've never bought a holiday online before	18	12	26	43
With whom do you go on holiday the most?	Family	44	78	166	123
	Friend / Friend Group	7	10	46	102
	Personal	7	5	20	17
	Relative	0	6	9	15
How long is the holiday period suitable for you?	4-6 days	24	41	115	98
	7-9 days	17	39	59	83
	10-11 days	10	14	28	39
	1-3 days	7	4	38	24
	12 days and more	0	1	1	13

- It has been determined that all generations go on holiday mostly with their families. It is seen that the number of generation Z participants who go on holiday with their friend/friend group is higher than other generations.
- In the context of the most appropriate holiday period, it was determined that all generations choose a maximum of 4-6 days. It was revealed that the participants of the generation Z generation who see 7-9 days of vacation as ideal are more than other generations.
- All generation participants mostly prefer coastal tourism/sea-sand-sun). Looking at the second ranking, it was determined that the baby boomers prefer health tourism (thermal, spa, medical etc.), the generation X and Y prefer cultural tourism and the generation Z prefer adventure tourism.
- As the most preferred accommodation choice during the holiday, it was determined that all generation participants preferred to stay in the hotel the most. Looking at the second ranking, it was revealed that all generations mostly prefer to stay in holiday resorts.
- All generations prefer the road first and the airline second as the most preferred mode of transportation when going on vacation and returning.
- In the context of the most preferred food and beverage business on holiday, it was determined that all generations prefer restaurants first and food areas of accommodation business second. The rate of preference for food areas of the accommodation business of the generation Z is lower compared to other generations.

Table 3. Holiday Preferences for Generations 2

Question	Answer	BB	X	Y	Z
Which type of tourism do you prefer to participate in?	Coastal tourism (Sea-Sand-Sun)	20	60	145	146
	Culture tourism	10	23	41	27
	Adventure tourism	5	1	17	37
	Health tourism (thermal, spa, medical etc.)	11	8	10	10
	Rural tourism	3	4	11	8
	Winter tourism	2	1	5	13
	Sports tourism (skiing, diving, golf, rowing, climbing, etc.)	0	1	2	13
	Faith tourism	4	1	5	1
	Other	3	0	5	2
Where would you prefer to stay on holiday?	Hotel	23	49	134	111
	Resort	11	15	37	54
	Apart Hotel	5	12	12	24
	Camping Area (Caravan, Tent Etc.)	3	5	16	27
	Hostel	6	5	14	9
	Friend/Relative House	4	5	8	16
	Motel	3	4	9	6
	Other	2	3	8	6
	Cruise ship	1	1	3	4
Which mode of transportation do you prefer most when going on holiday and returning from holiday?	Road	41	84	193	186
	Airline	13	12	41	57
	Seaway	1	3	5	6
	Railroad	3	0	2	8
Which catering business do you prefer most on holiday?	Restaurant	15	35	88	92
	Food Areas of the Hospitality Business	15	37	78	47
	Diner	12	17	28	23
	Café	5	4	9	44
	Street (Food, Beverage) Vendors	4	3	20	32
	Other	7	3	18	19
Do you make plans for a certain amount of time before you go on holiday?	I definitely do	38	69	170	167
	Sometimes (Ad-Lib Holiday)	15	27	61	76
	I absolutely do not	5	3	10	14
Do you pay for the holiday yourself?	Yes	38	86	195	108
	Sometimes (Partly)	18	9	34	83
	No	2	4	12	66
Do you usually buy souvenirs that reflect that region on holiday?	I definitely buy	25	49	116	144
	Sometimes	27	47	106	99
	I definitely do not buy	6	3	19	14
Do you usually go to entertainment establishments at the holiday resort?	Sometimes	29	53	139	110
	I definitely go	10	25	63	125
	I definitely do not go	19	21	39	22
Do you participate in guided tours conducted at the resort or go on a holiday as part of an organized guided tour?	Sometimes	32	56	130	127
	I absolutely do not participate	13	21	56	71
	I definitely participate	13	22	55	59

- Most of the participants of all generations definitely make a plan before going on holiday.
- Most of the participants of all generations cover the holiday pay themselves. However, it was determined that a large part of the generation Z participants did not pay the holiday fee themselves compared to other generations.

- The rate of generation X, Y, and Z tourists to purchase souvenirs that reflect that region on holiday is higher than baby boom generation tourists.
- It was determined that while baby boomers, generation X and Y tourists sometimes go to entertainment establishments, the majority of Z generation participants go to entertainment establishments.
- It was determined that the majority of all generations sometimes go on guided tours in holiday destinations or on holiday as part of guided organized tours.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It was determined that all generations learn most about the holiday from social media advertisements. As the most preferred accommodation choice during the holiday, the result that all generations of participants mostly prefer to stay in hotels is similar to the studies of Buffa (2015) and Setiawan et al. (2018). Similarly, the low interest in participating in guided tours is consistent with the work of Buffa (2015) and Setiawan et al. (2018). The result that all generations prefer the road first and the airline second as the most preferred mode of transportation when going on vacation and returning. It coincides with the study of Günel (2005). It was determined that the number of generation Z participants who go on holiday with their friend/friend group is higher than other generations. It was determined that the generation Z mostly buy holiday from the website of holiday destinations. Sari and Harta (2018), who carried out studies in different areas related to purchasing, also determined that the generation Z generally uses the Internet in their shopping.

It is recommended that marketers and tourism businesses give importance to social media advertisements and create a digital image through social media experts, since it is determined that the participants, regardless of generation, obtain information about the holiday from social media. Another issue for marketers to consider is that others are more likely to buy the holidays for the baby boomers. While online vacation buying is generally found safe by generations X and Y, generation Z is undecided. Therefore, travel agencies and businesses need to convince the generation Z that it is safe to buy holidays from the Internet. Activities for groups of friends should be included in holiday packages for the generation Z. The tours created should generally cover a period of 4-6 days. Although all generations are most involved in coastal tourism, tours and holidays should be created that include health tourism for the baby boom generation and adventure tourism for the Z generation. In the context of accommodation, hotel or resort accommodation options should be included in tours and holidays.

The main population of the study consists of baby boomers, generations X, Y and Z members residing in Antalya. Convenience sampling method was used in the research. Convenience sampling is one of the non-probability sampling methods. For this reason, generalizations cannot be made to the whole population.

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