

Seyahat ve Otel İşletmeciliği Dergisi/  
Journal of Travel and Hospitality Business  
Cilt/Vol:20(3),Yıl/ Year:2023, ss/pp:389-405  
Gönderim Tarihi/ Received: 26.07.2023  
Kabul Tarihi /Accepted: 21.08.2023  
DOI: 10.24010/soid.1333433

## Which Travel Package Makes People Happier? Cultural or 3s Hangi tatil türü insanları daha mutlu eder? Kültür veya 3s?

Öğr. Gör.Dr. Zeynep ALBAYRAK   
Çukurova Üniversitesi  
Pozantı Meslek Yüksekokulu  
Mersin, Türkiye  
E-posta: zeyneppalbayrak@gmail.com

Doç. Dr. Dilek ATÇI   
Mersin Üniversitesi,  
Turizm Fakültesi  
Mersin, Türkiye  
E-posta: dilek@mersin.edu.tr

### Abstract

Happiness is one of the central concerns of many disciplines and also one of the most controversial topics of all time. Researches show there are many factors that affect happiness. Traveling is considered as one of these factors. This study aims to determine whether traveling for vacation makes significant difference on the level of happiness and which tour package affects happiness most. The study has a quasi-experimental and longitudinal design. Experimental group consisted of two sub-groups that included individuals who took a cultural tour or sea, sun and sand tour, and the control group consisted of contributors who did not travel for vacation in the last 6 months and had no vacation plans in the next 6 months. The questionnaire was applied to the experimental group (and control group at the same time) 15 days before and 15 days, 2 months and 6 months after the vacation. As a result of the analyses, it was verified that the level of happiness does not change depending on demographic factors, but the study revealed that traveling for vacation has an effect on the level of happiness that lasts longer than 2 months. Results show happiness level of the experimental group was higher than the control group, and traveling for vacation really increased the level of happiness. Between the two different tour packages tourists participating in cultural tours have greater level of happiness.

**Key Words:** Happiness, Tourist Happiness, Cultural Tours, Quasi- Experimental Design

### Öz

Mutluluk birçok disiplinin temel ilgi alanlarından biri olmakla birlikte aynı zamanda tüm zamanların en tartışmalı konularından biri durumundadır. Araştırmalar mutluluğu etkileyen birçok faktörün olduğunu göstermektedir. Tatile çıkmak bu faktörlerden biri olarak kabul edilir. Bu çalışma, tatil için seyahat etmenin mutluluk düzeyinde anlamlı bir fark yaratıp yaratmadığını ve hangi tur paketinin mutluluğu en çok etkilediğini belirlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Araştırma yarı deneysel ve boylamsal bir tasarıma sahiptir. Deney grubu kültür turu veya deniz, kum, güneş turu yapan bireylerden oluşan iki alt gruptan oluşurken, kontrol grubu ise son 6 ay içinde tatil için seyahat etmeyen ve sonraki 6 aylık dönem için tatil planı yapmayan katılımcılardan oluşmuştur. Anket deney grubuna (ve aynı zamanda kontrol grubuna) tatilden 15 gün önce ve tatilden 15 gün, 2 ay ve 6 ay sonra uygulanmıştır. Analizler sonucunda mutluluk düzeyinin demografik faktörlere bağlı olarak değişmediği doğrulanmıştır. Çalışma, tatile çıkmanın mutluluk düzeyi üzerinde 2 aydan uzun süren etkisinin olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Sonuçlar deney grubunun mutluluk düzeyinin kontrol grubuna göre daha yüksek olduğunu ve tatil için seyahat etmenin mutluluk düzeyini gerçekten artırdığını göstermektedir. İki farklı tur paketi arasında kültür turlarına katılan turistlerin mutluluk düzeyi daha yüksek bulunmuştur.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Mutluluk, Turist Mutluluğu, Kültür Turu, Yarı-deneysel model

*"Bu makale Zeynep Albayrak'ın Mersin Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü'nde yazılan "Tatile Çıkmanın Mutluluğa Etkisi: Yarı- Deneysel Bir Araştırma" başlıklı doktora tezinden üretilmiştir.*

## Extended Summary

### Purpose

This study aims to determine whether traveling for vacation makes a major difference on the level of happiness and which tour package affects happiness most. Happiness is one of the central concerns of many disciplines and also one of the most controversial topics of all time. Researches show there are many factors that affect happiness. Traveling is considered as one of these factors. In this context, this study seeks to reply the question of whether traveling for vacation really affects the level of happiness and which tour package makes people happier.

### Background

Defining and measuring happiness is one of the biggest difficulties of happiness studies. There are many different definitions about happiness. Aristotle defines eudemonia, usually translated as happiness, as "the highest good and an act of virtue in accordance with the reason that leads to a competent and mature life" (Kabadayi, 2013: 79). It was reconceptualized as subjective well-being and was defined as an umbrella term for all the negative and positive evaluations that individuals make about their lives.

Looking at the relevant literature, many studies (Gilbert and Abdullah, 2002; Gilbert and Abdullah, 2004; McCabe and Johnson, 2013; Chen, Fu and Letho, 2016) show that intentional activity has positive affect on people's happiness level. Tourism activities can be considered one of the intentional activities. Because of that traveling for vacation can affects the level of happiness. The levels of happiness decrease by the end of 6 months, they were still higher than those of the first measurement. This can be interpreted as an indication that the impression of the holiday on the level of happiness lasted for nearly 6 months. Previous researches (Nawijn, et al, 2011; Corvo, 2011; Nawijn, 2011) have different findings on the duration of this effect; it was stated to be disappeared after 3 days finally after 2 months. Compared to these studies, the results of this study reveal that the impression of the vacation lasts longer. This result is the most important result that distinguishes the study from previous studies.

### Method

For this study, people who took a vacation in the last 6 months or were planning to travel for vacation in 6 months were selected as the experimental group. The number of people in both control group and experimental groups are determined to be at least 30 people. Experimental group consisted of 40, who participated in cultural tour and 42 individuals who participated in 3S package tours. The control group of 45 was formed by people who did not take a vacation in the last 6 months and also are not planning to take a vacation in 6 months. Since the pre-test and post-tests will be applied to the experimental and control groups in the research, the research is designed to be semi-experimental unequal pre-test - post test control group model (Campbell and Stanley, 1963: 34). Within the scope of this research, the data were gathered through questionnaire. The happiness levels of the participants were measured by single item self-rating scale which includes overall item "Do you feel happy in general?" Participants were asked to think in general not just the present state. A horizontal line is used as a scale with equal intervals from 0 to 10. The questionnaires were applied to experimental groups 15 days before the vacation and 15 days, 2 months and 6 months

after the vacation. The happiness levels of the control group were also measured at the same time.

## **Findings**

According to the findings of the study, happiness levels of the participants does not change according to gender, marital status, age, income, education level and whether or not they had children. The level of happiness of the participants differs significantly according to both short-term vacation and long-term vacation. According to the calculations, 13% of the happiness level of the participants can be explained by the holiday. The level of happiness differs significantly according to the type of holiday. Cultural tour has a more positive effect on the happiness level of individuals.

## **Results**

This quasi-experimental longitudinal study tries to determine whether taking a vacation makes people happy and which tour package makes people happier. One of the remarkable results of the study is that the happiness level changes significantly according to the preferred tour type. As the results show, the experimental group who took a cultural tour has the highest level of happiness. It can be concluded that individuals who go on a cultural tour are happier than those who prefer 3S tour package or those who do not take a vacation during the research. It was also confirmed in this study that the level of happiness does not change according to such demographics as age, education level, marital status, income and age as stated in previous studies. In the study, it was confirmed that rather than demographic factors, taking a long or short vacations creates an important difference on the level of happiness. Regardless of the duration of the holiday, getting away from daily routine and stressful life results in a favourable effect on the level of happiness as expected. This is an important result for the tourism sector in itself. Traveling can be one the most effective factors to boost happiness. Especially cultural tours which nurture people from different aspects besides relaxing and escaping the daily routine make a significant difference on happiness.

## **1. Introduction**

Happiness has always been the ultimate goal of people's actions since ancient times. The question of "How can a person be happy?" has been tried to be answered by people from different disciplines e.g. philosophers, clerics, psychologists, and new age gurus even economists. Especially in today's competitive and demanding life, happiness is of utmost importance than ever but just as much harder to reach.

From time-to-time new ways have been proposed to make people happier. Traveling for vacation may be the oldest one of them. People need to have fun, see new places, try new activities, and relax. The main purpose is to achieve physical and mental relaxation and thus to feel happier (Liu, 2013: 69). Tourism activities are considered as a set of activities that make people happy (Aktaş Polat, 2016: 297).

A lot of studies have been conducted on the life satisfaction of tourists (Hobson and Dietrich, 1995: 21; Dann, 2002: 5; Gilbert and Abdullah; 2002: 352; De Bloom et al, 2009: 13; Sirgy, 2010: 246; Nawijn and Veenhoven, 2011: 39; Chen et al., 2013: 284; Lyubomirsky and Layous, 2013: 57; Okwaraji et al., 2017: 284), tourists' happiness (Milman, 1998: 166; Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004: 104; Lu and Hu, 2005: 325; Nawijn, 2010: 281; Nawijn and Peeters, 2010: 381; Nawijn et al, 2010: 35; Nawijn,

2011: 559; Bimonte and Faralla, 2012: 1929; Nawijn and Veenhoven, 2013: 193; Bimonte and Faralla, 2015 : 179; Chen et al., 2016: 49; Servidio and Ruffolo, 2016: 151), burnout (Stanton-Rich and Iso-Ahola, 1998: 1931; Westman and Etzion, 2001: 595; Lin et al., 2014: 244) , work-family stress relief (Strauss, Blasche et al., 2000: 167; De Bloom et al., 2010: 196; De Bloom et al., 2011: 333; McCabe and Johnson, 2013: 42), because traveling for vacation has the potential to make people happy both passively and actively. As tourists actively participate in various relaxation activities during their vacation, it can have a positive impact on the level of happiness of tourists (De Bloom et al., 2009: 15). Even planning the vacation and the preparation stage can increase the level of happiness passively. This study seeks to reply the question of whether traveling for vacation really affects the level of happiness and which tour package makes people happier.

## **2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development**

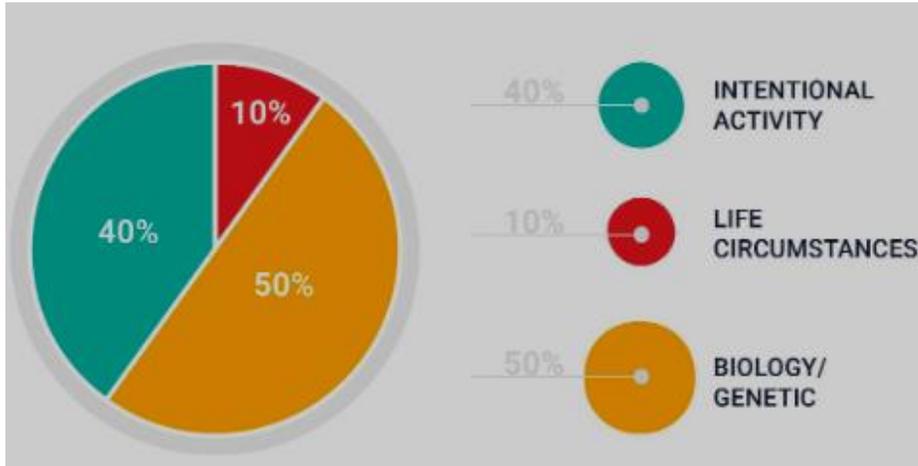
One of the biggest difficulties encountered in happiness studies is defining and measuring it. The fact that the happiness perception differs from person to person makes it difficult to define the concept clearly. Aristotle defines eudemonia, usually translated as happiness, as "the highest good and an act of virtue in accordance with the reason that leads to a competent and mature life". In this sense, he has a teleological perspective which involves the fulfillment of human nature. In fact, the term happiness evokes "pleasurable feelings", for eliminating this, another term "well-being" is proposed for eudemonia (Bradburn, 1969). It is argued that happiness as a daily word is hard to define and measure, thus, it should be reconceptualised as well-being, much broader than happiness. Otherwise, some argue happiness is just feeling positive emotions more often than negative emotions and some equates it with life satisfaction that involves all negative and positive evaluations that person makes about their lives (Bradburn, 1969; Diener, 2006; Chen, 2011). It was reconceptualized as subjective well-being and was defined as an umbrella term for all the negative and positive evaluations that people make about their lives. Hence it is "experiencing positive moods more frequently than negative ones, and also making favorable judgments about one's life".

As aforementioned, different perspectives are adopted to investigate and measure happiness. Mainly, two different perspectives can be mentioned on which happiness (or well-being) research is based, hedonism and eudemonism. Hedonic approach defines happiness in terms of pleasure, and has an external perspective; whereas eudemonism has an internal perspective and concentrates on realization of person's potential (Ryan and Deci, 2001: 141). Eudemonic researchers avoid using the term happiness but researchers from the hedonic view use the term as a component of subjective well-being (Zevnik, 2014: 7). The measurement criteria of both approaches are also different, former focuses on negative and positive affections and life satisfaction and the latter focuses on psychological aspects and full functioning. In this study, hedonic view is adopted and happiness is regarded as the affective part of subjective well-being.

Many studies (De Bloom, et al, 2010; Chen, 2011; Chen, Fu and Letho, 2016) show that happy people are more successful in their marriages, friendships, and job performances. In addition, it has been found that the happier the people the healthier they are (Lyubomirsky, et al, 2005: 803). Thus, it is significant to know the factors that affect people's happiness. Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, and Schkade (2005) found out the factors which happiness depends on and asserted some strategies that can be

implemented to enhance happiness above the fixed point and ensure its sustainability. The integrative happiness model is shown in Graph 1.

**Graph1:** Determinants of Happiness



In this model, happiness is considered to be shaped by the combination of genetic factors, intentional activities, and circumstances. As shown in the model, 50 % of the variation in happiness is explained by genetic factors, 10% by life circumstances, and 40% by intentional activities. Circumstances have a limited capacity to influence happiness, even if the person has pretty much control over them. Therefore, intentional activities, have a greater capacity to influence happiness as people choose them willingly. This is because “circumstances happen to people but activities are the ways that people act on their circumstances” (Lyubomirsky et al, 2005: 119).

Circumstantial factors are the factors such as gender, age, ethnic origin, and geographical region. Factors such as marriage, work, income, health, and religion are also included in circumstantial factors (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005: 117). The belief that happiness depends mainly on circumstantial factors is the biggest obstacle to happiness. Giving too much importance to these factors, which explain approximately 10% of the variance in happiness level, hinders happiness itself (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005; 118). In some studies in the literature, there was no relationship between happiness and circumstantial factors. Csikszentmihalyi, 2008; Nawijn, 2010; Bimonte and Faralla, 2012; Klein, 2014; 253; Hefferon and Bonivel, 2014; Baiocco, et al, 2019). In this direction, the following hypothesis will be tested in order to determine the effect of circumstantial factors.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** The level of happiness does not change according to demographic characteristics (age, gender, marital status, education level, income, whether or not they have children).

People generally strive to improve their living conditions in order to increase happiness. But instead, sustainable happiness will come from participating in intentional activities (Haidt, 2014: 127; Lyubomirsky, 2019: 35). It is possible to increase happiness through activity-oriented strategies. Activity-oriented strategies are changes in which individuals are involved in the process by making continuous efforts, thus creating the opportunity to reach sustainable happiness. Since the individual determines how and when to participate in these activities, the adaptation tendency of

happiness can be eliminated (Sheldon and Lyubomirsky, 2006b: 61). Traveling is considered among one of these activities that have the potential to increase and sustain the level of happiness.

In a study conducted to find out which leisure time activity has the greatest impact on happiness, among the activities such as taking a vacation, visiting neighbors and family members, going to church, playing sports, playing games, participating in art activities, going to movies, concerts, etc., it was concluded that only taking a vacation has a significant effect on happiness. However, this effect is short-lived (Nawijn and Veenhoven, 2011). Chen (2011) found a significant difference between the happiness levels of individuals who go on vacation and those who do not. In some studies (Wu et al., 2000; Gilbert and Abdullah, 2004; McCabe and Johnson, 2013) it has been revealed that taking a long vacation affects the happiness level of the individual. Based on these rationales, the following hypothesis was proposed.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** The level of happiness between groups differs by taking a long vacation in a year.

Both the duration and frequency of the vacation have an impact on the level of happiness. People who take vacation frequently, are found to feel negative emotions such as depression, stress, burnout, less and positive emotions such as peace, happiness, relaxation and hope more (Bargemon, et al, 2002: 322). Vacation creates hedonic experience in a short time, happiness, and life satisfaction in a long time. Getting away from the daily life routine and attending activities have a short-term effect on happiness (Güner, 2019: 24). However, returning to the routine after the vacation leads to a decrease in the level of happiness (McCabe and Johnson, 2013: 60). Bargemon et al., (2002); Nawijn et al., (2010); Chen, (2011) and De Bloom et al. (2011) concluded that taking short and more frequent vacations has a positive relationship with the happiness level of individuals.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** The level of happiness between the groups differs by taking short vacations in a year.

Some studies (Gilbert and Abdullah, 2002; Gilbert and Abdullah, 2004; De Bloom et al., 2010; Nawijn et al. 2010; Corvo, 2010; Chen, 2011; Nawijn, 2011) revealed that individuals who are planning to go on vacation are happier than those who are not. This is due to the motivation provided by the pre-holiday preparation. It has also been observed that the happiness levels of the holiday-taking group after the holiday are higher than non-holiday-taking group (Gilbert and Abdullah, 2004).

**H<sub>4</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the happiness level of people who will take a vacation in next 15 days (experimental group) and people who will not (control group).

De Bloom and Geurts (2010) concluded that vacation makes a significant difference on the level of happiness, but this lasts for one week and then returns to the pre-holiday level. In a study conducted by Nawijn, et al, (2010), the happiness levels of individuals who went on vacation and those who didn't, were compared before and after the vacation, and it was seen that the happiness levels of individuals who went on vacation were higher than the other group. Besides, this study concluded that the level of post-holiday happiness lasted for maximum 2 weeks. There was no significant effect of the period of the vacation on happiness.

Nawijn (2011) used the data of 3650 people who went on vacation which he obtained from the GfK (Growth from Knowledge) Tourism Panel, in the study, it was concluded that going on a holiday had a positive effect on the level of happiness, but the effect was short-lived (2 weeks. In the studies carried out by Gilbert and Abdullah (2002); Gilbert and Abdullah (2004); De Bloom et al. (2010); Corvo (2011); Ha and Kim (2013); Servidio and Ruffolo (2016), Peng, et al. (2023), it was found that the level of happiness differs before and after the vacation. Based on these arguments, the following hypothesis was proposed.

**H<sub>5</sub>:** There is a significant difference between the happiness level of the people (experimental group) before and after the vacation.

While the holiday has a positive effect on the happiness level of individuals, not going on a holiday affects the happiness level negatively. People who don't go on vacation and have to stay at home all the time have low levels of happiness (Rossouw, et al, 2021: 2).

**H<sub>6</sub>:** There is a significant difference between the happiness level of people who took a vacation (experimental group) and those who did not (control group).

In the studies conducted by Nawijn (2010), Nawijn and Peeters (2010), and Bimonte and Faralla (2012), it was concluded that the level of happiness varies according to the type of holiday. Nawijn (2010) found that only very relaxed holiday trips increase vacationers' happiness level and this level of happiness continues even after returning from vacation. According to Nawijn and Peeters (2010); attending green travel activities make people happier. Bimonte and Faralla (2012) found that the happiness levels of tourists who prefer natural parks are higher than the happiness levels of tourists who prefer beaches. Visiting nature parks that can be evaluated within the scope of cultural tour makes a remarkable difference on the happiness level of individuals (Buckley, 2020: 1412).

**H<sub>7</sub>:** There is a significant difference between happiness levels of the groups taking different tour packages (cultural or sea, sun and sand).

### **3. Methodology**

The primary purpose of this study is to establish whether taking a vacation really increase the level of happiness, and also which tour package have the greater influence on the level of happiness by utilizing sustainable happiness framework. As it is stated in the model intentional activities have the greater potential to increase happiness and in this study, travel packages are used for happiness-increasing intervention. It was aimed to obtain more reliable results by forming experimental and control groups and then comparing the happiness level of these groups.

For the study, people who took a vacation in the last 6 months or were planning to travel for vacation in 6 months were selected as the experimental group. The number of people in both control and experimental groups are determined to be at least 30 people based on the Central Limit Theorem. Experimental group consisted of 40, who participated in cultural tour and 42 individuals who participated in 3S package tours. The control group of 45 was formed by people who did not take a vacation in the last 6 months and also are not planning to take a vacation in 6 months. Since the pre-tests and post tests will be applied to the experimental and control groups in the research, the research is designed to be quasi-experimental pre-test post-test control

group model (Campbell and Stanley, 1963: 34). It is also longitudinal research in which level of happiness is measured repeatedly in a course of time. Namely, the pretest-posttest control group design, which can also be defined as a split-plot or mixed design, is a two-factor experimental design, one of which shows repeated measures (pre-test – post-test), and the other shows the subjects in different categories (control and experimental groups).

Within the scope of the research, the data were collected with a questionnaire. The happiness levels of the participants were measured by single-item self-rating scale which includes overall item “Do you feel happy in general?” (Bimonte and Faralla, 2015). Participants were asked to think in general not just the present state. A horizontal line is used as a scale with equal intervals from 0 to 10. The questionnaires were applied to experimental groups 15 days before the vacation and 15 days, 2 months, and 6 months after the vacation. The happiness levels of the control group were also measured at the same time.

#### 4. Findings

The demographics of the participants in the control and experimental groups have been presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Demographic characteristics of the control and experimental groups

Demographics	Groups				Demographics	Groups			
	Experimental (n:82)		Control (n:45)			Experimental (n:82)		Control (n:45)	
	f	%	f	%		f	%	f	%
<b>Gender</b>					<b>Educational Level</b>				
Female	41	50	26	57,8	Primary school	2	2,4	18	40
Male	41	50	19	42,2	Secondary school	0	0	8	17,8
<b>Marital Status</b>					High school	28	34,1	10	22,2
Married	46	56,1	35	56,1	Associate degree	9	11	1	2,2
Single	36	43,9	10	43,9	Bachelor's degree	39	47,6	8	17,8
					Master degree	4	4,9	18	40
<b>Age</b>					<b>Income (n=82)</b>				
18-30	38	46,3	8	46,3	2020-3500 TL	11	15,9	25	55,6
31-50	24	29,3	23	29,3	3501-7500 TL	39	47,6	10	22,2
51 +	20	24,4	14	24,4	7501 TL +	30	36,6	10	22,2

Testing the first hypothesis of the study, it was seen that the happiness levels of the individuals doesn't change according to gender, age, marital status, education level, income, and whether or not they had children ( $p > 0.05$ ). However, when the mean scores are considered, it can be said that the age group with the highest level of happiness is 51 years old and over. In terms of gender, the level of happiness of female participants was higher than that of male participants. Results are shown in Table 2. According to these results, the first hypothesis of the study was accepted as it is also stated in the literature.

**Table 2:** Comparison of happiness levels according to demographic variables

		Happiness Level			
AGE	n	Mean	St. Deviation	F	P
18-30	55	3,55	0,60763	3,887	0,414
31-50	34	3,63	0,57804		
51+	38	3,73	0,74791		
GENDER	n	Mean	St. Deviation	T	P
Female	67	3,68	0,61333	1,117	0,266
Male	60	3,58	0,67715		
MARITAL STATUS	n	Mean	St. Deviation	T	P
Married	81	3,67	0,64763	0,978	0,330
Single	46	3,55	0,64027		
EDUCATION	n	Mean	St. Deviation	F	P
Primary & secondary school	32	3,49	0,67797	1,051	0,353
High school	38	3,71	0,69739		
Associate degree & above	57	3,64	0,58678		
INCOME	n	Mean	St. Deviation	F	P
2020-3500 TL	38	3,65	0,72488	0,077	0,926
3501-7500 TL	49	3,62	0,62940		
7501 TL+	40	3,60	0,59562		
HAVING A CHILD	n	Mean	St. Deviation	T	P
Yes	75	3,66	0,67974	0,657	0,512
No	52	3,58	0,59455		

Testing the second hypothesis of the study, a significant difference was found ( $p=0.046<0.05$ ) between the groups who took a long vacation and who did not. The results are shown in Table 3 and according to these results; the second hypothesis of the research was accepted.

**Table 3:** Comparison of happiness level by taking a long vacation in the last year

		n	Mean	St.Deviation	T	P
Level of Happiness	Yes	51	3,76	0,66423	2,019	0,046
	No	76	3,53	0,61843		

A statistically significant difference was found ( $p=0.047<0.05$ ) as a result of the analysis applied to define whether taking short vacations in the last year affects the level of happiness. As it is shown in Table 4, the third hypothesis of the research was accepted.

**Table 4:** Comparison of happiness levels by taking a short vacation in the last year

		n	Mean	St.Deviation	T	P
Level of Happiness	Yes	70	3,73	0,68236	2,006	0,047
	No	57	3,50	0,57691		

The difference between the levels of happiness of the control and experimental groups 15 days before vacation was compared and no statistically significant difference was found. ( $p=0,083$ ;  $p>0,05$ ). When the mean scores are compared, it is seen that the average level of happiness of the experimental group is higher than that

of the control group. According to the results shown in Table 5, the fourth hypothesis of the study was accepted.

**Table 5:** Comparison of the happiness of the experimental and control groups in the first measurement (15 days before vacation)

		n	Mean	St. Deviation	T	P
Happiness Level	Experimental group	82	3,70	0,64986	1,726	0,083
	Control group	45	3,49	0,62106		

In order to test the H<sub>5</sub>, H<sub>6</sub>, and H<sub>7</sub> two factor analysis of variance for repeated measures is employed. A two-factor ANOVA for repeated measures is frequently used in studies where dependent variable is measured over two or more time, or when subjects have passed two or more circumstances. The major aim of this analysis is to find out if there is a coaction between these two factors on the dependent variable (Büyükoztürk, 2023: 32). In the present study there are four-time points (within subjects) and 3 vacation groups (between subjects).

In order to interpret the analyses, the homogeneity condition of the variances (Sphericity assumption;  $p > 0.05$ ) must be met (Can, 2019: 222). The outcomes of the homogeneity test of sphericity variances are given in Table 6.

**Table 6:** Sphericity test results

Sphericity Test							
Measurement: Happiness							
Within subjects effects	Mauchly's W	Approx. Square	Chi-df	Sig.	Epsilon <sup>b</sup>		
					Greenhouse-Geisser	Huynh-Feldt	Lower-bound
Time	,182	209,220	5	,000	,539	,554	,333

Since the Sphericity assumption could not be met in the study ( $p=0.00$ ), two different methods were used to interpret the difference. Firstly, Epsilon values were examined. When Epsilon values are less than 0.75 ( $\epsilon < 0.75$ ), Greenhouse-Geisser epsilon value; when it is bigger than 0.75 ( $\epsilon > 0.75$ ), the Huynh-Feldt value is checked (Can, 2019: 223). Since Epsilon values are under 0.75 as seen in Table 7, the result of analysis of variance including Greenhouse-Geisser correction was examined and a difference was statistically significant. Also, there is a significant difference in tests of between-subjects effects. The results are shown in Table 7 and Table 8, thus H<sub>5</sub>, H<sub>6</sub> and H<sub>7</sub> were accepted.

**Table 7:** Test of Within-Subject Effects

Test of Within-Subject Effects						
Measure: Happiness						
Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Time	Sphericity Assumed	4,848	3	1,616	18,702	,000
	<b>Greenhouse- Geisser</b>	<b>4,848</b>	<b>1,616</b>	<b>2,999</b>	<b>18,702</b>	<b>,000</b>
	Huynh-Feldt	4,848	1,661	2,919	18,702	,000
	Lower bound	4,848	1,000	4,848	18,702	,000
Time * Groups	Sphericity Assumed	1,777	6	,296	3,427	,003
	<b>Greenhouse-Geisser</b>	<b>1,777</b>	<b>3,233</b>	<b>,550</b>	<b>3,427</b>	<b>,016</b>
	Huynh-Feldt	1,777	3,322	,535	3,427	,015
	Lower bound	1,777	2,000	,888	3,427	,036
Error (Time)	Sphericity Assumed	32,143	372	,086		
	<b>Greenhouse-Geisser</b>	<b>32,143</b>	<b>200,442</b>	<b>,160</b>		
	Huynh-Feldt	32,143	205,976	,156		
	Lower-bound	32,143	124,000	,259		

The effect size is calculated with the following formula (Can, 2019: 226).

$$n^2 = \frac{\text{Sum of Squares}}{\text{Sum of Squares}_{(\text{measure})} + \text{Sum of Squares}_{(\text{error})}}$$

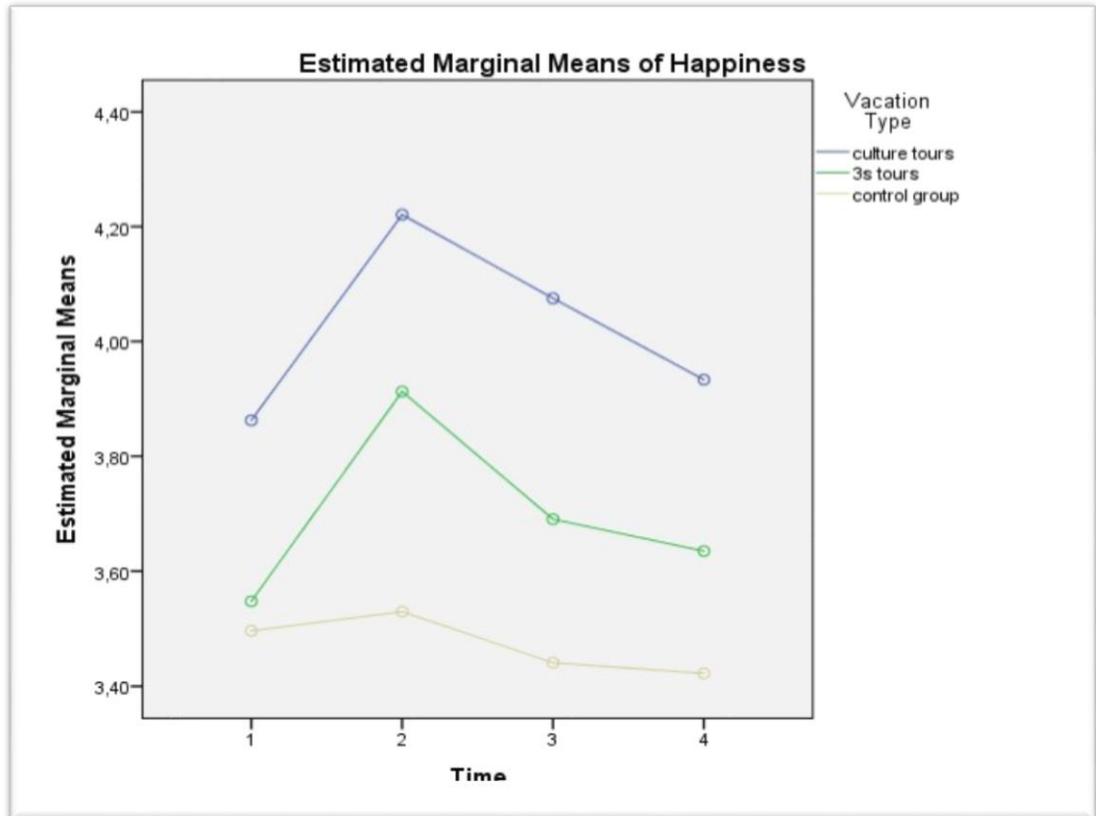
According to this formula, the effect size is;  $4.848 / (4.848 + 32.143) = 0.13$ . Based on the calculated effect size, taking a vacation explains 13% of the variance in happiness.

When table 8 is examined; the level of happiness of individual varies according to the type of vacation they took. There is a significant difference between groups' happiness level.

**Table 8:** Tests of Between Subject Effects

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Type of tour package	25,826	2	12,913	12,237	,000
<b>Error</b>	<b>130,850</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>1,055</b>		

Testing the difference among happiness levels of the three research groups, namely experimental group (3S), experimental group (cultural tour), and the control group, results are shown in Graph 2. It was revealed that the cultural tour group has the highest level of happiness over all measurement points, i.e. taking a cultural tour as a vacation enhances the level of happiness more than taking a 3S tour.

**Graph 2:** Comparison of Happiness Levels by Vacation Type

To sum up, all the hypotheses and the results of the study are illustrated in Table 9.

**Table 9:** Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis		Hypothesis Test Results
<b>Hypothesis 1</b>	The level of happiness does not change according to demographic characteristics( gender, age, educational level, income, marital status, whether or not they have children).	<b>Accepted</b>
<b>Hypothesis 2</b>	The level of happiness differs between the groups according to taking a long vacation in a year.	<b>Accepted</b>
<b>Hypothesis 3</b>	The level of happiness differs between the groups according to taking short vacations in a year.	<b>Accepted</b>
<b>Hypothesis 4</b>	There is no significant difference between the happiness level of people who will go on vacation in 15 days (experimental group) and people who will not (control group).	<b>Accepted</b>
<b>Hypothesis 5</b>	There is a significant difference between the happiness level of the people (experimental group) before and after the vacation.	<b>Accepted</b>
<b>Hypothesis 6</b>	There is a significant differences between the happines level of the people who took a vacation (experimental group) and those who did not (control group).	<b>Accepted</b>
<b>Hypothesis 7</b>	Happiness levels differ among two different vacationer and non-vacationer groups along with time.	<b>Accepted</b>

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This quasi-experimental study tries to determine whether taking a vacation makes people happy and which tour package makes people happier. Control and experimental groups are formed in order to test the hypotheses of the study, from people who take a vacation (namely 3S and cultural tour packages) and people who did not take a vacation over a year respectively. The happiness levels of both groups are measured 15 days before and 15 days, 2 months and, 6 months after the vacation.

It was also confirmed in this study that the level of happiness does not change according to such demographic characteristics as age, income, gender, marital status, educational level as stated in previous studies (Nawijn, 2010; de Bloom etc., 2010; Bimonte and Faralla, 2012;). It is of great importance to analyze and eliminate this effect, if there is any, for determining the real effect of taking a vacation. Participants were also requested to state if they had experienced good or bad events during the time period the study was conducted so that it could be eliminated. In the study conducted within the integrative happiness model, it was confirmed that rather than demographic factors, taking a long or short vacation creates an important difference on the level of happiness. Regardless of the duration of the holiday, getting away from daily routine and stressful life results in a positive effect on the level of happiness as expected (Nawijn et al., 2010; De Bloom et al, 2010, Chen, 2011; de Bloom, Geurts, and Kompier, 2011; Nawijn, 2011). Traveling which can be considered as one of the intentional activities makes a difference and, in this study, it was found that taking a vacation explains 13% of the variance in happiness.

As far as the pre-test (15 days before the vacation) results are concerned, there was no significant difference between the happiness levels of the control and experimental group. However, it was observed that the mean scores of the control group were lower than those of the experimental group. The underlying reason is that they are in the preparation period for a vacation and even just the idea of taking a vacation motivates people and therefore increases their level of happiness (De Bloom et al., 2010; Corvo, 2011; Chen, 2011).

It was also compared the happiness levels of the experimental group at different times after the vacation, specifically 15 days, 2 months, and 6 months after the vacation. The results show that the level of happiness of the experimental group, which was 3.70 before the holiday, was found to be 4.06, 3.87, and 3.78 respectively in the second, third, and fourth measurements. This result supports the fixed-point theory, which advocates the idea that "even though people's life satisfaction changes by being affected by various life events, they will return to a fixed point arising from their genetic predisposition over time" (Emmons and McCoullough, 2003; 379). Although the vacation offers people the opportunity to escape their stressful routine, thus leads to an instant increase in happiness, its effect fades over time. The level of happiness returns to the initial point. Although the levels of happiness decreased by the end of 6 months, they were still higher than those of the first measurement. This can be interpreted as an indication that the effect of the holiday on the level of happiness lasted for nearly 6 months. Previous researches have different findings on the duration of this effect, it was stated to be disappeared after 3 days (De Bloom, Geurt, and Kampier, 2011), after 1 week (De Bloom et al., 2010), after 2 weeks (Nawijn et al, 2010; Nawijn, 2011), after 3 weeks (Etzion, 2003), after 1 month (Kühnel and Sonnentag, 2011; Ağca and Aksoy, 2017), and finally after 2 months (Chen, 2011). Compared to these studies, the results of this study reveal that the effect of the vacation lasts longer.

Another remarkable result of the study is that the happiness level changes significantly according to the preferred tour type. As the results show, the experimental group who took a cultural tour has the highest level of happiness. It can be concluded that individuals who go on a cultural tour are happier than those who prefer 3S tour package or those who do not take a vacation during the research. This result should be carefully interpreted as the level of happiness in the first measurement is also higher in this group relative to 3S group. But it should also be considered that there was no statistically significant difference between the happiness levels of groups 15 days before the vacation.

In the study, it was concluded that taking a vacation really makes people happier. While none of the demographic factors, i.e., circumstantial factors, does not change the levels of happiness, taking a vacation, no matter the duration, even just thinking and planning it cause a change on the level of happiness. Furthermore, there was no statistically significant difference between the control and experimental groups in terms of happiness during the first measurement, but a significant difference was found in the measurements made after the vacation. The study showed the influence of (travel as one of the) intentional activities over circumstantial factors. Taking a closer look at the diagram showing the average levels of happiness over time, patterns change between 3S tour and cultural tour as the decrease in the latter is more gradual. This means happiness created by cultural tourism is more permanent the reason behind it may be the deeper experience provided.

This is an important result for the tourism sector in itself. Traveling can be one of the most effective factors to boost happiness. Especially cultural tours which nurture people from different aspects thus creating a deeper experience besides relaxing and escaping the daily routine make a significant difference on happiness. This result gives some clues for a meaningful tourism experience. From a managerial perspective, it should be noted that better understanding of the effects of traveling can contribute to product development and marketing communication.

However, this study is limited in this context; some suggestions can be made for future studies to search the relationship between memorable experiences and happiness. By conducting such research, the influence of tour experiences on the happiness can be evaluated. Also, research can be conducted on people who prefer individually planned vacations instead of package tours. In addition, comparative studies can be carried out on individuals from different cultures to determine the cultural perspective or include any recreational activities other than traveling.

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<b>Teşekkür:</b> Katkılarından dolayı hakemlere teşekkür ederiz.	<b>Araştırmacıların Katkı Oranı:</b> Yazarlar çalışmaya eşit oranda katkı sağlamıştır.
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<b>Çıkar Çatışması:</b> Yazarlar arasında çıkar çatışması yoktur.	

  
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Mersin Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü lisansüstü öğrencilerinden Zeynep ALBAYRAK'ın "Tatil Deneyimi ve Mutluluk İlişkisi" adlı çalışma kurumumuz tarafından incelenmiş ve, Etik yönden uygun bulunmuştur.

Etik yönden geliştirilmesi gerekmektedir.

Etik yönden uygun bulunmamıştır.

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Etik Kurul Karar Toplantı Tarihi ve Karar No	19/09/2019 - 025
Yer	Mersin Üniversitesi, Uğur Oral Kültür Merkezi
Katılımcılar	Formda imzası bulunan üyelerimiz toplantıya katılmıştır.