

The Effect of Experience Quality on Behavioral Intention: The Serial Mediating Roles of Leisure Involvement and Leisure Satisfaction

Deneyim Kalitesinin Davranışsal Niyet Üzerindeki Etkisinde Serbest Zaman İlgilenimi ve Serbest Zaman Tatminin Seri Aracılık Rolü

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to examine the relationship between experience quality, involvement, satisfaction, and behavioral intention. A total of 327 participants engaged in recreational skiing activities were included in the research, which was carried out using correlational study. The hypotheses developed within the scope of the study were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The results of the SEM revealed that experience quality had a direct and positively significant effect on both involvement and satisfaction. Furthermore, it was found that involvement and satisfaction had full and serial mediation effects in the relationship between experience quality and behavioral intention. As a result, the findings indicate that experience quality has a direct and significant impact on both involvement and satisfaction levels; moreover, the effect of experience quality on behavioral intention occurs indirectly through the mediating roles of involvement and satisfaction. Accordingly, it is recommended that recreational service providers focus on enhancing experience quality by developing strategies aimed at increasing participants' levels of involvement and satisfaction, thereby strengthening their intention to participate again.

Keywords: Experience quality, involvement, satisfaction, behavioral intention

ÖZ

Bu çalışma deneyim kalitesi, ilgilenim, tatmin ve davranışsal niyet arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemek amacıyla yapılmıştır. İlişkisel tarama modeli ile yapılan araştırmaya rekreasyonel kayak aktivitesi yapan 327 katılımcı dahil edilmiştir. Araştırma kapsamında oluşturulan hipotezler Yapısal Eşitlik Modeli (YEM) kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. YEM sonuçları; deneyim kalitesinin, ilgilenim ve tatmin üzerinde doğrudan pozitif anlamlı etkilerinin olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca, deneyim kalitesinin davranışsal niyet üzerindeki etkisinde ilgilenim ve tatminin tam aracılık ve seri aracılık etkisinde sahip olduğu bulunmuştur. Sonuç olarak, araştırma bulguları, deneyim kalitesinin hem ilgilenim hem de tatmin düzeyleri üzerinde doğrudan anlamlı bir etkisinin bulunduğunu; bununla birlikte, deneyim kalitesinin davranışsal niyet üzerindeki etkisinin, ilgilenim ve tatmin değişkenleri aracılığıyla dolaylı olarak gerçekleştiğini göstermektedir. Bu doğrultuda, rekreasyonel hizmet sunan işletmelerin, katılımcıların ilgilenim ve tatmin düzeylerini artırmaya yönelik stratejiler geliştirerek, deneyim kalitesini iyileştirmeye odaklanmaları; böylece kullanıcıların tekrar katılım niyetlerini güçlendirmeleri önerilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Deneyim kalitesi, ilgilenim, tatmin, davranışsal niyet

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Introduction

Among the various types of tourism, sport tourism has exhibited faster growth than others and has developed as a profitable niche market (Hashemi et al., 2023). In line with this expansion, scholars have begun to employ interdisciplinary methods and approaches to better understand the motivations that drive participants toward sport tourism. Recreational skiing represents a distinctive niche market with high revenue potential; it is both directly associated with tourism and recognized as a highly popular winter sport tourism activity (Huang et al., 2025). Understanding the profiles of participants engaged in recreational skiing is important for gaining deeper insight into the structure and functioning of this specialized domain. Recreational skiing participants are travelers who, in pursuit of their holiday purposes, show interest in skiing-related activities and accordingly plan skiing experiences at a variety of facilities ranging from small recreational areas to large-scale ski resorts (Armbrecht, 2021).

Accordingly, recreational skiing stands out not only for its economic significance but also for the contributions it makes to individuals' psychological and social well-being (Hall et al., 2017). Moreover, by providing enjoyable experiences, recreational skiing offers benefits such as rest, relaxation, and opportunities to form new social relationships (Lin et al., 2014). In addition to these benefits, natural advantages, such as mountainous terrain and abundant snowfall, facilitate individuals' engagement in other winter recreational pursuits like snowboarding and snowmobiling (Ito & Higham, 2020). The enhancement of perceived experience quality, leisure involvement, and satisfaction during these activities encourages individuals' intention to revisit or re-engage in recreational skiing (Hashemi et al., 2023).

Analyzing individuals' perceptions of their recreational skiing experiences and the behavioral outcomes of those experiences has become an essential requirement within the leisure literature. This study represents one of the initial attempts to employ a serial mediation research model to examine participants' perceived experience quality, level of involvement, satisfaction, and behavioral intention in the context of recreational skiing. By modeling the relationships among experience quality, involvement, satisfaction, and behavioral intention within a ski resort context, the study seeks to fill gaps in the literature. In particular, for facility operators to enhance their competitive advantage, they must understand the factors that influence participants' satisfaction levels and behavioral intentions.

Conceptual Framework and Research Hypotheses Experience Quality and Behavioral Intention

In this study, the conceptual model is grounded in the adaptation of the Resource-based Theory (Barney, 1991) to the individual level. The Resource-based Theory posits that sustainable competitive advantage arises from resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable. In this framework, experience quality is conceptualized as an intangible, individual-specific resource that accumulates over time for recreational skiing participants. In high-involvement and experience-intensive activities such as recreational skiing, superior experience quality strengthens individuals' psychological attachment to the activity, thereby enhancing leisure involvement, which in turn fosters leisure satisfaction. Leisure satisfaction is positioned as a key mechanism emerging from individuals' evaluations of experiential outcomes and plays a critical role in shaping behavioral intention (Huang et al., 2015; Mao, 2025). Accordingly, this study proposes that the effect of experience quality on behavioral intention is realized indirectly through leisure involvement and leisure satisfaction. The permanence of the psychological and social benefits generated by recreational winter sports for individuals largely depends on how participants experience and evaluate the activity process, in other words, on experience quality (Huang et al., 2025). Experience quality refers to how customers emotionally perceive their experiences during consumption activities as a result of their interactions with the servicescape, employees, other customers, and additional elements (Chang & Horng, 2010). It is also closely related to the meaning ascribed by the customer, representing the consumer's appraisal of the experience in emotional terms (Mao et al., 2024). Within this framework, experience quality is defined as a psychological outcome attributed by participants to service activities (Glaveli et al., 2021). Accordingly, how individuals participating in recreational winter sports perceive their experience during the activity directly affects their psychological and emotional satisfaction levels. In this regard, it emerges as a decisive factor in both experience quality and the intention to re-participate in the activity (Jin et al., 2015). In light of this information, experience quality has been found to positively and directly influence behavioral intention (Ghorbanzade et al., 2019). Within this scope, the following hypothesis was formulated:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Experience quality has a positive effect on behavioral intention.

Experience Quality and Involvement

In the continuity of the psychological and emotional satisfaction that individuals experience during an activity, not only experience quality but also leisure involvement, which reflects individuals' level of personal interest and motivation toward these activities plays a significant role (Li et al., 2020). Leisure involvement denotes the interaction between individual factors and external stimuli (Kyle et al., 2007) and has been defined as a latent state of motivation, arousal, or interest directed toward a recreational activity or related product (Havitz & Mannell, 2005). Leisure involvement embodies meanings such as the attractiveness and importance of an activity for individuals, self-expression, the formation of social relationships, and identification with the activity (Chien, 2020). Accordingly, where and how participation motivation for an activity develops appears crucial for the sustainability of that activity. The sense of satisfaction felt during a leisure activity contributes to increasing individuals' level of involvement and to the continuation of participation (Tsai, 2021). Involvement is regarded as an effective concept and tool for understanding individuals' commitment to leisure activities. It has been shown that the level of involvement of participants has a significant effect on their perceived experience quality, and that feelings of pleasure and happiness during the activity enhance perceptions of experience quality (Kuo et al., 2024). Within this scope, the following hypothesis was formulated:

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Experience quality has a positive effect on involvement.

Experience Quality and Satisfaction

Event satisfaction emerges as a salient factor that renders the influence of leisure involvement within the activity process more concrete; thus, the satisfaction participants derive from their event experiences deepens the individual meaning of leisure through its effects on their life satisfaction and overall quality of life (Chick et al., 2021). Leisure satisfaction is generally regarded as the evaluation by individuals of the experiences they undergo in their participation in leisure activities (Zhou et al., 2021). The satisfaction and positive emotions experienced following participation in leisure activities not only help sustain continued engagement in such events but also contribute to increasing the level of participation (Wu et al., 2018). It is argued that the relationships between perceived experience quality and satisfaction are situation-specific, varying across participants, and that satisfaction emerges subsequent to the assessment of the event's quality (Armbrecht, 2021). This condition supports the positive relationship between experience quality and satisfaction. Accordingly, the following hypothesis was developed:

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Experience quality has a positive effect on satisfaction.

Involvement, Satisfaction, and Behavioral Intention

Behavioral intention is defined as the extent to which an individual formulates deliberate plans to perform or not perform specific future behaviors (Armbrecht, 2021). In another definition, behavioral intention, expressed as the likelihood of enacting a behavior in a given situation, is commonly associated with behavioral outcomes such as re-participation and recommending the experience to others (Ghorbanzade et al., 2019). Individuals' behavioral intentions emerge following the evaluation of a product or service and subsequently influence their intentions to repurchase or re-engage (Kuo et al., 2024). Involvement explains the intentions underlying individuals' participation in leisure activities through specific informational stimuli and psychological factors (Wang et al., 2022). Involvement also provides individuals with opportunities to understand themselves and to express their identities appropriately through participation in activities (Li et al., 2020). Moreover, it has been noted that a high level of involvement among individuals participating in outdoor recreation activities offers values such as seeking novelty by escaping monotony, enhancing environmental awareness, self-actualization, self-esteem, sense of belonging, satisfaction, and happiness (Ho et al., 2015). As a consequence of these gains, higher levels of involvement increase individuals' intentions to re-participate in activities.

The positive emotional and psychological effects generated by event satisfaction are closely related to the concept of behavioral intention, which constitutes a fundamental factor shaping participants' future behaviors (Jin et al., 2015). Satisfaction is regarded as a mediator for predicting individuals' behavioral intentions and positively and significantly influences re-participation intention (Hashemi et al., 2023). Individuals' preferences for re-engaging in an activity are determined by the level of satisfaction that emerges. In this context, the construct of satisfaction should be examined together with behavioral intention, which explains whether an individual will participate in an activity in the future (Hall et al., 2017). It has been determined that a high perception of experience quality following an activity leads to increased satisfaction, which in turn exerts positive effects on behavioral intention (Armbrecht, 2021). Within this scope, the research hypotheses developed are presented below:

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Involvement mediates the effect of experience quality on behavioral intention.

Hypothesis 5 (H5): Satisfaction mediates the effect of experience quality on behavioral intention.

Experience Quality, Involvement, Satisfaction, and Behavioral Intention

The relationships between experience quality and behavioral intention (Ghorbanzade et al., 2019; Jin et al., 2015), experience quality and involvement (Tsai, 2021), experience quality and satisfaction (Armbrecht, 2021), involvement and behavioral intention (Kuo et al., 2024), and satisfaction and behavioral intention (Hall et al., 2017; Triantafyllidou & Petala, 2016) have been demonstrated in various studies in the literature. However, these relationships have not been examined from the perspective of participants in recreational skiing activities. This research is significant at both national and international levels for understanding the benefits that recreational activities provide to individuals and for elucidating how a higher-quality service experience can be achieved. In the context of recreational skiing, experience quality encompasses individuals' comprehensive perceptions of service, interaction, and consumption dimensions, and acts to enhance their involvement in the activity (Mao, 2025). Increased leisure involvement subsequently amplifies the evaluative appraisal of the extent to which the experience satisfies individuals' expectations and leisure-related needs, thereby promoting leisure satisfaction. Leisure satisfaction, as a post-consumption evaluative outcome, in turn, serves as a proximal antecedent of behavioral intention. Accordingly, leisure involvement and leisure satisfaction operate as sequential psychological mechanisms that mediate the translation of experience quality into behavioral intention (Hashemi et al., 2023). Within this framework, investigating the relationships among the experience quality, involvement, and satisfaction levels, and the behavioral intentions of individuals participating in recreational skiing will offer a meaningful contribution to the relevant literature. Accordingly, it is assumed in this study that there are indirect effects among recreational ski participants' experience quality perceptions, their levels of involvement and satisfaction, and their behavioral intentions. Therefore, the following hypothesis has been developed:

Hypothesis 6 (H6): Experience quality can effect behavioral intention through the serial mediating roles of involvement and satisfaction.

Methods

Participants

The sample of the study comprised a total of 327 individuals who participated in skiing for recreational purposes. Participants were selected using a convenience sampling method, and the data were obtained from individuals visiting ski resorts located in Türkiye, specifically Uludağ Ski Resort in Bursa and Palandöken Ski Resort in Erzurum. The ages of the participants ranged from 18 to 65 years, with a mean age of 26.06 ± 8.32 . Examination of the demographic characteristics revealed that the gender distribution was 31.8% female ($n = 104$) and 68.2% male ($n = 223$). In terms of income level, 41.6% of the participants ($n = 136$) reported a below-average level, 40.7% ($n = 133$) an average level, and 17.7% ($n = 58$) an above-average level. Regarding the frequency of participation in recreational skiing, 44.0% ($n = 144$) indicated taking part at least once per season, 34.6% ($n = 113$) two to five times per season, 5.5% ($n = 18$) six to ten times per season, and 15.9% ($n = 52$) eleven or more times per season.

Procedures

Ethics committee approval was received for this study from the ethics committee of İstanbul Nişantaşı University (Date: July 16, 2025, Decision Number: 2025-08). After obtaining ethics committee approval the data collection instruments were administered to participants within the framework of voluntariness and confidentiality. Within the scope of the study, data were collected in 2025 from individuals participating in recreational skiing activities at the Uludağ and Palandöken ski resorts in Türkiye. The survey form was sent to individuals included as participants in the study through personal email and social media platforms. Prior to participation, the purpose and duration of the study were explained, and it was emphasized that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time. Verbal or written consent was obtained as part of the informed consent procedure. Completion of the questionnaire took an average of 10 minutes per participant. Participants were assured that no identifying information would be requested, that the data would be used solely for scientific purposes, and that they would not be shared with third parties.

Data Collection Tools

The questionnaire employed in the study consisted of two sections. The first section included demographic information concerning the participants. The second section comprised scales designed to measure participants' perceptions regarding their recreational skiing experience, specifically the variables of experience quality, involvement, satisfaction, and behavioral

intention toward this activity. During the data collection process, the researchers conducted an extensive literature review and made the necessary adaptations to the scale components to ensure alignment with the purpose and scope of the study. The measurement instruments used in the research were adapted from established scales in the relevant literature.

Experience Quality Scale (EQS): A four-item construct, developed on the basis of the scale created by Sevilmiş and Doğan (2023), was utilized in the study. An example item is: "Skiing is an enjoyable experience." Participant responses were obtained using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = "Strongly disagree" to 5 = "Strongly agree." The Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient for the construct was calculated as .76.

Leisure Involvement Scale (LIS): The scale originally developed by Kyle et al. (2007) was adapted to Turkish culture by Gürbüz et al. (2018), who established its validity and reliability. In the present study, a four-item construct was employed to measure this variable; a sample item is: "Skiing interests me." Participant responses were collected using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = "Strongly disagree" to 5 = "Strongly agree." The Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient for the construct was determined to be .85.

Leisure Satisfaction Scale (LSS): The scale developed by Beard and Ragheb (1980) was adapted into Turkish by Gökçe and Orhan (2011). In the present study, a four-item construct was utilized; a sample item is: "I am quite satisfied with skiing." All items were evaluated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = "Strongly disagree" to 5 = "Strongly agree." The Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was reported as .88.

Behavioral Intention Scale (BIS): The scale was adapted from the study of Garcia-Fernandez et al. (2018). In the present study, this three-item scale was employed; a sample item is: "I would recommend skiing to others." All items were evaluated using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = "Strongly disagree" to 5 = "Strongly agree." The Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found to be .85.

The items were first translated into Turkish and subsequently examined for content validity, linguistic appropriateness, and clarity by four academics who are experts in leisure and consumer behavior and proficient in both English and Turkish. During the content validity evaluation, experts were asked to assess each item in terms of relevance, representativeness, and clarity using their disciplinary expertise, and their feedback was used to identify items requiring revision. Minor wording modifications were made based on expert consensus to enhance conceptual equivalence and comprehensibility. During the Turkish-to-English translation phase, the back translation method was employed (Banville et al., 2000); the translator and the researchers compared the translated texts with the originals, after which the necessary revisions were made to ensure the applicability of the Turkish form of the questionnaire in the relevant field. The questionnaire was administered to participants in Turkish.

Data Analysis

The skewness and kurtosis values of the variables examined in the study were evaluated, and all values were found to fall within acceptable ranges. This result indicates that the assumption of normality was met (Leech et al., 2005). In addition, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated to determine the reliability levels of the scales employed. Pearson product moment correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships among the variables. To test the mediating roles of involvement and satisfaction in the relationship between experience quality and behavioral intention, Model 6 of the mediation analysis framework proposed by Hayes (2013) was applied. Indirect effects were assessed within a 95% confidence interval using 5,000 bootstrap samples via the PROCESS macro. The PROCESS macro interprets analysis results on the basis of confidence intervals and provides robust outcomes even when the assumption of normality is not fully satisfied. The significance of the mediation effect was determined by whether zero was contained within the confidence interval. The absence of zero in the interval indicates that the mediation effect is statistically significant. The magnitude of the mediation effect was evaluated in accordance with the criteria proposed by Preacher and Kelly (2011).

Results

The results related to descriptive statistics, mediation and serial mediation analysis for the scales used in the study are included in the Table 1, 2 and Figure 1.

Table 1.
Distribution of Scale Scores (EQS, LIS, LSS, BIS)

Scales Sub-Dimensions	Number of items	Mean	Sd	Skewness	Kurtosis	C. Alpha
EQS	4	4.41	0.58	-1.12	1.49	0.76
LIS	4	4.38	0.74	-1.18	0.57	0.85
LSS	4	4.60	0.57	-1.47	1.35	0.88
BIS	3	4.68	0.55	-1.93	2.94	0.85

Note: EQS = Experience Quality Scale; LIS = Leisure Involvement Scale; LSS = Leisure Satisfaction Scale; BIS = Behavioral Intention Scale

An examination of the scale score distributions indicated that the mean scores for all four scales conformed to a normal distribution. Based on the distribution of the mean scores, the highest mean was observed for the BIS (4.68), whereas the lowest mean was found for the LIS (4.38). Furthermore, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient values were determined to be high.

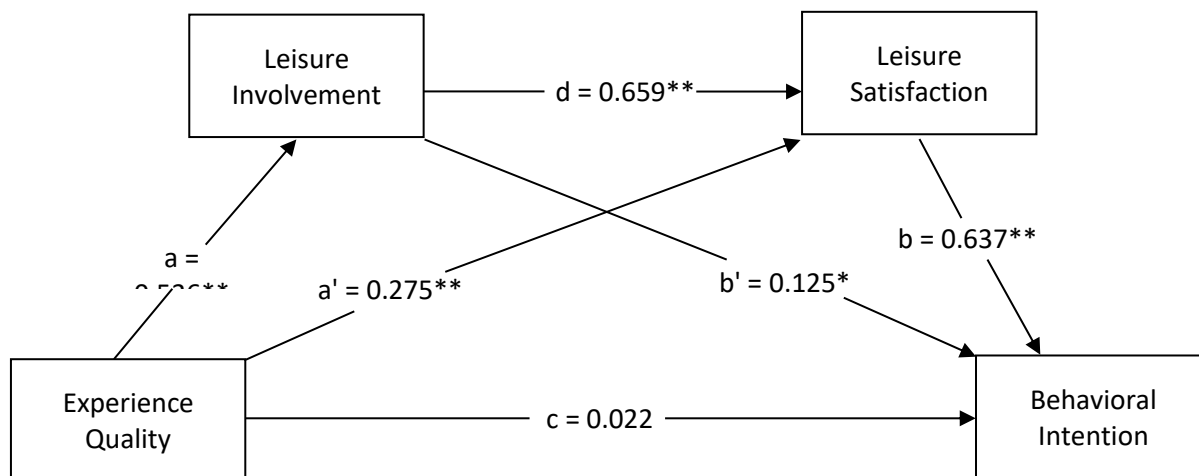
Table 2.
Pearson Correlation Analysis Results for Scale Scores

	EQS	LIS	LSS	BIS
EQS	1			
LIS	0.536**	1		
LSS	0.629**	0.807**	1	
BIS	0.491**	0.652**	0.753**	1

Note(s): * = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .01$. EQS = Experience Quality Scale; LIS = Leisure Involvement Scale; LSS = Leisure Satisfaction Scale; BIS = Behavioral Intention Scale

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis indicated statistically significant, moderate positive relationships between EQS and the mean scores of LIS, LSS, and BIS ($p < .01$). In addition, statistically significant, strong positive relationships were identified between IS and SS, as well as between LSS and BIS ($p < .01$).

Figure 1.
Results of Path Analysis Related to the Model



Note(s): * = $p < .05$; ** = $p < .01$.

The analysis results indicated that experience quality did not have a statistically significant direct positive effect on behavioral intention ($\beta_{EQS \rightarrow BIS} = 0.022$; $p > .05$). Experience quality was found to have a significant positive direct effect on involvement ($\beta_{EQS \rightarrow LIS} = 0.536$; $p < .01$) and on satisfaction ($\beta_{EQS \rightarrow LSS} = 0.275$; $p < .01$). In addition, involvement was

identified as a mediator in the effect of experience quality on behavioral intention (indirect effect $\beta_{EQS \rightarrow LIS \rightarrow BIS} = 0.067$; $p < .01$). Satisfaction also demonstrated a mediating effect in this relationship ($\beta_{EQS \rightarrow LSS \rightarrow BIS} = 0.175$; $p < .01$). Finally, a significant serial mediating effect of involvement and satisfaction was established in the relationship between experience quality and behavioral intention ($\beta_{EQS \rightarrow LIS \rightarrow LSS \rightarrow BIS} = 0.225$; $p < .01$).

Table 3.
Hypothesis Results for Regression Coefficients

	Relationships between Parameters	Effect (β)	95% CI		Hypothesis Result
			LLCI	ULCI	
Direct effect	H1 = EQS \rightarrow BIS	0.022	-0.066	0.107	Unsupported
	H2 = EQS \rightarrow LIS	0.536	0.559	0.791	Supported
	H3 = EQS \rightarrow LSS	0.275	0.200	0.338	Supported
Indirect effects	H4 = EQS \rightarrow LIS \rightarrow BIS	0.067	0.008	0.149	Supported
	H5 = EQS \rightarrow LSS \rightarrow BIS	0.175	0.108	0.246	Supported
	H6 = EQS \rightarrow LIS \rightarrow LSS \rightarrow BIS	0.225	0.147	0.311	Supported
Total indirect effect		0.467	0.371	0.568	
Total effect		0.489	0.372	0.551	

Note(s): CI = Confidence Interval; LLCI = Lower Level of Confidence Interval, ULCI = Upper Level of Confidence Interval.

The research findings demonstrated that experience quality did not have a direct positive and significant effect on behavioral intention ($\beta = 0.022$; $p > .05$), indicating that Hypothesis 1 (H1) was not supported. However, experience quality was found to exert a direct positive and significant effect on involvement ($\beta = 0.536$; $p < .01$) and satisfaction ($\beta = 0.275$; $p < .01$), supporting Hypotheses 2 (H2) and 3 (H3). Moreover, involvement was identified as a mediator in the effect of experience quality on behavioral intention ($\beta = 0.067$; $p < .01$), thereby supporting Hypothesis 4 (H4). Satisfaction was also found to mediate this relationship ($\beta = 0.175$; $p < .01$), supporting Hypothesis 5 (H5). Finally, a significant serial mediation effect of involvement and satisfaction was established in the relationship between experience quality and behavioral intention ($\beta = 0.225$; $p < .01$), providing evidence for the acceptance of Hypothesis 6 (H6).

Discussion

In this study, a model was developed that can contribute to a long-term service perspective for recreational ski participants and enable facilities to improve their service performance more effectively. The study aimed to examine the relationships among participants' experience quality perceptions, levels of involvement, levels of satisfaction, and behavioral intentions. The findings indicate that participants' perceptions of experience quality have a direct effect on their involvement and satisfaction levels; furthermore, involvement and satisfaction play indirect roles in the relationship between experience quality and behavioral intention. In addition, involvement and satisfaction were found to exert a serial mediating effect on the influence of experience quality on behavioral intention.

Hypothesis 1 (H1), which tested the direct effect of recreational ski participants' experience quality on their behavioral intentions, was not supported. This finding differs from the results reported in previous studies by Armbrecht (2021) and Tapar et al. (2017). The discrepancy suggests that recreational participants visiting ski resorts in Türkiye do not rely solely on experience quality when forming their future behavioral intentions. From a structural equation modeling perspective, the absence of a significant direct effect indicates that experience quality does not independently influence behavioral intention; rather, its impact is exerted through the mediating variables of satisfaction and involvement (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Consistent with mediation frameworks proposed in the literature, the finding that the direct path from experience quality to behavioral intention was non-significant in the initial assessment suggests that the effect of experience quality becomes meaningful only when the mediating variables are incorporated into the model (Ledermann et al., 2025). Thus, the development of repurchase or revisit intentions, or the recommendation of a touristic destination to others, is closely associated not only with the perceived quality of the experience but also with the degree of satisfaction derived from it and the extent of mental and emotional engagement. Accordingly, when satisfaction and involvement are incorporated into the model as mediating variables, the effect of experience quality on behavioral intention can be better explained, pointing to a full mediation mechanism in which experience quality indirectly shapes behavioral intention.

According to the research findings, experience quality plays a decisive role in the involvement levels of recreational ski participants; accordingly, Hypothesis 2 (H2) was supported. Individuals with high levels of involvement tend to ascribe value

to skiing activities, derive enjoyment from participation, and develop favorable attitudes toward these activities. Thus, experience quality emerges as a key factor that positively shapes involvement. The relevant literature likewise indicates that the involvement levels of individuals engaged in outdoor recreational activities significantly influence their perceptions of experience quality. For example, participants who find outdoor recreational activities enjoyable and appealing report higher experience quality perceptions (Kuo et al., 2024). Moreover, experiences gained during skiing activities have been shown to exert positive effects on individuals' quality of life (Huang et al., 2025). These findings demonstrate that experience quality is an important determinant in enhancing the involvement levels of recreational ski participants.

In this study, a positive and significant effect of experience quality on individuals' satisfaction levels was identified. In line with this finding, Hypothesis 3 (H3) was supported. The literature likewise demonstrates that experience quality exerts a favorable influence on satisfaction among recreational ski participants (Huang et al., 2025). Moreover, prior research has shown that core dimensions of experiences in adventure-based recreation activities such as hedonism, escape, and socialization rank among the most salient factors enhancing participants' satisfaction levels (Triantafillidou & Petala, 2016). These results exhibit a high degree of consistency with the findings of the present study. In particular, the enhancement of experience quality during recreational activities positively influences the feeling of satisfaction, thereby contributing to elevated overall satisfaction levels. This underscores the decisive role of experience quality in shaping participants' emotional and cognitive processes and highlights its importance as a key parameter in evaluating the effectiveness of recreational activities. Consequently, improving the quality of recreational experiences is critically important for increasing individuals' satisfaction and fostering their sustained interest in such activities.

It was found that involvement fully mediates the effect of experience quality on behavioral intention; thus, the study's fourth hypothesis (H4) was accepted. The relevant literature likewise points to the existence of positive and statistically significant relationships among involvement, experience quality, and behavioral intention (Kuo et al., 2024; Tsai, 2021). These findings are consistent with the results of the present research. Participants with high levels of involvement are more inclined to engage in recreational activities, experience positive emotions, and form more favorable perceptions of experience quality. This indicates that involvement is not only a variable influencing behavioral outcomes, but also a critical factor shaping how individuals evaluate an experience and the extent to which they derive satisfaction from it. Accordingly, the development of strategies aimed at enhancing individuals' involvement levels in the design of outdoor recreational activities would make an important contribution to the sustainability of purchase and participation behavior.

According to the research findings, satisfaction fully mediates the effect of experience quality on behavioral intention. The study's fifth hypothesis (H5) was therefore supported. There is strong evidence in the related literature that satisfaction exerts positive and statistically significant effects both on perceptions of experience quality and on individuals' behavioral intentions (Ghorbanzade et al., 2019; Jin et al., 2015). In a study conducted by Armbrrecht (2021) within the context of outdoor recreational activities, the mediating role of satisfaction in the relationship between event quality and behavioral intention was emphasized as strong and significant. These results are in alignment with the findings of the present study. Positive emotional experiences strengthen participants' behavioral intentions regardless of prior expectations, offering strategic opportunities for event organizers. Moreover, even when experiential costs are high, behavioral intentions may remain unaffected if satisfaction is achieved. When participants perceive an event as high-quality and enjoyable, the likelihood of repeat participation and recommending the event to others increases (Armbrrecht, 2021). These findings underscore the significant impact of satisfaction on experience quality and behavioral outcomes.

Finally, it was determined that involvement and satisfaction exert a serial mediating effect on the relationship between experience quality and behavioral intention. The study's sixth hypothesis (H6) was thus confirmed. The pertinent literature provides extensive and consistent evidence that levels of involvement and satisfaction generate positive and significant effects on both perceived experience quality and individuals' behavioral intentions (Hall et al., 2017; Kuo et al., 2024). In a study conducted by Li et al. (2020) within the context of cultural recreational activities, high-level positive relationships were identified among leisure involvement, satisfaction, and behavioral intention. Furthermore, an examination of the sub-dimensions of leisure involvement revealed that hedonic value exerted the strongest effect on satisfaction, while the centrality of the activity setting demonstrated the strongest effect on behavioral intention. Another study on recreational ski participants showed that positive emotions are strong predictors of both place satisfaction and behavioral intention. Additionally, place satisfaction was found to play a full mediating role in the relationship of customer loyalty and positive emotions with behavioral intention (Hashemi et al., 2023). These findings are consistent with and supportive of the results obtained in the present study. In conclusion, experience quality, involvement, satisfaction, and behavioral intention are of

critical importance for ski resorts. Improvements targeting these factors should be implemented to ensure the effective and seamless performance of service delivery.

Conclusion

Experience quality and participants' intentions toward their future behaviors hold an important place in ski resorts. The research findings show that the perceptions of experience quality that participants construct based on their past experiences generate positive effects on their levels of involvement and feelings of satisfaction. This study demonstrated that the satisfaction experienced and the level of involvement felt by individuals participating in recreational skiing activities are shaped by their actual experiences of service performance, and that these elements are fundamental factors influencing participants' repurchase intentions. For ski resort managers to enhance the quality of the services they offer and to establish a sustainable management model, participants' perceptions of experience quality, behavioral intentions, levels of involvement, and feelings of satisfaction are of great importance. Therefore, enterprises providing recreational services need to adopt a holistic service design and marketing strategy that places experience quality at the center, attends to participants' levels of involvement and satisfaction, and supports behavioral intention in a positive manner. Such an approach will contribute to the long-term success of the enterprises.

This study offers several theoretical contributions. First, it demonstrates that the effect of experience quality on behavioral intentions is not direct; rather, it operates through strong indirect and serial mediation mechanisms via participation and satisfaction. Furthermore, it indicates that experience quality alone does not shape behavioral intentions, and that the observed full and serial mediation effects are transmitted through participants' cognitive and affective processes. This finding illustrates that behavioral intentions are dynamic processes shaped not solely by experience quality, but also through the interaction of participation and satisfaction, reinforcing the relevance of process-oriented theoretical frameworks, such as the S-O-R model and the resource-based theory, for understanding participation behavior in recreational activities. Thus, the transformation of positive recreational experiences into behavioral outcomes occurs not through a singular effect, but through a series of cognitive and affective mechanisms, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the processes that guide consumer behavior in the context of recreational activities.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This study contains certain limitations. The conceptual model developed was considered predominantly in the context of ski resorts in Türkiye and was tested on a sample consisting of 327 valid participants. Therefore, caution is required in generalizing the findings. Further research is needed to determine whether the model is also valid for different winter sports activities or various sport tourism destinations. In addition, the participants included in the study consist of domestic visitors to ski resorts in Türkiye. This situation creates a specific limitation regarding the participant profile. Therefore, it is recommended that future studies employ more diverse samples that include international ski participants. Moreover, in order to enhance the validity and generalizability of the model, it would be beneficial to collect data from different ski resorts across Türkiye. Furthermore, to increase interest in and participation in ski resorts, events and programs that stimulate individuals' interest in skiing activities should be organized. The services offered should be continuously improved in ways that enhance participants' levels of satisfaction. In this process, data-driven improvements based on feedback obtained from participants are recommended.

This study provides practical recommendations for ski resort management, emphasizing the development of concrete strategies aimed at enhancing participants' involvement and satisfaction levels. Given that experience quality has a decisive impact on both involvement and satisfaction, ski resorts should prioritize organizing personalized programs, interactive workshops, or skill-development sessions that enhance the overall skiing experience. Moreover, ensuring high-quality facilities, efficient and safe service delivery, as well as opportunities for social interaction and recreation, can strengthen participants' positive perceptions and satisfaction. The continuous improvement of services based on participant feedback can further encourage repeat visits. The serial mediating role of involvement and satisfaction on behavioral intentions indicates that integrated strategies addressing both dimensions simultaneously can effectively reinforce loyalty and recommendation behaviors; thus, loyalty programs and personalized reward systems can support both involvement and satisfaction. Overall, ski resort management should adopt a holistic approach that not only enhances experience quality but also strategically fosters involvement and satisfaction, thereby translating positive experience perceptions into behavioral intentions and securing long-term customer loyalty and sustainable service performance.

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