

Nihat Kamil Anil

# Festival visitors' satisfaction and loyalty: An example of small, local, and municipality organized festival

## Abstract

*Festivals have been proliferating worldwide, and local authorities are either supporting, or organizing small, local festivals to enhance the attractiveness of the destination for non-local visitors. Festivals are also very effective tools for developing destination image, revitalizing economy, culture, traditions, building civic pride, raising funds for special, civic or charitable projects, and providing opportunities for the community to deal with fine arts. This situation increases the importance of factors related to the satisfaction and loyalty of festival visitors, especially for small and local festivals. Therefore, drawing on the existing literature and an assumption that festivalscape is the most important contributor to visitors' satisfaction and loyalty in the context of a small, local and municipality organized annual festivals, the present study aims to identify factors related to the festivalscape that determine visitors' satisfaction and loyalty by using a structural equation modeling. The study examines several variables as the antecedents of the festival visitors' satisfaction and loyalty such as staff, festival area, food, souvenir, informational adequacy and convenience. As a result of the analysis, the study reveals three dimensions related to the festivalscape environmental factors which are food, festival area, and convenience and examines how these factors affect the visitors' satisfaction and, in turn, their loyalty.*

*Key words: festivalscape, festival satisfaction, festival loyalty, Vize, Turkey*

## Introduction

Recently, festivals have been considered as one of the fastest growing types of tourism attractions and have increased in numbers through gaining popularity in many cities worldwide (Gursoy, Kim & Uysal, 2004; Felsenstein & Fleischer, 2003; Thrane, 2002; Crompton & McKay, 1997; Getz, 1997). Goldblatt (2002) defines festivals as a "kaleidoscope of planned culture, sport and political and business occasions: from mega-events like Olympics and world fairs to community festivals; from programs of events at parks and attractions to visits by dignitaries and intergovernmental assemblies; from small meetings and parties to huge conventions and competitions." According to Janiskee, (1980) "festivals are formal periods or programs of pleasurable activities, entertainment or events having a festive character and publicly celebrating some concept, happening or fact". Falassi (1987) views festivals as "a sacred or profane time of celebration, marked by special observances". Simply and shortly Getz (1997) uses three words for festivals "themed public celebrations" that include a large range of events, including sports, concerts, participatory recreation, consumer shows and sales, hospitality places for sponsors and educational events (Getz, 2000).

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Heritage festivals and cultural events have become unique attractions for rural destinations that appeal to many urban residents by creatively blending the best of rural life and cultural traditions (Getz, 1991). Therefore, local authorities use events and festivals within their region to help achieve a diverse range of economic and social objectives (Wood, 2005). As an element of cultural celebrations, festivals can be used to enhance the attractiveness of the destination for non-local visitors, develop community image, raise funds for special, civic or charitable projects, provide opportunities for the community to deal with fine arts, help to preserve and revitalize local cultures and traditions, provide important leisure activity outlets, build social cohesion and provide opportunities for family members to strengthen their bounds, foster civic pride and cohesion (Weaver & Robinson, 1989; Janiskee, 1980; Getz 1991; Liang, Illum & Cole, 2008; Getz, 2008). As Long and Perdue (1990, p. 10) argue, rural communities strive to enhance the local tourism industry to attract nonresidents to the community with the expectation to boost the economy. Similarly, O'Sullivan and Jackson (2002) suggest the critical income generation advantages of festival tourism to localities.

Therefore, for rural areas in particular, government sponsored/supported actions and networking may be significant in overcoming the problems of rurality and smallness by providing a purpose to visit and a social forum for coordination amongst the members of the local rural community (Pickernell, O'Sullivan, Senyard, Julienne & Keast, 2007). Pickernell et al. (2007) also highlight that the vast majority of festivals and events are local in scope and strongly focus on social capital building. They are also strongly correlated with self employment and rurality. In terms of resourcing, there is evidence that local (entrepreneurial) resources are supplementing or replacing those from unitary authorities so supporting the notion that social capital and entrepreneurial activity in rural areas are mutually supportive activities.

Many municipalities are active in funding and organizing festivals and special events (Getz & Frisby, 1991). Andersson and Getz (2009) investigate 193 festivals in four countries, and report that the cost and revenues of more than 1/5 of festivals are internalized by local authorities or other government bodies. Grappi and Montanari (2011) state that the proliferation of festivals has heated up the competition between different cities wishing to organize festivals and attract potentially interested visitors. Therefore, especially in small rural areas, public and private festival organizers should be aware of the major factors affecting visitors' satisfaction and loyalty as satisfaction is crucial to establish longer-term relationships for making repeat visits. This high satisfaction can also raise the likelihood of the visitors recommending the festival and increase the profitability of the event. Additionally, visitor's satisfaction should increase his/her desire to re-participate in the festival next year.

In the literature, despite the vast number of festival studies concerning satisfaction and loyalty, little attention has been paid to small, local and municipality organized festivals with almost no participation of tourists from abroad. However, small rural areas or provinces mostly prefer to revitalize their economy by tourism. Therefore, this study aims to find out the factors related to the festivalscape that determine visitors' satisfaction and loyalty by using a structural equation model in the context of small, local, and municipality organized festival. The study will serve as a guideline for small municipalities that organize small festivals to affect the domestic visitors' satisfaction and loyalty positively; and will try to fill the gap in the literature in this context.

The structure of the paper is as follows: The following section reviews the literature, proposes a basic model for small festivals and sets the hypotheses. The third section is related to the methodology including the site, data collection and measures. Then findings covering demographics of the respondents, measurement reliability, validity, structural model, and hypothesis testing are presented, followed by concluding remarks.

## Literature review

### Festivalscape: Its origin and importance

According to Yoon, Lee and Lee (2010), the concept of "festivalscape" takes its origin from Bitner (1992). Actually, Booms and Bitner (1981) define servicescape as "the environment in which the service is assembled and in which seller and customer interact, combined with tangible commodities that facilitate performance or communication of service" (cited in Masterson & Pickton, 2010). Then, Bitner (1992) states that physical surroundings (e.g., lighting, color, signage, textures, quality of materials, style of furnishings, layout, wall decor, temperature) affect, both, employee performance/job satisfaction and customer actions. These physical factors can be controlled to enhance or constrain customer reactions as servicescape elements are an integral part of the service encounter and they provide customer cues for evaluating service delivery (cited in Lio & Rody, 2009).

According to Bitner (1992), "servicescape" has three basic dimensions: (a) ambient conditions, (b) spatial layout and functionality and (c) signs, symbols and artifacts. Ambient conditions are factors that affect perceptions of human responses to the environment. Generally affecting five senses, ambient conditions include background characteristics of the environment such as temperature, lighting, noise, music and scent. For example, Mitchell, Kahn and Knasko (1995) investigate the effects of congruent and incongruent odors on purchase behavior. Their results indicate that congruent odors increase processing time, holistic processing, self references and variety-seeking behavior. Bitner (1992) defines spatial layout as "the ways in which machinery, equipment and furnishings are arranged, the size and shape of those items and the spatial relationships among them." According to Bitner (1992), functionality means the ability of the same items to facilitate performance and the achievement of goals. Garip and Unlu (2011) show that spatial layout of the retail store affect spatial perception and consumer behavior. They find that more products are purchased from more integrated spaces of the store. For the last dimension, Bitner (1992, p. 66) stresses that many items in the physical environment serve as explicit or implicit signals that communicate about the place to its users. Quality of materials used in construction, artwork, presence of certificates and photographs on walls, floor coverings and personal objects displayed in the environment can all communicate symbolic meaning and create an overall aesthetic impression. Bitner (1992) gives an example of a restaurant where white table cloths and subdued lighting symbolically represents full service and high prices.

The superiority of "festivalscape" over "servicescape" is about what Yang, Gu and Cen (2011) suggest that previous studies have related with the service environment in retail store (Garip & Unlu, 2011) and restaurants (Bitner, 1992). These studies, unfortunately, have not covered the effects of staff, program content or souvenirs. Therefore, "festivalscape" includes broader definition than the "servicescape". Lee, Lee, Lee and Babin (2008) define "festivalscape" as the general atmosphere experienced by festival

patrons. Inspired by Bitner (1992) they identify seven dimensions of "festivalscape" that may impact consumer satisfaction: program content, staff service, facilities, food, souvenirs, convenience, and information availability. They find only three dimensions (a) program content, (b) facilities, and (c) food to be the antecedents of festival satisfaction.

## Studies related to festivalscape

Ozdemir and Culha (2009) adapt the construct for International Camel Wrestling Festival in Ephesus, Turkey, created by Lee et al. (2008). They have analyzed the data by employing factor analysis and multiple regression analysis. They renamed the mixed factor as festival area because two items of the content dimension, four items of the facilities dimension and one item of the convenience dimension were loaded on the same factor. Moreover, they note that, contrary to the study of Lee et al. (2008), their factor analysis did not separate the satisfaction and loyalty dimensions. Therefore, they are not analyzed separately, but as a combination of both of these dimensions. They also discover that only the festival area has an impact on satisfaction/loyalty as other dimensions, such as food and convenience, are not found significant.

Yoon et al. (2010) adapted and improved the construct for The Punggi Ginseng festival in Republic of Korea. They claim that program, souvenir, food and facility are the antecedents of the festival value which affects directly festival satisfaction and, then, the festival satisfaction influences the festival loyalty. Later on, Grappi and Montanari (2011) re-adapted and further improved the construct for Festival of Philosophy in Italy. They argue that festival's environment plays an important role in affecting repeat visit intention through emotions and hedonism visitors experience during the festival. They find that a festival's program content can affect visitors' emotions and hedonism more strongly than the other cues. Staff behavior also appears to affect hedonism. Moreover, locations, atmosphere, hotel and restaurant offers and souvenir availability demonstrate an ability to affect emotions. However, the information and facilities environment cue do not play any significant role.

Yang et al. (2011) investigate the effect of festivalscape in a different perspective. Prior to their study, the festivalscape had always been treated as antecedents of emotions or satisfaction that affect behavioral intentions or loyalty. However, in this study, they propose that festivalscapes moderate the effect of customers' emotion and perceived value on behavioral intentions. Still, their results indicate that there is no moderating effect of festivalscape on behavioral intentions. Lastly, Mason and Paggiaro (2012) also explore the relationships among festivalscape, emotions, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions. They find that festivalscape (food, fun and comfort) and emotions have crucial and direct effects on satisfaction which, in turn, affect behavioral intention. The effects of the festivalscape on visitors' future behavior are only indirect and mediated by satisfaction.

## The relationship between festival satisfaction and loyalty

Getz (2010) investigates 233 studies under the planning and managing events category. Under this category, he identifies 36 studies within the evaluation theme consisting of effectiveness and efficiency; consumer satisfaction and service quality; return on investment; unanticipated impacts; learning organization. "Evaluation emerged as a strong topic, with 36 citations, although the majority of these research articles pertain to the assessments of quality and satisfaction. This fashion has basically

adopted consumer marketing to events through application of model-building" (Getz, 2010, p. 15). Similarly, Marcussen (2011) reviews the studies about tourist satisfaction and loyalty published through 2000-2011. According to the review and the statistical analysis, Marcussen (2011) finds that overall satisfaction with the holiday is a very strong driver of intention to return or loyalty. It should be noted that behavioral intentions and (attitudinal) loyalty have been used interchangeably in the literature of marketing and tourism (Yoon et al., 2010).

Satisfaction is defined as pleasurable fulfillment (Oliver, 1997). McDowall (2011, p. 282) defines festival satisfaction as "a sum of the experiences the attendees had at the festival." Yoon et al. (2010, p. 337) depict festival satisfaction as "overall festival value evaluated by the composite of quality dimensions." Loyalty is defined as "a deeply held commitment to re-buy or re-patronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior" (Oliver, 1999). Oliver (1999, p. 36) sets phases of loyalty as cognitive, affective, conative and action where "cognitive loyalty focuses on the brand's performance aspects, affective loyalty is directed toward the brand's likeableness, conative loyalty is experienced when the consumer focuses on wanting to re-buy the brand and action loyalty is commitment to the action of re-buying". According to Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman (1996) customers who remain with a firm for a period of years because they are pleased with the service are more likely to buy additional services and spread favorable word-of-mouth communication than the short-term customers, and loyalty may be manifested in multiple ways; for example, by expressing a preference for a company over others, by continuing to purchase from it, or by increasing business with it in the future. Festival loyalty inspired by aforementioned studies can be defined as a deeply held commitment to re-visit, spread positive word of mouth about and willingness to recommend a festival.

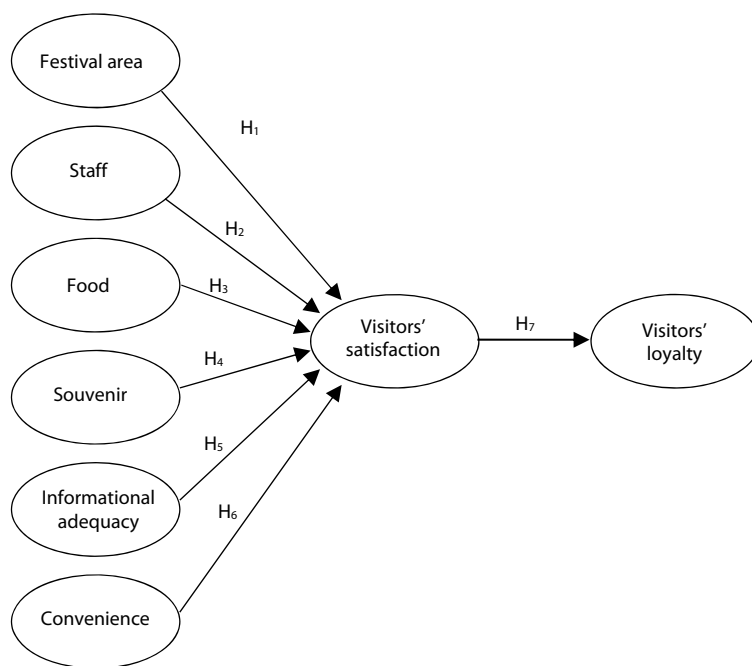
As for the satisfaction and loyalty relationship, Baker and Crompton (2000, p. 786) state that "Higher quality of performance and levels of satisfaction are perceived to result in increased loyalty and future visitation, greater tolerance of price increases and an enhanced reputation". Similarly, travelers' overall satisfaction level is positively related to the possibility of revisiting the destination in the future (Hui, Wan & Ho, 2007; Kozak & Rimmington, 2000). Similarly, Cole and Illum (2006) find that visitors' satisfaction can result in repeat visitation and positive word-of-mouth. Recently, Kim, Suh and Eves (2010) confirm that satisfaction is a significant direct factor influencing customers' loyalty in hospitality and tourism. Lee, Yang, and Lo (2008), researching the "2006 Kenting Wind Chime Festival", found that 64% of the respondents promised to make a visit again. Mendes, Valle, Guerreiro, and Silva (2010) examine tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty in Portugal. They find that the relationship between satisfaction and destination loyalty is stronger among older tourists, tourists possessing higher education and Portuguese (domestic) tourists. However, they find that for foreign tourists that are mainly motivated by business, health and leisure, the link between satisfaction and loyalty is weak. Grunwell, Ha and Martin (2008) analyze Asheville Film Festival and Bele Chere- Street Festival. They discover that most of the attendants of both festivals are willing to re-visit the festival in the following year. Yuan and Jang (2008) examine the festival satisfaction and festival behavioral intentions in the context of a wine festival. The results show that wine festival satisfaction positively influences the behavioral intentions. They report that high satisfaction at a wine festival causes, both, higher purchase and visitation intentions. Yoon et al. (2010, p. 338) assert that the relationship between festival satisfaction and festival loyalty is strong and positive.

Although McKercher, Denizci-Guillet and Ng's (2011) qualitative study suggests re-examination or re-conceptualization of loyalty within a tourism context, Yuksel, Yuksel and Bilim (2011) examine the links among three loyalty dimension (cognitive, affective, and conative) and satisfaction. They find that there exists a strong relationship between satisfaction and two loyalty intentions, but they state that the link between satisfaction and cognitive loyalty is statistically insignificant. In sum, from the previous studies, it may not be wrong to conclude that festival satisfaction influences festival loyalty.

## Proposed simple model for small, local, and municipally organized festival

Based on the above review, previous festivalscape survey results and under assumption that the festivalscape is the most appealing factor for visitors' satisfaction and loyalty in the context of a small and local municipality organized annual festivals, the present study adopts six dimensions as the antecedents of festival satisfaction for a small, local and municipality organized festival: festival area, staff, food, souvenir, informational adequacy, and convenience. The hypotheses for this study are summarized in the model shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1  
Proposed model



H1: Festival area is positively associated with visitor's satisfaction

H2: Staff is positively associated with visitor's satisfaction

H3: Food is positively associated with visitor's satisfaction

H4: Souvenir is positively associated with visitor's satisfaction

H5: Informational adequacy is positively associated with visitor's satisfaction

H6: Convenience is positively associated with visitor's satisfaction

H7: Visitor's satisfaction is positively associated with visitor's loyalty

## Methodology

### The study settings: Vize

To test the proposed model, a study of local community festival in the Municipality of Vize, Turkey, was conducted. Vize, a province of Kırklareli City, is 142 km away from Istanbul. The city has 4 municipalities and 23 villages. The total population is 31,000 and the province center constitutes 38 per cent of it. The main rivers are Pabuç and Kazan. Vize also has the spring of Ergene River, which is one of the main tributaries of the Meric River drawing the border between Greece and Turkey. Some of the historical attractions in and around the town are: the Hagia Sophia of Vize, remains of the Ancient fortress on the acropolis of Vize, remains of the Ancient amphitheater – the one and only amphitheatre of Trace in Turkey, tumulus, Trak Altars, Kıyıköy Castle, Ayanikola Monastery, Ayayorgi Church, Asmakaya Campus, Uçmakdere Campus, Derekaya Campus, Balkaya Inn Monastery, Baths, Mosaics, Observing Towers, Water Cistern (Malkoçlu, Anil & Bilgen, 2011).

"Vize History and Culture Festival" is an annual festival which has been held since 2006 by the province municipality to develop economy, increase tourist attractiveness and improve civic pride and social cohesion. Celebrating and introducing local food traditions and eating habits, promoting Vize's historical and economic importance are among some other goals of the festival. Concerts, fashion parade, local food cooking competition, presentations underpinning the historical and archeological importance of Vize, dance shows and commercial booths are some other events and features that take place in the festival. According to the estimates of Vize Municipality, each day and night of the festival, almost 25,000 people visit the city and more than 50% of them are residents of neighboring cities and provinces.

Traditionally, the festival is opened by city officials and the people of Vize get together at the Republic Square to homage Atatürk - founder of Turkey and sign Turkish National Anthem. The Mayor places Municipality's wreath on Atatürk's monument. After the ceremony, folkloric dances of the vicinity take place and traditional festival parade starts with festival band from the Republic Square to the festival area. After the arrival, the Governor and the Mayor light the festival wood fire to start the festival and cut the tape to let people enter the festival area.

### Measures

To test the proposed model, a 33 item questionnaire in Turkish was adapted from Ozdemir and Culha (2009). Following Crompton, Lee and Shuster's (2001) suggestion, the aim was to keep the questionnaire as short as possible to take lesser time and to get more cooperation from the respondents. Festivalscape environment, satisfaction and loyalty were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale with the following values: 1 = strongly disagree, 3 = neutral, and 5 = strongly agree. Festivalscape environment included 6 dimensions: (a) festival area, (b) staff, (c) food, (d) souvenir, (e) information adequacy, (f) convenience. The festival area dimension was measured by five items (the festival area is clean; the festival program is well organized; seats are sufficient; the size of the festival area is sufficient; there are many different kinds of events in the festival). In contrast to Ozdemir and Culha (2009) and Lee et al. (2008), the resting area was considered under the "convenience" dimension. The "staff" dimension was measured by four items (the guides and staff at the festival are helpful; the guides and staff are

polite; the guides and staff have enough knowledge about the festival; the guides and staff respond to our request quickly). The "food" dimension was covered by four items (there is enough variety of food; there is also traditional food; food sold in the festival site is of very good quality; food is reasonably priced). The "souvenir" dimension was composed of three items (there are several kinds of souvenirs; souvenirs are good in quality; souvenirs are reasonably priced). Different from Ozdemir and Culha (2009) and Lee et al. (2008) the "informational adequacy" and "convenience" dimensions were measured by adding one more item to each category. The "informational adequacy" was measured by three items (the signboards provide sufficient information; the pamphlets provide sufficient information; the signs showing festival area for visitors provide sufficient information). This study adds "the signs showing festival area for visitors". Lastly, the "convenience" dimension was measured by three items (the parking lot is sufficient; the resting areas are sufficient; the restrooms are convenient). This study adds more items "there are enough security guards" and "treats the resting areas under convenience". Visitors' satisfaction was evaluated by three items (I feel very good with this festival; I am satisfied with my decision to visit this festival; overall, I am satisfied with this festival). Visitors' loyalty was measured by using three items (I will say positive things about this festival to other people; I will recommend this festival to my friends and neighbors; I would like to visit this festival again next time). Demographic characteristics of visitors included the gender, age, education level and marital status.

## Data collection

Data for this study was collected during the 6<sup>th</sup> "Vize History and Culture Festival" festival held as a 4-day event between 21-24 of July, 2011. Population was defined as all visitors to the festival and random sampling was used, ensuring that all four days and all part of programs (day and night) were evenly covered. To collect data, a self-completion questionnaire was used, with trained staff from the Vize Vocational School of Kirklareli University approaching visitors, handing over a questionnaire and collecting them upon completion. During day, visitors were approached in the festival area and asked to participate in the study. The evening program consisted of a performance starting at 20:30 and, thus, a different approach to data collection was used. In order not to disturb visitors during the main event, the questionnaire was randomly handed out at the entrance and completed questionnaires were collected during the break or after the main event at the exits. In total, 600 questionnaires were distributed and 381 returned, of which 29 were incomplete and omitted from the analysis. This makes a response rate of 59%. SPSS and LISREL were used to analyze the collected data.

## Demographic characteristics of respondents

The descriptive analysis of demographic characteristics of the respondents is as follows: In the gender distribution, males were slightly overrepresented with 55.4 %. The respondents were more likely to be young with 44.9% of the respondents are under the age of 30, 30% of the people aged 30-40 years and 25% older than 50. Visitors were mostly married (53.4%). Only 31% of the respondents have a university education. Most of the respondents (69%) have less than a bachelor's degree, of which those with a high school degree prevail.



## Results

### Measurement reliability and validity

Factor analysis was performed on the data prior to further analysis. The principal component analysis was rotated by varimax procedure. Five factors were identified with eigen values greater than one. Similar to the studies of Lee et al. (2008) and Ozdemir and Culha (2009), some factors were eliminated because of the factor loadings less than 0.40 and cross-loading on two factors with factor loadings less than 0.40. Thus, seven of 23 items were deleted: three items from the festival area dimension, one item from the convenience dimension and three items from the souvenir dimension. As the souvenir dimension covers all these 3 items, the souvenir dimension was eliminated totally by the factor analysis.

Table 1  
Results of factor analysis for festivalscape environment

Factors and items	Factor loading	Eigen value	Variance explained (%)	Reliability coefficient
<b>Staff</b>				
The guides and staff in festival are kind	0.895	5.598	34.99	0.94
The guides and staff have enough knowledge about the festival	0.886			
The guides and staff respond to our request quickly	0.860			
The guides and staff are willing to help us	0.848			
<b>Food</b>				
The food sold in the festival site is of very good quality	0.795	2.230	13.94	0.79
There is also traditional food	0.784			
There is enough variety of food	0.779			
The food is reasonably priced	0.643			
<b>Informational adequacy</b>				
The pamphlets provide sufficient information	0.845	1.581	9.883	0.80
The signboards provide sufficient information	0.843			
The signs showing festival area for visitors provide sufficient information	0.639			
<b>Convenience</b>				
The restrooms are convenient	0.827	1.394	8.715	0.74
The resting areas are sufficient	0.823			
The parking lot is sufficient	0.723			
<b>Festival area</b>				
The size of festival area is adequate.	0.852	1.045	6.534	0.66
There are several events within the festival	0.720			
Kaiser–Meyer–Oklin: 0.82				
Bartlett’s test of sphericity: 3078.502 (p < 0.001)				

As shown in Table 1, the five underlying dimensions of the festivalscape environment derived from the factor analysis were festival area, staff, food, informational adequacy and convenience. Bartlett's test of sphericity with a value of 3078.502 ( $p < 0.001$ ) and Kaiser–Meyer–Oklin statistics of 0.82 indicated that the data was suitable to identify factor dimensions. Most of the reliability coefficients (Cronbach alpha) exceeded or were close to the minimum standard for reliability of 0.70 recommended by Nunnally (1978). The five factor solution explained 74.01% of the variance of the sample data.

**Table 2**  
**Results of factor analysis for satisfaction and loyalty**

Factors and items	Factor loading	Eigen value	Total variance explained (%)	Reliability coefficient
<b>Satisfaction</b>				
I feel very good with this festival	0.930	2.519	84.12	0.90
I am satisfied with my decision to visit this festival	0.912			
Overall, I am satisfied with this festival	0.906			
<b>Loyalty</b>				
I will recommend this festival to my friends and neighbors	0.944	2.505		0.90
I will say positive things about this festival to other people	0.906			
I would like to visit this festival again next time	0.890			
Kaiser–Meyer–Oklin: 0.87				
Bartlett's test of sphericity: 1787.10 ( $p < 0.001$ )				

As illustrated in Table 2, Bartlett's test of sphericity with a value of 1787.10 ( $p < 0.001$ ) and Kaiser–Meyer–Oklin statistics of 0.87 indicated that the data seemed suitable to identify factor dimensions. The factors also explained 84.12% of the variance of the sample data. Reliability coefficients were 0.90 for both, indicating acceptable reliability (Nunnally, 1978).

**Table 3**  
**Results of confirmatory factor analysis**

Factor	Factor loading	t-value
<b>Staff</b>		
The guides and staff are willing to help us.	0.89	21.06
The guides and staff in festival are kind.	0.92	22.22
The guides and staff have enough knowledge about the festival.	0.88	20.51
The guides and staff respond to our request quickly.	0.87	20.40
<b>Food</b>		
There is also traditional food.	0.82	17.29
There is enough variety of food.	0.83	17.67
The food sold in the festival site of very good quality	0.74	15.16
The food is reasonably priced.	0.44	7.87

**Table 3 Continued**

Factor	Factor loading	t-value
<b>Informational adequacy</b>		
The signboards provide sufficient information.	0.85	18.20
The pamphlets provide sufficient information	0.90	19.75
The signs showing festival area for visitors provide sufficient information.	0.56	10.73
<b>Convenience</b>		
The restrooms are convenient.	0.77	13.77
The parking lot is sufficient.	0.67	12.13
The resting areas are sufficient	0.67	11.99
<b>Festival area</b>		
The size of festival area is adequate.	0.66	11.29
There are several events within the festival.	0.76	12.73
<b>Satisfaction</b>		
I am satisfied with my decision to visit this festival	0.91	21.62
I feel very good with this festival	0.85	19.33
Overall, I am satisfied with this festival	0.80	17.38
<b>Loyalty</b>		
I would like to visit this festival again next time	0.90	20.91
I will recommend this festival to my friends and neighbors	0.86	19.39
I will say positive things about this festival to other people	0.75	15.88
X <sup>2</sup> /d.f. (661.72/185)=3.58; RMSEA= 0.086; NFI= 0.93; NNFI= 0.94; CFI= 0.95; IFI= 0.95		

The validity of the measures was examined through a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with LISREL 8.7. PRELIS was used to compute the covariance matrix used by LISREL. The results (Table 3), as interpreted by the goodness-of-fit measures, show that the model fits the data well, confirming the convergent validity characteristic of the measures ( $X^2/d.f. (661.72/185)= 3.58$ ; RMSEA= 0.086; NFI= 0.93; NNFI= 0.94; CFI= 0.95; IFI= 0.95).

## Structural model

Figure 2 shows the main results of the estimate of the proposed model. The global fit of the model is: ( $X^2/d.f. (750.12/193)= 3.89$ ; RMSEA= 0.091; NFI= 0.93; NNFI= 0.94; CFI= 0.95; IFI= 0.95). As a conclusion, the model fit is sufficient for further analysis. The squared multiple correlations (SMCs;  $R^2$ ) for the structural equations for visitors' satisfaction and loyalty were found to be reasonable (Table 4). Over 1/5 of the variance (SMC=0.21) in loyalty was explained by the direct effect of visitors' satisfaction and the indirect effects of the festivalscape environment such staff, festival area, food and convenience. For the visitors' satisfaction (SMC=0.29), even more of the variance was explained by the direct effects of the festivalscape environment.

Table 4

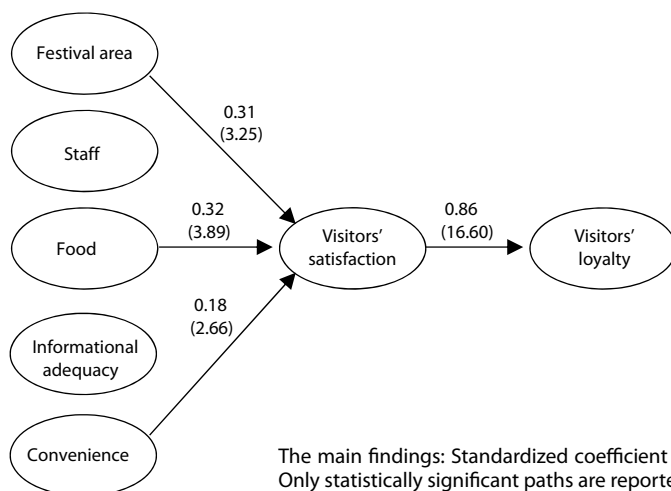
**Standardized parameter estimates and t-values**

Path	Standardized coefficients	t-value
Food → Satisfaction	0.32	3.89
Festival area → Satisfaction	0.31	3.25
Convenience → Satisfaction	0.18	2.66
Satisfaction → Loyalty	0.86	16.60
Staff → Satisfaction	0.07	1.05 (not significant)
Informational adequacy → Satisfaction	-0.03	-0.39 (not significant)
<b>SMC (R<sup>2</sup>)</b>		
Satisfaction	0.29	
Loyalty	0.21	

## Hypothesis testing

As shown in Figure 2, the relationships between festival area and visitor's satisfaction was found to affect satisfaction significantly (0.31,  $t = 3.25$ ), supporting H1. The relationship between the food dimension and visitor's satisfaction, the contents of the food served stand was the strongest predictor of satisfaction (0.32,  $t = 3.89$ ), supporting H3. The relationships between convenience and visitor's satisfaction was found to affect satisfaction significantly (0.18,  $t = 2.66$ ), supporting H6. Likewise, visitors' satisfaction positively affected visitors' loyalty (0.86,  $t = 16.60$ ). Hence, H7 was supported. However, "staff" and "informational adequacy" did not have significant effects on visitor's satisfaction. Therefore, H2 and H5 were not supported. Also, H4 was not supported as the souvenir dimension was eliminated after the factor analysis, and not included for further analysis (neither for CFA nor for SEM).

Figure 2

**Structural model**

## Concluding remarks

Tourism has been preferred as a development strategy for several small cities or provinces, such as Vize Province of Kirklareli City –Turkey. The municipality has been organizing annual history and culture festival for six years to attract domestic tourists (because a strong rural tourism economy must be linked to some nearby population centers as Gartner (2004) notes) and promote the city because festival tourism provides community development, environmental enhancement, and benefit of income generation (O’Sullivan & Jackson, 2002). However, it should be kept in mind that, as Grappi and Montanari (2011) mention, the increase in the number of festivals has also raised the level of competition between different cities and provinces of cities which, in turn, underlines the importance of festival’s elements that increase festival visitors’ satisfaction and loyalty.

This study aims were to identify factors related to the festivalscape that determine visitors’ satisfaction and loyalty by using a structural equation model in the context of a single small and local, municipality sponsored and organized history and culture festival with no international or foreign tourists. The study examines several variables: the antecedents of the festival visitors’ satisfaction and loyalty such as staff, festival area, food, souvenir, informational adequacy, and convenience. As a result of the analysis, the study reveals three dimensions related to the festivalscape environmental factors (the food, festival area, and convenience), and examines how these factors affect the visitors’ satisfaction and in turn loyalty. The food dimension is the most important factor for visitors’ satisfaction, and in turn it considerably affects loyalty. The food dimension includes sufficient variety of food, availability of traditional food, quality of food, and the price of food. The food booths must be planned and monitored for quality, variety, traditionality, and should be priced reasonably by the festival organizing committee or the Municipality in an effort to arouse good feelings and sustain visitors’ satisfaction as the findings and suggestions from Lee et al. (2008)’s study also indicate. If any supplier does not meet the specifications or neglect complaints received, it should not be permitted to take part in the following festival. Moreover, according to Crompton and McKay (1997, p. 438) festival visitors are motivated by six motive domains: cultural exploration, novelty/ regression, recover equilibrium (rest and relaxation/escape), known-group socialization, external interaction/socialization, and family togetherness (enhancing kinship relationships). Gursoy, Spangenberg, and Rutherford (2006) note that people are motivated to attend festivals for utilitarian and hedonic reasons. Combined with the findings of these studies, the author suggests organizing competitions such as cooking; best food; the fastest food eater; the fastest linden leaves picker (linden tree and leaves are also a part of the symbol of the province at the Municipalities emblem). In addition, the streets of the province are full of linden trees; climbing competitions inspired by the Vize Castle and Amphitheatre; and shooting (hunting is very popular in the vicinity). Families can be encouraged to take part in these competitions to have fun and excitement, to enhance family togetherness, to recover equilibrium. As Gursoy et al. (2006, p. 289) suggests, organizers should focus on how exciting, delightful, fun, thrilling, and interesting the festival is going to be because as Grunwell et al. (2008, p. 11) cites from Lade and Jackson (2004) "From a long-term aspect, the interest generated in the festival may constantly change and, as a result of a failure by organizers to respond accordingly, attendance may drop." At this point, it is very important to discover the key festivalscape attributes and new trends that may satisfy the participants so that festival organizers can make any necessary improvements in those areas that will bring greater loyalty via satisfaction within the festival experience.

The festival area dimension, unlike Ozdemir and Culha's (2009) study, is composed of only two elements: sufficient events in the festival, and the size of the festival area. Recall that Ozdemir and Culha (2009) found only festival area out of 7 items that had a direct positive relationship with satisfaction/loyalty. Thus, attractive events that will take place and the optimum size of the festival area should be taken into consideration by organizers to improve satisfaction and in turn loyalty. The convenience dimension covers convenient restrooms, adequate parking lots, and seating for events such as fashion shows, concerts, and resting. The organizers should closely control and increase the number, cleanness, and hygiene of the restrooms. Moreover, new well-organized parking spaces close to the festival venue and spare seats for top events should be considered.

Unexpectedly, souvenir, staff, and informational adequacy do not affect visitors' satisfaction, and in turn loyalty. The possible explanation related to those dimension can be associated with the festival and the province itself as "Vize History and Culture Festival" is a small, local festival with no souvenir symbolizing the city. In addition, since the city and festival venue are small, more explicit information, guides and staff are either low or are regarded as unnecessary. Therefore, it can be a good solution for Vize province to decide on a souvenir symbolizing the city itself. Lastly, satisfaction is found to be the main determinant of visitors' loyalty. In line with Lee et al. (2008) and Grappi and Montanari (2011) the more consumers are satisfied with the festival experience, the more they become loyal.

Although this paper is the first example of its kind in Turkey, to the best of the author's knowledge, examining a small, local, and municipality organized festival has several limitations. First of all, the model is too limited and takes festivalscape as the most appealing factor for visitors' satisfaction and loyalty in the context of a small and local municipality organized annual festivals like Vize History and Culture Festival. Secondly this study only analyzes the festivalscape as the antecedents of festival satisfaction and loyalty, and it needs to be improved by considering other antecedents such as emotions. Moreover, the questionnaire does not ask about the other important variables such as whether the visitors are spending a night in the city, whether they are spending time/money out of the festival venue, or how much time/money they are spending out of the festival venue. The sampling is another issue that limits the generalization of the findings. Further, this study only covers a publicly held festival, and it does not make any attempt to embrace private festivals. Lastly, there is an important limitation related to the generalizability of the results. The author frankly offers researchers to cover mentioned dimensions, and re-do the survey in other festivals.

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