

Measuring the Experience Economy Approach in a Festive Sport Event

Spor Festivali Etkinliğinde Deneyim Ekonomisi Yaklaşımının Ölçülmesi

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This study was presented as a poster at the 13rd World Leisure Congress (September 6-13rd 2014, Alabama, USA).

ABSTRACT Objective Providing satisfactory experience to participants has critical importance for the long-term success and sustainability of any recreational event. To provide a practical tool for festive sport event organizers the validity and reliability of the Experience Economy Scale were evaluated based on the Dragon Fest experience. **Material and Methods** The sample consisted of 358 Turkish festival participants including, 240 males (67%) and 118 females (33%). The Experience Economy Scale consists of four subscales: entertainment, education, escapist, and esthetics. In each of the experience subscales there are four items composed of 16 experiential items. Construct validity of the Experience Economy Scale was tested by employing exploratory factor analysis. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was carried out to investigate whether or not the four-factor structure of the scale would be confirmed in the Turkish Dragon Fest sample. **Results** The scale was found to have a four-factor structure. According to the confirmatory factor analysis results of the Experience Economy Scale, the model has adequate fit values ($\chi^2=39.27$, $df=14$, $\chi^2/df=2.81$; GFI=0.96, CFI=0.98; RMSEA=0.08). The scale was found to be a reliable and valid instrument in a festive sports event context. **Conclusion:** Experience Economy Scale not only provides us with a tool for the design of recreational events but also it may be beneficial when making promotional and marketing strategies. Therefore, leisure event organizers should consider the four experience dimensions for staging successful experiences. As the more experiential aspects an event contains, the more participants are pleased and repeat their attendance for the following events.

Keywords: Festival; recreational event management; experience economy; validity and reliability

ÖZET Amaç Rekreasyonel etkinliklerin uzun süreli başarısı ve sürdürülebilirliği için katılımcılara tatmin edici deneyim sağlamak kritik öneme sahiptir. Bu çalışmada festival organizatörlerine pratik bir ölçüm aracı sağlamak için Deneyim Ekonomisi Ölçeği'nin geçerliliği ve güvenilirliği Dragon Fest deneyimine göre değerlendirilmiştir. **Gereç ve Yöntemler:** Örneklem 240 erkek (%67) ve 118 kadın (%33) olmak üzere 358 festival katılımcısından oluşmaktadır. Deneyim Ekonomisi Ölçeği; eğlence, eğitim, kaçış ve estetik olmak üzere dört alt boyuttan oluşmaktadır. Deneyim boyutlarının her biri için ankette dört madde vardır ve toplam 16 maddeden oluşmaktadır. Deneyim Ekonomisi Ölçeği'nin yapı geçerliliği açımlayıcı faktör analizi kullanılarak test edilmiştir. Ölçeğin dört faktörlü yapısının Dragon Fest Türkiye örneğinde doğrulanıp doğrulanmayacağını araştırmak için doğrulayıcı faktör analizi (DFA) yapılmıştır. **Bulgular** Deneyim Ekonomisi Ölçeği'nin dört faktörlü bir yapıya sahip olduğu bulunmuştur. Doğrulayıcı faktör analizi sonuçlarına göre, model yeterli uyum değerlerine sahiptir ($\chi^2=39.27$, $df=14$, $\chi^2/df=2.81$; GFI=0.96, CFI=0.98; RMSEA=0.08). Ölçek spor festival etkinliği bağlamında güvenilir ve geçerli bir araç olarak bulunmuştur. **Sonuç:** Deneyim Ekonomisi Ölçeği bize sadece rekreasyonel etkinliklerin organizasyonu için bir araç sağlamakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda tanıtım ve pazarlama stratejileri yaparken de faydalı olabilir. Bu nedenle, boş zaman etkinliği düzenleyicileri, başarılı deneyimler tasarlamak için dört deneyim boyutunu göz önünde bulundurmalıdır. Bir etkinliğin içerdiği deneyim boyutu arttıkça, katılımcılar daha fazla tatmin olmakta ve sonraki etkinliklere katılım olasılıkları artmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Festival; rekreasyonel etkinlik yönetimi; deneyim ekonomisi; geçerlik ve güvenilirlik

Festivals are simultaneously regarded as leisure experiences, destination marketing tools and community celebrations.¹ Like any other leisure services festivals are experiential products and festival

participants' experience is the fundamental advantage individuals can get from festivals.² At the heart of any event, there is lived experiences designed or at least facilitated to the audience or participants.³ Compre-

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hension of the participants' experience is essential to grasp how to manage the growing body of festivals better. From an event management perspective, a better understanding of the festival participants' experience is essential for the organizers since the participants' experience is a key indicator of their possible next behavior.² For the sustainability and success and of any leisure event offering satisfactory experience to participants has critical importance. What is more, memorable experiences create sustainable competitive advantage more than service quality.⁴ Therefore, leisure event organizers should comprehensively figure out the participants' experience journey.

Traditional proposal for service value is no more sufficient for attracting customers and creating distinction.⁵ Pine and Gilmore who are the authors of a best-seller book published by the Harvard Business School Press, stated that businesses should change direction from the delivery-oriented service industry which gives importance to quality of the products to the experience economy that organizes unforgettable experiences in order to develop a consistent and coherent total experience.⁶ There is a shift in the economic progression from consumption of commodities to goods, services, and experiences. Pine and Gilmore described the last wave as *experiences* and the advent of the new economy as the *experience economy*.⁶ In order to figure out the economy property that proposes experiential offerings, the experience economy is a critical framework. According to this concept, the experience is a commercial offering that is difficult to imitate and provides a competitive advantage.⁶ Service and experience discriminated from an economic perspective by Pine and Gilmore which is in opposition to a long tradition of service marketing.⁶ The main difference is that experience is fundamentally personal and only occurs in people's minds who are engaged mentally, emotionally, psychologically, physically or even spiritually. Whereas services and goods takes place in people's environment.² Individuals willingly exchange valued resources such as money, time, for emotional and motivational experiences that are staged by organizations in experience economy concept.⁷ Authors of the concept, explained experiences as the 4Es (entertainment, educational, esthetic, and escapist experiences) according to their

places with regard to two axes (absorption/immersion and passive/active).⁸ For instance, when staging a festival according to experience economy framework, in addition to important event management concerns (e.g., transportation, event promotion, safety, parking, lodging), organizers should apply the methods of personalizing guest experiences, immersing guests in a consistent theme, appealing to multiple senses, making memorabilia available and making personnel in character as they perform their duties in fitting theatrical forms.⁷

Experience economy concept has increasing attention. Even though the trend was raised in the business sector, it has studied in tourism, entertainment, retailing, hospitality, branding, architecture, sports and other fields.⁹ Many conceptual studies have been done in related fields, but there has been lack of a concrete scale to evaluate the experience economy concept and its underlying dimensions which was a common criticism.¹⁰ Furthermore, in empirical studies on experience, quantitative research were conducted to a lesser extent than qualitative research which might be explained by the still development process of studies concerning experience measurement.¹¹ Measurement, however, is essential to understand which conditions are required in order to create distinctive experiences. Realizing this limitation, Pine and Gilmore suggested using the 4E (entertainment, education, escapist, and esthetics) experiential framework.⁶ In order to organize a favoring and engaging experience, authors advise comprehending each realm to promote the staged experience better. In this regard, Oh, Fiore, and Jeoung developed an experience scale in the tourism context.¹² The scale was reported to be reliable and valid and includes four subscales. Leisure services are experiential settings they offer many opportunities to deliver experiences. Particularly, festival experiences have laboratory-like characteristics, which make them suitable for experience studies.¹³ Therefore, the experience economy framework is considered to match up with a festival setting. Given the significance of festival experiences, surprisingly festival experience literature is limited. Although leisure researchers may have claimed that they measured experiences, they were, actually, measuring the individuals' behaviors of psy-

chological/qualitative dimensions related to experience, e.g., motivation, benefits, and satisfaction, etc.^{14,15} Quantitative work on lived experiences in the events that have both sport and festive dimensions is lacking. To close this gap, in this study, the adaptation of the experience economy scale was examined in a festive sports setting. Accordingly, the aim of this research is to measure the Oh, Fiore, and Jeoung's scale in a festive sports event context.¹²

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Experience research has a growing interest in diverse areas. Rossman and Ellis stated, "It seems everyone wants to provide experiences these days including retail businesses, tourism agencies, event planners, sports managers, leisure providers, marketers, arts managers, and museum curators. These seemingly diverse organizations share a common goal, an intention to provide experiences, preferably memorable experiences, and sometimes experiences that serve to transform people's lives" (p.1).¹⁶ There have been various explanations about experiences from several fields because of the complex nature of experiences. Scholars within each field have tried to explain the provider factors (e.g., products, services) and participant factors (e.g., relationships, values etc.) to varying degrees, that finally generate structured experiences.¹⁷ Although experience concept has received significant attention, little collaboration or coordination has occurred across these areas, which has caused the fractured understanding of experiences.¹⁷ The literature on experiences needs integration, but the leisure literature can be improved through integration with studies from different fields.¹⁷ This study answers this call for integration of research insights on structured experiences from different fields depending on a belief that the integration of studies from different fields on structured experiences may help to improve experience research. Hence, in this study experience economy framework which was born in the marketing field applied in a leisure event context.

The experience economy concept has a deep history. In 1970, Alvin Toffler proposed a transition that would have a future impact on goods and services and

contribute to the next forward phase of the economy. Defining it as "experience industries" (p.32).¹⁸ The researchers started to debate the rational consumer theory in the early 1980s. The important argument that consumer behavior has an experimental aspect first appeared as an alternative to the rational process of decision making, which was proposed by Holbrook and Hirschman in 1982.^{19,20} A transition from traditional to experiential marketing was also postulated by Schmitt.²¹ Traditional marketing was related to the creation of functionality and benefits according to his explanation. Experiential marketing, on the other hand, deals with building holistic service experiences by recognizing incentives for both logical and emotional consumption.²¹ Thus, an experiential approach emerged that recognizes the significance of factors which were previously ignored, "the roles of emotions in behavior; the fact that; consumers are feelers as well as thinkers and doers" (p. 50).²² Although experiential aspect recognized earlier, majority of the customer experience literature has written after the book of Pine and Gilmore, the book became a best-seller, and has appealed authors in recreation, sport and tourism as well.^{2,8,10,12,18,23} According to Pine and Gilmore like the service industry surpassed the manufacturing, the service economy outpaced by the experience economy.⁸ To clarify this shift, they give the example of the people who want to pay for coffee beans and a cup of coffee at a restaurant versus a cup of coffee at a Starbucks store. People want to pay more for the Starbucks coffee experience. Competition centers on customized co-creation experiences in this new emerging economy, leading to a value that is completely special to every person.²⁴ Experiences were separated into four dimensions as the 4Es (educational, escapist, esthetic, and entertainment, experiences) according to their positions related to two axes: a) the degree of involvement (active/passive) and b) the degree of connection or engagement with the environment (absorption/immersion).⁸ These experiences are entertainment (passive/absorption), escapist (active/immersion), esthetic (passive/immersion), and educational (active/absorption).⁸

Figure 1 provides a theoretical framework about assignment of the experiences depending on the place of the experience on two axes. According to framework the experience can be result in immersion or ab-

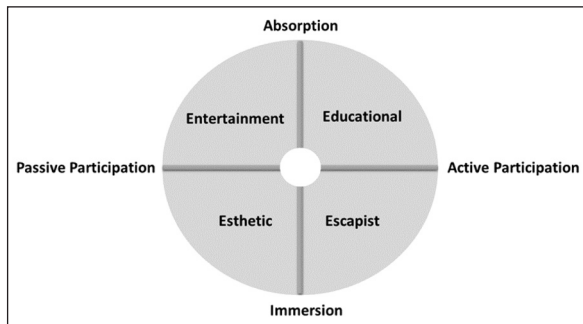


FIGURE 1: The experience economy realms (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, p.30).

sorption of the individual, and the experience may require active or passive participation. Passive participation can be explained as “where customers do not directly affect or influence the performance,” On the other hand, active participation is explained as “where customers personally affect the performance or event that yields the experience.” Absorption means “occupying a person’s attention by bringing the experiences into the mind” and immersion means “becoming physically or virtually a part of the experience producing event/performance itself” (p. 30).⁶ A leisure event may offer one dominant experience, yet festival participants would simultaneously perceive multiple dimensions of experience, and they may engage in experiences cross boundaries.²⁵

EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

The aim of self-education is believed to be a primary driving factor for leisure participation, which might be intellectual or physical self-growth.² Education experience necessitates absorption and active participation where the individual affects or influence the experiential outcome. Individuals learn something new such as learning to paddle in a dragon boat with the group is an example of the educational example. Participants may feel that their knowledge and/or skills is developed after paddling in a dragon boat in the festival setting.

ENTERTAINMENT EXPERIENCE

Entertainment experience necessitates passive participation and absorption, where people do not have an influence on the outcome. It is considered the oldest type of experience, therefore it is among the most developed forms of experience.⁶ According to framework entertainment necessitates that the offerings oc-

cupy peoples’ readiness and attention. Frequently, the entertainment experience occurs as a result of passively observing activities of other attendees.⁶ Such as, listening to music, watching competitors paddling in a dragon boat as a group, watching costume contest, watching dance performances.

ESCAPISM EXPERIENCE

Leisure services may offer many opportunities to deliver extraordinary and unique experiences. The escapist experience is one of the most frequently indicated motive in leisure activities because individuals pursue novel experiences in order to revitalize and to refresh their everyday life. Escapism is the festival participants’ desire to be in a divergent setting that is different from daily life. This type of experience necessitates active participation and immersion which necessitates that the individuals influence actual performances wherein they play a crucial part in the process.⁶ Predominantly, festivals offer a setting that is unlike from daily life and provide a chance to escape from daily routine. In comparison to ordinary moments or events, participants better remember extraordinary events and recall them in more brilliant and vivid detail, which makes festivals as memorable events.^{2,26}

ESTHETIC EXPERIENCE

Esthetic experience is defined as the physical environment features and festival participants’ overall assessment of the festival’s atmospherics, physical environment, or mood.⁶ Esthetic experience necessitates immersion and passive participation. Individuals appreciate being in the destination without changing the style of the surroundings presented to them. Participants may be influenced from the surroundings which appeal to their senses or passively enjoy the environment.¹² Colorful festival ambiance, vibrant colored boats in the festival setting, different costumes that participant wear are the examples of the esthetic experience.

From an event management perspective, comprehension of festival experience is important for the sustainability of the event success and to improve marketing strategies by aiding in the design of the event context. Experiences are the principal output of the events, therefore; event studies should concentrate

on the experience of the event.²⁷ However, empirical understanding of event experiences is inadequate.^{27,28} Quantitative work on lived experiences in the events that have both sport and festive dimensions is lacking. On the other hand, valid measurable tools will help to understand event experience on the part of the participants. Keeping this background in mind, the present study extends the experience literature by undertaking the adaptation of the Experience Economy Scale in a festive sports event. Accordingly, this research aims to evaluate the Oh, Fiore, and Jeoung's scale in a festive sports event context.¹²

MATERIAL AND METHODS

SAMPLE

In the current study, data were gathered in Dragon Fest 2013 which is held in Turkey. The sample consisted of 358 Turkish festival participants including, 240 males (67%) and 118 females (33%). As for the sample size, Nunnally suggested sampling at least ten times as many subjects as variables.²⁹ From this standpoint, 358 sample for a 16 item questionnaire was considered adequate for both data analyses. With respect to the previous participation at the Dragon Fest, 210 (59%) participants were participants for the first time, 84 (23%) participated for the second time, 41 (11%) participated for the third time and 23 (6%) were participants for the fourth time or more (Table 1).

Data were gathered by three researchers after dragon boat competitions. All researchers were informed how to make an explanation of the scale and how to implement the scale to achieve standardization. The necessary time to complete the scale was around 10 minutes.

TABLE 1: Descriptive statistics of the festival attendees.

Variable		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	118	33
	Male	240	67
Previous Attendance	First Time Attendees	210	59
	Second Time Attendees	84	23
	Third Time Attendees	41	11
	Fourth or More Time	23	6

THE SAMPLE SETTING OF THE STUDY

Special events are regarded as leading representatives of the experience economy which enhance entertainment and active participation, that finally turns out to be a memorable experience.¹³ Dragon Festivals turned into a worldwide festival trend.³⁰ In this sense, the Turkish Dragon Festival 2013 was decided as a study context and scales were administered to employees of the companies participating in dragon boat competitions and other festive activities. Dragon Fest competitions are arranged among institutional teams in Turkey. The festival is open to private companies, public institutions, educational institutions, all social groups, and non-governmental organizations. The festival's focus is the dragon-boat races. Individuals participate dragon boat races and other joyful physical performances on the festival setting. To reach the designated destination before the rival teams, a team of amateur people paddles together. One member of the team sits in front of the dragon boat, he or she beat a drum in order to make sure that the rowers keep in time with one another and to maintain morale.³¹ There are crazy costume contests. Dance performances like tango, samba in the festival area. Participation in festivals or special events incorporates many experience dimensions. Since event participants pursue pleasurable and unforgettable experiences with social relationships and through performances that individuals feel themselves in an exceptional time and space.³² Dragon Fest is also a context with physical learning activities, full of activities. There are many opportunities for social interactions with friends also the festival area has rich, colorful environmental attributes. Hence, Dragon Fest was decided as a research field.

INSTRUMENT

The Experience Economy Scale was developed by Oh, Fiore, and Jeoung to evaluate experiences in tourism.¹² It was developed considering the framework of experience economy.⁶ The Likert-type scale incorporates four factors including: esthetics, entertainment, escapist, and education. For each of the experience subscales, there are four items comprising of 16 experience items. Slight adjustments and revisions to the wording of the scale was conducted to suit our empirical context, with the author's permis-

sion. “Festival setting” and “dragon boat sport” words were added where necessary.

TRANSLATION AND ADAPTATION OF THE SCALE

First of all, the scale items were translated from English into Turkish by two bilingual language experts. The translations were then matched and variations were identified, and the final Turkish version was written by getting agreement between the translators. Then, another language expert translated the Turkish edition back into English. The final draft of the Turkish version was decided after it was considered that back translated sentences and the original English sentences represent each other. Afterwards, the Turkish version was slightly changed by a physical education specialist for the context of the festival. With the author’s permission, minor changes and wording modifications have been applied to the scale in order to suit our empirical context. Where appropriate, the words “festival setting” and “dragon boat sport” were added. To understand whether the adjusted scale was measuring what it was intended to measure, face validity was tested by applying the scale to 15 students. The feedback revealed that the scale was suitable to use in a Turkish sample. Required permissions to administer the scale were taken from the authors of the scale and METU Human Subjects Ethics Committee

(HSEC) with 28620816/213-584 code in 2013. This study was conducted in accordance with the principles set forth in the Helsinki Declaration 2008.

RESULTS

EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS RESULTS

The selected scale was not administered in a festive sports event before. To see whether the dimensional structure of the instrument differs in this new setting and to decide on the items’ factor structure, chosen to measure experience dimensions, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted. EFA aims to evaluate the dimensional structure based on the correlations between the variables.^{33,34}

Before conducting the EFA, assumptions including linearity, no outliers, and the Skewness and Kurtosis values were inspected and satisfied. Skewness and Kurtosis values were found between +3.29 and -3.29 and the mean values of the items differed between 4.27 and 1.92 as presented on the Table 2.³⁵

Barlett’s test was significant χ^2 (df=120)= 1392.61 ($p<.05$), indicating that there were equal variances across samples which is called as the homogeneity of variances.³⁶ Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin KMO value was (.83) surpassing the suggested score of .60.³⁵ Thus, the sample size was considered adequate for the factor analysis.

TABLE 2: Descriptive statistics of the items of the experience economy scale.

	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
1. The festival experience has made me more knowledgeable about Dragon Boat Sport DBS	3.98	.78	-.96	1.2
2. I learned a lot about DBS in this festival	3.97	.76	-.53	.25
3. The festival stimulated my curiosity to learn new things about DBS	4.13	.86	-1.2	1.9
4. The festival was a real learning experience	4.02	.85	-.90	1.1
5. I felt a real sense of harmony at the festival setting	4.04	.85	-.60	-.25
6. Just being at the festival was very pleasant	4.23	.71	-.96	1.5
7. The festival setting was pretty bland (reverse coded)	1.92	1.04	-1.42	1.8
8. The festival setting was very attractive	4.11	.68	-1.2	2.7
9. Activities of others were amusing to watch	4.19	.68	-.48	.13
10. Watching others perform was captivating	4.08	.85	-1.2	2.0
11. I really enjoyed watching what others were doing	4.24	.79	-1.4	3.0
12. Activities of others were fun to watch	4.20	.67	-.61	.68
13. I felt I played a different character at the festival	4.14	.85	-.86	.52
14. I felt like I was living in a different time or place at the festival setting	4.27	.82	-1.6	2.9
15. The experience at the festival let me imagine being someone else	4.18	.84	-1.1	1.5
16. I completely escaped from daily routine at the festival	4.23	.83	-1.0	.87

Multivariate normality assumption was satisfied since Mardia's test was not found significant ($p > .05$). Therefore, maximum likelihood was conducted as an extraction method. Because if the data were distributed in a fairly normal way, maximum probability is the best option.³⁷ The oblimin rotation was performed as a rotation method. Eigenvalues were checked to evaluate the number of factors (Table 3). Analysis revealed that four factors have eigenvalues over than 1 (Table 3). Thus, the scale considered to have a four-factor structure. The first factor (education experience) explained 40.84% of the total variance of the scale; the second one (escapist experience) explained 10.45%; the third factor (entertainment experience) explained 8.35%, and the fourth factor (esthetics experience) explained 7.02% of the total variance. The four-factor structure totally explained 66.66% of the total variance. Hence, this instrument was decided to have four factors.

Overall, based on all statistically appropriate values, the four-factor structure of the scale was considered as a final model. After performing the EFA, Cronbach alpha value was calculated to evaluate internal consistency. Results showed that the scale had good internal consistency ($\alpha = .89$). Costello & Osborne claim that a factor composing of items fewer than three is predominantly weak and unstable.³⁸ In the present analysis, the number of factors is acceptable since a factor has at least four items. Thus, this four-factor model was decided as the final model.

CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS RESULTS

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is a statistical technique that determines whether the predicted structure is fitting with the data, whether a relation exists between the variables observed and the underlying unobserved variables.³⁹ CFA is a validity method especially utilized in the adaptation of measurement tools developed in different cultures and contexts. In the present study, CFA was carried out to investigate whether or not the four-factor structure of the scale would be confirmed in the Turkish Dragon Fest sample. The CFA was carried out by AMOS 19 program with the maximum likelihood method. According to the results of the confirmatory factor analysis of the scale, the model has acceptable

TABLE 3: Eigenvalues and percentages of variance.

Factors	Eigenvalues	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6.53	40.84	40.84
2	1.67	10.45	51.29
3	1.34	8.35	59.64
4	1.12	7.02	66.66

fit index values ($\chi^2 = 39.27$, $df = 14$, $\chi^2/df = 2.81$; GFI = 0.96, CFI = 0.98; RMSEA = 0.08).

In order to determine the magnitude of common variance between the models' latent variables, the Fornell-Larcker criteria has been frequently preferred.⁴⁰ The measurement models' convergent validity can be evaluated by the Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) in accordance with this criterion. AVE calculates the level of variance recorded by a construct versus the level of variance as a result of measurement error, scores above 0.7 are regarded very good, while, the level of 0.5 is adequate.⁴⁰ CR is a reliability measure, 0.7 and above considered as an acceptable value of CR.⁴⁰ Both the AVE and CR values were found to be between suggested thresholds for all the subscales except for the esthetics subscale. Esthetics subscale was found to have values lower than suggested thresholds. This may be caused by the reverse coded item in esthetic subscale (the setting was pretty bland) which has a low loading in confirmatory factor analysis. To increase fit index values that item was dropped from the scale for the second analysis.

After exclusion of one item from Esthetic Subscale (the festival setting was pretty bland), reliabilities were calculated. Four factors of the scale had enough internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha value was found to be .85 for the Education Subscale; .80 for the Entertainment Subscale .77 for the Esthetic Subscale; and .82 for the Escapist Subscale. After exclusion of the item from the scale, CR ranged between 0.74 and 0.85. The AVE ranged between 0.48 and 0.59 (Table 4).

To evaluate the concurrent validity of the scale, Pearson correlation coefficient scores between the Experience Economy Scale values and Satisfaction Scale, values were determined.⁴¹ In this research a positive correlation was found between these two

TABLE 4: CFA loadings of the experience economy scale, AVE, CR and Cronbach's alpha values.

	Factor loadings	AVE	CR	Cronbach's α
Education		.59	.85	.85
The festival experience has made me more knowledgeable about Dragon Boat Sport DBS	.74*			
I learned a lot about DBS in this festival	.84**			
The festival stimulated my curiosity to learn new things about DBS	.76*			
The festival was a real learning experience	.73**			
Esthetic		.48	.74	.77
I felt a real sense of harmony at the festival setting	.67**			
Just being at the festival was very pleasant	.77**			
The festival setting was very attractive	.64**			
Entertainment		.51	.81	.80
Activities of others were amusing to watch	.74**			
Watching others perform was captivating	.65**			
I really enjoyed watching what others were doing	.79**			
Activities of others were fun to watch	.68**			
Escapist		.55	.83	.82
I felt I played a different character at the festival	.86**			
I felt like I was living in a different time or place at the festival setting	.72**			
The experience at the festival let me imagine being someone else	.80**			
I completely escaped from daily routine at the festival	.56**			

** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; One item from Esthetic Subscale was excluded from the scale.

scales ($r=.79$, $p < .01$); Validities for subscales were also verified by calculating values of Pearson correlation coefficient between Education and Satisfaction Scale ($r=.62$), Entertainment and Satisfaction Scale ($r=.59$), Esthetic and Satisfaction Scale ($r=.60$), and Escapist and Satisfaction Scale ($r=.67$).

DISCUSSION

Experience Economy Scale evaluated in Dragon Fest which is an event that incorporates both festival and sports dimensions. This research offers insight into the concept of Pine and Gilmore to better understand and explain participants' experience dimensions in a festive sports event setting.⁶ To provide a practical tool for festive sport event organizers the validity and reliability of the scale were evaluated in a sport festival experience. The instrument was found to be valid and reliable. After performing exploratory factor analysis and assessment of the instrument's factorial structure, internal consistency scores were evaluated. All of the factors found to have adequate Cronbach alpha values

($\alpha > .70$).²⁹ CFA was performed to see if the dimensional structure of the scale derived from the original theory and the exploratory factor analysis results, would be confirmed in the Turkish sample. Confirmatory factor analysis results provided acceptable fit index values as well.

Recreational event organizers can utilize the experience economy scale in their event evaluations to figure out participant opinions about their offerings. This kind of practical tools may help event marketers to develop their offerings and serve participants' needs better.¹²

This study recommends that an evaluation of an experience based on the 4E framework can be a helpful measure for leisure marketing similar with the results of Mehmetoglu and Engen.⁴² Since, when an event includes more experience types, participants become more satisfied and participate in the next events repeatedly.²³ On the other hand, Hosany and Witham applied Experience Economy Scale on cruise vacation tourists with a sample composing of different nationalities.^{10,12} Their analysis also revealed the four-factor

structure of the experience economy scale. Similarly, Lemke, Clark, and Wilson claimed that effective experience management, across all touch points, is critical for the success and to develop loyalty.⁴³ Thus, it is important to organize leisure event setting that reflect the four realms of experience to some extent.

This study contributes to the growing area of festive sports events. This research demonstrated that experience economy framework provides a practical measurement tool to better understand participants' experiential preferences in a festive sports event setting. Recreational event managers can better able to co-create event setting by getting information about the participants' experience from their own point of view. How individuals perceive the different experience dimensions of the festive sports event and how festive sports events should be designed to raise satisfaction levels are important considerations. Therefore, leisure event organizers should consider the experience economy framework for staging successful experiences. From a leisure event perspective, a better knowledge of the value which is gained by the event experience is significant to be attractive.²⁸ Event organizers need to keep in mind that individuals have experiential needs, they desire to be entertained, stimulated, educated and challenged.⁴⁴ In this sense, marketing through direct experience is suggested, because, if individuals satisfy with their leisure time experience, they are more prone to share their experience with their relatives and friends. Besides, it is regarded as one of the most reliable advertising since it is about one's ideas based on real lived experiences.⁴⁵

The 4E framework may be beneficial when making promotional strategies as well. In the organization of the websites and banners, incentive sentences incorporating the 4E experience can be chosen to motivate individuals towards the event. For instance, follow the music (Entertainment), feel the water and enjoy the festival ambiance (Esthetics), explore a new sport, discover your potential, improve your paddling skills (Education), move away from stress (Escapist).

As for the limitations of the study, the data used for this study gathered in one specific event in Turkey, and purposive sampling method might have been limited the generalizability of the scale. Lack of

prior research on festive sports event experience may lead to a weak discussion of the findings.

CONCLUSION

First of all, Experience Economy Scale was tested by employing EFA and results demonstrated a four-factor model. Model fit was assessed by CFA. Internal consistency of the scale and subscales were checked. Consequently, it was decided that the Experience Economy Scale is a reliable and valid measure in a festive sports event context. Results verified that recreational sports event experience could be presented by four realms including esthetics, escapist, entertainment and educational experience. Overall, recreational event organizers are suggested to keep in mind the four dimensions of experience when they plan the events. Marketers can use the instrument as a guide to evaluate how well their events meet participants' needs. Lastly, experience economy concept not only provides us with a tool for the design of recreational events but also it may be beneficial when making advertisement and marketing strategies.

Informing

Due to the presence of the name of the journal editor's among the authors, the assessment process of the study was conducted by the guest editor.

Source of Finance

During this study, no financial or spiritual support was received neither from any pharmaceutical company that has a direct connection with the research subject, nor from a company that provides or produces medical instruments and materials which may negatively affect the evaluation process of this study.

Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interest between the authors and / or family members of the scientific and medical committee members or members of the potential conflicts of interest, counseling, expertise, working conditions, share holding and similar situations in any firm.

Authorship Contributions

Idea/Concept: Tuba Yazıcı; Design: Tuba Yazıcı; Control/Supervision: Settar Koçak; Data Collection and/or Processing: Tuba Yazıcı; Analysis and/or Interpretation: Tuba Yazıcı; Literature Review: Tuba Yazıcı; Writing the Article: Tuba Yazıcı; Critical Review: Tuba Yazıcı; References and Fundings: Tuba Yazıcı; Materials: Settar Koçak.

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