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# ASSESSING MOTIVATION AND SATISFACTION IN AN EMERGING KIND OF SPORTS TOURISM: PADDLE TENNIS

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## ABSTRACT

*This article aims to analyse two major research questions on paddle tennis as a new type of sports tourism. Using data collected through a survey of paddle tennis tourists playing in Islantilla (Spain), motivation and satisfaction characteristics were examined: (1) to identify the socio-economic characteristics of paddle tennis tourists; (2) to identify reasons why tourists choose paddle tennis tourism, and (3) to measure the satisfaction achieved during the experience. The analysis of paddle tennis tourism enables their behaviour to be determined and information on the profile of this type of tourist to be ascertained, thereby allowing related companies, governments, tourism agents and managers to orientate their strategies in order to achieve considerable economic benefits.*

## KEYWORDS

*Sports Tourism; Paddle Tennis; Motivation; Satisfaction; Factorial Analysis.*

## ECONLIT KEYS

*L830; I230; O300.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Nowadays, tourism is considered a powerful industry capable of notably influencing many economies in the world (Goeldner and Ritchie, 2003). In recent decades, tourism demand has undergone a series of changes and transformations that affect not only the tourism destinations on offer and in demand, but also the forms, models, ways and styles of travelling. A new, mature, well-trained and well-informed traveller has been defined, who is experienced in the matter of travelling, acquainted with many areas and destinations, and imposes new styles and values regarding quality of life and social well-being. Currently, new travellers are more demanding and require a greater variety of quality services and a more active and comprehensive participation in their holiday programmes (González, 2008; Peric, 2010).

For these reasons, the tourism industry, as a driving force and engine of the economy of many regions, is calling for a real alternative to traditional tourism models, such as that of sun-and-sand vacations, and is giving way to an emerging demand of active tourism in which tourists are lured by dynamic physical-recreational activities.

Sports tourism arises from the unique interaction of activity, people and place (Weed and Bull, 2004). Within the tourism industry, sports tourism constitutes the most rapidly growing segment in recent years (Brown, Busser and Baloglu, 2010; Mihelj, 2010).

Sporting events can be used as tourist attractions by destinations that seek to attract large numbers of tourists to their locale (Kaplanidou, 2010). In this sense, many tourism agents, both public and private, are focusing their efforts on the promotion of specialised tourism services where events, such as paddle tennis tournaments and activities, are included. Nowadays, it is possible to compete in a paddle tennis tournament while on a sightseeing holiday. Paddle tennis is a sport whose popularity continues to grow: it can be played in many very different circumstances and in unconventional settings. There are even rural houses offering the practice of this sport as one of the many services they provide. Rural tourism and paddle tennis used to be a most unlikely partnership until only a few years ago; however, it has become a sign of the increasing presence of this sport in the field of tourism (Muchoviaje, 2011). Every day, a greater number of advertisements for this

kind of sports tourism can be found on the Internet. In fact, sport is one of the common factors for creating passion for tourists (Taleghani and Ghafary, 2014).

Following the typology of sports events proposed by Wilson (2006), a paddle tennis tourist can be involved in small-scale event sports tourism. This type of tourism is compatible with and contributes towards the economic, social, and environmental pillars of sustainable tourism (Gibson, Kaplanidou and Kang, 2012).

Currently, the growth rate of paddle tennis is higher than other sports (Padel Spain, 2011). The astonishing expansion of paddle tennis cannot be compared to that of other sports. The incredibly rapid adoption of paddle tennis can only be compared to that of the mobile phone (Revenge, 2011).

The increasing popularity of paddle tennis has encouraged many tourism destinations to provide the facilities required to practise this sport in order to attract more customers. Consequently, many tourism destinations are building the adequate infrastructures to organise sports events and boost tourism in the area. Due to the economic cost of these infrastructures, the tourism sector needs to compensate (through the rising number of tourists and the growth of incomes) for the investment in building sports facilities and in promoting sports events (Latiesa and Paniza, 2006).

The present work focuses on tourists who travel to a tourism destination and in addition become involved, whether actively or passively, in the practice of paddle tennis. Therefore, tourists who occasionally or incidentally play paddle tennis during their vacations are not considered, while those who fully intend to somehow participate in this activity during their holidays are the object of our study.

In order to develop business strategies that enable the aforementioned goals to be attained, an in-depth knowledge of paddle tennis tourism is necessary. Hence, the objectives of the present work are: (1) to identify the socio-economic characteristics of paddle tennis tourists; (2) to identify the reasons why tourists choose paddle tennis tourism; and (3) to measure the satisfaction achieved during the experience. The greater the understanding of this kind of tourism, the more the agents involved will be able to develop adequate strategies to reach their economic and business objectives in this area.

Despite the ample and varied literature on sports tourism, hardly any studies focus on paddle tennis tourism. Moreover, the results obtained in general research on sports tourism may be influenced by the heterogeneity of the sports activities; it is

therefore necessary to undertake sport-specific tourism studies. Thus, the main difference between this work and preceding studies is that this research analyses an emerging market that is both increasingly present in certain countries and representative of a major economic activity in many geographical areas, namely paddle tennis tourism.

The benefit of this work for researchers and for people in business lies in its provision of greater knowledge of paddle tennis tourism, through which the behaviour of this kind of customer can be identified, the characteristics of this type of customer can be recognised, and possible new market niches can be found. In particular, this work may help governments and tourism agents and managers to develop adequate strategies, which in turn may lead to beneficial economic results.

The paper is laid out as follows: a literature review on motivation and satisfaction in sports tourism is presented in Section 2. Section 3 is devoted to methodological issues and data. Section 4 shows the results obtained. Finally, conclusions, limitations and future research are presented in Section 5.

## **2. MOTIVATION AND SATISFACTION IN SPORTS TOURISM**

Two of the most relevant issues regarding the tourism sector are those of why people travel and what they expect from their destination (Yoon and Uysal, 2005). The first issue is related to motivation, while the second issue is related to satisfaction. Furthermore, in a highly competitive market, offering such a tourism attraction in the form of a paddle tennis event entails being deeply acquainted with: (i) the reasons that make tourists choose this event instead of other tourism alternatives; and (ii) the degree of satisfaction that these tourists draw from the service provided (Jang and Feng, 2007; Martin, 2008). It is important to show that the concept of authenticity in sports tourism lies in understanding tourists' motivation and experiences (Lamont, 2014).

### ***2.1) MOTIVATION IN SPORTS TOURISM***

Generally speaking, motivation is a dynamic process that involves internal psychological factors such as choice, novelty, effort, and persistence over time (Jang and Feng, 2007). Bearing this in mind, it is possible to identify various tourist profiles

depending on the variables considered. For this reason, tourism managers try to promote those attributes that better adapt to the profile of certain groups of tourists (Kim, 1999; Kozak, 2002; Laws, 1991).

In general terms, tourists travel either because they are driven by internal reasons or variables or because they feel attracted by some external variables associated to the destination. The push factors are related to the internal and emotional aspects, such as the wish to escape, rest and relax, to live an adventure, or to attain a certain social interaction. The pull factors are connected with the external, cognitive and environmental aspects, such as the appeal of the destination, its recreational facilities, or its cultural heritage or natural scenery (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977, 1981).

In the field of tourism, motivation enables an answer to be provided to three essential questions intrinsic to the tourism cycle: the reasons to travel (why); the choice made (where to); and the results obtained (satisfaction) (Castaño et al., 2003).

Motivation is one of the main factors leading tourists to a specific destination, since they are often driven by a specific reason or cause to satisfy a need or a wish (González and Conde, 2011). Motivation can also manifest itself as the desire to participate in a leisure activity (Carroll and Alexandris, 1997). Although motivation has been defined diversely, in general all definitions coincide in putting it in relation with the intensity and direction of specific behaviour (Morilla, 1994). Direction is related to whether the individual looks for, comes close to, or feels attracted to certain situations, while intensity refers to the amount of determination felt by an individual in a specific situation (Wainberg and Gould, 1996). Santesmases et al. (2003) define motivation as the general predisposition that leads a person's behaviour towards the achievement of that which they seek. Motivation also evolves and changes over time (Recours et al., 2004).

With regard to motivation in the field of sport, most work considers that this depends on the interaction between personal aspects (personality, needs, and motives) and situational aspects (the importance of a sports game or event, the characteristics of the opponent, etc.) (González et al., 2000).

Sports tourists usually have a high degree of specialisation and a technical command of the sports discipline they practise. The main motivation of this kind of tourist is the practice of sport itself, and they are stimulated by the possibility of

performing this sport in different kinds of venues or settings (areas, regions, countries) with the purpose of enjoying the activity in parallel with sightseeing, cultural visits, gastronomic activities, and shopping trips (González, 2008).

For managers in the tourism industry, it is crucial to ascertain the reasons that lead tourists to choose this category of tourism, in order to focus marketing efforts on this kind of customer.

## **2.2) SATISFACTION IN SPORTS TOURISM**

Customer satisfaction has always been a central concept in marketing literature and is an important goal of all business activities. For hospitality and tourism, satisfaction has always been important since it can make the difference between a company's survival and failure (Williams and Uysal, 2013).

Most companies pay more attention to their market share than to their customers' satisfaction (Kotler, 2006). Nevertheless, this is a mistake because if customer satisfaction starts slipping, then market share erosion soon follows. Companies need to monitor and improve the level of customer satisfaction: the higher the customer satisfaction, the higher the customer retention.

The most comprehensive definition of satisfaction has been offered by Kotler and Keller (2006) who define satisfaction as a person's feeling of pleasure or disappointment that results from comparing a product's perceived performance or outcome against his/her expectations. Customer-perceived value has been defined as "the difference between the perspective customer's evaluation of all the benefits and all the costs of an offering and the perceived alternatives" (Kotler and Keller, 2006). More recently, Dominici and Guzzo (2010) have also defined customer satisfaction as a business philosophy which tends to the creation of value for customers, by anticipating and managing their expectations, and demonstrating ability and responsibility to satisfy their needs.

Customers' satisfaction is their comparative opinion, formed according to the benefit obtained from a product or service as compared to their expectations (Kotler, 2006). In this sense, the achievement of a high level of satisfaction among customers is of great importance, since the possibility of them repeating their visit (Naylor and Bardi, 2002; Shonk and Chelladurai, 2008) and positively mentioning the event to other potential customers (Moreno et al., 2002) depends on this satisfaction.

Therefore, the measurement of satisfaction is one of the main goals for many firms. In fact, many tourism destinations consider customer satisfaction as one of the most important sources of their competitive advantage (Shonk and Chelladurai, 2008).

Given that satisfaction is considered a prerequisite of customer loyalty and even of business success, it has greatly captured the attention of scientific literature over the years (Bigñé et al., 2001; Gil et al., 2002; Reichheld and Sasser, 1990; Teye and Leclerc, 1998; Yoon and Uysal, 2005; Yuksel et al., 2009). The proven positive relationship between satisfaction and loyalty (Bitner, 1990; Fornell, 1992; Zeithmal et al., 1996; Oh and Parks, 1997) has transformed tourist satisfaction into a paramount objective of all tourism agents.

A review of the literature reveals that there are many factors that affect customer satisfaction. Such factors include friendly employees, courteous employees, knowledgeable employees, helpful employees, accuracy of billing, billing timeliness, competitive pricing, service quality, good value, billing clarity, and quick service (Hokanson, 1995).

The measurement of the level of tourist satisfaction entails considering the multiple dimensions involved in the psychological process for the evaluation of the experience with a particular product or service (Peter and Olson, 1996). Therefore, not only is it important to measure satisfaction on a general level, but it is also necessary to evaluate the customers' satisfaction with the specific attributes of that product or service (Barroso et al., 2007; Chi and Qu, 2008; Severt et al., 2007; Yu and Goulden, 2006). This importance arises since tourism destinations encompass a set of resources, activities and feelings experienced by customers, and each of these attributes has a different relevance when measuring the customer's satisfaction (Varela, Prat, Voces and Rial, 2006). In fact, the enhancement of tourist satisfaction not only has positive effects on the tourism service provider and on the reputation of the destination, but also strengthens tourist loyalty, lowers the price elasticity, lowers the future transaction cost, and increases the productive force (Chen, Zhang and Qiu, 2013).

In the case of tourism, in order to analyse the possible evolution of demand, it is also better to study the satisfaction shown by tourists in relation to their experience at the tourism destination than to study the answers provided by potential customers of that specific destination (Arimond and Elfessi, 2001). Regarding this issue, it is important to show that past experience with the destination significantly influences

intentions to revisit the destination for sports tourism activities (Kaplanidou and Vogt, 2007).

Specialised literature has also confirmed the existence of certain elements of tourism supply that are independent of the tourists' motivation to travel and that have a large influence on the final evaluation of the tourists' experience (Gundersen and Olsson, 1996). Thus, Laguna and Palacios (2009) define the treatment and kindness of the employees as the primary indicator of satisfaction. On the other hand, Devesa and Palacios (2005) conclude that the level of satisfaction depends on two factors: the human factor and the access to the many services, the first being the most decisive aspect despite the eminently cultural motivation shown by the survey respondents. These results are in line with the work of Parasuraman et al. (1985) and that of Batman and Soybali (1999), which show that, as in other service industries, personal factors are those which most affect the tourists' satisfaction with their destination. On the other hand, Wang et al. (2000) underline security, price and extras as the most significant aspects of tourist satisfaction.

Sports event tourism is characterised by an ample supply of elements and activities that complement the main activity and affect tourist satisfaction with the destination. In relation to this, tourist satisfaction has been considered a useful tool to help increase competitiveness between tourism destinations (Andriotis et al., 2008). Hence, the study of the degree of satisfaction of sports event tourists is a priority objective for many tourism agents, since satisfied tourists constitute the key factor for growth within this tourism sector.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

The data used in this study was based on a total of 141 structured interviews distributed among the tourists of a paddle tennis event held in Islantilla (province of Huelva, Spain), in October 2012. This paddle tennis tournament was organized by a prestigious Spanish travel agency at a hotel in Islantilla. The travel agency offered a package that included accommodation (at the four-star hotel chosen to be the site of the paddle tennis tournament) and registration for the tournament. The tournament had been held several times before, in previous years, and was to last four days.

Islantilla is a coastal resort located between the towns of Isla Cristina and Lepe, in the province of Huelva. It is a modern tourist complex with seafront hotels, tourist apartments, restaurants, residential complexes, sports facilities, a seaside promenade, various shopping malls, and green and recreational areas. In addition, it has a 27-hole golf course and beautiful views over the sea.

Thanks to the complete road network connecting the provinces of Huelva and Seville with the Portuguese border, and to the nearby airports of Seville (Spain) and Faro (Portugal), Islantilla is a place easily accessible from anywhere in Spain or Europe at any time of the year.

In Islantilla, as in most of the Costa de la Luz area, there are more than 300 sunny days per year and the yearly average temperature oscillates between 19°C at noon and 12°C at night, with June and July as the warmest months. Its oceanic climate favours the practice of sports all year round.

The target population is composed of tourists registered in the event. During the last two days of the event, tourists were randomly selected at the venue of the event. All were tourists registered at the paddle tennis tournament. The data collection took the form of a self-administered questionnaire. The tourists completed the questionnaire before they began a match or after the match was completed. The interviewer was available for queries or further information.

The questionnaire was structured in order to collect information on several socio-economic, motivational and satisfaction-related aspects of the practice of paddle tennis. The variables and questions were adapted from others found in the literature on the topic (Farías, 2011; Molera and Pilar, 2006; Osti et al., 2012). The questions of the motivational aspects were based on the publication about recreational, sporting and tourist activities by Farías (2011) and the publication concerning rural tourism by Molera and Pilar (2006), but adapted to address paddle tennis tourists instead of hiker tourists. Among the goals of these publications was also the study of motivation in sports tourism.

The items related to the satisfaction variable were adapted from Osti et al. (2012). This study analysed the effect of tourist loyalty and tourist satisfaction with a sporting event on visitors' behavioural intention not only to revisit and recommend the event but also to revisit and recommend its nearby tourist destinations. They found three factors to be relevant regarding the satisfaction variable, and hence those items

representing services, prices and accessibility factors were included in the present study.

The motivation variable was measured by means of 16 items on a Likert scale spanning from 1 (in great disagreement) to 7 (in great agreement). The items are shown in Table 3. The satisfaction variable was measured by means of 13 items regarding the accommodation services, organization of the sporting event, prices and facilities. These items were measured on a Likert scale spanning from 1 (barely satisfied) to 7 (very satisfied). For the measurement of satisfaction, and in order to question customers who had already experienced the service, the interviews were carried out over the last two days of the tournament. These items are shown in Table 5. Moreover, socio-demographic variables and variables related to paddle tennis were inserted in the questionnaire.

For the analysis of the motivation and satisfaction issues, a factor analysis with varimax rotation was applied. Factor analysis was used in order to reduce the number of variables and find a small number of new uncorrelated variables (factors) explaining these phenomena. Varimax rotation was used to maximize variance of the squared loadings of a factor on all variables in the matrix and to rotate the extracted factors to a terminal solution.

A total of 141 valid questionnaires were collected. The sampling error was plus or minus 4.76 percentage points and a confidence level of 95% was applied in the analysis. The data was analysed with SPSS software.

#### **4. RESULTS**

Tables 1 and 2 present, respectively, the socio-demographic features of the survey respondents and the characteristics of the paddle tennis event.

<b>Variable</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	47.5
Female	52.5
<b>Total Gender</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Age</b>	
18-29	8.5
30-44	41.8
45-59	44.7
Over 59	5.0
<b>Total Age</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Marital status</b>	
Single	8.5
Married	77.3
Divorced	14.2
Widowed	0.0
Other	0.0
<b>Total Marital status</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Educational level</b>	
Minimal studies	6.4
Further education	78.7
Higher education	14.9
<b>Total Educational level</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Employment situation</b>	
Self-employed worker	20.6
Employee	56.7
Unemployed	7.1
Student	3.5
Homemaker	7.1
Pensioner or retired	5.0
<b>Total Employment situation</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Monthly income</b>	
Under 1,200 euros	20.5
1,200-2,100 euros	37.6
2,100-3,000 euros	35.5
Over 3,000 euros	6.4
<b>Total Monthly income</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 1: Socio-demographic profiles of the respondents.  
Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Table 1 shows that the percentages of men (47.5 percent) and women (52.5 percent) are similar, a fact that demonstrates that paddle tennis is played by a large proportion of women, in contrast to other sports, such as golf (Reis and Correia, 2013). Most of the respondents are adults aged between 30 and 59. Concerning the marital status of the respondents, most are married (77.3 percent), although there is also a significant percentage of divorced (14.2 percent). Most respondents have

received further education and are usually employed. Finally, the level of their monthly income is medium to high, with most respondents earning between 1,200 and 3,000 euros per month.

Table 2 shows certain aspects related to the activity of paddle tennis tourism as practised by the respondents. This information leads to a better understanding of this kind of event.

<b>Variable</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Frequency of paddle tennis practice</b>	
3 or more times a week	29.5
Once or twice a week	54.7
Less often	15.8
<b>Total frequency</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Intention to return to the event</b>	
Yes	85.8
No	12.8
Do not know / No answer	1.4
<b>Total intention</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Participation in the event</b>	
It is my first time	20.9
Have attended on previous occasions	79.1
<b>Total participation</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Practice of paddle tennis tourism in similar events</b>	
Yes	19.9
No	76.6
Do not know / No answer	3.5
<b>Total similar events</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 2: Characteristics of the respondents in regard to the sporting event.  
Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Most respondents play paddle tennis reasonably often (once or twice a week). A high percentage of these regular players have attended the same sporting event on previous occasions, although it is important to underline that most respondents have never been to other events of this kind. Regarding the intention to return to paddle tennis tourism, a very high percentage (85.8 percent) of respondents affirms that they intend to return, which is a significant indicator of loyalty to this kind of tourism.

In order to study the motivation that leads people to play paddle tennis, a factor analysis has been applied to the sixteen items included in the questionnaire to this effect. Factor analysis is a method for investigating whether a number of variables of interest are linearly related to a small number of unobservable factors, and is therefore a suitable method for this purpose. First, the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin)

coefficient is 0.912, which confirms that the application of factor analysis is correct. On the other hand, Bartlett's test of sphericity tests the hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix, which would indicate that the variables are unrelated and therefore unsuitable for structure detection. In this case, Bartlett's test of sphericity (approximate chi-square value is 2283.875) also guarantees the suitability of the application of factor analysis to this data, since its p-value is 0.000, and hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

The first four factors explain 83.39 percent of the total variance. Table 3 shows the results obtained from the varimax rotation, where only those factor loadings above 0.5 are included.

Items	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Satisfaction with the event in relation to expenses	0.826			
Improvement of the abilities and qualities as a player	0.831			
Greater enjoyment than with other sports	0.923			
New sensations and experiences	0.857			
Playing in suitable weather conditions	0.853			
Relaxation or stress reduction	0.876			
Overall friendly atmosphere and pleasant comradeship	0.859			
Increase in social status		0.753		
Meeting other people		0.757		
A complement to holidays		0.909		
Additional enjoyment of nightlife		0.879		
Additional enjoyment of cultural visits		0.818		
Going shopping		0.865		
Being with the family on holiday		0.788		
Competition with advanced-professional players			0.643	
Doing business with other businesspeople				0.722

Extraction method: Principal component analysis. Rotation method: Normalisation. Varimax with Kaiser.  
The rotation has converged in five iterations.

Table 3: Results of the rotated factor analysis for paddle tennis tourists' motivation.  
Source: Authors' own elaboration.

The first factor explains 53.35 percent of the variance and is associated with the sensations provoked by paddle tennis itself, such as enjoyment, stress reduction and the appreciation of the atmosphere in general. The second factor explains 20.66 percent of the total variance and is related to the social component and the leisure complement of the holiday. The third factor explains 5.97 percent of the variance and has to do with the tourists competing in various tournaments. Finally, the fourth factor

explains 3.41 percent of the variance and is associated to the use of paddle tennis tourism to generate business with other people or companies.

The first factor can be labelled “New experiences” because it includes aspects such as new sensations and experiences, relaxation, overall friendly atmosphere and pleasant comradeship, and greater enjoyment than with other sports. The second factors can be labelled “Social” since it includes aspects such as social status, meeting other people, nightlife, cultural visits, and going shopping. The third factor can be labelled “Competitiveness” because it describes tourists who strive to compete with advanced-professional players. The final factor can be labelled “Business” since it includes tourists who do business with other businesspeople.

With the purpose of analysing the satisfaction drawn from the sporting event, a factor analysis is applied to thirteen items included in the questionnaire to this effect. These items were taken from the literature on the topic. The KMO coefficient is 0.939; therefore the application of factor analysis to the data is justified. On the other hand, Bartlett’s test of sphericity corroborates the result achieved with the KMO index, since its approximate chi-square value is 3540.667 and the p-value is less than 0.01. Therefore, factor analysis can be applied without objection.

By applying the principle of parsimony with the aim of correctly identifying the factors, three components that explain 93.50 percent of the total variance are retained. Table 4 shows the results obtained by implementing a varimax rotation, whereby only those factor loadings above 0.5 are included.

Items	Component				
	Mean	Standard deviation	1	2	3
Quality of the tourism accommodation	6.47	1.106	0.790		
Attraction of the tourism destination	6.45	1.092	0.639		
Pleasant atmosphere	6.48	1.080	0.786		
Location of the accommodation/event	6.45	1.085	0.720		
Organisation of the event	6.52	1.080	0.791		
Professionalism of the organisers	6.53	1.144	0.787		
Leisure activity programme	6.44	1.124	0.655		
Price of the registration for the event	6.38	1.199		0.787	
Price of the accommodation	6.38	1.169		0.780	
Price of meals and beverages	6.32	1.203		0.813	
State of the paddle courts	6.40	1.139			0.651
Sport facilities in general	6.38	1.125			0.626
Parking	6.24	1.325			0.847

Method of extraction: Principal components analysis. Method of rotation: Normalisation Varimax with Kaiser.

The rotation has converged in 7 iterations.

Table 4: Results of the rotated factor analysis for paddle tennis tourists' satisfaction.

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

The means show a high level of satisfaction for all items. The highest values are related to the organization of the event and the professionalism of the organisers. The lowest values are related to the parking and the price of meals and beverages: the items with the highest values in standard deviation. Regarding the Factor Analysis, the first component is related to the accommodation and to the organisation of the sporting event. This factor includes aspects such as quality, attraction, and location of the accommodation, as well as with the overall organisation of the event, something which helps create a pleasant atmosphere. This component can be labelled as *quality of accommodation and organization*. The second component is related to the price: it includes the price of the registration for the event, of the accommodation and of the meals and beverages. This component can be named as *price factor*. Finally, the third component reflects various aspects associated to the sports facilities in general, including the state of the paddle tennis courts and the existence of suitable parking. This component can be labelled as *facilities in general*. In brief, the satisfaction of tourists can be classified into 3 factors: a component, including aspects as the accommodation and the organisation of the event, another component including aspects related to the prices, and another component including facilities in general.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

There are issues that can be fundamental to the development of provision strategies for sports tourism and event sports tourism (Weed, 2006). This work strives to highlight some of these issues in paddle tennis tourism.

The present work is framed within the literature on emerging tourism categories. As pointed out by Esteve (2001), tourism supply should tend towards specialisation since the tourism market is segmented and a certain part is insufficiently explored due to the lack of adequate facilities. Therefore, the relevance of this study lies in that it is focused on a specific and emerging tourism speciality, namely paddle tennis tourism.

The relationship between tourism, sport, and paddle tennis can bring significant benefits to tourism regions. On the one hand, it enables the corporate image of many hotel resorts to be upgraded through the creation of sports areas that respond to the current needs of customers. On the other hand, it improves the image of tourism areas through the organisation of paddle tennis sporting events, in a similar way to that of other sporting events. Finally, these enhancements foster the creation of new specialised tourism destinations that respond to the current tourism trends.

The analysis of paddle tennis tourism enables the behaviour of these kinds of tourists to be identified and knowledge on their profile to be ascertained, thereby allowing the companies, governments, travel agents and tourism managers to orientate their strategies towards achieving notable economic benefits.

The results of this study indicate the existence of four dimensions that measure the motivation of paddle tennis tourists. In this sense, there is a factor including aspects as to experience new sensations, to reduce personal stress, to have fun, and to enjoy the atmosphere in general. This factor can be labelled “New experiences”. By playing paddle tennis, tourists can comment on their jobs, projects, and worries, and disconnect from their daily life while simultaneously improving their fitness level. Therefore, paddle tennis tourism represents a major form of socialisation since it enables both new friendships to be forged and old friendships to be maintained at these kinds of sporting events.

Another factor is related to the social activity; in other words, they understand this practice as a leisure complement to their holidays and aim to establish new social relationships thanks to this sport. This factor can be labelled “Social tourists”. A

significant aspect of this kind of tourist is that they expect to increase their social status. For many people, paddle tennis tourism is thus associated to the possibility of raising their social status. This may be due to the fact that, since its beginnings, paddle tennis was deemed an elitist sport to which only a limited few had access (Montero, 2009). It should be borne in mind that, at first, paddle tennis was mostly practised in private clubs, which were only accessible to people with a high income. Back in those years, paddle tennis was played by representatives of the upper classes, such as famous politicians, a fact that helped this almost unknown sport to gain prestige (Rodríguez, 2008). Furthermore, it should be emphasized that the access to certain leisure activities is influenced by social status (Recours et al., 2004). For example, golf is often seen as a “rich man’s sport”, although this view is not universally held (Kuentzel and Heberlein, 1997). Despite this elitism, paddle tennis has slowly become an affordable sport played by a wide cross-section of citizens and is therefore expanding into other social strata.

The third component is mainly focused on competition. This component includes aspects related to competing tourists who strive to improve their sports abilities. This factor can be labelled “Competitors”. Finally, there is another factor including aspects related to generate business with other people. This factor can be labelled “Negotiators”.

The results observed in this study also show that most paddle tennis tourists are between 30 and 59 years-old and that their economic level is medium to high. These results are in consonance with those obtained by Latiesa et al. (2006), who described the profile of the sports tourist as a middle- to upper-class adult. In addition, it is important to underline that the practice of this kind of tourism is favoured by the fact that paddle tennis is an enjoyable and physically affordable sport with a sharp learning curve. Consequently, adults with enough time to practise sport find it an easy and entertaining alternative.

Concerning the tourists’ economic level, contrary to other kinds of sport tourism, such as golf tourism, which is affordable for only a tiny minority due to its high economic cost (Hennessey et al., 2006; Kim et al., 2008), paddle tennis tourism does not necessarily imply a high economic level. Anyone can practise this kind of sports tourism thanks to its minimal economic cost. However, it is important to show that expenditure on sports tourism provides important information for the development of

effective and efficient short-term and long-term management and marketing strategies (Dixon et al., 2012).

On the other hand, it should be pointed out that, despite the determinant role of the weather when planning sports holidays, one of the advantages of paddle tennis tourism as compared to other sport tourism categories is that it does not require a specific type of weather, although good weather conditions always provide an extra attraction. Paddle tennis can be played in indoor facilities because the courts are not overly large, and this lightens the load of investment in the construction of courts within a hotel complex.

Another objective of this study was to analyse the satisfaction of paddle tennis tourists. Measuring their satisfaction is of great interest to both researchers and businesspeople due to the existing intense competition between various sporting events (Osti et al., 2012). The sample of respondents perceived satisfaction through three factors labelled as quality of accommodation and organization, price, and facilities in general. A factor is related to the accommodation services and the general organisation of the sporting event. It includes aspects as quality, attraction, and location of the accommodation, as well as the overall organisation of the event: something which helps create a pleasant atmosphere. This result reflects that the event and the destination aspects appear together in the measurement of satisfaction. This may be because, in this case, there are a good organization of the event and an attractive destination for paddle tennis tourists. It must be noted that this event was held in an attractive place: Islantilla. Additionally, this event was organised by the travel agency of one of the most prominent trading companies in Spain. It is therefore reasonable that event and destination aspects can be lumped together. However, it is possible to find other places with different levels of satisfaction between the event and destination aspects. More research is needed to understand this finding.

Another factor is related to the prices, and there is yet another factor including facilities in general. These results corroborate those obtained by Osti et al. (2012) on the factors of tourist satisfaction with sporting events. Furthermore, the first and third components are the same as those shown by Shonk and Chelladurai (2008) in their proposed model of service quality in sports tourism, called “access quality” and “accommodation quality”. As a consequence related to the proposed model, this satisfaction leads to the tourist’s intention to return to the city or town of the sporting

event (Shonk and Chelladurai, 2008). It is necessary to take into account that satisfaction is a key factor not only for the tourists' return but also for them to recommend their experience to their friends and acquaintances.

In brief, this article has analysed a new kind of sports tourism: paddle tennis tourism. Given the boom of paddle tennis in many countries, and the benefits derived from practising the sport itself, paddle tennis tourism represents an excellent market niche for many hotels. Tourism bodies and agents should focus their efforts on promoting and boosting tourism destinations through the development of new categories such as paddle tennis tourism.

The main limitation of this study lies in the fact that the data on the sporting events was collected from one single specific tourism destination. It would be most interesting to perform similar analyses with data gathered on other tourism destinations, with the purpose of revealing possible heterogeneity across the results. With regard to future lines of research, it is worth emphasizing the importance of undertaking this type of study in other countries where paddle tennis is also fast becoming widespread, in order to detect possible differences between results.

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