

## Economic Sciences

### Экономические науки

UDC 33

#### **Identification and Analysis of Significant Factors Influencing Visitor Satisfaction at Heritage Sites – The Case of Serbian Medieval Fortresses**

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**Abstract.** With increased appreciation of general public, heritage sites gained more attention regarding contemporary tourism and management studies. Accordingly, the assessment of visitors' satisfaction on these sites is important tool for both financial and organization management. The aim of this research is to identify the main (statistically significant) factors that influence visitors' satisfaction. Data was obtained by survey conducted during the visit of three medieval fortresses in Serbia, with aim to capture tourist's expectations and perceptions on ten given attributes. The results of factor and descriptive statistical analysis indicate three factors: "regional settings", "marketing", "aesthetic appeal" significant for visitors' satisfaction of the investigated heritage sites.

**Keywords:** heritage; medieval fortresses; visitors' satisfaction; factor analysis; Serbia.

**Introduction.** During most of the past century, tourism and culture were on different sides of specter where cultural resources were related to education, and tourism was regarded as pure leisure (Brida et al, 2012). However, since the 1980s cultural activity has begun to merge and was viewed as a part of tourism (OECD, 2009). Nowadays, there are different opinions on how to define cultural tourism. Some of them offer very narrow approach in describing this phenomena, like visits to museums and archaeological sites, opposite to those who identifies cultural tourism as part of any given tourism experience (ICOMOS, 2002; Cuccia and Rizzo, 2011). Consistent with more general global trends in cultural tourism, heritage tourism has emerged as increasingly popular and the most rapidly growing international sector of the tourism industry (Alzua et al., 1998; Herbert 1995; Poria et al., 2003).

Heritage tourism, like other leisure and tourism activities, is viewed to a great extent as an experiential consumption. Currently, a transitional phase can be identified, namely from product-led development of heritage attractions that emphasize exhibits and education, to a more visitor-oriented development that emphasizes consumer preferences and quality of personal experience (Apostolakis and Jaffry, 2005). To increase visitors' positive behavioral intentions, heritage managers should set their priorities to provide high quality, satisfying experiences that visitors perceive to be a good value (Lee et al., 2007).

Serbia, as country with turbulent history and target of many invading tribes and nations from Romans to Ottomans and Austro-Hungarians, presents a "cradle" of various inheritances. Medieval fortresses that were built-to-last in wars and battles still remain as potential tourism attractions. As still amongst less developed European countries, Serbia today urges to be rediscovered as a source of symbols and new interpretations (Nuryanti, 1996).

The largest and most significant Serbian fortresses were built in Danube region at the border between medieval Serbia and Hungary. Almost every fortress was built at the river side in order to

aggravate every form of besiegement. In the second half of XIV century the danger of the Turks from south were raising and Serbs started to build towns south from this region. Most towns were built in the Western Morava valley, and most important of these was Lazar's Town.

The purpose of this study is to better understand tourists' satisfaction when visiting medieval fortresses, which should prove as a useful tool for heritage management, the tourism and political sector, the local economy, etc. The overall objective of the research project is to estimate the main (statistically significant) factors that influence visitors' satisfaction upon visit of three Serbian medieval towns (Golubac, Smederevo and Lazar's Town).

### **The concept of visitor's satisfaction and service quality – A brief overview**

In the context of "cultural tourism", the emotional aspects of activities also have a significant effect on consumers' evaluations of their experiences, and hence on their level of satisfaction (Jeong and Lee, 2006). When tourists visit an archaeological site, a museum, or a cathedral, they are not merely seeking the "product" itself, but the emotional (aesthetic), cognitive (educational), and social (identity) values associated with it (Bigné et al., 2008). Aforementioned concept could be further expanded by certain additional values that determine the level of satisfaction such as functional (location, accessibility, hotels and restaurants in closer vicinity etc.) or tourism and marketing values (visitor animation, advertising, etc.).

Number of authors in tourism literature came to same conclusion that tourist satisfaction and tourist's intention to return to same destination are under effect or rather determined by his/her assessment of the destination's different attributes. In this respect, many studies explore destination's performance by analyzing declared tourist satisfaction with different aspects of the destination (Alegre and Cladera, 2006; Baker and Crompton, 2000; Crompton and Love, 1995; Danaher and Arweiler, 1996; Kozak, 2002; Kozak and Rimmington, 1999; Murphy et al., 2000; Pizam and Ellis, 1999; Yoon and Uysal, 2005). In addition, research on destination loyalty shows that one of the most decisive factors in a further visit to a destination by tourists is their satisfaction with their previous visit (Alegre and Cladera, 2006; Appiah-Adu et al., 2000; Baker and Crompton, 2000; Bignie et al., 2001; Caneen, 2003; Kozak and Rimmington, 2000; Kozak, 2001, 2003; Yoon and Uysal, 2005). Research shows that the benefits of service quality lead to customer loyalty and attraction of new customers, positive word-of-mouth, employee satisfaction and commitment, enhanced corporate image, reduced costs, and increased business performance (Berry et al., 1989).

Satisfaction is viewed like perceived discrepancy between prior expectation and perceived performance after consumption – when performance differs from expectation, dissatisfaction occurs (Oliver, 1980). It can be defined as the degree to which one believes that an experience evokes positive feelings (Rust and Oliver, 1994). In tourism context, satisfaction can be defined as a synergy of pre-travel expectations and post-travel experiences. Simply said, when experiences compared to expectations result in feelings of gratification, the tourist is satisfied, and when they result in feelings of displeasure, the tourist is dissatisfied (Reisinger and Turner, 2003). Past studies have suggested that perceptions of service quality and value affect satisfaction, and satisfaction furthermore affect loyalty and post-behaviors (Anderson and Sullivan, 1993; Bigné et al., 2001; Chen, 2008; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Choi and Chu, 2001; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; De Rojas and Camarero, 2008; Fornell, 1992; Oliver, 1980; Petrick and Backman, 2002; Tarn, 2000). In that context, the satisfied tourists may want to revisit a destination, suggest it to others, or express favorable remarks regarding the destination. On the other hand, dissatisfied tourists may never return to the same destination and never recommend it to other tourists. Even worse, dissatisfied tourists may express negative comments about a destination and damage its market reputation (Reisinger and Turner, 2003).

Certain authors emphasize different element importance that influence the formation of visitors satisfaction, further they stress out the elements that refer to: *perceived quality of service or product* (Zeithaml, 1988; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Shetty, 1993; Anderson et al., 1994; Anderson and Fornell, 2000; Caruana et al., 2003; Kotler and Keller, 2006); *Consumers value for money* (Zeithaml, 1988; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Anderson et al., 1994; Anderson and Fornell, 2000); *price as the monetary expression of value* (Anderson et al., 1994; Kotler and Keller, 2006); *time spent in the search for product* (Wang and Lo, 2003; Kotler and Keller, 2006); *Current and previous experiences that affect customer satisfaction* (Anderson et al., 1994); *Customer expectations* (Shetty, 1993; Anderson et al., 1994; Anderson and Fornell, 2000; Kotler and Keller,

2006); *Level of consumers involvement that directly reflect on level of his satisfaction* (Oliva and Oliver, 1995). Among previously mentioned variables, service quality, perceived value, and satisfaction have been identified as three major antecedents affecting tourists' behavioral intentions in past studies (Baker and Crompton, 2000; Petrick, 2004; Petrick and Backman, 2002).

From abundant tourism literature (references include in this paragraph) arouse question whether expectations should be included in measuring of service quality, which later lead to two opposite paradigms: 1) disconfirmation paradigm - concept based on the difference between consumers' expectations and perceptions of service and 2) perception paradigm – concept in which expectations are irrelevant (Mikulić, 2007), service quality of tourism product is equivalent to satisfaction, and expectations prior to service are not taken into account. Widely accepted approach in measuring service quality is SERVQUAL model, while SERVPERF model (Cronin and Taylor 1992; 1994) and EP (Evaluated Performance) model (Teas, 1993) are tools used in second paradigm for measuring service quality. The SERVPERF and EP model characterize modifications of SERVQUAL model which purpose was to enhance it and remove any given lacks (Blešić et al., 2010). After first results of SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1985), authors continued to further develop model thru thorough research and paper publishing (Parasuraman et al., 1988., 1991a, 1991b, 1994, Zeithaml et al., 1985, 1988, 1990, 1993, 2006). An unmodified SERVQUAL model assumes that consumer satisfaction is measured as the difference (gap) between ideal provision and actual provision (Parasuraman et al., 1985).

## Methodology

### Research setting

The empirical study was conducted at the sites of medieval fortresses, two along the river Danube (Golubac and Smederevo), and one in central Serbia (Lazar's Town - Kruševac) (Figure 1). The number of Serbian medieval towns grew parallel with the strengthening of the medieval Serbian state. The ruins of 201 towns were found and located on the territory of old Serbia. Serbian medieval towns differed among themselves in the time of their formation and in the appearance. Towns consisted of several units. The most striking parts were Upper Town and Lower Town which can be seen on the examples of Smederevo, Golubac. The Upper Towns were smaller but rather strongly built. They had more defense towers which provided ruler with a shelter during the war times. Towns in earlier periods were not split into different parts but had Donjon towers which represented the residence and the main shelter for a ruler. Mentioned characteristics have great tourism appeal and represent pull factors for visitors. The most renowned Donjon tower is in Kruševac – Lazar's Town. These medieval fortresses represent "outdoor museums" with defensive walls, Donjon towers, inner chambers and vivid history that occurred within these walls. The current services and facilities in medieval fortresses include information office, guided tours and restrooms, which can be found only in Smederevo, while Lazar's Town and Golubac are totally neglected.

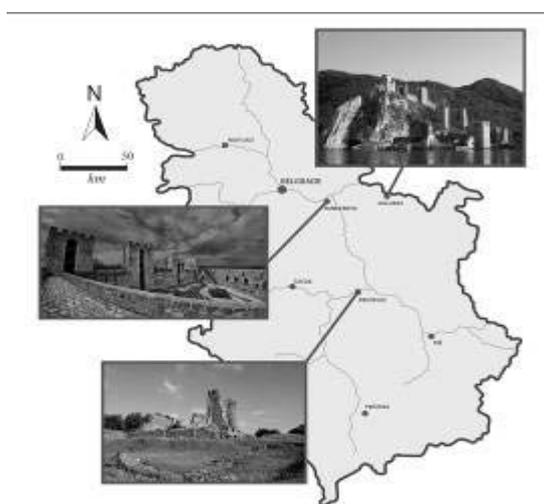


Figure 1. Location of three medieval heritage sites in Serbia included in this study

## Data collection and sample

Data were collected by personal interview and completion of a questionnaire with 284 students of second and third year of Faculty of Sciences, Department for Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management in April 2011. Students visited medieval fortresses (Golubac, Smederevo and Lazar's Town) during their organized visit. Students already passed the exams concerning touristic development of heritage sites (marketing in tourism, cultural assets in tourism, sustainable development in tourism, cultural tourism, spatial planning), which are crucial for understanding the advantages and disadvantages of a given heritage. This type of research demands maximum homogenous sample appliance, and students sample can be described as one (Calder et al., 1981; Winer, 1999; Lynch, 1999). A total of 284 valid completed questionnaires were collected by group of trained researchers, who interviewed students before and after the visit at the medieval fortification. The questionnaire was based on a review of the literature and researchers experience in practice.

Prior to the main survey, a pilot study, consisting of 60 respondents, was done. Six items (site maintenance, number of open areas, state of conservation, guided visits, use of technology, and length of queues) were deleted from the survey instrument due to their low factor loading scores. Then, a formal survey with 10 items was conducted.

The final questionnaire, was arranged in three parts. The first part of questionnaire consisted of 10 attributes, for which students were asked to indicate the expectations of the attributes, while in other part of questionnaire students were asked about their perceptions of the attributes. Attributes were measured a five-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important), in the Importance part, and from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) in the Performance part. The third part of the questionnaire included demographic characteristics of the respondents.

The demographic data revealed that the sample included 71 (25%) males and 213 (75%) females among the respondents. Most of the interviewed students are on tourism program (45.4%). Mean value of their grades during their studies mostly ranges from 8.01-9.00 (53.2%) (min possible grade 6.00 and max possible grade 10.00) and most of the interviewed students finished grammar school (54.9%). More detailed demographic characteristics of the respondents are given in table 1.

*Table 1. Summary of the most important demographic data on the sample (n = 284).*

Variables	Sample size	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	71	25
Female	213	75
<b>Study modules</b>		
Tourism	129	45.4
Professor of Geography	71	25
Multidisciplinary studies – Geography and Informatics	84	29.6
<b>High School</b>		
Grammar school	156	54.9
Technical school	48	16.9
School of Economics	80	28.2
<b>Mean grade of I and II year of Faculty study (6-10)</b>		
6.00-7.00	12	4.2
7.01-8.00	59	20.8
8.01-9.00	151	53.2
9.01-10.00	62	21.8

## Results

### Factor analysis

Categories of tourism quality of selected Serbian medieval heritage sites, measured perceptions and expectations scales were factor analyzed using the principal component method and varimax rotation procedure in order to extract the sub-dimensions of those attributes. In this study, all factors with eigenvalue greater than 1 and with factor loadings more than 0.5 were retained.

The results of the expectations scale factor analysis, which suggested a three-factor solution, included 10 attributes of medieval fortresses and explained 66.19 % of the variance. The Kaiser – Meyer – Olkin (KMO) overall measure of sampling adequacy was 0.83 which was meritorious (Kaiser, 1974) and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ( $p = 0.000$ ). The results of the factor analysis produced a clean factor structure with relatively higher loadings on the appropriate factors. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  values for each factor were greater than 0.7. This demonstrates that the scales of the formal questionnaire have considerable reliability (Nunnally, 1978). Table 2 shows the results of the expectations scale factor analysis.

Table 2. Results of expectations scale factor analysis

Extraced factors	Items	Factor loading	Eigenvalue	Variance explained	Cronbach's $\alpha$
Marketing	Tourism promotional activities	0.763	3.96	24.74	0.77
	Souvenirs	0.763			
	Quality of tour guide service	0.803			
	Quality and availability of information at the site	0.652			
Geographical settings	Locality and accessibility of site	0.757	1.55	21.47	0.80
	Possibility of merging with other sites in vicinity	0.809			
	Vicinity of Accommodation & Food Services	0.802			
	Ambient	0.769			
Aesthetic appeal	Authenticity, sense of place	0.783	1.11	19.98	0.73
	Level of tourism infrastructure (parking space, toilets, place for rest, verdure	0.809			

The first factor is labeled as "*Marketing*". This factor explained 24.74% of the total variance with a reliability coefficient of 0.77. The second factor is "*Geographical settings*" and explains 21.47% of the total variance with a reliability coefficient of 0.80. The third factor was labeled "*Aesthetic appeal*" and explained 19.98% of the variance with a reliability coefficient of 0.73.

For perception scale, as well as for expectations scale, these factors were singled out through explanatory factorial analysis. Rotation was conducted by varimax rotation procedure, which further acknowledged three-factor structures, which involved 10 attributes of Serbian medieval fortifications and explained 64.89% of the variance. The Kaiser – Meyer – Olkin (KMO) overall measure of sampling adequacy was 0.85 which also was meritorious (Kaiser, 1974) and Bartlett's

test of sphericity was significant ( $p = 0.000$ ). Cronbach's  $\alpha$  values for each factor were greater than 0.7 (Table 3).

Table 3. Results for perceptions scale factor analysis

Extraced factors	Items	Factor loading	Eigenvalue	Variance explained	Cronbach's $\alpha$
Marketing	Tourism promotional activities	0.812	4.24	25.49	0.70
	Souvenirs	0.702			
	Quality of tour guide service	0.768			
	Quality and availability of information at the site	0.689			
Aesthetic appeal	Ambient	0.718	1.22	20.53	0.81
	Authenticity, sense of place	0.842			
	Level of tourism infrastructure (parking space, toilets, place for rest, verdure	0.735			
	Locality and accessibility of site	0.592			
Geographical settings	Possibility of merging with other sites in vicinity	0.844	1.03	18.87	0.73
	Vicinity of Accommodation & Food Services	0.746			

Descriptive statistical analysis

Differences between the perceptions and expectations of medieval fortifications visitors were negative in all the selected attributes and factors that determine the quality of tourism product. Largest negative Gap is within "Marketing" factor, whose attributes were graded with lowest average grade of 2.67. This suggests that main issue in medieval fortresses affirmation in Serbia is lack of good promotional activities and inadequate propaganda.

The most important factor for visitors, which got the largest grade on perception scale, was the "Aesthetic appeal". As from attributes that determine the quality of medieval fortresses visitors expected most from the "location and accessibility", "Level of tourism infrastructure" and "Authenticity, sense of place". Detailed analysis of expectations and perceptions regarding selection factors and attributes is shown in table 4.

Table 4. Mean ratings of expectations and perceptions of selection factors and attributes

Factors and attributes	Expectations		Perceptions		Gap (P-E)
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	
<b>Marketing</b>	<b>3.60</b>	<b>0.86</b>	<b>2.67</b>	<b>0.88</b>	<b>-0.93</b>
Tourism promotional activities	3.84	1.08	2.84	1.03	-1
Souvenirs	3.19	1.09	2.25	1.06	-0.94
Quality of tour guide	3.60	1.11	2.64	1.21	-0.96

service					
Quality and availability of information at the site	3.75	1.05	2.94	1.12	-0.81
<b>Geographical settings</b>	<b>3.98</b>	<b>0.69</b>	<b>3.43</b>	<b>0.78</b>	<b>-0.55</b>
Locality and accessibility of site	4.35	0.80	4.06	1.02	-0.29
Possibility of merging with other sites in vicinity	3.83	0.81	3.27	0.94	-0.56
Vicinity of Accommodation & Food Services	3.75	0.87	2.95	1.00	-0.8
<b>Aesthetic appeal</b>	<b>4.30</b>	<b>0.57</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>0.76</b>	<b>-0.3</b>
Ambient	4.30	0.68	3.92	0.95	-0.38
Authenticity, sense of place	4.27	0.77	3.96	1.01	-0.31
Level of tourism infrastructure (parking space, toilets, place for rest, verdure	4.32	0.67	4.11	0.87	-0.21

### Discussion and managerial implications

The purpose of this study was to analyze visitors of medieval fortresses and to capture their level of satisfaction on certain parameters. Drawing on the literature on the evaluation of visitor's satisfaction, characteristics of cultural tourism, the study has successfully evaluated and validated medieval fortifications' quality from the visitor's perspective and hence measured level of satisfaction.

The component of *Marketing*, which aimed to capture the subjective personal feelings experienced by visitors on visit and prior, influenced by given information's about a site, was found to be the last of all three components and with the biggest gap. Promotional activities attribute reflects the biggest gap between expectations and perceptions, due to inaccurate promotional activities. Fortress of Golubac is present on every promotional material regarding medieval fortifications and Danube, despite its lack in infrastructure and tour guiding. When visitors come to Golubac they do not find the experience they were looking for because the site is neglected and inadequately equipped. For the same reasons souvenirs and tour guiding attribute were also given low grades.

The component of *Geographical settings* aimed to capture the more functional aspects of service delivery on site and visitors experience as a result of that service and was graded as second important with intermediate gap. Attribute that has the biggest gap is Vicinity of Accommodation & Food Services, which could prove as first limiter in tourism development and visitors satisfaction. Other two attributes need later attention due to smaller gap and less influence on visitor's satisfaction at first stage of development.

The component of *Aesthetic appeal* was found to be the strongest factor and with the smallest gap within all three components. This element could easily be enhanced by small amount of financial support and effort and from which visitor's satisfaction benefits mostly in the first stage of tourism development. Ambient attribute has the biggest gap within aesthetic appeal component but, as previously determined, that is something that can easily be changed in near future. Other two attributes do not need that kind of attention due to good grading and small gap.

#### *Managerial Implications*

This study has several relevant implications important to managers, who are responsible for creating or measuring visitor's satisfaction at medieval fortresses. According to result obtained by this study, authors propose three particular stages regarding tourism development at heritage sites.

At initial (first) stage of development, managers should focus on building a full service experience for their visitors, but without neglecting the technical and functional aspects of a site.

Enhancing visitors' subjective experiences could be achieved through different methods, depending on the particular circumstances and characteristics of individual medieval fortification. In the case of Serbian heritage of this type, this might be achieved by reconstructing a fantasy scene showing how medieval population lived at the sites. This form of visitor's animation would be more effective than merely putting an information panel in front of the medieval sites. This would also improve value of the fortifications and would improve the items on the service experience component (Quality and availability of information at the site, Authenticity, Sense of place, etc.). Partly, similar kind of service is provided at Smederevo fortress, where outdoor concerts and theatre festivals are held throughout the year.

At second stage, managers should deliver better service quality for visitors, achieved through an appropriate and adequate mixture of processes, employees, and physical amenities. Not just provide them with simple tour or brochure, and then totally abandon them to wander around heritage site, but accommodate them with various experiences. For instance, in the case of Golubac fortress visitors are left alone to roam around the site, which is in pretty bad shape, and therefore not secure due to lack of signposts, brochures, tour guiding, etc. Furthermore, this heritage site is located on the regional road with high frequency which makes safety issue even more important. These problems are well reflected in the poor scores obtained by the marketing factor and gap between expectations and perception attribute in this study (item scores ranging from 3.60 (expectations) to 2.67 (perception)). The use of appropriate technology (such as touch screens, audio guides, visual media, etc.) and human factor would improve the visitor's perception of quality at the site. Personal guidance is the foundation of better visitor's experience. Later on, managers should draw up a framework regarding rules of behavior that would preserve the fortresses and enhance the atmosphere at the site. Also managers should think about developing adequate promotional activities that would attract visitors, for example only visitors at Golubac fortress are random passer-bys.

Thirdly, managers should pay attention to geographical settings of the site. The main issue here is the vicinity of accommodation and food services, and later on there is a problem about possibility of merging with other sites in vicinity. Managers should arrange a meeting with stakeholders and potential investors that should make a strategy for local and regional tourism and heritage development. Inventory and afterward networking of complementary sites should occur and the final product should be a thematic route and mutual beneficial promotional activities, which would benefit every site in vicinity.

Finally, this study emphasizes that aesthetic appeal is the strongest part of medieval heritage sites, as it represents the main resource and beginning of every future development. Good side of ambient and aesthetic appeal is that it must not need much financial investment, but with serious disadvantage reflected through limited level of modifications due to the authenticity issues.

**Conclusion.** During most of the past century, tourism and culture were on different sides of spectre as cultural resources were related to education, while tourism was regarded as pure leisure (Brida et al, 2011). However, since the 1980s cultural activity has begun to merge and was viewed as a part of tourism (OECD, 2009). Nowadays, there different opinions on how to define cultural tourism, some of them offer very narrow approach in describing this phenomena, like visits to museums and archaeological sites, opposite to those who identifies cultural tourism as part of any given tourism experience (ICOMOS, 2002; Cuccia and Rizzo, 2011). Nevertheless, UNESCO defines cultural and natural heritage tourism as "the most rapidly growing international sector of the tourism industry". Although it is difficult to estimate the actual size of this phenomenon, the OECD and the UNWTO estimated that in 2007, cultural tourism accounted for 40% of all international tourism, up from 37% in 1995 (Brida et al, 2011, Mintel, 2010). In that context cultural heritage is not only "another pretty face to look at", alluding to aesthetic appeal and historical component which are just the peak of an iceberg in conservation strategy. Currently there is an increasing political focus on cultural heritage, both because of higher public interest in heritage per se and because many see heritage as a means to stimulate economic activity in regions with economic problems (Bowitz and Ibenholt, 2009).

Many authors in tourism literature came to same conclusion that tourist satisfaction and tourist's intention to return to same destination are under effect or rather determined by his/her assessment of the destination's different attributes. In this respect, many studies explore a destination's performance by analyzing declared tourist satisfaction with different aspects of the

destination (Alegre and Cladera, 2006; Baker and Crompton, 2000; Crompton and Love, 1995; Danaher and Arweiler, 1996; Kozak, 2002; Kozak and Rimmington, 1999; Murphy et al., 2000; Pizam and Ellis, 1999; Yoon and Uysal, 2005). In addition, research on destination loyalty shows that one of the most decisive factors in a further visit to a destination by tourists is their satisfaction with previous stays there (Alegre and Cladera, 2006; Appiah-Adu et al., 2000; Baker and Crompton, 2000; Bignie et al., 2001; Caneen, 2003; Kozak and Rimmington, 2000; Kozak, 2001, 2003; Yoon and Uysal, 2005). Research shows that the benefits of service quality lead to customer loyalty and attraction of new customers, positive word-of-mouth, employee satisfaction and commitment, enhanced corporate image, reduced costs, and increased business performance (Berry et al., 1989).

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Serbian medieval towns differed among themselves in the time of their formation and in the appearance. Towns consisted of several units. The most striking parts were Upper Town and Lower Town which can be seen on the examples of Smederevo, Golubac, Belgrade and Novo Brdo. The Upper Towns were smaller but rather strongly built. They had more defense towers which provided ruler with a shelter during the war times. Towns in earlier periods were not split into different parts but had Donjon towers which represented the residence and the main shelter for a ruler. Mentioned characteristics have great tourism appeal and represent pull factors for visitors.

Data was obtained by survey conducted during the visit of three representative medieval fortresses in Serbia (Golubac, Smederevo and Lazarev grad).

The result indicates three factors: "regional settings", "marketing", "aesthetic appeal" significant for visitors' satisfaction.

The component of *Marketing*, which aimed to capture the subjective personal feelings experienced by visitors on visit and prior, influenced by given information's about a site, was found to be the last of all three components and with the biggest gap. Promotional activities attribute reflects the biggest gap between expectations and perceptions, due to inaccurate promotional activities. Fortress of Golubac is found on every promotional material regarding medieval castles and Danube, despite its lack in infrastructure and tour guiding. When visitors come to Golubac they do not find the experience they were looking for because the site is neglected and inadequately equipped. For same reasons souvenirs and tour guiding attribute got the same marks.

The component of *Geographical settings* aimed to capture the more functional aspects of service delivery on site and visitors experience as a result of that service and was graded as second important with intermediate gap. Attribute that has the biggest gap is Vicinity of Accommodation & Food Services, which could prove as first limiter in tourism development and visitors satisfaction. Situation with other two attributes is somehow better and doesn't need immediate attention, due to less influence on visitor's satisfaction at current stage.

The component of *Aesthetic appeal* was found to be the strongest part and with the smallest gap out of three components. This element could easily be enhanced by small amount of financial support and effort and from which visitor's satisfaction benefits mostly in the first stage of tourism development. Ambient attribute has the biggest gap within Aesthetic appeal component, but as mentioned that is something that can easily be changed in near future. Other two attributes doesn't need that kind of attention due to good grading and small gap.

The purpose of this study is to better understand tourists' satisfaction when visiting medieval castles, which should prove as useful tool for heritage management, political sector etc. The overall objective of the research project is to estimate the main (statistically significant) factors that influence visitors' satisfaction upon visit of Serbian medieval towns. Secondary objectives of the project include proposals how management of cultural heritage can enhance economic value.

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**Выявление и анализ значимых факторов, влияющих  
на удовлетворенности посетителей историко-культурным наследием  
(на примере сербских средневековых крепостей)**

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**Аннотация.** В последнее время возрастает понимание интернет общественности, что исторические памятники играют важную роль в современном туризме. Соответственно, оценка удовлетворенности посетителей на этих сайтах является важным инструментом для привлечения финансовых потоков и управление турорганизацией. Целью данного исследования является выявление основных (статистически значимый) факторов, влияющих на удовлетворенность посетителей. Данные были получены путем опроса, проведенного в ходе визита в три средневековых крепости в Сербии. Результаты факторного и описательного статистического анализа указывают на три фактора: "Региональные настройки", "Маркетинг", "эстетическая привлекательность" значимых для удовлетворения посетителей исследуемых историко-культурных памятников.

**Ключевые слова:** наследие; средневековая крепость; удовлетворенность посетителей; факторный анализ; Сербия.