The Evaluation of Health Service Quality That Elderly Foreign Residents Receive in Turkey and Their Own Countries: The Case of Alanya

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Abstract

This study was carried out in order to compare the quality and satisfaction of health services that foreigners, who were over and under 65 years and could get health services from their own countries although they were settled in Alanya, received in Alanya and their own countries. This study was conducted in Alanya with 159 German, 159 Russian and 151 other countries' citizens between February and June 2018. It was found that there were more individuals and female over 65 years of age in all three groups. It was observed that while German citizens over 65 years of age were satisfied with the quality of health service in Alanya, the ones under 65 years of age were satisfied with the quality of health service in their own country. Moreover, it was achieved that the inpatient satisfaction of German citizens over 65 years for their own country was lower than that of participants under 65 years of age. Quality and satisfaction of health services of the citizens of other countries over 65 years were identified to be higher than German citizens over 65 years of age. There was no statistically significant difference regarding Russian citizens. Elderly resident foreigners are health immigrants settling permanently in order to protect and improve their health. Accordingly, it is considered that their health service preferences, length of stay and recommendations are affected positively when the quality and satisfaction of health services they receive in their place of residence are higher than their own countries, and studies should be carried out with these groups within the scope of health tourism.

Keywords: Elderly, Resident Foreigners, Health Service Quality, Health Tourism.

1. Introduction

The number of immigrants is increasing quickly throughout the world (IOM, 2017) and Turkey has been facing with immigrations from the European Union and the Russian Federation since the 1990s for a variety of reasons. Individuals, leaving their living or own country and beginning to have the status of firstly foreigner and then resident foreigner by settling in the country where they have gone, obtain their status in society through immigration (Ozgunes, 2017). Individuals coming to Turkey and residing here for a long time are called resident foreigners. Most of these people prefer historical and touristic places such as Istanbul, Antalya, Alanya and Mugla for different reasons such as sea, climate, health and historical features after having retired in their own countries.

Alanya was included in this study because as of

2016, 8,126 resident foreigners from 99 countries were living there and 3,535 foreigners from 60 countries purchased real estate. While there were 1,673 people from the Russian Federation in 2016, it increased to 2,530 in 2017, and although there were 1,339 German citizens in 2016, this increased to 1,735 in 2017. Citizens of other countries (Netherlands, England, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Poland, Iran) also seemed increase in 2017 compared to 2016 (Akman et al., 2016, 2017).

It was found out that German, Russian and other citizens of the country, who participated in this study, were mostly 65 years old or older. This shows that individuals over 65 years of age, called elderly, third age or geriatric tourism, are considered within the health tourism. Although these people are settled, they go to their country at certain times of the year or at any time. In the event that they are ill or feel sick and when they receive paid health services in Alanya or in their own countries out of insurance coverage they are included in health

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tourism. They can also receive health service in any other country in the world.

Baukute (2012) defined the health tourism to receive health service during the time spent away from home or home country, but this should be more than 24 hours. Wellness tourism is the organic combination of tourism and health. It has a great effect on health promotion. The elderly is a huge source of wellness tourism, and its wellness tourism market has great potential (Qi and Jiang, 2018). Consequently, the growing population of elderly becomes increasingly prevalent in health tourism in general (Mrcela et al., 2015).

Patient satisfaction in health service is one of the criteria used to evaluate the quality of health services. Patient satisfaction, defined as the degree of meeting wishes and expectations of patients, is considered to occur as a result of patients' expectations and perceptions. The Servqual (SQ) model and scale are also based on this assumption (Parasuraman et.al., 1985).

The purpose of this study is to determine the expectation-perception and satisfaction levels of the health service quality (SQ) received by the resident foreigners, who are Russian, German and other countries' citizens, 65 years old and under in Alanya. For this purpose, the expectation-perception and satisfaction levels of health service quality (SQ) they received in both Alanya and their own countries were evaluated.

As a result of these evaluations, the followings are aimed in order to measure and compare the satisfaction of resident foreigners, interacting with the health system of both their own countries and Turkey, about the health services provided in both their own countries and in Alanya:

1. To contribute to the development of information, policies and strategies on the health system for resident foreigners or foreigners to settle by determining how the health services provided in Alanya are perceived by resident foreigners and comparing them with the quality of health services they receive in their own countries,

2. To carry out studies on health tourism as elderly, third age or geriatric tourism by organising ageing and health programs related to old age.

2. Method

This study was carried out with the foreigner residents, receiving health services in Alanya or Turkey and their own countries, from the ones having an active residence permit as a landlord or tenant in Alanya and the foreigner residents living in Alanya between February-June 2018.

The pilot study of questionnaire, used in this study, was conducted by administrating to 50 (20 German, 20 Russian and 10 other nationals) resident foreigners, and it was identified that there was no incomprehensible expression in the questionnaire.

In the research, the sample size to represent the universe with 95% confidence by random sampling method is 400. Since some questionnaires were thought to be insufficient at the beginning of the study, 500 questionnaires were distributed and 31 questionnaires (12 questionnaires from Russian, 10 from German and nine from other foreigners) were not included in analyses, and remaining 469 questionnaires were found to be suitable for analysis. Of these questionnaires, 159 were Russian, 159 were German and 151 were citizens of other countries. 2 different questionnaire forms were used as data collection tools. SQ was the first questionnaire, widely used in service quality measurement and developed by Parasuraman et al. (1985) in the United States, and it was administrated as adapted by Isik (2011). The second questionnaire was the satisfaction survey developed for outpatients and inpatients according to the Satisfaction Survey Practical Guide by the Ministry of Health of Republic of Turkey and this questionnaire was administrated as adopted by Kilavuz (2016). This questionnaire was used in order to measure the outpatient and inpatient satisfaction levels of resident foreigners in their own countries and Alanya. The validity and reliability of the questionnaires were carried out and the Ethical Committee Approval was taken.

Data analyses were presented in descriptive statistics, frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation values. In this study, p values smaller than $\alpha = 0.05$ were considered statistically significant.

3.Findings

Of the Russian citizens participating in this study, 84 of them were female (%53), 75 of them were male (%47), and of the German citizens participating in this study, 135 of them were female while 24 of them were male, and finally, of the citizens of other countries, 107 of them were female (%71) and 44 of them were male (%29). When looking at the age range, there were 142 German citizens over 65 years of age with 89% percentage which was very high compared to the Russian and other countries' citizens. In addition, it was found that 115 (72%) German citizens, 112 (68%) citizens of other countries and 89 (56%) Russian citizens were retired (Table I).

Table 1. **Investigation of Demographic Characteristics of Resident Foreigners by Country**

Demographic Characteristics		Russian Citizens (n:159)		German Citizens (n:159)		Citizens of Other Countries (n:151)	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Gender	Female	84	53	135	85	107	71
	Male	75	47	24	15	44	29
Age	Below 65	70	44	17	11	83	55
	Over 65	89	56	142	89	68	45
Education	Primary School	17	11	0	0	10	7
	Secondary School	85	53	6	4	25	17
	High School	32	20	54	34	62	41
	University	20	13	90	57	37	25
	Master Degree	5	3	6	4	17	11
	PhD	0	0	3	2	0	0
Income	500-1000 €	42	26	128	81	34	23
	1001-1500 €	58	36	12	8	71	47
	1501-2000 €	39	25	0	0	22	15
	2001-2500 €	6	4	9	6	16	11
	2501-3000 €	4	3	4	3	8	5
	3001 € and above	10	6	6	4	0	0
Marital Status	Married	64	40	91	57	105	70
	Single	65	41	50	31	20	13
	Widow	30	19	18	11	26	17
Occupation	Working	115	72	44	28	49	32
	Retired	44	28	115	72	102	68

It was achieved that there was not any difference among SQ health service expectation level, SQ health service perception level for Alanya and SQ health service perception level of Russian participants and their perceptions for their own country according to participants over 65 years and under 65 years (p> 0.05). Russian participants' outpatient health service satisfaction level for Alanya, outpatient health service satisfaction level for their own country, inpatient health service satisfaction level for Alanya, inpatient health service satisfaction level for their own country were found to be similar according to the participants over 65 and under 65 years (p>0,05) (Table 2).

Table 2. **Comparison of SQ Health Service and Satisfaction Levels of Russian Citizens by Age Groups**

Country	Scale	Age	Mean±SD	p
Russia	SQ Health Service Expectation Level	65 age < (n:70)	83,04±13,63	0,21
		65 age > (n:89)	85,29±8,92	
	SQ Health Service Perception Level Alanya	65 age < (n:70)	79,66±11,84	0,16
		65 age > (n:89)	82,55±13,51	
	SQ Health Service Perception Level Own Country	65 age < (n:70)	83,67±11,66	0,97
		65 age > (n:89)	83,61±9,34	
	Outpatient Health Service Satisfaction Level Alanya	65 age < (n:70)	49,66±9,96	0,60
		65 age > (n:89)	50,44±8,53	
	Outpatient Health Service Satisfaction Level Own Country	65 age < (n:70)	52,09±9,02	0,56
		65 age > (n:89)	51,26±8,75	
	Inpatient Health Service Satisfaction Level Alanya	65 age < (n:70)	69,13±12,05	0,21
		65 age > (n:89)	66,83±11,09	
	Inpatient Health Service Satisfaction Level Own Country	65 age < (n:70)	74,04±9,08	0,58
		65 age > (n:89)	74,81±8,32	

It was determined that SQ health service expectation levels of the German participants did not differ among the participants over 65 and under 65 (p> 0.05). German participants' SQ health service perception levels for Alanya and their own country were found to be different for participants over 65

years and under 65 years (p <0,05, p = 0,01, p = 0,03). It was achieved that while SQ health service perception level scores Alanya of participants over 65 years of age were higher, SQ health service perception level scores for their own countries were higher for participants under 65 years of age. It was found that German participants' outpatient levels for Alanya and their own country and the satisfaction level of inpatients for Alanya did not show differences according to the participants aged 65 and under 65 (p> 0.05). German participants' level of inpatient satisfaction for their own country was found to be significant related to the participants over 65 and under 65 years (p <0.05, p = 0.04). It was achieved that the levels of inpatient satisfaction for their own country were lower for participants over 65 years than those under 65 years (Table 3).

Table 3. **Comparison of SQ Health Service and Satisfaction Levels of German Citizens by Age Groups**

Country	Scale	Age	Mean±SD	p
	SQ Health Service Expectation Level	65 age < (n:17)	85,06±8,11	0,25
		65 age > (n:142)	87,35±3,28	
	SQ Health Service Perception Level Alanya	65 age < (n:17)	83,39±10,44	0,01*
		65 age > (n:142)	91,06±7,36	
	SQ Health Service Perception Level Own Country	65 age < (n:17)	75,19±10,68	0,03*
		65 age > (n:142)	69,24±6,86	
Germany	Outpatient Health Service Satisfaction Level Alanya	65 age < (n:17)	53,47±12,64	0,43
		65 age > (n:142)	55,94±4,52	
	Outpatient Health Service Satisfaction Level Own Country	65 age < (n:17)	45,1±11,16	0,06
		65 age > (n:142)	39,94±2,33	
	Inpatient Health Service Satisfaction Level Alanya	65 age < (n:17)	73,28±11,74	0,64
		65 age > (n:142)	74,65±6,94	
	Inpatient Health Service Satisfaction Level Own Country	65 age < (n:17)	62,64±12,59	0,04*
		65 age > (n:142)	56,06±7,61	

Table 4. **Comparison of SQ Health Service and Satisfaction Levels of Citizens of Other Countries by Age Groups**

Country	Scale	Age	Mean±SD	p
	SQ Health Service Expectation Level	65 age < (n:68)	85,26±11,02	0,96
		65 age > (n:83)	85,18±10,36	
	SQ Health Service Expectation Level Alanya	65 age < (n:68)	78,19±12,51	0,59
		65 age > (n:83)	79,19±10,04	
	SQ Health Service Expectation Level Own Country	65 age < (n:68)	75,29±15,67	0,01*
		65 age > (n:83)	81,6±8,26	
Other Country	Outpatient Health Service Satisfaction Level Alanya	65 age < (n:68)	50,84±10,34	0,64
		65 age > (n:83)	49,92±13,16	
	Outpatient Health Service Satisfaction Level Own Country	65 age < (n:68)	45,97±11,13	0,99
		65 age > (n:83)	45,99±11,32	
	Inpatient Health Service Satisfaction Level Alanya	65 age < (n:68)	65,26±15,66	0,01*
		65 age > (n:83)	70,92±10,81	
	Inpatient Health Service Satisfaction Level Own Country	65 age < (n:68)	64,06±14,56	0,01*
		65 age > (n:83)	71,53±9,06	

It was found that SQ health service expectation levels Alanya and SQ health service perception levels of the participants of other countries did not show difference according to the participants over 65 years and under 65 years (p> 0.05). SQ health service perceptions of the participants of other countries for their own countries were found to be significant according to the participants over 65 and under 65 (p <0.05, p = 0.01). It was determined that SQ health service evaluation scores of the participants over 65 years of age were higher than those of the participants under 65 years of age. It was achieved that other country participants' outpatient satisfaction levels for Alanya and their own countries did not show differences according to the participants over 65 and under 65 years (p> 0.05). It was found that other country participants' inpatient level satisfaction for Alanya and their own countries was significant according to the participants over 65 years and under 65 years of age

(p <0.05, p = 0.01). It was concluded that this difference originated from higher inpatient level satisfaction of the participants over 65 years for Alanya and their own countries than the participants under 65 (Table 4).

4. Conslusion

This study, evaluating the quality and satisfaction of health services received by resident foreigners, over 65 and under 65 and living in Alanya, both in their own countries and in Alanya, was carried out with totally 469 resident foreigners of whom 159 were German, 159 were Russian and 151 were other nationals. It was observed that German, Russian and other countries' citizens were generally over 65 years of age, and there were more retired individuals in German and other country citizens than the Russian citizens. Therefore, the resident foreigners in Alanya can generally be referred to as elderly-third age immigration and retired migration.

Wellness has become an important topic of research, as well as a rapidly increasing business. There is demostrable growth in health wellness tourism across Europe, as the result of a number social circumstances, including the increas in the elderly population and their lifestyles (Qintela at al.,2011). Tempest et al. (2002) indicated that by the end of the 20th century, elderly population showed a rapid increase in the demographic structure of developed countries, while one out of five-person is retired now in the developed countries, this rate would reach 25% by 2025, and the rate of 60 years and over will increase threefold by 2050. He also stated in Houb (2011) that by 2050, the total of people over 65 will be just under 1.5 billion or 16 percent of the global total.

King and Patterson (1988) argued in their study, in which they published interviews they made with some of the resident retirees, that retirees sometimes immigrated due to health, sometimes nutrition, and sometimes the beauty of the coast. Yildirim (1997) urged that Turkey is very close to Europe and this is an advantage for third age tourism. Sudas (2005) also indicated that elderly Europeans mostly immigrate to Alanya, thus, this may be called a retired, elderly immigration. Supporting our study in terms of old age, Karakaya and Aykut (2006) suggested that the majority of the participants were over 55 years old with 45.1% in his study conducted with the British citizens living in Didim. Pasa (2013) argued in his study on foreigners owning the second residence in Alanya that 40.7% of the resident foreigners were over 60 years of age and the number and quality of health

services were slightly below the satisfaction point.

When evaluating this study regarding quality and satisfaction, it was found that the health service quality and satisfaction of Russian citizens over 65 and under 65 were similar, and there was no difference, and while German citizens over 65 years of age were satisfied with the quality of health service in Alanya, German citizens under 65 were satisfied with the quality of health service in their own country. Inpatient satisfaction levels of German citizens over 65 for their own country were found to be lower compared to participants under 65 years of age. On the other hand, the quality of health service was found to be higher by other country citizens over 65 for their own country compared to participants under 65 years of age. Inpatient satisfaction levels of other country citizens over 65 for Alanya and their own country were found to be higher compared to participants under 65 years of age. Whereas, it was achieved that the quality of health service of other country citizens over 65 was higher compared to German citizens over 65.

Resident foreigners can receive health services in the country where they currently live, in their own country or another country. They are included in health tourism when they pay for the health service they receive out of insurance coverage. Of the types of health tourism, elderly, geriatrics or retired tourism generally cover people over 65 years of age. Accordingly, it is considered that they will recommend the quality and satisfactory health services, created as a result of their expectations and perceptions, to their relatives, friends or acquaintances in their own countries, and this will contribute positively to the health, social and economic structure of the place they live regarding both health tourism and settlement.

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