

**LENGTH OF STAY AND SATISFACTION OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TOURISTS:
EVIDENCE FROM SÃO PAULO CITY, BRAZIL**

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Introdução

The length of stay is a critical element both in the decision-making process in tourism and in the estimation of tourist demand. Recent studies have expanded what we know about the factors that determine the length of stay in tourism activities. However, scant attention has been paid to studies on the length of stay in business tourism. Business tourism is a segment that has been growing worldwide due to several factors but mainly due to the integration and expansion of the economy and commercial relations.

Problema de Pesquisa e Objetivo

This article aims to investigate the influence of the length of stay on different dimensions of satisfaction of business tourists in São Paulo city. Therefore, econometric models were applied based on the original microdata extracted from the survey conducted by the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism.

Fundamentação Teórica

The length of stay is a central phenomenon that constitutes the decision-making process in tourism and a requirement for understanding the tourist demand. This phenomenon is even more relevant when it is related to business-driven tourism, a rapidly growing and very profitable subset of the tourism industry (Barros and Machado, 2010). Business tourism is characterized by the movement of people to business centres in order to undertake professional activities and using their free time in the consumption of recreation and entertainment offered by these centres.

Metodologia

The article used data from BITS, a survey was undertaken by the Foundation Institute of Economic Research and funded by the Tourism Ministry of Brazil. The data was collected in 2018, through personal questionnaires with the head of the travel party at the main gateways of the country, including 15 airports and 12 land borders. The main variable of this study was the length of stay of international business tourists in São Paulo city and measured in overnight stays. From the BITS database, a total of 2,625 interviews with tourists with business motivations were obtained.

Análise dos Resultados

These results show that the length of stay negatively influences satisfaction, therefore, the longer tourists stay in the city, the lower their general satisfaction and their satisfaction with the infrastructure. These results are robust and do not change when applying the logarithm form to the length of stay variable. Additional regressions were conducted with the inclusion of variables on individual characteristics and attributes of the trip and no significant differences were found in relation to the models presented.

Conclusão

The results achieved in this article are twofold. First, this study clearly indicates that the length of stay, regardless of the logarithmic form, has a negative effect on the satisfaction dimensions studied. Similarly, there is no evidence for the existence of a curvilinear relationship between these variables. Second, although the determinants of length of stay have similarities with studies on tourism with other motivations, business tourism has specificities that need to be observed.

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