Faculty of Business and Economics
University of Pannonia

Pannon Management Review

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We acknowledge the financial support of Széchenyi 2020 under the **EFOP-3.6.1-16-2016-00015**.

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Pannon Management Review

Pannon Management Review contributes to bridging scholarly management research and management practitioner thinking worldwide. In particular, *Pannon Management Review* broadens the existing links between Hungarian scholars and practitioners, on the one hand, and the wider international academic and business communities, on the other – the Journal acts as an overall Central and Eastern European catalyst for the dissemination of international thinking, both scholarly and managerial. To this end, the articles published in *Pannon Management Review* reflect the extensive variety of interests, backgrounds, and levels of experience and expertise of its contributors, both scholars and practitioners – and seek to balance academic rigour with practical relevance in addressing issues of current managerial interest. The Journal also encourages the publication of articles outside the often narrow disciplinary constraints of traditional academic journals, and offers young scholars publication opportunities in a supportive, nurturing editorial environment.

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Zoltán Veres

EDITORIAL: AFTER THE PANDEMIC THERE COMES A MOMENT OF TRUTH WHEN IT IS NECESSARY TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO NEXT…

Dear Reader,

Welcome to this special issue of Pannon Management Review in the year of 2020. It is special in two senses as well. On the one hand, this is the only issue in this extraordinary – i.e. special – year, and on the other hand, the pandemic has presented a whole new, previously unknown challenge to university-scientific life.

What's changed? While sovereign national economies have so far shaped supply chains in their own interests, they are now increasingly forced to connect to supply chains that have become global. In essence, companies faced the same threat and opportunity, thanks to the TQM and JIT methods. Global competition and a growing range of products have forced the creation of production/service units with an increasing focus on the ever narrower section of the value chain. With this, the value chains that were previously organised within companies and then within national economies were not simply organised into a global supply chain, but gradually became an independent entity. Former sovereign nations and corporations were forced to „connect" to global supply chains and platforms because they could connect with each other namely through their mediation.

Our world is now becoming a true „global village". Everyone in our former little village knew everyone, and whatever you did, said, promised, and fulfilled or didn't do, everyone immediately became aware of it and adjusted their opinion of you, and it regulated everyone for free. Then we got used to it: the state enacts laws, checks, judges, punishes rule violations, of course the system is already funded by citizens' taxes. In the „global village" that is now in front of our eyes, technology allows everything from birth to „public" and integrated into our global reputation, and the system is almost free to operate. But this cheapness and personalization has a price: the system is based on institutions with real dangers. The technology offers the classification of the elementary behaviour of all people by all concerned, the total availability of their opinions and, on this basis, the operation of a global behavioural control system, and, moreover, almost free of charge.

This system has collapsed with the pandemic. For now, we're fighting to get out of it so that as many people as possible can survive. Then, however, there comes a moment of truth when it is necessary to decide what to do next. What should be the new epidemic-proof supply chains, world tourism, international relations, global consumer, etc. etc.… A lot of new questions we don't know the answer to yet. Let us read with such an eye, Dear Reader, the articles of this issue.

The first paper written by a research team of Annamária Sasné Grósz, Katalin Lőrincz, Xia Dehua, Tan Panhavaon and Letícia Lang discusses the *Aspects of Life-quality among International and Native Students*. As the authors posit, "In our globally cosmopolitan world that we are living right now, no matter where we come from, what language we are speaking, what kind of career we have, we all want to improve our lives in hope that it would be continuously becoming better and better." Collecting data from the population of foreign students reality has been faced with the desirable quality of life in an interesting cross-cultural context. The results show that quality perception of the sample is not free of contradictions and there is still a place to invest into the international relationship development. And the pandemic situation may have clearly amplified the difficulties of the studied points.

Tourism is perhaps the biggest victim of the unfavourable health situation. Ildiko Virág Neumann and Barbara Varga-Dani, the authors of the article *The principle of Circular Economy in Tourism at Lake Balaton* do not avoid the problem. "The outbreak of the pandemic has been putting unprecedented pressure on EU tourism ecosystem as well." – as they declare. From this viewpoint their discussion is thematizing a really actual concept, namely the circular economy in the tourism, and a perspective for a hopeful future at the same time. It can only be hoped that the pandemic has not brought tourism development back to an already advanced state.

In the Portraits of Companies section Tamás Perjés, managing director of HARIBO Hungaria Kft. is depicting an incredible success story of a globalized brand. The German company is a global market leader in fruit gummies and liquorice, and its products are now available in more than 100 countries around the world. From the interview the miracle of the marketing of such a simple product can be understood. Its future, however, is a question mark, because the management has to cope with the challenge of how to meet the needs of the modern health-conscious nutrition.

Finally in the Young Researchers' Section of this issue Fanny Liska, PhD student from the Doctoral School of University of Pannonia is introducing with her paper under the title of *Co-Creation Related Expectations in Services*. Common value creation of the service provider and the client is one of the crucial elements of service development. It is based on the consumers' activity during the extended service process. Nevertheless, the present situation gives a wry side taste to the topic, considering that the research focus was in the tourism and HORECA. The model, as an outcome of the author's qualitative research, however, can be applied in a generalized approach, independent of the distorting effects of the pandemic. Tourism and HORECA services are paralized for the moment, but looking to the future we are optimistic.

We do hope, Dear Reader, that the articles of this issue will give you exciting insights into the studied areas of management, and new impulses for scientific creative work and cooperation.

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He worked as project manager of numerous international industrial projects in the Mediterranean region (e.g. Greece, Middle East, North Africa) between 1977 and '90. Since 1990, he actively participates in the higher education. Among others he taught at the College for Foreign Trades; at the Ecole Supérieure de Commerce d'Angers and between 2004 and 2009 he was Head of Institute of Business Studies at the University of Szeged. In 2011 he was appointed professor of marketing at the Budapest Business School (BBS), Hungary, and between 2010 and 2014 he was also Head of Research Centre at BBS. Since 2014 he is Head of Department of Marketing at the Faculty of Business & Economics of the University of Pannonia, Veszprém, Hungary and the editor-in-chief of the Pannon Management Review.

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He has nearly 300 scientific publications, including the books of *Introduction to Market Research, Foundations of Services Marketing* and *Nonbusiness Marketing*. He has been editor of series to Academy Publishing House (Wolters Kluwer Group), Budapest. Besides Zoltán Veres has been editorial board member of the journals Revista Internacional de Marketing Público y No Lucrativo (Spain), Вестник Красноярского государственного аграрного университета (Krasnoyarsk, Russian Federation), Tér-Gazdaság-Ember and Marketing & Menedzsment (Hungary); member of Социально-экономический и гуманитарный журнал Красноярского ГАУ, member of Journal of Global Strategic Management, Advisory Board and Review Committee; member of Asian Journal of Business Research, Editorial Review.

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ASPECTS OF LIFE-QUALITY AMONG INTERNATIONAL AND NATIVE STUDENTS

In our globally cosmopolitan world that we are living right now, no matter where we come from, what language we are speaking, what kind of career we have, we all want to improve our lives in hope that it would be continuously becoming better and better. Obviously, it is true that every human-being on earth wants to have a life filled with comfortability and ability to enjoy life events. Through this sentiment a so-called "quality of life" is a key tool which particularly identifies how people live their lives as well as the experience of an individual. Therefore, quality of life is immensely subjective since people define the concept differently based on material, physical, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and social well-beings. This paper explores the role of social network, sleeping quality and external conditions that might trigger stress in international and native students' quality of life at a European institution. Furthermore, it studies how these basic elements are connected to each other and it discovers our students' feelings, experiences and expectations. Based on the primary research structured focus groups interviews were conducted among international students from different countries, especially at bachelor level. The findings suggest that international students' problems related to their quality of life also have a strong impact on changing the higher education institution. Based on the results we can improve our students' quality of life, thereby retain them, and ultimately, we will be able to extend student's lifetime value.

Introduction

Hungary is a fascinating place attracting many (international) students to study here every year. No matter whether the student's status is exchange, full-time or Erasmus, there are plenty of options to choose from. In terms to students' quality of life is the most important factor for maintaining a happy, safe and satisfied life throughout their academic studies. If students develop a sense of belonging to the institution they are studying in, they may have a satisfied university life.

In connection with *life as a university student*, earlier research has shown that ULQ (University Life Quality) is shaped by the factors related to university together with the academic and social experiences gained as a result of the students' involvement in university life. If students experience psychological comfort at the university, feel safe and unthreatened by their environment, it can be assumed that they have a high *quality university life* (Ayşe et al., 2019). The factors are:

– *Social satisfaction*: includes relationships with friends; a student's leisure time; family and health condition of the student; health state of the student's family; the level of family income; university career; student's financial condition and friendships acquired during university studies (Sirgy et al., 2007). The satisfaction with the accommodation facilities of the campus, the international programs and services, the spiritual support of the programs and services, the clubs and parties, satisfaction from sporting, the recreation activities are involved in the framework of social satisfaction.

– *Academic satisfaction*: involves satisfaction with the university; instruction methods; the classroom environment; the workload in the class; the academic standards of the university and appreciation for the diversity of the institution (Kesici – Çavuş, 2019).

Apart from what we mentioned above, *tourism* plays an important role in student's quality of life. Moreover, tourism is also a crucial experience through learning things and engaging actively in different actions. It is important because if students are happy and gain a lot of experiences, they will be more satisfied with their lives and travel often to get more positive experiences (Gondos, 2014).

More researchers stated that collecting different experiences from tourism services and attractions (such as health tourism, visiting friends and relatives, business and leisure), in destinations promote the improvement of happiness and quality of life (Cho, 2005; Bayrakdar et al. 2017). It is also evident that sociology, psychology and health are interrelated in the models of quality of life (Kopp – Pikó, 2006).

Researchers tried to map the relationship between tourism and quality of life along the following five factors: 1. visiting/visitor's motivation; 2. characteristics of travelling; 3. impact of tourism; 4. characteristics of tourism/destination; 5. travelling as assessment of activity (Kovács, 2007). Based on this approach "studying abroad" belong to the visiting motivations (2) factor.

Reasons and difficulties of studying abroad

The reasons why students choose to study abroad are well known. These include discovering another culture, learning another way of behaving and thinking, making new friends and developing intercultural knowledge and skills (Andrade, 2006; McClure, 2007).

However, if institutions do not pay sufficient attention to the special needs of international students, they may become frustrated and dissatisfied. Earlier researches have shown that international students face many challenges: cultural differences, language problems, study and funding issues, interpersonal issues, racial discrimination, lack of social and community support, alienation and homesickness, academic, personal adjustment to a new life, and socially building new friendships (Yeh – Inose, 2003; George et al., 2019).

It is unanimous that university years seem to be a stressful time for students. During this period, students face challenges such as separation from their family and friends, dealing with rules, and building relationships. One of the main issues in this period is the threat to students' emotional well-being and psychological distress of adjusting to a new life (Roberts – Zelenyanski, 2002). Therefore, university years are considered to be as one of the most stressful periods (Cress – Lampman, 2007; Chao, 2012) and somehow leads to anxiety.

Due to *cultural differencies*, sometimes international students are misunderstood by local people. Finding the similarities between local culture and foreign culture is extremely important, which will be helpful to reduce culture conflicts when facing local relevant affairs or dealing with problems with local people (Li, 2015). For example, when showing gratitude by saying "Thank you" to the person who provided help, they would response "No need to thank me" in Chinese way. In the European culture, that would sound odd. Therefore, in local area, it is especially important to realize the cultural difference, and also avoiding these cultural conflicts as much as possible is essential in the daily life.

Moreover, international students are not a separated group of people. They study in the same facilities as Hungarian students, but behave differently and have distinct expectations: so the cultural shock is inevitable. Especially for the newcomers who will face cultural differencies and assimilating to them is a rather time-consuming process. It is common and understandable that they might have some misunderstandings in the beginning of their time studying abroad. (Zhou et al., 2008).

Therefore getting to know the local culture is beneficial for international students as it strengthens their local identity. Their attitudes towards the host country are heavily related to their local identities; a better attitude and understanding towards the local community will make it easier to integrate themselves into the local life (Zhou et al., 2008).

Beyond cultural difference, international students often feel lonely. This loneliness means not only the lack of family and friends from home, but also the lack of a familiar cultural and/or linguistic environment (Adelman, 1988; McClure, 2007; Sawir et al., 2008; Zhou et al., 2008; Ip et al., 2009). For those who are far from home and do not get any social support network via family or friends, they might not be interested in anything. Consequently, they feel lonely or isolated from the social network (Baier, 2005). Furthermore, social isolation is highly connected to loneliness, which is defined as the inability to reach the desired level of socialization, and can contribute to a poor health condition (Pressman et al., 2005).

To summarize, community support and community network are very important for ensuring international students to be successful in the new environment. The number of friends of an international student is a significant factor in success in a new environment (Furnham – Alibhai 1985; Sam 2001). There is a strong need to be aware of such problems in order to provide international students and their host institutions with effective and enriching experiences.

Satisfaction with qulatiy of life among international students

Quality of life involves the physical functions, psychological state, social relationships within and outside the family, effects of the environment and beliefs of an individual as well. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, a good level of life quality for people has been summarized under five categories. 1. Basic needs. 2. Safety need. 3. Love and belonging 4. Esteem 5. Self-actualization (Bayrakdar et al., 2019). In order for people to live a happy life, in harmony with themselves and the environment, they need to have a life of good quality.

The quality of life indicators are the state of physical and financial wellbeing, satisfaction gained from activities which allow individuals to participate in social life, spare time activities, psychological state, functional skills, state of emotional, mental and gender wise well-being, satisfaction from relationships with family, friends and community and orientation about the future differ in line with the individual's character, perception of life and sociocultural habits (Telatar, 2007).

Studies supported that satisfaction with family life and friends are positively connected with life satisfaction (Dew – Huebner, 1994; Greenspoon – Saklofske, 2001; Maton, 1990; Seibel – Johnson, 2001; September et al., 2001). The results suggest that satisfaction with one's significant other is another crucial factor. Finally, better living conditions (i.e., physical condition of the place of residence and the people with whom the respondents live) are significantly and positively related to life satisfaction among these university students. It resulted that the more a student is satisfied with his/her life, the higher his/her quality of life index is.

Life satisfaction (SWL) is one of the three components of subjective well-being (Andrews – Whitney, 1976) and embodies the subjective aspect of well-being (Neto, 1995). It does not match happiness, which is part of the affective / emotional dimension of well-being. Diener et al. (1999) suggest that although some components of well-being are closely correlated with each other, each component should be examined in its own right.

According to researchers, problems of international students are very similar to those of domestic students, and international students are much more "students" than "foreigners" in their ways of adapting (Cormack, 1968; Walton, 1968). Other researchers emphasized that these problems are unique to foreign students. Bochner et al. (1977) identified four main sources of problems: (1) cultural shock (2) the role of 'ambassador' (acting as an informal representative of the individual's country); (3) adolescent emancipation (the process of becoming an independent, self-reliant member of society); and (4) academic stress (stress arising from higher education requirements). The first two problems are unique to international students, the third presents in the lives of every young adult and the fourth displays in the lives of all young adults in higher education.

Researchers suggested that institutions should contribute to leisure activities that encourage and help students to make friends, improve their health condition and advance them in their career. The campus should also be qualified, and students' spiritual life, psychological, social, physical and cultural activities should be supported. Additionally, academic development of students should also be advocated in a good-quality higher education institution and this can be carried out by directing students towards scientific congresses and participating in seminars. The remedies and instructional technologies that enable students to be active in the classrooms should be used and classroom setting should be organized in accordance with teaching. In addition, they should incorporate certain characteristics to their open and hidden elements of the curriculum so that they increase the quality of life of students (Kesici – Çavuş, 2019).

Additional factors influencing students' quality of life

However, it is clear from former researches that students do not just spend their days inside the institution. Beyond studying, *fun and leisure activities* are important for a well-balanced study. University or local community should support students by providing relevant help, and encourage them to participate in activities that are conducive to physical and mental health, instead of going to pubs and becoming addicted to drinking. This question was investigated by Keri (2018) with her colleagues at their university. They found that satisfaction with external factors (those out of the university's reach or influence) has a greater impact on loyalty to the institution, and thus to the settlement, than satisfaction with the university itself. From our viewpoint, this means that we must explore and improve the quality of study-related and out-of-university life so that students are more likely to pursue their studies in our institution.

International students cannot live without *social networks*; these are truly important for them. They are characterized by multidimensionality and complexity in the host countries, the impacts of social networks on international students are not distinct and obvious (Pusztai et al., 2019). Lack of social networks can result in a poor health condition; thus, it is important even for first-year students to build relationships with others. Since small social network size can easily turn into psychological problems, such as loneliness, not only the formulation of contacts but also expansion of them is important (Pressman et al., 2005).

In the adjustment process, international students establish social networks with other persons with a similar cultural background or nationality and form ethnic communities within the context of the university (Al-Sharideh – Goe, 1998). Baier (2005) found, that socializing with those who have the same cultural background is helpful for international students to overcome culture stress, furthermore they are more socially connected with each other.

International students tend to form three different social networks: monocultural, bi-cultural and multi-cultural friendships. Firstly, they have a strong connection only with their compatriots, so that they might keep their own original cultural behaviours. Secondly, they have interactions with local students or teachers, so they can learn local culturally relevant skills. Thirdly, they have good friendships with some non-compatriot foreign students, and they can help each other and participate in activities. Furthermore, international students can psychologically, socially and academically benefit a lot from their relationships with local students or teachers (Zhou et al., 2008).

However, a new problem arises: *adjustment, identity crisis* can result in psychological stress. It may occur when students are far from home. According to Young-Chul (1996) suffering from all the psychological feelings and struggling with cross-cultural adjustment, expatriates may fail to fulfil their tasks and, depending on individual personality factors, become depressed. Therefore, social support plays an important role in international students' life, it helps them overcome loneliness (Newsome – Cooper, 2016). In addition, social support from both the hosts and co-nationals is an effective tool to help international students to enhance their wellbeing, and also helps to reduce their homesickness (Zhou et al., 2008).

Besides social support, *social interactions* can have positive impact handling the stress and increase a further element of life-quality influenced by stressors: quality of sleeping. Sleeping quality is an important factor in determining life-quality, and it can be measured by the sense of coherence, which is an inner sense of safety against internal and external stressors. During the first months, due to the adjustment to different time zone and adaption to a new environment, international students might have sleeping issues (low sleeping quality). However, if it lasts longer, gradually they will suffer from insomnia. As a result, the student's performance diminishes and the person becomes irritable, which has an impact on his university and social life, thus creating a vicious cycle. Based on the findings we discussed above, a simple model of students' quality of life was created (Figure 1).

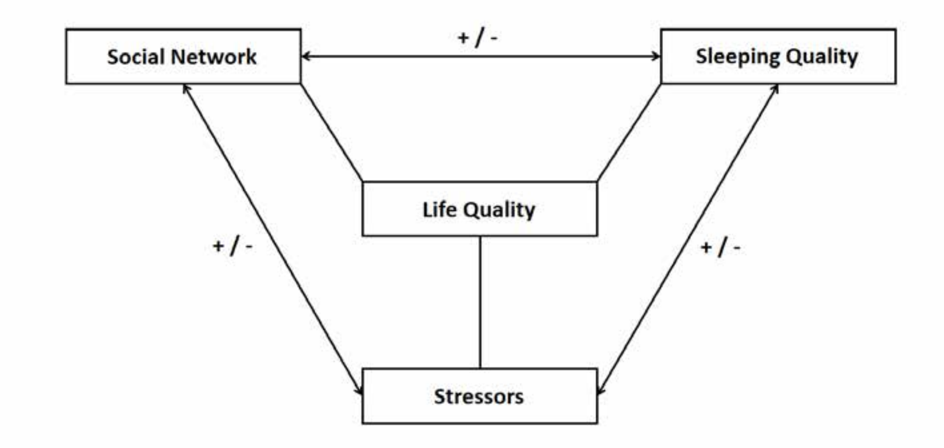

Figure 1 Research model of students' quality of life
Source: own editing

Research method

We applied focus group interviews for our research. The advantage of this methodology is that it often yields unexpected discoveries from freely conducted group discussions. Furthermore, an interpersonal moderator is needed to conduct the discussion efficiently. An observer is also required to watch the participants' behaviour with regards to the analysed topic.

The respondents in this research are international and native full-time students. We compare these two groups in quality of life, so that the similarities and differences between them are discovered and examined. Focus group interviews were recorded by voice recorder, with the permission of participants. Under the relaxed and informal atmosphere, time duration of interviews was between one and a half and two hours, depending on the size of the group, with the members ranging from three to 12 people.

There were four focus group interviews conducted at the university. As illustrated in *Table 1*, we have collected participants' basic data, including their genders, education levels, specializations and home countries. Based on Li's suggestion (2015) one group-moderator was a foreign student. The aim was to avoid international students telling favourable words instead of the truth, so the collected information is more reliable and reasonable.

	Number of Students	Gender	Educational Level	Specialization	Countries
Focus group 1	12	M (3)	Third-year bachelor (12)	Business Administration and Management (3)	China (5)
		F (9)		Catering and Tourism (5)	Cambodia (4)
				Applied Economics (1)	Laos (1)
				English and American Studies (3)	Nigeria (1)
					Ghana (1)
Focus group 2	4	M (2)	First-year master (4)	Tourism Management (3)	Morocco (1)
		F (2)		International Economic Relations (1)	Romania (1)
					China (1)
					Laos (1)
Focus group 3	3	F (3)	Second-year bachelor (3)	Commerce and Marketing (3)	Hungary (3)
Focus group 4	5	F (5)	First-year master (2)	Management and Leadership (3)	Hungary (5)
			Second-year master (2)	Tourism Management (1)	
			Phd (1)		

Table 1 Study sample
Source: own editing

We assessed the trustworthiness of the research by applying sets of criteria from former studies (Anney, 2015). *Table 2* demonstrates that data and analyses meet these criteria (such as credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmality, integrity).

Trustworthiness Criteria	Method of Addressing in our Study
Credibility Confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings	– Investigator triangulation: four research team members during data collection and interpretation – Engagement in field: two student-researchers among team members – Member checks: respondents were informed about the first interpretations and could give comments – Result: better understanding of core issues; participants were involved in interpretations
Transferability The degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts with other respondents	– Detailed description of method and sample – Purposive sampling – Result: description allows comparison of our context to other possible context; greater in-depth fndings
Dependability Stability of findings over time	– Stepwise replication: two researchers analysed the same data and compared the results – Peer examination: During the research researchers continuously discussed the process and findings with colleagues – Result: inconsistences could be eliminated; peers contributed to deeper analysis
Confirmability Interpretations and findings clearly derived from the research data	– Triangulation – Reflexive journals, discussing preliminary theories – Result: reduce the effect of investigator bias
Integrity Ensure that data were not fabricated by the informants	– Interviews were professional, of a nonthreatening nature and anonymous – Result: participants were not trying to misinformate and evade the discussed issues

Table 2 Trustworthiness of the study and findings
Source: Based on Anney (2015), own editing

Results

What does quality of life mean for our students? At first, we got the answers which we can read in books: „it is mental, physical and spiritual wellbeing", „you live actively every day in your life", „there is no wasted time", „having the opportunity for self-actualization". But if we dig deeper, we find out that there are factors, circumstances and affairs affecting our students' life quality. Based on the model we showed in Figure 1, we grouped the answers.

Stressors

In case of native students, we can say that there is some difference between the factors influencing their quality of life according their ages. Younger students who are not independent yet and are supported by their family, consider the university and friends as the main factors in this term. However, students who lives with support of their families and independent students mentioned the same main stressors.

First of all, the *university has a huge impact* on the life of the students in both positive and negative ways. The *home assignments, exams and deadlines* can be a source of stress for them but on the other hand, the friendly environment and the attitude of teachers can make a positive influence. For example, some MA students did not go to other university after finishing their bachelor but stayed here because of these reasons. Five foreign participants explained that they felt stressed due to lots of homework and exams, including students from China, Nigeria and Cambodia. Participants complained that they had to put a lot of effort into the exams and home assignments. The close deadlines made them stressful.

Another important stressor is the *transportation*. Some of the native students still live at home with their parents which means that they commute every day between the university and their hometown. Regarding this, they mentioned that sometimes they have to wait for the bus or train to get home which takes time, or they have free time between two classes and cannot go anywhere or the last bus or train of the day leaves too early. However, for financial reasons they choose to live at home and commute between the two places. Transportation is a big issue for foreign studenst as well, but with a different meaning. They need to travel within the city especially when they need national food. It upsets Asian students that they couldn't find any Asian ingredients or food nearby and the selection of vegetables is too narrow.

Another component of quality of life is – as one of the participants mentioned – the *work-family-study triangle*. Even for those who are not living at home with their parents, family can be a stressor which influence their performance at work or study causing more and more stress. For younger students, it is a challenge to find a job which they can do along with the university unless they work in their families' businesses. The older ones try to perform at their workplace or to find a job for the future which meets their parents' expectations and they hope not to make a wrong decision about this. In addition, it is also crucial whether they are qualified enough for the job which requirements seem to be too high for them.

Moreover, there are many expectations in several areas of life which students have to face. On one hand, they say that: „in all of the areas of life, they think that this is primary for you" whether it comes back to work, study or anything else. Beside the expectations of other people, they also make requirements for themselves. In case of younger students, we talked about it in terms of the performance at the university but MA students are more concerned with their future. They have the urge to build a career and establish their independence.

Among foreign studenst we could fine additional aspects:

– Six participants *feeling homesick* since they studied abroad, including students coming from Laos, China, and Cambodia. Especially the sense of missing home was the strongest at the early stage, but later it turned out to be a short-term feeling that did not last long. For those students who hold scholarship, was not enough to travel or cover monthly life spending, thus they might seek for job or ask parents to get more money.
– Another factor causing stress is *discrimination*. A participant coming from Morocco mentioned that when he walked on the street, there were some people staring at him, but they didn't talk to him and even didn't know him.
– As for the *closing time of stores and public services*, a participant coming from Laos mentioned that after 6pm, there were less and less people walking on the streets and stores were closed from this time, the best place for dinner would be McDonald's, because sometimes it's open for 24 hours.
– A participant coming from Romania complained about the *attitude of public servants*. "They are rude, they don't speak English". Immigration office is the place where every international student must go to apply for or expand residence permission. The participants hope that the attitude of employees and the English level of the office workers will improve.

Sleeping Quality

Lack of *quality sleeping* causes low efficiency during classes, students can't focus on their studies enough. Low grades for homeworks or exams might be the consequence of it. Most of the native students live at their parents' home but others chose to live in the dormitory or rent a flat in the city. For them, it is important to have enough space and adequate circumstances for learning and sleeping. In addition, leaving the family home improved their quality of life because of the newly acquired independence and self-reliance.

Students, who choose the dormitory, have to deal with further issues. There used to be parties like local-language Karaoke, held often at accommodation facility or next to it until midnight or till dawn. Some students wanting to go to bed early found it difficult to fall asleep due to the noise which greatly affected their sleeping quality. There were four participants who experienced a deterioration in sleep quality, including students from Cambodia, Morocco and China.

Social Network

It turned out that *social networks* play an important part in the life of students especially for younger ones. For them, it is necessary to have friends around them to do their job and make their life easier at the university. One of the master students mentioned that she does not like living in the capital because of the lack of company.

Social network is truly important for international students. Making friends with people from different countries makes it easier to learn about different cultures and share information by establishing social networks. However, *language* becomes the barrier to communicate with each other. There were 16 participants who can't speak the native language, but also there were 11 participants who didn't take any English proficiency exams before coming to the university, including students from China, Cambodia, Laos and Ghana but they reportedly knew some basic English (speaking and writing).

However, *local residents often don't speak English* which many times make it difficult for international students to communicate and interact with them when going shopping, etc. As one of the participants commented: "Sometimes, I find difficulties to communicate with the reception and everything. Because there is only one who speaks English, only one." More importantly, *international students socialize with compatriots and other international students much more than with native students or residents* due to the language barrier. A participant coming from China expressed that information about student events is usually available in Hungarian which makes it hard for them to get the necessary information, details of events that might have led to missing out on them. Other respondents couldn't agree more with the complaint, they suggested that the information about the students' activities provided by university should be much more international.

Conclusions and implications

The expectations of students regarding university life have a significant impact on raising the university's quality and service standards.The findings of this research revealed that there are some factors influencing the quality of life of both native and both international students, but it also proved that there is a significant difference between them.

We can state that social network is an important factor for both groups, however international students sometimes have some difficulties with communications due to the lack of language knowledge. For this reason, having other students from their home nations around them can improve their well being.

While there are some stressors which were mentioned by both of the groups, such as the university obligations and expectations of other people, for international students' acculturation cause serious problems. Cultural shock, discrimination are present in their life, sometimes they feel homesick and also financial difficulties were emphasised among this category. They even have problems with the public services.

Due to the literature we collected, we also featured the sleeping quality as an important influence factor of life quality however we did not get much information about this. Some international students mentioned that events organised in the dormitory, sometimes disturb them at nights.

Based on these results, we can state that for improving the quality of life of international students, universities have to focus on the social aspects. For this purpose, universities can organize tolerance trainings for native and international students, and also some special events and programs to explore the wider area of the university / country, plus to get to know others' cultures.

In case of stressors, the university can facilitate the administration processes for international students by better cooperation with the city government and service providers. Also, local events could help residents accept the foreigners.

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Ildiko Virag Neumann – Barbara Varga-Dani

THE PRINCIPLE OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN TOURISM AT LAKE BALATON[1]

The Balaton region is the most popular tourist destination in Hungary among domestic travellers, and the second most visited destination for foreign guests. The largest lake in Central Europe awaits visitors all year round, with a tourist offer to each seasons, unique natural and cultural attractions and programs as well. Seasonality is still a major problem. The goal is to find solutions to ensure a high quality of life and working environment for the local residents living and working in the region throughout the year and also to increase the length of stay of tourists visiting the Lake Balaton area and the development of institutions and organizations that can respond flexibly to changing needs. The concept of Circular Economy has possibilities for tourism industry to achieve higher sustainability in hotel, food and spa services and the material flows of energy and water. The tourism industry has to address environmental problems and carry out the transition to a circular economy. The outbreak of the pandemic has been putting unprecedented pressure on EU tourism ecosystem as well. The implementation of Circular Economy principles can contribute to more positive impacts in tourism industry.

Introduction

We need to emphasize the importance of sustainability in tourism for the future of Europe. "A Circular Economy" (CE) can be defined as a purposefully designed "socio-economic system inspired by natural systems, regenerative of human and natural capital that works long term for all stakeholders" (Ellen MF, 2012). It is an innovative economy model which is aimed towards diverting waste from landfill by way of reuse or recycling raw materials and products so that they can be used or sold again, therefore reducing waste and the need for the constant consumption of valuable natural resources. The concept of CE defines a theory for production and consumption, different from the linear "take-make-dispose" growth model based on volume growth (McCarthy et al., 2018).

The concept of Circular economy

In the circular economy action plan (Commission, 2015), the circular economy is explained as an economy "where the value of products, materials and resources is maintained in the economy for as long as possible, and the generation of waste is minimized". It requires a broader design of alternative solutions over the life cycle of products (Kirchherr et al. 2017).

1 The present publication has been implemented with the support provided from the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund of Hungary, financed under the project no. 2019-1.3.1-KK-2019-00015, titled „Establishment of a circular economy-based sustainability competence center at the University of Pannonia".

It allows manufacturers to learn about the performance of their product in the market, and improve subsequent product versions (Gössling et al., 2015). The CE relies on value creation, restoration, regeneration and reuse of resources and radical change. (Kunwar, 2018)

The innovative approach has potentials for tourism industry with the idea ”reuse instead of building new, reduce, recycle more effectively” should be applied in tourism as well. (Manniche et al. 2017) The industry is interlinked with multiple key resource flows, including agriculture and food, built environment and transport industries. (Einarsson et al. 2020)

Many legislative proposals and targets have been set by the EU with the aim of reducing waste and creating long term aims for waste management. (Commisison, 2015) In December 2015 the European Commission set about bringing new ambitious waste management goals into legislation with the release of the action plan “Closing the Loop”. In the circular economy action plan CE is explained as an economy “where the value of products, materials and resources is maintained in the economy for as long as possible, and the generation of waste minimised”. (Commisison, 2015) Creating a further value from existing products as long as possible and turning them into resources lies at the core of the concept which involves innovation. (Barbudo et al., 2019)

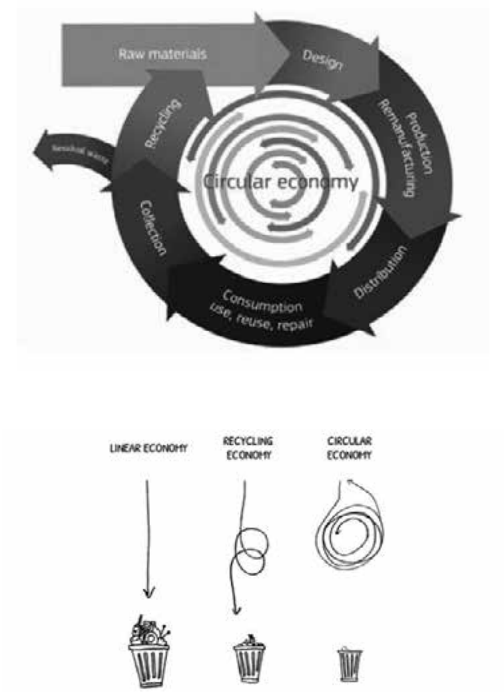

Figure 1 Circular economy[2]
Source: europarl.europa.eu; Towards a circular economy: A zero waste programme for Europe

2 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/HU/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52014DC0398R(01)&from=HU Towards a circular economy: A zero waste programme for Europe/* COM/2014/0398 final

This package outlined the main Circular Economy ideals and plans for the coming years and revised four legislative proposals mainly targeting waste (Commission, 2015)[3]. The Circular Economy action plan includes many of new goals such as increasing recycling of municipal waste to 65 per cent and recycling of packaging waste to 75 per cent by 2030, new measures promoting food waste prevention and a ban on landfilling of separately collected waste amongst many others (Commission, 2015). The countries now face and put growing emphasis on sustainable waste management, circular economy models should be encouraged across the country in as many establishments as possible.

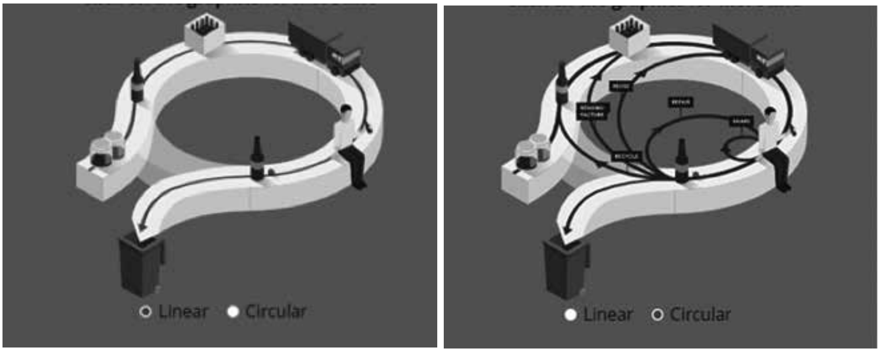

Figure 2 Model of linear and circle economy
Source: EUROSTAT: „Discover the 'circular economy" (2018)

It means management of resources: single use plastic, green energy, electricity, water; textile, chemicals, raw materials. (Rios, 2020)

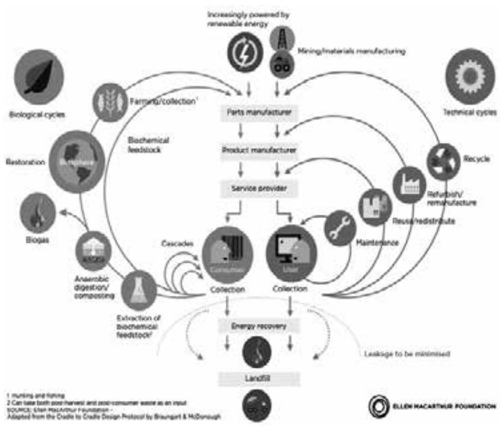

Figure 3 Circle economy: Butterfly diagram
Source: Ellen Macarthur Foundation

3 European Commission, Closing the loop, New Circular Economy Package , 2015).

The most publicised illustration of the CE framework is the Butterfly diagram (Figure 3) published in 2012 by Ellen MacArthur Foundation (EMF 2012). "It describes resource flows in an economic system driven by energy from the sun (renewables), where linear product and material flows are replaced by circular flows in two separate cycles – a biological cycle and a technical cycle, and where value is generated through 'circular business models" (EMF, 2012). In order to reach the targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and make a significant shift towards truly sustainable tourism, we should recover value in resources again. (Borrello et al., 2017)

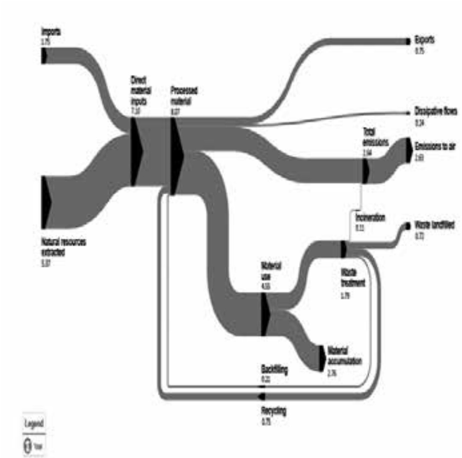

Figure 4 Material flows in the economy (EU-27, 2019)
Monitoring the circular economy in the EU27[4]
Source: Eurostat

On the picture (Figure 4) we can see how materials enter, flow within and leave the economy. This material flows diagram shows all raw materials throughout the economy, from their extraction until they become waste.

Lake Balaton tourism

The Balaton tourist region plays a key role in Hungarian tourism and national economy, too: about one third of tourism related revenues of the country is generated in the area. One of the most important destinations of Hungarian tourism is the region of Lake Balaton.

The most important tourism attractions of the region are the following:

- Fresh water lake,
- Areas of nature and landscape preservation – Balaton Uplands National Park, diverse natural environment,

4 https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/circular-economy
https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-datasets/-/env_ac_mfa
https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/HU/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018DC0029&from=IT l

- National monuments, castles and fortresses, built environments and traditions – Benedictine Abbey of Tihany, Festetics Castle of Keszthely, Veszprém Castle, Szigliget Castle, Sümeg Castle, Somogyvár National Memorial,
- Lake Balaton wine regions – open cellars, Lake Balaton wine routes (Badacsony, Csopak, Balatonlelle), historical wine regions, wine-related culture,
- Lake Balaton gastro revolution, local products, novelties (beach food, slow living, life style, lavender, wine cinema),
- Adventure parks (Zalaszabar, Balatonboglár, Balatonfűzfő)
- Numerous musical, theatrical, gastronomic and sports events and festivals: such as Balaton Swimming Race, "Valley of Arts" Cultural Festival and the BalatonSound, VeszpremFest, Jazz Picnic, Anna Ball, Blue Ribbon competition,
- Thermal water resources: spas and health resorts of particular/national importance (Hévíz, Zalakaros, Kehidakustány),
- Golf (Balatongyörök, Balatonudvari, Zalacsány),
- Hévíz-Balaton Airport,
- Monuments of folk architecture, historical and cultural traditions, craftsmanship.

Based on the preliminary data of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO), it can be stated that tourism on Lake Balaton is on a growth trajectory: it shows a continuous increase in terms of both the number of guests and the number of guest nights. Tourism in the Lake Balaton region shows the following characteristics[5]: the actual high season is limited to four to six weeks in July and August (depending on the weather) and the average stay is three to five days (the so-called long-weekends are preferred).

Analysing the tourism of Lake Balaton destination with descriptive statistics

In 2019 the commercial accommodation establishments registered 2,018,480 guest arrivals and 6,197,854 spent guest nights – compared to the previous year, there was an increase of almost 3 per cent in terms of the number of guests, and stagnation was observed in guest nights. Last year, the destination of Lake Balaton was visited approx. by 1,551 thousand domestic and 467 thousand foreign guests – this remained the second most popular destination in Hungary after Budapest.

According to the latest statistics, until 2019 the tourism flow of Lake Balaton showed an increasing trend. In 2019, the destination attracted 16 per cent of all the guests in the country and 20 per cent of all the guest nights (Table 1). It should also be highlighted that more than three quarters (77 per cent) of the guests in the destination were domestic guests, with 68 per cent of all the guest nights (Table1).

5 Economy & tourism regional economy Https://balatonregion.hu/en/magunkrol/balaton-regio/turizmus/

	2018	2019	
Variable			Change 2019/2018
All the guests	1 961 845	2 018 480	102,9%
Number of foreign guests	456 743	467 318	102,3%
Number of domestic guests	1 505 102	1 551 162	103,1%
All the guest nights	6 172 885	6 197 854	100,4%
Number of foreign guest nights	2 022 793	1 995 852	98,7%
Number of domestic guest nights	4 150 092	4 202 002	101,3%
Average duration of stay at all tourists	3,15	3,07	97,6%
Average duration of stay at foreign tourists	4,43	4,27	96,4%
Average duration of stay at domestic tourism	2,76	2,71	98,2%

Table 1 The guest traffic on commercial quarters in the Lake Balaton destination in 2018-2019
Source: HSCO (Hungarian Central Statistical Office database)

The marked increase in the number of domestic guests per night is remarkable: in 2019, +54 per cent more guest nights were realized in the destination, compared to the data of 2010. There is also a positive trend in inbound tourism: examining the period from 2010 to 2019, the number of guest nights spent by foreigners increased by 21per cent.

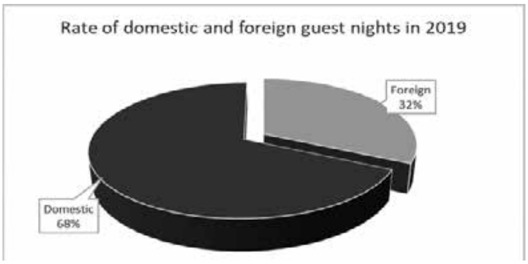

Figure 5 The rate of domestic and foreign guest nights in 2019 in the Lake Balaton region
Source: HSCO (Hungarian Central Statistical Office database)

In the last 25-30 years, there has been a restructuring of tourism in Lake Balaton: instead of mass tourism with a highly seasonal profile (exploiting the waterfront opportunities), the services have expanded and risen to a higher standard (not least in the field of wellness).

Wine and gastronomy, quality, authentic offerings, slow living and Lake Balaton life style have become of high importance as an independent attraction. The lake tourism and the gastro tourism are connected, that's why it would be possible to hold more big gastronomic programs at Balaton and our bigger lakes (wine festivals, fish bakings, pig cuts stb). (Sulyok, 2014)

A significant development in the structure of the destination accommodation was first experienced in the establishment of boarding house-sized accommodation establishments, and then in the area of quality hotel developments (four-star accommodation establishments). There has also been a definite development in the leisure, sports and cultural program offers at the settlement level. Renewed public spaces, promenades, parks have appeared, several marinas have opened their doors, and the offer has been expanded on the beaches with the expansion of services.

Guest arrival of commercial accommodation establishments (2010-19)

Analysing the data series of the last ten years, it can be said that from 2010 onwards, there were a significant, stable increase in the number of guest nights at Lake Balaton in commercial accommodation establishments till the COVID-19 effect. In 2019, 42 per cent more guest nights were realized in the region compared to 2010 data. In 2013, the number of guest nights already exceeded the data measured before the crisis (2009), and in 2014, more than five million guest nights were already generated in commercial accommodation in the destination.

The marked increase in the number of domestic guests per night is remarkable: in 2019, 54 per cent more guest nights were realized in the destination, compared to the data of 2010. There are also positive changes in inbound tourism: looking at the period from 2010 to 2019, the number of guest nights spent by foreigners increased by 21 per cent.

A total of 467,318 foreign guests spent 1,995,852 guest nights in the Lake Balaton destination in 2019, which means a +2 per cent increase in the number of guests and a -1 per cent decrease in the number of guest nights compared to the same period in 2018.

Number of guest nights at commercial quarters			
Year	**Domestic**	**Foreign**	**All together**
2010	2 732 723	1 643 993	4 376 716
2011	2 816 298	1 688 048	4 504 346
2012	2 865 754	1 747 837	4 613 591
2013	3 113 272	1 879 501	4 992 773
2014	3 331 984	1 819 539	5 151 523
2015	3 516 597	1 803 319	5 319 916
2016	3 860 778	1 843 545	5 704 323
2017	3 979 467	2 033 498	6 012 965
2018	4 150 092	2 022 793	6 172 885
2019	4 202 002	1 995 852	6 197 854

Table 2 Number of guest nights on commercial quarters 2010-19
Source: HSCO (Hungarian Central Statistical Office database)

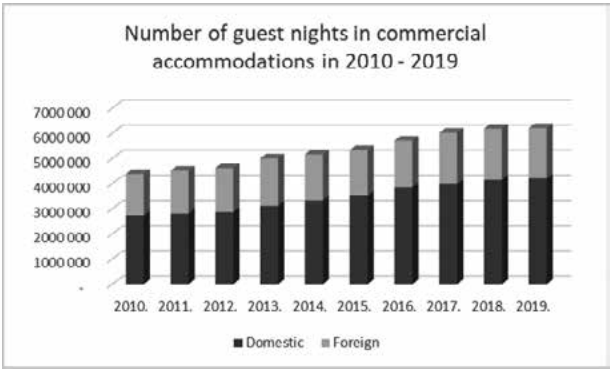

Figure 8: Number of guest nights in commercial accommodations in 2010-19.
Source: HSCO (Hungarian Central Statistical Office database)

In terms of the most important sending markets, most people came to the Lake Balaton from Germany (97 thousand people), Austria (56.9 thousand people), the Czech Republic (57 thousand people) and Russia (25.6 thousand people) the four sending areas together accounted for half of the region's foreign visitors (50 per cent).

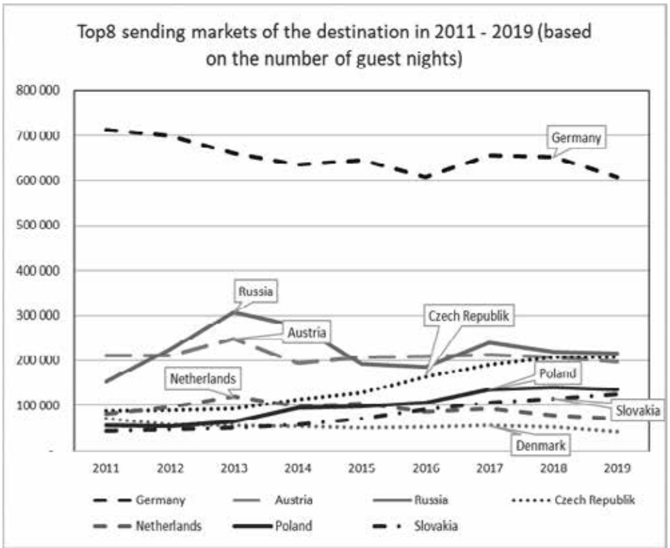

Figure 9: Top 10 sending markets of the destination between 2011 and 2019
(based on the number of guest nights)
Source: HSCO (Hungarian Central Statistical Office database)

The most visited towns in the destination of Lake Balaton (2019)

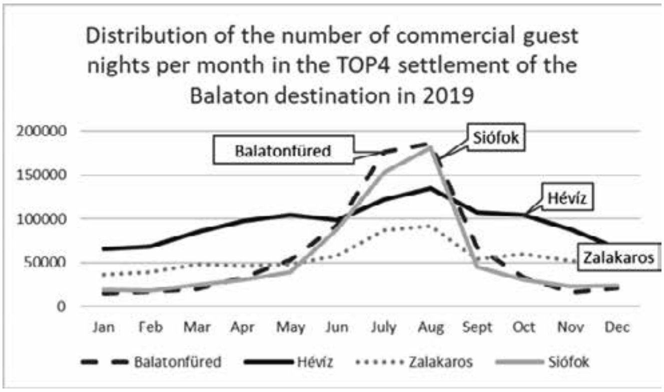

Figure 10: Distribution of the number of commercial guest nights per month in the TOP4 settlement of the Balaton destination in 2019
Source: HSCO (Hungarian Central Statistical Office database)

The popularity of non-coastal attractions can go a long way to equalize seasonality, as there is a much more balanced guest traffic here, which has expanded extremely dynamically in recent years. (National Tourism Development Strategy 2030)

It can be clearly seen from diagram that the guest arrivals of the TOP Four settlement accounts for half of the guest nights of the whole destination (52 per cent). In terms of the number of guest nights, Hévíz was still the first place among the towns of Lake Balaton last year, however, it is noteworthy that Balatonfüred overtook the data of Siófok with its guest arrivals data.

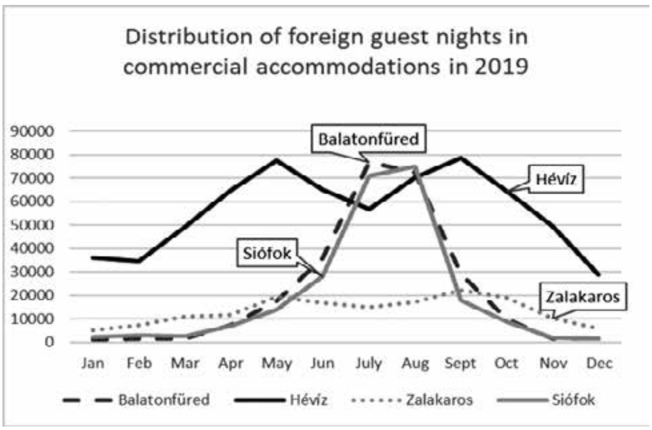

Figure 6 Distribution of foreign guest nights in commercial accommodations in 2019
Source: HSCO (Hungarian Central Statistical Office database)

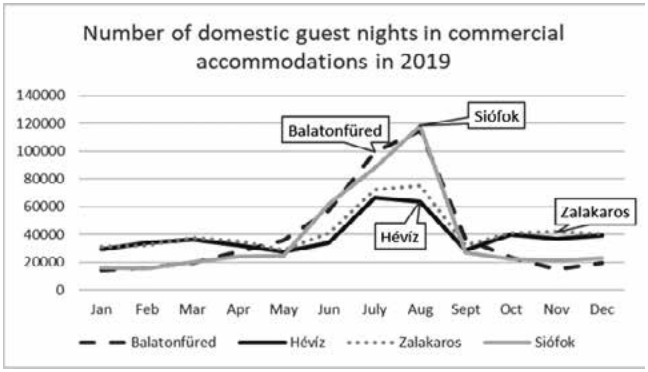

Figure 7 Distribution of domestic guest nights in commercial accommodations in 2019
Source: HSCO (Hungarian Central Statistical Office database)

It is interesting that in 2019, among the largest guest cities in Lake Balaton, the seasonality was the least felt in the tourism of Zalakaros and Hévíz: circa 30 per cent of both foreign and domestic guest nights realised in the high season, most of them in the off-season months at commercial accommodation. In the case of Balatonfüred and Siófok, the time concentration of tourism has clearly decreased in recent years.

As it was examined, Siófok has the largest total commercial accommodation capacity in the Balaton destination (11,948 units), followed by Balatonfüred (7,725 units), Hévíz (6,567 units) and Zalakaros (4,295 units).

Analysing the foreign and domestic guest arrivals' data, the above diagrams show that the seasonality (the distribution of guest nights) is more balanced in case of Hévíz and Zalakaros. In that area, where the conditions of touristic hospitality are given in autumn and winter as well, and the attractions are open all year round, the distribution of guest nights is even more balanced, the tourism is more sustainable and predictable.

Characteristics of tourism at Lake Balaton-Seasonality

In the destination of Lake Balaton, in connection with the tourist infrastructure, the geographical, natural, landscape, cultural and transport conditions of each tourist micro-region are different. Due to the developmental and historical characteristics of tourism, a strong spatial concentration of tourism supply has developed (eg. more than 85 per cent of accommodation establishments are concentrated in the coastal zone), and due to the characteristics of dominant tourism products, time concentration has also been observed. The 80 per cent of the tourists' arrivals on Lake Balaton is generated in the 15 most visited settlements of the Balaton destination. Hévíz which is in the first place, can claim 19 per cent of the guest nights at Lake Balaton.

The Balaton region is able to offer a quality touristic services in spring and autumn, to compensate the seasonality, adapting to the travel trends of the world (the desire to travel several times for a shorter period of time). The degree of seasonality – that still exists – (due to four-season wellness hotels, the development of uplands attractions, and marketing messages to domestic travellers) has decreased.

Diversifying tourism offerings and quality services enable the development of new tourism product packages and open new seasons in spring and autumn. An essential condition for the new seasons is product development filled with attractive content and the formation of an attitude that the Balaton region is no longer just a summer holiday destination. "The lake and its surroundings play an outstanding role in attracting domestic and foreign visitors to the country, one of its main asset is the water itself that is suitable for bath during the summer months. Based on the available data on guest nights at commercial accommodation establishments, Sulyok et al. provides a detailed overview of the destination's seasonality with the help of the well-known Gini index . The analysis focuses on the composition of the temporal concentration and its development during the period 2008 to 2014".

One of the biggest challenges of the period following the change of regime was the dissolution and reduction of concentration and seasonality. The main problem areas were: concentration over time; the extremely unequal territorial distribution of tourist capacities; concentration of traffic in the Lake Balaton region on shore; the seasonal environmental overload of Lake Balaton as a natural lake and the seasonal congestion of the transport network.

Among the three most popular cities of the destination that register the most guest nights – Hévíz, Balatonfüred and Siófok – unsurprisingly, thanks to its health tourism offer, Hévíz can claim much less seasonality. In the case of Balatonfüred and Siófok, the time concentration of tourist arrival has clearly decreased in recent years, which shows that these destinations are increasingly positioning themselves outside the summer period, and at the same time an important feedback on the developments in recent years.

Among the settlements with the highest turnover of Lake Balaton, Hévíz, Zalakaros and Hévíz had the least seasonality: 30 per cent of both foreign and domestic guest nights appeared in the high season, the majority of them spent in the off-season months. In the case of Balatonfüred and Siófok, the time concentration of guest traffic has clearly decreased in recent years, which shows that these micro-destinations are increasingly positioning themselves out of the summer period.

The large-scale development goals to be realized in the tourist destination of Lake Balaton in the near future are the development of bicycle paths and the e-bicycle network, port developments, the establishment of new adventure parks, visitor centers, and the development of castles and chateaux.

The development of hotel services, the development of more than just coastal attractions, and marketing messages to the traveling public have significant potential. The developments confirm the marked shift in the guest traffic, the trends indicate a dynamic development trajectory.

The Hungarian Tourism Agency (MTÜ) draws attention to the fact that "the experience of Lake Balaton is inexhaustible, as the lake and its surroundings are a four-season destination that hides wonderful treasures regardless of the season and reveals thousands of new colors to visitors at all times of the year[6] ".

6 https://bbj.hu/budapest/travel/sights/hungarian-tourism-agency-launches-balaton-campaign

The main tourist product of the region is, family holidays, based on the water activities. The region primarily attracts families with children, young adults and young people. Guest traffic shows a significant concentration over time. Major events, festivals and the rethought gastronomy and wine culture of Lake Balaton go beyond local events as independent travel motivations. In addition, the region has a significant offer in both active tourism and health tourism. (National Tourism Development Strategy 2030)

Possibilities for transiting to the circular economy within the tourism and hospitality sectors

- As far as heating and cooling are concerned a ground water based climate system is needed. Within the closed system, ground water meets with air and the temperature difference between the two elements allows for the cooling of the hotel during the summer.
- An advanced building climate control system can be connected to the booking system of the hotels so that the room temperatures willdepend on their usage. Through such mechanisms heating, cooling and air ventilation is at an absolute minimum when the room is not booked.
- On the outside, the hotels can be covered in solar panels.
- A smart system can be installed to control lighting and water-saving.
- Hospitality businesses should buy used or remanufactured furniture. Typical remanufacturing operations are: replacement of worn parts, refinishing of metal or wooden surfaces, remanufacturing used products and reselling them (Mannich et al., 2017)Those firms that supply products with looping services, offering their consumers economically efficient end-of-life product returns and recycling practices.
- Reusing textiles: converting damaged textiles into useful items.
- Expanding the types of products available as remanufactured or reused.
- Reusing bottles and glasses.
- Intelligent room functions are available through new technologies, promoting the rational use of energy and reducing power consumption. (Sloan et al. (2013)
- Circular waste treatment focuses on separating different types of waste in order to increase their reuse value. An example is the separating and collection of used oils in the kitchen. (Mannich et al., 2017)
- The treatment of greywater, i.e. used water that is no longer potable, but which has been treated to remove potential disease-carrying microbes and redistributed to non-potable systems. (Mannich et al., 2017)
- New technologies which minimise the use of water in the laundering process.
- The sustainable modes of transport at lake Balaton for example between the individual attractions are proposed to be developed otherwise they become inaccessible during critical periods. (long weekends, summer peak season)
- Infrastructural investments in transport development, environmental protection, economic development and, last but not least, human development are of primary

importance, as well as education in addition to further integrated accommodation and network attraction developments. (Mannich et al., 2017)

- Selection of the most sustainable tourism service providers that adhere to the principles of the circular economy.
- Selecting the most environmentally friendly transport option.
- Management of selected services: use of locally produced food, handicrafts and adopted environmentally friendly measures such as waste management, energy water saving, etc.
- Infrastructure or season-extending developments at Lake Balaton for example (winterization of water blocks, sauna world, construction of swimming pools, creation of event space), projects implementing family-friendly services and improving the conditions for leisure sports.
- Strengthening the tourist attractiveness of the region through the integrated development of products and services in tourist-frequented areas.
- Supporting the local economy and actively contributing to the preservation of nature and culture.
- All operating activities should be made environmentally sustainable.
- Encouraging tourists to buy products, materials and services that have a renewable and sustainable, recyclable or reusable biodegradable property.
- At Lake Balaton another problem is the railway and roadway that separates the waterfront from the recreation areas and causes a significant environmental load. The road transport system around the lake is overcrowded, especially in the high season.
- Thanks to infrastructure investments in recent years (eg construction of the M7 motorway, bypasses, junctions), the situation is more favorable, but both road, rail and water transport require further development. Road traffic on the northern coast of Lake Balaton is overcrowded, train traffic is of a critical standard, the section between Székesfehérvár and Balatonfüred is currently being electrified by the northern coastal railway, which results in a significant improvement in the accessibility of the destination.
- At Lake Balaton however, the entry and exit points of the destination, the flow of visitors to the accommodation and the TOP attractions, the sustainable modes of transport between the individual attractions are proposed to be developed in parallel, otherwise they become inaccessible during critical periods (long weekends, summer peak season) and experience is negative.

Conclusion

Tourism in the Lake Balaton region has undergone significant qualitative and quantitative changes in recent years. Domestic tourism has become dominant, while inbound tourism has restructured.

Following the previous negative trends in tourists' arrivals on Lake Balaton, the number of both foreign and domestic guest nights started to grow steadily from 2013 onwards.

Thus, in the field of developments, infrastructural investments in transport development, environmental protection, economic development and, last but not least, human development are of primary importance, as well as education in addition to further integrated accommodation and network attraction developments.

Examining the volume and concentration of guest arrivals together, it can be seen that the development of hotel services, the development of non-coastal attractions, and marketing messages aimed at the domestic travel audience have significant potential. The data of Hévíz and Balatonfüred confirm the developments of the cities.

Due to the more favorable distribution of traffic and conscious professional attention, as well as responsible water management, the biological overload of the lake does not cause any further problems, the amount of water is adequate and the water quality is excellent. In the last ten years, the use of development funds has accelerated and large-scale attractions have been made that can attract a significant number of visitors: for example, the Festetics Castle in Keszthely, and the historic downtown II in Balatonfüred. pace, the Lavender Visitor Center in Tihany and the Tavas Cave Visitor Center in Tapolca. In addition, the accommodation developments required for the capacity of the hostel are continuous, either on their own or with the involvement of a European Union source, which has doubled the number of beds (four stars, four stars superior) in the high quality accommodation category.

It is important to see that domestic tourism provides an increasing share of the ever-growing guest traffic on Lake Balaton every year. As such, it is an indispensable segment of Lake Balaton tourism, a qualitative development that ensures the renewal of the region. Another key to the development of tourism in the region could be the strengthening of inbound tourism.

In the field of developments, infrastructure investments (transport development, environmental protection, economic development, human development, etc.) and further integrated attraction developments are of primary importance.

Overall, it can be stated that the concentration of accommodation establishments in the Balaton destination is concentrated in 3 micro-regions: Western Balaton: Hévíz and Zalakaros; Balatonfüred, and Siófok's area.

In the accommodation structure of the destination, there is a significant development in the establishment of accommodation the size of a pension, resp. experienced in the field of quality hotel developments (four star accommodation).

It is generally the case that a high number of guest nights is increasingly generated where there is high traffic and large seating capacity and vice versa.

There is a fundamentally strong correlation between the quality of attractions and the number of visitors throughout the region.

In recent years, the spatial and temporal concentration of tourist arrivals has clearly decreased, thanks to the developments of recent years and the slow living offer of non-coastal settlements, as well as the quality services of the destination. Out of the three settlements that register the most guest nights – Hévíz, Balatonfüred and Siófok – Hévíz can claim much less seasonality due to its health tourism offer.

The outbreak of the pandemic which has hit the entire planet has been putting unprecedented pressure on EU tourism ecosystem as well. Businesses in tourism are facing a severe crisis. Analysing the persons in commercial accommodations at Lake Balaton, in Hungary we find that there is a decline in 2020 of 40-50 per cent from January to April compared to the same period in 2019. COVID-19 has impacted heavily on tourism demand, and hospitality industry, which is highly sensitive to shocks How will the industry recover after COVID-19 and how the industry can be made sustainable? Applying the Circular Economy framework and opportunities we can reach a sustainable, resilient recovery of the tourism industry. Overtourism, GHG emissions issues will not automatically disappear once the COVID-19 crisis is over. We need to to rebuild a more resilient, economically and environmentally sustainable tourism industry. It also encourages different stakeholders in the tourism ecosystem to rethink their existing (most often linear) business models in a more holistic way. (Einarsson et al., 2020)

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Kereskedelmi szálláshelyek kapacitása http://statinfo.ksh.hu/Statinfo/haViewer.jsp
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The present publication has been implemented with the support provided from the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund of Hungary, financed under the project no. 2019-1.3.1-KK-2019-00015, titled „Establishment of a circular economy-based sustainability competence center at the University of Pannonia".

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„…WE MUST NOT STOP AT GAINING KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE, BECAUSE THEN THE WORLD WILL STEP BY OUR SIDE AND WE WILL BE LEFT BEHIND."

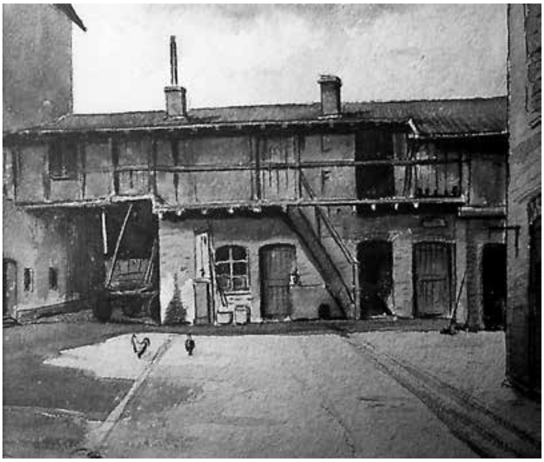
Interview with Ákos Perjés, managing director of sales, marketing and logistics at HARIBO Hungária Kft.

Q: Welcome, I am Zoltán Veres from the University of Pannonia, and I would like you to interview for the next issue of Pannon Management Review. First of all, I would like to know how the German mother company was created, who founded the company, what was the company foundation history and what were the early successes?

A: The company's 100 years old history can be listed as follows:

1920 A small sweets company

Born in Friesdorf near Bonn in 1893, Hans Riegel trains to be a confectioner and becomes a partner in the Heinen & Riegel company. He establishes HARIBO (HAns RIegel BOnn) on 13 December 1920 and began making confectionery in the laundry room in the backyard of the house with nothing more than a sack of sugar, a marble slab, a stool, a stove, a copper pot and a rolling pin. His wife Gertrud becomes the new company's first employee in 1921.



The laundry room where it all started.

1922 The DANCING BEAR sees the light of day

Hans Riegel lays the first foundation stone for HARIBO's success when he invents the DANCING BEAR – a fruit gummy bear that would one day become world-famous as the legendary HARIBO Goldbear. It was bigger than today's Goldbears, and also slimmer. At that time, two DANCING BEARS in inflation shaken Germany cost just one penny.

1923 The first company car

An increase in demand prompts the first investment in modern transport technology: HARIBO acquires its first car, which is used to supply customers. Up until that point, Hans Riegel's wife Gertrud had delivered the daily production by bicycle.

1923 Riegel family

Hans Riegel Junior is born. The first of three children, the family went on to welcome daughter Anita in 1924 and son Paul in 1926. Hans and Paul begin managing the HARIBO company in the mid-40s.

1925 Liquorice produced for the first time

The second foundation stone in HARIBO's success story: Hans Riegel begins producing liquorice products. Liquorice sticks with HARIBO lettering are one of the first customer favorites, soon followed by many other specialties such as the world-famous Liquorice Wheels of today. The popular DANCING BEAR welcomes a cousin: the BLACK BEAR.

1930 A growing company

Sales representatives now supply the whole of Germany with HARIBO products. By the year 1933, the company has grown into a solid medium-sized company with 400 employees. At the same time, the main building of the production facility in Bonn is completed. The latest stroke of genius is the simple and catchy advertising slogan: 'Haribo macht Kinder froh' (Haribo makes children happy). The DANCING BEAR is joined by a new relative: the TEDDY BEAR.

1945 Difficult times

War and a shortage of raw materials take their toll on the economy – and not even HARIBO is spared. In 1945, company founder Hans Riegel dies at the early age of 52. For a brief period following World War II, Hans' wife Gertrud manages operations.

1946 A new generation

Restoration of the company begins with just 30 employees after World War II. In 1946, brothers Hans and Paul Riegel take over company management, relieving their mother of her role. Dr Hans Riegel is in charge of the commercial side, marketing and sales, whilst his brother Paul is responsible for production. Success soon follows, with HARIBO employing around 1,000 people by 1950.

1960 The Goldbears are born

HARIBO Goldbears hit the market! The huge success of the cult sweet prompts HARIBO to have an official birth certificate issued for Goldbears. In 1967, the German Patent Office officially recognises Goldbears as a registered trademark.

1962 HARIBO advertises on TV for the first time

HARIBO recognises early on just how important the new medium of TV is, with HARIBO ads shown for the first time on German TV. In the mid-60s, the advertising slogan 'Haribo macht Kinder froh' (Haribo makes children happy) is expanded to include the phrase 'und Erwachsene ebenso' (and adults too).

1972 New markets

HARIBO, the world's biggest manufacturer of fruit gums and liquorice products acquired a majority stake in the English firm Dunhills (Pontefract) in 1972. Dunhills' great product portfolio of traditional lines was retained, and the famous round liquorice Pontefract Cakes are still produced today.

1978 The Goldbears change their shape

Customers' aesthetic preferences changed during the 70s, and with them the shape of the Goldbears: the feet are shortened and the Goldbears are given their compact, stylised appearance, which they still have to this day.

1986 MAOAM now belongs to HARIBO

HARIBO acquires Edmund Münster GmbH & Co. KG, which is now based in Neuss. The long-standing MAOAM brand now belongs to the HARIBO Group. Since it was introduced, the unmistakable MAOAM lettering has remained virtually unchanged and has long been one of the most well-known classics among prominent trademarks.

1989 New colors for the Goldbears

Goldbears get a makeover: the colours are softened due to the fruit and plant concentrates used. The yellow Goldbear illustration with red bow tie appears on the packaging for the first time.

1994 New ideas

In 1994, HARIBO took the final step to fully acquire Dunhills. It set about revolutionising the UK's sweets market and went on to create its own unique mixes, to create what have become the UK's most popular sweets. Starmix, which is now the UK's number one treat, was launched in 1995. Supermix, combining its squishy and soft textures, followed in 1996 and in 1997 the HARIBO 'tang' was introduced with Tangfastics.

1996 Here come the marshmallows!

HARIBO acquires the Belgian sweets company Dulcia, which has been producing the highly popular Dulcia marshmallow products Soft-Kiss, Cocoballs and Rombiss for decades. In mid-2007, the name Dulcia is removed from the packaging and customers now find the foam products under the name HARIBO Chamallows.

2007 85 years of HARIBO Goldbears

For their 85th birthday, Goldbears were given a new flavour, bag design and a cheerful smile. Apple is the sixth flavor to join the ranks. For consumers, that means the Goldbears are now even fruitier.

2008 Advertising

Take-off for a unique, ten-year collaboration: two TUIfly Boeing 737-800s are presented as 'flying ambassadors of the skies' in the exclusive HARIBO Goldbear design: the GoldbAIR and, from 2010, the HaribAIR. The colorful Tropifrutti aeroplane joins the HARIBO/TUIfly air fleet in May 2015.

2009 Paul Riegel dies at the age of 83

Co-owner Paul Riegel, who is in charge of production and technology, dies unexpectedly on 2 August 2009. As an experienced inventor, he developed many machines himself, including his most famous invention, the Liquorice Wheel winding machine.

2013 Dr Hans Riegel dies at the age of 90

Dr Hans Riegel dies on 15 October 2013. He had managed the commercial side of HARIBO for 67 years and was the oldest active Managing Director in Germany. He not only played a key role in shaping HARIBO, but also the sweets industry in Germany and abroad.

2014 A new start in Grafschaft

In 2013, HARIBO GmbH & Co. KG shareholders vote to establish a new site in Grafschaft, a municipality in Rhineland-Palatinate. Acquired in 2014, the 27-hectare site offers ideal transport connections as well as space for a large logistics center, one of the most cutting-edge production lines on three levels and a new, modern administration building.

2020 HARIBO: 100 years young

The family business in its third generation celebrated its anniversary on 13 December 2020.

100 years anniversary celebrated in Hungary

Q: How did the company become international? In how many countries is it present?

A: HARIBO's success has not been limited to the German market: as a global market leader in fruit gummies and liquorice, HARIBO is now available in more than 100 countries around the world. HARIBO produces its treats at 16 locations worldwide and employs more than 7,000 people. The product range continues with new sweets joining the familiar range of favorites that fans love. Further variety comes as a result of the quality brands that continue to be added to HARIBO's worldwide portfolio. In countries throughout the world, sales and production networks continue to be expanded. In order to deliver treats recipes are specially tailored to suit the unique flavor preferences in different countries.

Q: What is the short development history of HARIBO in Hungary? What is the relationship between Hungarian employees and the company?

A: Dr. Hans Riegel was the person who noticed confectionery company Flórián Kft. in Nemesvámos, which he bought in July of 1999. The construction of the new HARIBO factory started in August 2000, about on 23000 square meters as a greenfield investment. On June 26 of 2002 the Happy Cola was born. It was the first HARIBO fruit gummy that was produced in Nemesvámos. Then two years later our first candied product, Pfirsiche was produced for the first time, it was a peach-flavored fruit gummy covered with delicious sugar mantle. Both of them belong to our product portfolio ever since. After more than 10 years of operation, the company almost doubled its production capacity here in 2013 with a production capacity expansion and information technology investment of 8000 square meters. Market demands are constantly changing and in order to be able to adapt to the change, the production of custom dragee products started a year later and was followed by a new candying technology development in 2015.

In terms of production, we here in Nemesvámos are one of the factories within the HARIBO Group with a smaller but diverse product range, flexible production options and highly advanced production technology.

We produce about a thousand different products worldwide, almost a hundred of them in Nemesvámos. Our most famous fruit gummies are already considered classics, among others they are Goldbears, Tropifrutti and Quaxi. From this year, we offer our locally developed new product called Exotix, which - with its sour, exotic taste - hopefully will become a favorite of many.

Our colleagues are always holding a prominent position at HARIBO. For example, when last fall a larger company announced to leave Nemesvámos, and at the same time, another wave of COVID-19 epidemic started, we felt that many colleagues were frightened. In a local communication campaign we wanted to make it clear to our employees, to their families, and to those who are living in our close area that they can count on us and trust us in the future as well, because we will stay and continue our work despite the changes around us and the pandemic.

Nowadays we are grateful to our employees because the management of the COVID situation has been successful in our company so far, because we have not had bigger disruptions in the last year. We could count on our employees during this period that is testing people and industry, too. We were able to continue our production smoothly. However, our sales were temporarily challenged by the pandemic mainly due to short-term disruptions on the logistics side.

Q: Let us go into a little details that are more interesting: What do you think of the benefits of a relatively narrow product range?

A: The HARIBO product range has expanded significantly by now, beside single-layer fruit gummies of various flavors, double layered, foamed, candied, and dragee products are also made in the factory in Nemesvámos for domestic and export markets as well. From other HARIBO companies, nevertheless, we can get products that we do not produce such as chamallows or extruded products. The key ideas here are focus and concentration. We are the best in the world in this because we keep that in mind. We do not have to share our energy and resources. We can respond immediately to market changes or new consumer demands with either new developments or new packaging. Thanks to our international technology developments, we are able to manufacture our own production machines based on more than 100 years of experience, which are not available for others on the market. This allows us to offer products that are even more competitive to our consumers, and we can raise the entrance barrier to competing manufacturers. The relatively narrow product range is also a major advantage in the process of production economy and logistics chain. The larger the batch, the more economical relatively the production. It is easier to forecast sales, and purchasing raw and packaging materials is also more economical.

Q: How can the company's product policy meet the needs of modern health-conscious nutrition?

A: Our company is committed to the production of quality fruit gummies. In the context of product development and innovation, high emphasis will be placed on the use of natural raw materials in Nemesvámos. We use fruit and vegetable concentrates as dyes of natural origin in more and more products. What is more, the iconic Goldbears as well as the Wummis F!ZZ that was developed in Nemesvámos achieve an explosively fruity aroma thanks to the concentrated fruit juices used in their production. We are justifiably proud that all fruit gummies produced in Nemesvámos are free of preservatives and we have been able to replace artificial colors with natural dyes in almost all of our products.

In line with different consumer trends, HARIBO also offers unique innovations in the market of fruit gummies and liquorice as vegetarian fruit gummy. Furthermore, we would like to serve the needs of food allergy sufferers and health-conscious consumers, as well. Therefore, in using of raw materials, we prevent cross-contamination with strict factory regulations. Our locally made products are gluten and lactose free in accordance with domestic legislation. The information on the production's place is indicated on the packaging of each product: fruit gummies marked with the number line beginning with L361 are made in HARIBO's Nemesvámos factory.

Q: What is the global position of your brand? How do other cultures relate to your products?

A: The HARIBO brand, as I mentioned, is the market leader in the world of fruit gummies and chamallows. We achieved this pleasant result by building the brand in the market step by step, with patient and thoughtful work. Openness and willingness to take risks are necessary for long-term success.

The brand building is a very slow process, because we need to adapt our portfolio to local preferences without compromising HARIBO's traditional values. Entry into new markets is preceded by a detailed survey of market and consumer habits. Among others, we examine the market participants, consumer preferences and millions of other factors. Knowing these, we create our range in terms of both packaging and flavors. Our product portfolio has two big parts: the first includes traditional products, such as Goldbears, Happy Cola, Quaxi, Tropifrutti, and the second part consists of a range of products to suit local tastes. In the Asian market, for example, people are very fond of extremely sour, very soft-consistency, strongly fruity-flavored fruit gummies, so we have also developed such products for them.

Since our product portfolio is very wide internationally, consumers can find their flavor and packaging preferences in each country. In Nordic countries – Norway, Denmark, Sweden – products based on liquorice (typical taste of root of liquorice plant), which are almost unknown to us, are preferred. We produce from this among others sweet, sour, ammonia water versions, but in Nordic countries liquorice with fish and seafood tastes are also sold.

There are countries where consumption of fruit gummies happens rather alone, on the go, we offer them mono packs of 40-100g. In other countries, they prefer to consume fruit gummies together as a community experience, for them we pack the mixtures of 1.2-1.5 kg in a plastic box made of recycled material with a resealable top.

One of the raw materials of our products is pork gelatin. There are countries where pork gelatin-based products are not consumed, so we make halal products for them using beef gelatin, and we even have factories where we can produce according to kosher technology.

Q: And the most exciting question: What is the secret to marketing such a simple product?

A: With long and persistent work, we have achieved that HARIBO has become synonymous with fruit gummy in Hungary, as well. The secret is the product itself, which is cheerful, colorful and last but not least, very delicious. Childhood habits accompany most people throughout their lives. What they liked as children will be liked later. Of course, one's taste changes over the years, but that's why we make so many different colors, tastes and textures that later on everyone can find the most favorable variation of their taste.

We have to find the right balance between traditional and trendy products when designing our range. If we do it well, success will come. We can make trends because we are the market leaders. In addition, we can do that, if we think it is the right market strategy. However, we must ensure that fashion does not take away our imagination, because then we would lose our consumer range of traditional tastes and shapes. But one thing we do not compromise on, it is quality.

In market work, we focus on visibility and availability. Since we are talking about an impulse category, we need to show up at points of sale to arouse the interest of customers in the high communication noise that surrounds them in a store. Increasing penetration is a long-term task for such products, because the frequency of purchases cannot be increased indefinitely. To do this, we use POS materials included clear messages that are uniform throughout the market. The brand elements used in print and other campaigns are same and easy to identify them. The exact and uniform placement of the brand elements on the packaging is designed according to the instructions of the corporate style guide, which ensures the possibility of a uniform shelf appearance regardless of the factory in which the product is made.

We reach the younger target group with Facebook communication and the traditional media consumers with TV commercial. We need to create and pass on kind, heartfelt, short stories that the target group cannot only identify, but also creates cheerful moment for them.

A few weeks ago, a German business magazine listed the most important inventions in Germany that changed the world. In addition to book printing, light bulbs, X-rays and cars, HARIBO Goldbears has also been added to the list. The steps taken to continuously implement the principles, the creation of everyday values and the commitment to the maximum service of consumers' needs have paid off many times over the hundred year since 1920. Superbrands is the trademark symbolizing high quality, which the HARIBO brand won in Hungary for the tenth time in 2020. This award is of particular importance to us as it points to the values of the HARIBO brand in recognition of the work invested in brand building and the outstanding brand quality.

Q: What were the most important milestones in your professional career? How challenging is it to work in HARIBO's management?

A: I started my professional career at United Biscuites – Győri Keksz – as sales representative in 1992. At that time, after the privatization, a team was built of 12 sales representatives according to the English model. Their task was to ensure the distribution of the factory's products in the total Hungarian market. They did a very thorough job of setting up the team. An Austrian trainer taught us for 21 days as a part of the theoretical and practical training. After that, we received continuous follow-up trainings for 3 years, and even the smallest details of the successful commercial work was "burned into us". Following less than a year of representative work I was promoted to Regional Sales Manager then when the Key Account Manager team was set up I became a Key Account Manager. In 1998, I contracted with the German-owned Reemtsma, a tobacco factory in Debrecen, where my task was to manage the total Hungarian tobacco wholesale business. In that time the turnover was more than 40 billion forints. In 2000, I was approached by a personnel consultant with an offer, and as a result, I contracted with the American-owned Hasbro to the Budapest office as a domestic sales manager, and then 2 years later I took over the management of the Hungarian company as managing director. I was responsible not only for the Hungarian market, but also for the Czech, Romanian, Bulgarian and for Ukrainian markets for several years, as well. The management of the Czech and Slovak markets was a serious challenge, because they were similarly complex as the Hungarian market, but they had different trade policies and expectations towards suppliers. Also in 2006, a head-hunter found me and I contracted with HARIBO where I have since been in charge of the position of managing director for sales, marketing, logistics and corporate communications.

HARIBO is a privately owned family business that values its economic success across generations. It combines local and international values very effectively and gives the local management a great deal of freedom. We strive for long-term relationships with colleagues, suppliers and customers, and we treat all our relationships with pre-established trust. We focus on quality from the very beginning, we say what we do and we do what we say. We work in a team where all participant accepts the basic directions and this determines our everyday actions. Therefore, our situation is clear because we know the rules of the game exactly and work according to them. These principles are such values I like to identify with. In international relations we often use a German-English mixed language, but we are changing to English more and more often because it is not easy to set up a good German-speaking management in international business. Since HARIBO is present outside Europe, including America, Brazil and Australia, not to mention countries belonging to the export team, this would be particularly difficult. If one is open enough to cooperation and does one's work in a solution-oriented way, one can find the common points, that takes management with different cultures and nationalities in one direction. Open communication helps a lot. We learn from each other day after day, because we often turn to each other for professional consultation and advice. The degree of development of the markets is very different, so it is always possible to find colleagues who have already solved a similar problem successfully and we can turn to them for professional advice if necessary. I really enjoy this because I can learn things in my daily work that cannot be obtained in any other way. I believe and confess that we must not stop at gaining knowledge and experience, because then the world will step by our side and we will be left behind. In addition, the one who lags behind is left out.

Q: Finally, what is your message to young Hungarian jobseekers who are now looking for their first job?

A: I do not think I will reveal a big secret, when I say that with the right studies, a well-established professional competence, the knowledge is the most important, but immediately afterwards interpersonal skills, i.e. communication, teamwork and the ability to cooperate, are included. The lack of these skills cannot be compensated, since they play an important role both in daily contact with colleagues and in achieving organizational goals. In third place for me is innovative and creative thinking, followed by strategic thinking and general thinking skills. Employers in international markets prefer those youngsters, who have experience in abroad. Those who have previously studied abroad in part-time training are most preferred. They are lagging those behind who have completed full training in another country, but they are also ahead of young people who have only studied or worked only in Hungary. All of this can be explained by the foreign language knowledge, intercultural skill and personality traits, which means that the job applicant is able and willing to cut into new situation, take risks, be open to innovation and work with people from other cultures. Stress and resilience, as well as the ability to fight and endurance should not be left out of the list. Without these abilities and skills, you cannot be effective and happy in the ever-changing environment in the long run. The openness factor to happiness is very important because those who do not feel in the right place where they are will sooner or later give a weaker performance and go on the path of uncertainty. This is not good either professionally or personally. Endurance is essential in the early days. Too frequent job changes do not allow us to develop our basic knowledge to a high level in the chosen job and gain the experience needed for the long-term success. Serious companies are reluctant to hire colleagues who change jobs every few years and bounce back and forth. I consider it a decisive aspect to have a goal of a medium- and a long-term career and to reconcile this with the goals of one's private life. A well-put together plan is already half the battle. If someone has serious goals, it is good to get used to the idea that it is necessary to invest both time and energy at the beginning of the career in order to begin the harvest later. Because without sowing there is no harvest.

Fanny Liska

CO-CREATION RELATED EXPECTATIONS IN SERVICES

Co-creation in the economic sense manifests itself in the interaction between the company and the consumer. This research presents a qualitative study of consumer decision-making in the service market, exploring the co-creation content in user preferences. The research investigated two areas. One is the beginning of the service selection process, important aspects emerging in the information gathering and consideration phase, with a focus on service products in the tourism and HORECA sectors. Empirical research is based on focus group interviews, where the deeper context of the transcripts was explored using text analysis software. In examining the texts, it was revealed that the occurrence of concepts related to co-creation was remarkable. Based on the code structure in the text, the following user expectations for co-creation can be associated: communication, value proposition, availability, flexibility and experience. In addition, service complexity affects the customer's expectations of co-creation and the expectations of potential consumers separate according to their personality. The results of the research have been built in a proposed model to identify co-creation expectations. From the point of view of service marketing theory, it can be concluded that co-creation is a combination of adaptation and active client policy. At the same time, the revealed model gives the company the opportunity to improve quality management.

Introduction and research purpose

The value of services is a somewhat abstract concept in consumer decision making. This is because the basis of consumer decisions' is typically not the holistic value of the service, but services are being evaluated according to certain properties and attributes that are considered important to consumers. Thus, in the case of the very same service, different consumers may consider the process as a positive or negative experience based on their different perspectives. In the longer run, however, most consumers have a picture in mind about the perceived value of the service, which is mostly related to the value created by the service. First, Zeithaml and his co-authors (1985) identified the inseparable property of services in the so-called HIPI principle, that is, "production" and "consumption" require both the customer and the service provider. This so-called real-time collaboration is captured by the concept of value co-creation. As Vargo and Lusch (2004) stated in the 6th premise of Service-Dominant Logic theory: the user is always a value-creating partner in the service process.

The aim of this study is to contribute to a deeper understanding of the nature of shared value creation between consumers and service providers. The article explores *the decision-making processes of consumers during service-choice decision, through a qualitative analysis*, paying particular attention to value creation aspects in consumer preferences. It is important to examine these "soft" factors because, although the ultimate value of a service is shaped by the interdependence of the user and the service provider, value creation is predominantly controlled by the service provider and/or service personnel and staff. So if we can model the components of common value creation, it represents the benefits associated with relationship management in the marketing of service providers.

Literature review

Like many other concepts, common value creation appeared much later in the theory of corporate economics than in practice. The cooperation of the customer / consumer in the improvement of the company's performance is an obvious solution in several corporate functions, and a number of early application examples can be mentioned. Mention should be made of the former practice of Southwest Airlines in the United States, where frequent flyers were involved as active customers in the process of selecting cabin crew (Veres, 2009 p. 267). Thus, the concept of common value creation can be examined not only from a management perspective, but also from the perspective of consumers and other stakeholders (Ind, Coates 2013). Co-creation has basically contributed to the development of the company in two main directions. The first aspect is the generation of new product/service ideas, actually innovation and development; the other area is the continuous improvement, such as quality improvement by exploring typical complaint situations. The latter is particularly typical in the service market, where targeted qualitative research methods provide the necessary input. Such methods include focus groups to explore service quality scope, as well as front-line audit (Jäckel, 2016) or the Critical Incident Technique (Veres, 2009). The so-called proactive market research, however, is also unknown in product innovation (in Witell, Kristensson, Gustafsson, & Löfgren, 2011), in addition, the concept of common value creation also appears in the Japanese kaizen approach to quality management (Belal, Shirahada, & Kosaka, 2013). It is to note that organizational market co-creation research has intensified in recent years (see among others Preikschas, Cabanelas, Rüdiger, & Lampón, 2017; Ruiz-Alba, Soares, Rodríguez-Molina, & Frías-Jamilena, 2019; Berenguer-Contrí, Gallarza, Ruiz-Molina, & Gil-Saura, 2020; Ramaswamy & Ozcan 2020).

A study by Vargo and Lusch (2004) with a paradigm shifting intent appeared in the early 2000s, in which the exclusive dominance of services over the traditional marketing approach based on the classical product-service dichotomy was emphasized. The 6th premise outlined in their theoretical concept states „The Customer Is Always a Coproducer". This approach follows the management concept formulated by Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2000, 2002, 2004), according to which economic value creation takes place in the interaction between companies and consumers. Following the logic of Ramaswamy (2011), mutual value creation is a common extension of value, where the source of value is the consumer experience and the experience is manifested through interactions. Here, however, the role of the consumer also changes (Cova & Dalli, 2009, Cova, Dalli, & Zwick, 2011). Research by Gustafsson et al. (2012) has also shown that the mechanism of effective service innovation is based on consumer communication, and differs according to whether the innovation is comprehensive or partial only. In a broader sense, 'value co-creation' takes place between different economic actors, which constitutes certain types of service systems, in which they integrate their resources for value creation (Edvardsson, Tronvoll, & Gruber, 2011; Vargo & Lusch, 2008; Skålén, Pace, & Cova, 2015; Oertzen, Odekerken-Schröder, Brax & Mager, 2018). The context of the present research is based on those formulated by Grönroos (2011), that common value creation is a kind of direct interaction between the company and the consumer, in which actors unite through their coordinated activities in an integrated process in which both parties are active, learn together and from each other, while also directly influencing each other. Grönroos's cited article is also significant in a way that it breaks the mainstream consensus with analyzing and partially redefining the elements of Vargo-Lusch's premises on a critical basis, which leads to a deeper understanding and better interpretation of co-creation. The main new premises are as follows:

- Common value creation is the basis of economic transactions in which service provision plays an intermediary role.
- Basically, the consumer is always a value-creator.
- Basically, the company is a facilitator of consumer value.
- The company's activity is not limited to the value proposition, but it provides the opportunity to directly and actively influence consumer value creation.
- Value accumulates in the process of value creation.
- The consumer perceives the value individually, empirically and in context.

Although the focus of common value creation is at the heart of the servuction model (Eiglier & Langeard, 1991), there are different models in the literature. Analyzing these, De Koning et al. (2016) distinguish four approaches. The "raw" interpretation of common value creation between economic actors is a kind of common *area, overlap*, where value creation is created as input-output values. Other models follow the structural thinking, ie that common value creation can be defined along such spectra as an *area of innovation* (low level of cooperation, little impact on product / service design, innovation output) or common value creation can be a method of *participation and cooperation in product/service planning*. Some authors view common value creation as a *process* and define the steps during which value creation takes place. Models that differentiate the types of co-creation define 5 areas. According to this, personalized offers; real-time self-service; mass customization; co-design and community design represent the views of the business and scientific perspective on the types of co-creation. There are researches which examines the concept of co-creation from a user perspective, providing insight into consumer experiences and the determinants of co-creation situations. Some studies mention co-creation as a defining element of a holistic service experience (Kelemen-Erdős, Mitev, 2016).

In the Hungarian co-creation research, the work of Ercsey (2015, 2016, 2017) should be highlighted, who primarily examines the topic in the context of service marketing. The result of her research is to prove a model that captures consumer co-creation behaviour in a multidimensional structure. Mention may also be made of Adrienn Papp (2014, 2019), who investigated the innovation-supporting role of co-creation.

The present research examined the co-creation phenomenon from the users' point of view and sought the answer to how the assessment of common value creation appears in the choice decision and in the evaluation of services.

If we combine the complexity and difficulty of the service with the dimensions of general and individual complexity, we obtain a framework that identifies the complexity of services in four categories.

According to the nature of complexity:
- *complicated*: multiplicity (the service consists of a large number of components) and / or coherence (high level interaction between components);
- *difficult*: significant financial or intellectual resources are required to perform the service and / or it is characterized by uncertainty, ie it is not possible to make accurate forecasts or rely on any information.

According to the source of complexity:
- *general*: in this case, the type of service is characterized by complexity, thus, any firm wishing to provide a particular type of service must deal with the same level of complexity;
- *individual*: the complexity of each service provider, so different companies operating in the same type of service represent different levels of complexity. This may be derived from the decisions made by the company or the environmental factors in which the company operates.

The characteristics that determine the complexity of the service are summarized in Table 1, highlighting in italics the aspects that refer to the common value creation of the service provider and the consumer.

Table 1 Characteristics determining service complexity

	Markets and products
1	*The service is highly individual.*
2	*The service has low commodity content.*
3	*The service is offered according to many differentiated options.*
4	*The needs and wants for the service are very heterogeneous among the firm's customers.*
5	*The customer requirements for the service are difficult to interpret.*
6	*The customer requirements for the service are subject to change.*
7	*The timing and level of customer demand for the service are uncertain.*
8	*The customers tend to look for new offerings for the service all the time.*
9	*The service delivers many different functions / addresses a wide range of customer requirements.*
10	The service delivers sophisticated functions / addresses sophisticated customer needs.
11	The service is infrequently purchased.
12	The service has a short life cycle.
13	The service has a high risk of obsolescence.
14	The service contains a high number of sub-services.
15	The service contains very heterogeneous sub-services.
16	The service contains highly interrelated sub-services.
17	*The service involves an ongoing interaction between the customer and the service, so that the customer can make decisions.*
18	*The service requires a high degree of customer knowledge.*
19	The outcome of the service is difficult to predict.

20	The outcome of the service is difficult to monitor.
21	*The service is affected by information asymmetry between the client and the service provider.*
22	The service organisation offers many different services.
23	The market for the service is highly competitive.
24	The service is new.
25	The service entails some innovation that is perceived as being difficult to understand and use.
26	*The process of service innovation involves suppliers and customers.*
27	The service is delivered at many different locations (geographical dispersion of the firm's domain).
28	The service is delivered across multiple channels.
29	The service is offered to many different groups of customers (heterogeneity of the firm's domain).
30	The customer will purchase the service based on credence qualities, i.e. supplier reputation and relationship with supplier.
31	The service is difficult to understand for the customers.
32	A large amount of information is needed to specify the attributes of the service in enough detail to allow potential buyers to make a selection.
33	The customers lack the technical knowledge to evaluate the service.

	Technologies
34	The service is offered according to sophisticated options, e.g. with the purchase of new technology, more advanced infrastructure.
35	The service uses new and sophisticated technologies.
36	The service uses rapidly developing technologies.
37	The service delivery involves several different technologies.
38	*The service incorporates a variety of distinct knowledge bases, skills and competencies.*

	Production processes
39	*The service requires a high number of interactions between the service provider and the customer during the service delivery process.*
40	*The service involves a high interrelation of activities taking place between the service provider and the customer during the service delivery process.*
41	*The service requires the customers to be in the system for a high percentage of the time it takes to serve them, i.e. high customer contact.*
42	*The service needs to be carried out cooperatively with the customers, i.e. high customer involvement.*
43	*The service is delivered in a process that is to be tightly integrated into the business processes of customers (industrial services only).*

44	The service is delivered through assembling sub-services offered by a pool of seller candidates, which provide complementary as well as substitutive services.
45	*The service is delivered through a network consisting of a complex web of direct and indirect ties between various actors, all delivering value either to their immediate customer or to the end customer.*
46	The delivery network for the service comprises actors each of whom might be involved with multiple other delivery networks, each with their own demands.
47	*The delivery network for the service involves different parties that depend on each other to accomplish their tasks.*
48	Material and data flows exchanged between partners in the service delivery network are affected by uncertainty.
49	A high number of steps are required to produce the service.
50	The service is produced through a high number of steps.
51	Highly interrelated steps are required to produce the service.
52	The service is produced through highly interrelated steps.
53	*The service process requires intensive input of human labour.*
54	The input of human labour in the service process is predominantly intellectual.
55	The cost and quality of the service, i.e. the relationship between input and service output, are affected by changes in the environment.
56	Tolerance on the time it takes to produce the service is low.
57	*The service requires a variety of inputs.*
58	The provision of the service involves use of shared resources.
59	*Operations relative to the service involve a high number of people.*
60	*The process of service production may need to adapt non-routine procedures and methods.*
61	*The service does not rely on established bodies of knowledge, yet it requires new solutions.*
62	The provision of the service is based on judgement as the service involves tacit, as opposed to declared, information.
63	*The service can be produced according to a number of alternative paths.*
64	The service involves a great deal of specialised knowledge to undertake the service tasks.
65	The production and delivery system for the service involves a high number of feedback loops.
66	The service is difficult to provide in a cost-effective and efficient manner.

	Administration and management
67	The service requires intensive investments.
68	The service has a high cost.
69	The service involves complicated commercial arrangements, such as stage payments, penalty clauses, and performance bonds.
70	Management takes responsibility for the entire task of providing the service through a performance-based contract.
71	*The contractual relationship between the service provider and the customer is highly individual.*
72	A variety of pricing structures are available for the service or different pricing structures exist for different customer groups.
73	The pricing structure for the service changes frequently.

	Service ecosystem
74	*The value network of the service comprises a high number of actors with which the service provider has to manage a relationship.*
75	The service involves conflicts between multiple stakeholders.
76	The service is subject to a pressing regulatory environment.

Source: Own editing based on Benedettini & Neely (2012)

If the properties of service complexity are classified into the above groups, Table 2 is obtained. The number of properties significant for co-creation was also highlighted in this. It is striking that most of the factors are clustered in cells associated with overall complexity, hence the high number of service components, the interactions between them and the complexity inherent in a particular type of service can be a challenge in most cases. The complexity of services is also interesting in terms of where they have a co-creation relationship. The features presented above illustrate that complexity also justifies common value creation, and that co-creation itself brings complexity into services.

Table 2 Classification of service complexity properties

	Complication	*Difficulty*
Individual complexity	***3***, ***4***, 22, 27, 28, 29, 44, ***45***, 46, ***47***, 50, 52, 58, ***71***, 72	***21***, 34, 48, 69, 70, 73
General complexity	***1***, ***9***, 14, 15, 16, ***17***, ***26***, 37, ***38***, ***39***, ***40***, ***42***, ***43***, 49, 51, ***57***, ***59***, ***63***, 65, ***74***, 75	2, ***5***, ***6***, 7, ***8***, 10, 11, 12, 13, ***18***, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, ***41***, ***53***, 54, 55, 56, ***60***, ***61***, 62, 64, 66, 67, 68, 76

Source: own editing, based on Benedettini & Neely (2012)

The purpose of consumers and customers is to maximize the value that can be acquired. If the purchased product or service meets or exceeds the consumers' expectations, a satisfied customer is expected to buy again. Regarding Rekettye's (2018) description of (customer) value, it can be agreed that satisfaction is not independent of the price of the product / service, or – remaining in the service topic – from the effort and expense made during its use. However, it should be treated with caution that the buyer would always be interested in obtaining the highest possible value with the least possible expenditure or effort. From a co-creation point of view, there is a service where the (extra) added value is that the customer participates in the process by higher activity and deeper involvement. Because there are segments that prefer activity, as assumed by active client policy in service marketing theory (Veres, 2009 p. 264). What utility factors a user can identify in a service, and what it considers necessary, plays an important role in what the perceived value will be. From a practical point of view, it is also an important question *what are the components of the value perceived by the consumer*.

Research problem statement

The change in the value orientation paradigm at the turn of the millennium (Rekettye, 2019) also had an impact on the management philosophy suggested that value being created for customers and owners is in the focus of corporate thinking. A product or service must represent value for the customers, making them feel that the goods are worth choosing (Chikán & Demeter, 1999). According to the classical decision model value of an action variant is determined by its utility as well as the probability of its occurrence (Samuelson, 1947). The relationship of consumers to the utility of co-creation is the so-called co-creation preference, meaning that in the case of a customer finds a co-creation solution more useful – as opposed to the non-co-creative way –, he/she prefers it. For this reason, it may be interesting to see whether co-creation-related preferences appear in the consumer choice decision and expectations, and whether the market shows any kind of grouping in these preference dimensions. Are there any overlaps or possibly contradictions between them? Does it cause tension in the customer if he/she doesn't have any opportunity for co-creation activity? For some linear process services e.g., such as a cruise in tourism, where the service structure is tight, such a constraint may occur.

Marketing is also a business philosophy and toolkit (Rekettye, 2019), so the present research examined two areas. One is the important aspects that emerge at the beginning of the service selection process, at the stage of information gathering and consideration. Related to this, participants in focus group interviews discussed issues such as:

1. Do consumers choose between services or service providers?
2. What are the important viewpoints of service choice decision?
3. What could be the 3 most important aspects of service choice decision?
4. How do consumers make a decision during a complex service choice?

Criteria for value creation have already emerged during the discussion of the general selection criteria, which were addressed in the second half of the interview in order to gain a deeper understanding. The meaning of the co-creation concept of the service was explored partly along the elements of the HIPI principle (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1985).

5.a. Services are *heterogeneous*, among other things, due to the human factor.

Based on what, a consumer can assume that once he/she has purchased a service, he/she will get exactly the same result from it – or with a very small difference – the next time he/she has already once received it? Can it be taken as an evidence as long as a customer not confronted anything else?

5.b. Services are *intangible*. How users get information about the service so they can imagine what it is like?

5.c. Services are *perishable* (e.g. an unrented accommodation from the previous week may be experienced by the buyer as a "lost offer"). How does this affect the choice of consumers?

5.d. Provision and use of the services are *inseparable in time and space*. This results in a kind of quality performance risk. How this may affect consumer decisions? Can the next service purchase be affected if a co-creation process starts during the service process? For example, the consumer highlights the development of a service attribute that may be necessary but was not thought of by the service provider (so-called co-development, co-operation).

6. What risks may arise when using a service on the service provider and on consumer side?

7. What does the value of a service mean to a consumer?
   a. The value of the service is functional or emotional?
   b. In case of a choice, releasing the non-selected options, how much it 'hurts' to give them all up?
   c. How does the nature of cooperation in the service process affect the consumer?
   d. Does the convenience of the decision matter?
   e. Does it matter to the consumers that others see what service they have chosen?
   f. Does it matter to a consumer whether he/she can have a say in shaping the individual elements and parameters of the service?

8. What does the consumer expect from common value creation with the service provider?

9. When a service provider and a consumer create a new service parameter together – so there is a co-creation interaction – what is its perceived advantage?

Research method

The results of the multi-module research discussed in this study are explored using focus group studies and qualitative text analysis software. In the first phase of the research, mini-focus group interviews on service market choice decisions and co-creation preferences were conducted. The consecutive series of interviews (6 by number) were transacted by a professional moderator, based on a semi-structured guide over three weeks, with two interviews each week.

Regarding the profile of the respondents, the subjects of the focus group interviews were selected from the university student base. As an incentive 5 extra points could be redeemed at the end of the semester at a given course. The surveyed sample has a mixed gender composition, ranging in age from 18 to 24 years. Table 3 shows the gender distribution of focus groups. Restricting the age of the participants to the undergraduate age group in the qualitative, exploratory research phase is not expected to result in a significant loss of information.

Table 3 Gender distribution of focus groups

	Focus 1	Focus 2	Focus 2	Focus 4	Focus 5	Focus 6
female interviewee	4	3	5	3	4	4
male interviewee	1	1	0	1	0	2

Source: own editing

During the interviews, in addition to the concrete answers, we also gathered experiences, which showed that in many cases the respondents' parents paid for the services (for accommodation, restaurant, healthcare services), thus, the preferences of the respondents are less distorted by the price, but at the same time they are strongly involved in the choice decision-making process. After six interviews, we assessed the topic as sufficiently explored by saturation testing.

Transcripts were subjected to a content analysis after repeated readings using MAX Qualitative Data Analysis (MAXQDA 2018) software. The applied MAXQDA text analytics tool is widely used in scientific marketing research projects (Wymer, Boenigk, & Möhlmann, 2015; Petr, Belk, & Decrop, 2015).

Defining research area

The present study focuses on those types of services where higher co-creation appears at individual levels, as common value creation, the creation of a service together by "co-creators" really prevails in this area, in the case of mass services the mechanism is more limited. In addition, the research approaches the topic only from the consumer's side, the service provider side can be the subject of further research. The first two focus groups started from the scope of tourism services, but as the focus groups developed, other services also appeared in the sample of respondents, the scope expanded to other service types and also widened to services in general. Although during the first two focus group interviews respondents were requested to share examples from the field of tourism, the topic expanded on these occasions as well, as cultural and/or leisure services, which mostly overlap with tourism, also appeared in the answers/opinions/stories, such as the concerts, adventure parks, entertainment industry. The co-creation content of the research was strengthened by the fact that the participants involved experiences from several service areas, so there was no strict service area restriction from the third focus group. As a result, the interview was further broadened towards different types of services, thus providing an opportunity to generalize the results. In addition to the thematic dominance of tourism and HORECA, respondents were identified from a total of nine other areas: banking, vinery, hairdresser, concert, entertainment, cosmetics, massage, healthcare services, psychologist. It can be seen that services with a relatively high co-creation content, which are personal in nature, such as hairdressing, cosmetics, massage, medicine, psychology, have also appeared. The high and low content of professional and experience-based content of the services can be summarized according to Table 4.

Table 4 Adaptation and content matrix

	dominant professional content	*dominant experience*
wide room for adaptation	aesthetic procedures	tourism
narrow adaptation margin	medicine	massage

Source: own editing

Some services want to develop experiential content and the service provider is a partner in creating it. For example the technology of tourism services is not so specific to limit the consumers' own activity, which is why there are more opportunities in tourism to make 'consumption' more enjoyable for consumers, as opposed to a hairdresser or a doctor. In the latter service situations, the customer's need for experience may arise, but he may not have understood the service technology to such an extent that it can be shaped according to his/her ideas by the service professional. At the same time, tourism is an area where there are many more individual opportunities for the consumers' to increase their own experience. This makes tourism special from the point of view of co-creation, and the leisure industry can be closely related to certain service categories, for which a high degree of personalization and adaptability can be imagined within convenient activities.

The service structure shown in Figure 1 appeared in the interviews. The figure was obtained by drawing the conceptual relationships of the service types mentioned in the focus group interviews, using the data visualization tool of MAXQDA software. The figure shows what concepts the services were related to when the respondents explained their service choice and decision considerations. In addition, service experiences based on their previous consumer experience were shared with the moderator. Although the research was initially limited to the tourism focus, due to the abundant partial results available in the topic, we think it can be extended to other service areas. Thus, the model described at the end of the study is considered generalizable, as not only the typical services of the HORECA sector appeared in the qualitative research, but several interviewees spoke several times in general, mentioning the word "service" as Figure 2 illustrates in the 'Results' chapter.

Results

We examined and visualized the contexts of the transcripts in terms of the proportion of concepts related to co-creation, content related to other service features, concepts related to online space, and terms related to service performance such as positivity and quality, negativity, and risk. (Figure 2). It is striking how much of the terms related to common value creation appear in the choice of services.

The focus group interview series examined the criteria on the basis of which consumers choose services and whether the co-creation preference appears among the aspects of service choice in relation to service attributes. Figure 2 illustrates how markedly the concepts related to co-creation appear in the choices and service experiences. The visualization of the output is colourful in the original MAXQDA output, but due to printing reasons it has been grey tinted.

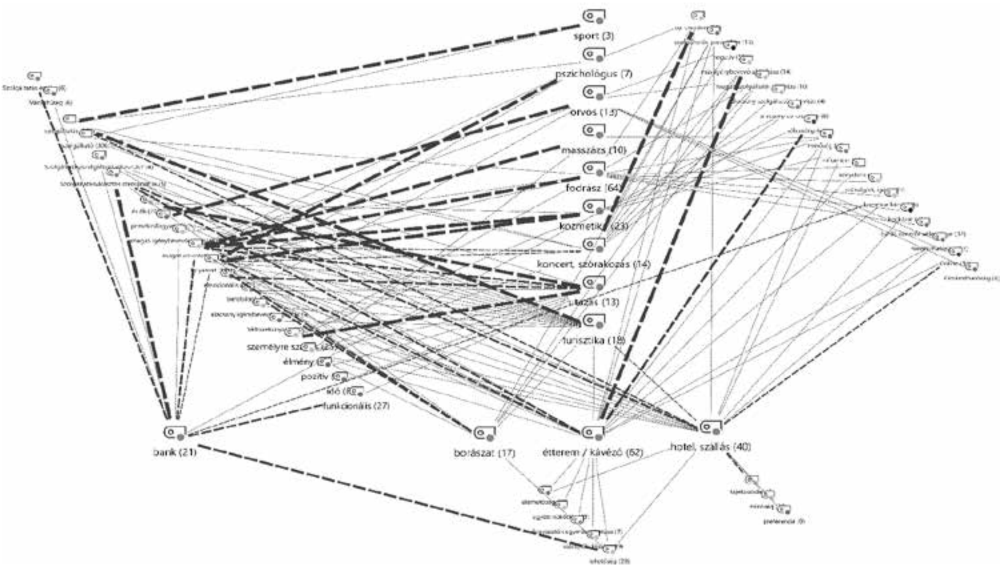


Figure 1 Types of services and related concepts that appeared in the interviews
Source: Own editing, MAXQDA

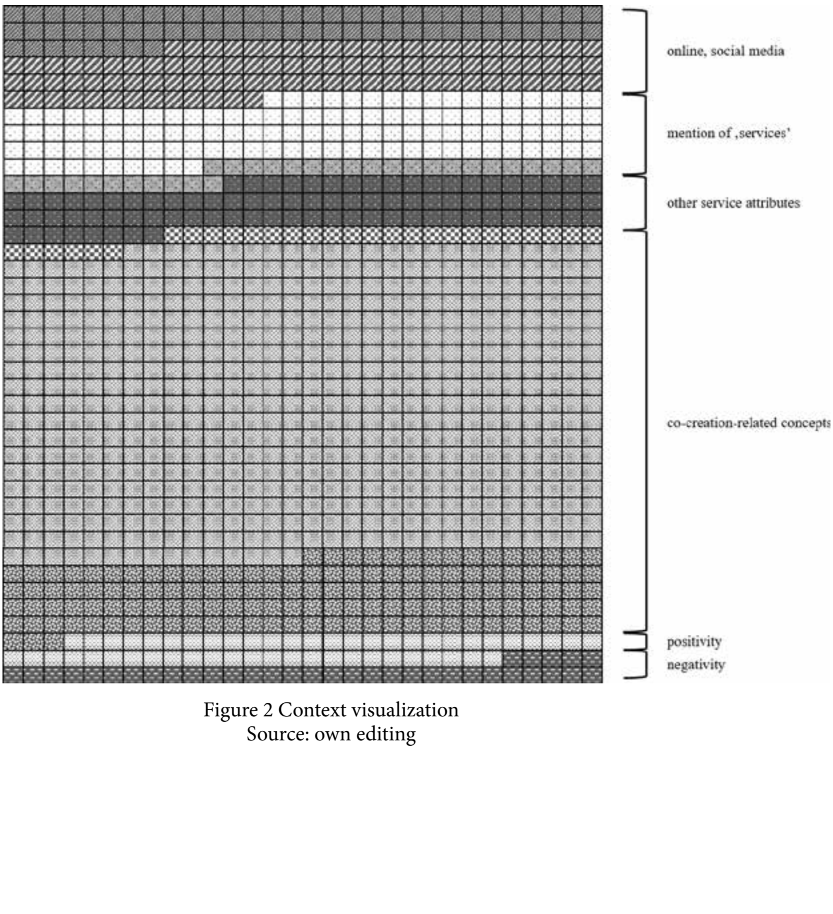


Figure 2 Context visualization
Source: own editing

The different patterned sections in Figure 2 are plotted based on the frequency of the keyword codes that appear in the transcript text, and should be interpreted as follows:

Online, social media
Thin stripes: social media, tags, blocked reviews, Facebook reviews, online, website.
Thick stripes: factors strongly influencing the consumption of 18-24 year olds, such as online media content, opinions of friends and/or acquaintances on the Internet, prestige consumption, influencers, personality.

Mention of 'services'
Dots on white: concrete mention of the word 'service'. This is significant in the sense that this term refers to mentions when a service or service provider was spoken of in general, thus supporting the generalizability of the study.
Dots on grey: When a service type was specifically stated.

Service attributes
Price, predictability, reliability, time, value, brand loyalty, functional or emotional value, image, service parameter, variability.

Co-creation related concepts
Chessboard pattern: comments related to service personnel.
Greyscale: mention of the word co-creation, where to find information in the selection decision process, service process, personalization, experience, opportunity, activity and behaviour of other users, communication, cooperation, flexibility, high user and / or service provider activity.
Grainy pattern: co-creation aspects that appear in terms of service choice, FOMO[1], the interaction of consumers, the value of the service.

Positivity / negativity
Specifically, the emergence of some positive or negative example in the field of service experience related to co-creation.

Already at the beginning of the interviews, it became clear that it could not be clarified whether the choice of service or provider is the first step. Some consumers choose a *service* first and then consider which service provider offers the best design, package offer, or simply sympathy for one where the supply is "good enough" based on their perceptions.

„I think first about what I really need, then I look at the providers and then I decide which one knows what I want." (Focus transcript, 4, M)[2]

1 „Fear Of Missing Out" is an acronym made up of an English term. Indicates a mentally or emotionally stressful condition in which an individual is afraid or anxious to miss something, miss out on something.
2 The citation reference is indicated by the number of the speech record created by MAXQDA and the gender of the respondent. E.g.: Focus transcript, 4, M = the 4th record of the transcript, male respondent.

"I think I choose service first. Then I look at which provider has the best offer, do customers like it. (...), how's the quality. That's how I choose." (Focus transcript, 432, F)

For other consumers, choosing a *service provider* is the first decision point.

„(...)I take a look at the service first, then on what the service provider offers at all. I'm checking whether I like it or not, how's the environment, what's the mood of the place – and if it's positive, I'm giving it a try and going inside." (Focus transcript, 204, F)

According to some participants, the primary choice of *service provider* already indicates a certain degree of brand loyalty.

„When it comes to brand loyalty, I think we choose the service provider itself." (Focus transcript, 432, F)

And there are those who *cannot generalize*, but orientation and information seeking in the online space immediately come up.

„I often look at the reviews and criticisms that people said about the service or the provider. Those 'starts' and stuff. It depends on what kind of service I'm about to choose. It may come up in case of a restaurant, I guess." (Focus transcript, 201, M)

In connection with the release, 'waiver' appeared not among services but among service attributes.

„We usually prefer the beach to be close to the accommodation during vacations. This comes first for us. After that, other things come… This year we just booked an apartment off the map, so despite the beach was really close, we had to d6rive through the city for the shopping. So as for the closeness of the beach, we stroked it, but there was a kind of sacrifice to be taken with the shopping part." (Focus transcript, 446, F)

Examining the 14,826 words in the 33,751-word transcript, the terms "service, service provider, he, they, me, me, the user" were omitted in addition to the conjunctions and explanatory words, as they were used with outstanding frequency due to the topic, however, they do not provide precise information for modelling. The remaining service-choice-related vocabulary can be divided in two co-creation related segments.

- One group contains the *classical mix elements of service marketing* (product, place; people; process) except for the physical environment and price (in relation to the latter, it was specifically requested during the interviews not to be considered as a decision factor).
- The other group of concepts refers to *consumer's feelings related to co-creation*. Here we can see the followings coming up: availability, activity, communication, the nature of the process and common activity (before and during the service process), choices and the human factor. The words "positive" and "negative" are appearing with high frequency, and the mention of those always appeared during the development of some kind of co-creation service experience. The interviews revealed, that co-creation does not appear only in service development (so-called pre-consumption) processes, but an aspect of digital marketing can also be included in this section when consumers express their opinions through online interfaces.

The concept of co-creation was defined at the very end of the interviews, throughout, the phenomenon was only circumscribed so that the concept does not distort the mindset of the respondents. Repeated reading of the transcript and analysis of word frequencies have already suggested, what the consumer expects from co-creation. The text file has been tagged with a code structure, this can point out the presence of a deeper, intrinsic patterns in the text. More than 2,600 codes were manually placed in the transcript text along the key phrases in the text.

The code structure can also be drawn in a matrix with MAXQDA, though this cannot be displayed in the present study due to the size limitation, however, the more pronounced results are presented.

Based on the analysis, the user expectations related to co-creation can be well identified, which are communication, value proposition, availability, flexibility and experience (the list is also a frequency order based on the number of occurrences of the terms, however, it cannot be considered as a preference order, as it varies individually):

- *Communication*: cooperation with the service provider, transparent literacy, consistency of verbal and nonverbal communication in the behaviour of service staff;
  - *„(...)communication should be regular and the service process should be tracked accordingly (...)" (Focus transcript 41, F)*
  - *(...)man goes to a therapist (...).There you only will start the service process, (...) as you start speaking, that's the basis of the service, you need to communicate to even start the service. (Focus transcript 154, F)*
  - *„(...)we wanted to go on a wine tour and I contacted the winery by email. It was very unsympathetic that they answered after a week, succinctly. Literally 3 words, not more. They did not write in the way as I would have expected (...)" (Focus transcript, 884, F)*
  - *„(...)primarily I think the service provider is the one who should initiate the communication." (Focus transcript, 57, M)*
  - *Can you imagine a situation like this that a service process starts, the customer does not feel good, but he/she initiates some kind of cooperation with the service provider, as a result communication is developing and a better service is created. (Focus transcript 895, F) We remodelled the living room at home. There was such a thing with the furniture design, several members of the family had a word several times during the design so that we could find the best possible solution, we constantly discussed out ideas with the service providers, plasterboard, carpentry, and finally everything really came together nicely. The service providers were really wholehearted, they just didn't always understand what we wanted and then you had to say it several times, make phone calls many times, negotiate different parameters. It didn't always go smoothly, but in the end it perfectly met our needs. (Focus transcript, 896, F)*
- *Value proposition*: authentic and representative presence, especially the opinions expressed by word-of-mouth in online media and the service provider's response to them;
  - *„If there's positive criticism, so the service provider could use the information. IT's not like „ugh, it was bad" or horrible" or even „I won't come here anymore", but it is explained why do I not come here again, this is a useful comment from an unsatisfied consumer ." (Focus transcript 176, M)*
  - *„I think when such a negative review arrives for a service, it is best for the provider to respond there immediately. So for example I like those comments when someone comes up with a problem or negative experience and after that the service provider*

immediately responds like 'yeah, we apologize for this and that happened'…and then they explain how they're intend to fix the given problem." (Focus transcript, 190, F)

- *Availability*: availability in space and time, predictability;
  - o *„For example, if I take the fancy of a restaurant, so it could be a nice place to have a meal, but then I realize that it's quite far away. I won't go that far for a dinner." (Focus transcript, 16, F)*
  - o *„Private, because there, if I apply for an appointment in advance, the doctor knows he/she has to take time for me. And we pretty thoroughly my case – what's the problem, where does it hurt and so on... While in hospitals I think the hurry goes on massively and the doctors barely have time to carefully listen to my complaint. They might just move on like „OK, another hysterical woman here". (Focus transcript, 214, F)*
- *Flexibility*: possibility to change the service parameters;
  - o *„The preliminary appointment came to my mind. If something comes up that restrain me, I can call the service provider and we transfer the appointment." (Focus transcript, 903, F)*
  - o *„I am thinking now that if a travel agency offers to have a tour to Tihany and have a 3-hour free program, offers a boat trip, walking on the beach and having an ice-cream, then I think I would be better off choosing the right one for me. If there'd be only one program offer, I'm not sure that I'd like it. Because let's just say I don't drink wine because I'm abstinent." (Focus transcript, 370, F)*
  - o *„Flexibility on both sides and a willingness to compromise."(Focus transcript, 154, F)*
- *Experience*: perception of the service process, other consumer(s) and/or the service provider's activity.
  - o *„If we return to the concert example, if someone there drank a little too much next to me and starts 'biological processes' next to me that are not very nice, I think it spoils the experience and service as well. And the service provider doesn't have to contribute to that to make me feel worse." (Focus transcript, 394, M)*
  - o *„(...)in case of a restaurant or a cafe, the experience depends a lot on the human factor." (Focus transcript, 425, F)*
  - o *„Many times small simple places can provide much better quality, a more pleasant atmosphere, and an extra service experience." (Focus transcript, 1067, F)*
  - o *„It will end up as a good service, as long as a consumer leaves with positive experiences, and it will be worth the service provider too, if a well-behaved consumer comes in, who eats the food with good appetite, behaves nicely, doesn't shout, their kids doesn't yell, so everything's good. It's actually some kind of collaboration, even if it's tacit. Here's this cool service, we'll do our best to make you feel good meanwhile you behave properly and then everything will be okay." (Focus transcript, 53, F)*
  - o *„If we don't get what we expect for example, if we book a specific room and get another, it will greatly affect the choice next time." (Focus transcript, 498, F)*

The list items above describe user expectations for co-creation. However, this is only one set of components that determines the overall co-creation perception. In addition to the criteria listed, co-creation expectations are determined by the degree of complexity of the service, the expected activity and personality of the co-creators. The *degree of complexity* of the services can affect the co-creation needs listed above. According to some consumers, the less complex the service structure, the easier it is to choose, and the convenience of decision is represented by reasonable and transparent service alternatives.

„I think transparency is also strongly related to a comfortable decision, so we don't have to spend hours online to find out what conditions we have to meet, what we should expect from the service provider, what the service provider promises, what it undertakes in the process, what it accomplishes, and what it entails." (Focus transcript, 1082, F)

However in case of wide range of service alternatives a greater sense of personalization results in a positive feeling for some consumers, which is positively assessed in all cases. Wider choice range also means for consumers that if the service experience is positive, they are more likely to experiment with another service package later at/with the same provider.

The next area identified that defines co-creation expectations is the *activity expected* in the service process. On the one hand, this is an expectation on the part of the consumer towards the service provider *„In the restaurant, I also expect the waiter and the chef to behave properly (...)" (Focus transcript, 396, F),* at the same time, users are aware that there is an expectation of activity on the part of the service provider in the process *„In the case of value creation, I do have expectations but so does the service provider, and we have a common goal that we want to achieve somehow (...)" (Focus transcript, 411, F).*

The degree of activity expected may vary, which may affect subsequent co-creation perception. However, there have also been raw opinions about communication, such as: *„The service provider should obviously communicate kindly, but I won't be happier about that, I expect him/her to care why am I there. But emotionally, it won't move me." (Focus transcript, 78, F)*

Feedback has also emerged as an expectation of activity that can help customer-oriented development of services. *„Because from a service provider's perspective, you can really learn from negative feedback as well, because this way they'll know that, for example, they need to be better prepared for pets, couples with a child/children or for any kind of special extra services (...)so, the service provider should be prepared for these. Then, if there is a correction or the service provider builds in an extra service item based on the feedback, these can also be communicated transparently." (Focus transcript, 849, F)*

There were different answers to the question of whether it's an advantage or disadvantage if the service provider tries to govern customer activity (the degree of co-creation):

„Not necessarily. This is not a problem. That's why they're the professionals and they know how to do it. (...)I don't want to have a say in the technical part of the service (...)" (Focus transcript, 1015, F)

„Maybe in the process of personalization, if everything were always freely customizable, we would spoil what we consider to be a fundamentally good service." (Focus transcript, 1016, F)

There was a consensus among the respondents that the degree of co-creation of services and customization can be excessive, so the service provider must be able to control the processes very precisely, because if the customer gets too much free movement, it can even worsen the quality of service. *„Things may come to their reverse outcome: we keep on interacting and communication what we want during the service until the end we don't even get what we paid for (the original service idea)." (Focus transcript, 1017, F)*

It has also been shown that the need for co-creation can vary not only with the complexity of the services, but also with the *personality type* of the potential customer.

„Well, whoever is an introvert will not co-create. He/she just coasting along. And whoever is an extrovert wants to take control and act." (Focus transcript, 162, M)

„But he who is introverted also has needs, so he/she, too, on some level, will somehow express his/her needs.." (Focus transcript, 163, F)

Respondents stated that according to the level of co-creation, services with relatively high and low co-creation needs can be distinguished. The degree of the customer's activity in the process can also be a high or low co-creation propensity. It was generally considered typical, that a consumer with introverted attitude is more likely to choose a service where face-to-face co-creation is minimal. Open and communicative people (with an extraverted attitude) prefer to initiate co-creation opportunities. There was a consensus in the focus group discussions that it is the responsibility of the service provider to monitor the evolution of the needs, which are linked to the value creation in accordance with the consumer expectations listed above. As a result services may have high co-creation potential for one consumer and a low one for others.

Figure 3 outlines a possible framework for identifying the dimensions and parameters along which the consumer's relationship to co-creation can be identified. The model shows the qualitatively explored co-creation elements explained earlier.

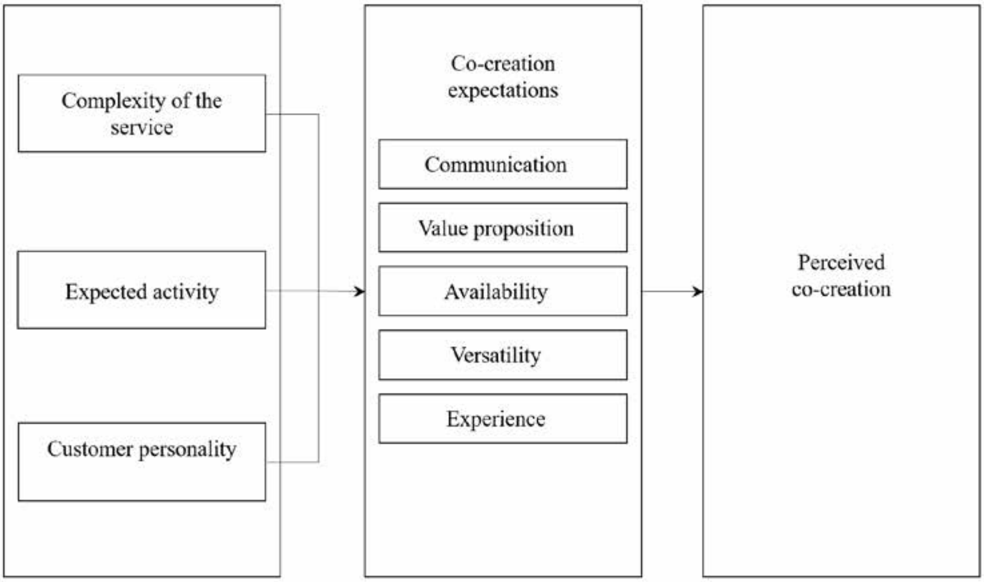


Figure 3 Model of co-creation expectations
Source: own editing

Based on the antecedents, the customers' perception of common value creation can be modeled according to Figure 3. The formation of expectations in the middle box may be influenced by the three identified areas seen in the box on the left: the extent of complexity of the service, the expected activity (the comsumer's expectation towards the service provider and vice versa) and the comsumer's personality. The *extent of complexity* of the service synthesizes the complexity and the common value creation content (relatively high or low), the *expected activity* indicates the degree of willingness to create common value. In addition, *personality of the customer* moves not only along the dimensions of introversion-extraversion, but also attributes such as emotional stability versus neuroticism, flexibility versus rigidity, and femininity versus masculinity.

Co-creation expectations in the middle box, such as communication, value proposition, availability, flexibility, and experience, define perceived common value creation differently for each consumer. Each area of expectation appears to a different extent in the assessment of value creation. Assessing value creation is different for a customer who participates in a simple service process with low activity expectations, with a phlegmatic personality factor, as opposed to a consumer who experiences a complex service process with high activity expectations, and a strongly choleric fundamental nature (Eysenck, 1975).

The model is a hypothetical structure based on qualitative research, which was validated by the quantitative research presented below. However, since the model was compiled on the basis of a gross textual data set (more than 1,000 speech records in the transcripts of the focus group interviews), it probably describes the phenomenon acceptably.

Limitations of the research

Although focus group interviews reveal consumers' underlying, ie. stable preferences for co-creation, in real-life situations there may be other contributing contextual factors that play a role in purchase choice decision, such as the consumer's external and internal opportunities or environmental impacts. Context-dependent changes of preferences can be explored with further experimental research. This way it is possible to approximate the results to real decision situations.

The study sample can be treated with reservations as attitudes may change with age. However, this is not a significant age characteristic, but rather a personality-based feature. As a result, it can be said, that there is little loss of information in focus group interviews, thus, although somewhat limited, the results can be generalized.

The objectivity of the present qualitative exploratory research may be reduced by the fact that these are so-called presumptions. And there is always a 'gap' between perceived and actual consumer behaviour, since the consumer has to judge himself/herself during questioning, which almost always carries a kind of implicit bias. This research tried to avoid this by formulating the questions in general, thus not specifically for the interviewees but for the consumers / customers in general. Nevertheless, in many responses, personal perspectives inevitably emerged, however, due to the qualitative, exploratory nature of the research, it is not considered to be significantly distorting.

There may be sensitive areas in co-creation that respondents in the focus groups are reluctant to say in front of each other because of their possible inhibitions or fears. The emphasis on prestige consumption may have contributed to the topic, therefore, respondents presumably mentioned services and providers that they are proud to use. It may also be important that during the conversation, they presumably evoked situations in which they did not feel uncomfortable sharing their experience of consumption.

The outlined model can be generalized to all services with a good approximation, but it is to note that the emphasis may be elsewhere for each type of service, so the role and weight of each dimension may depend on the type of service.

Conclusions, applications and further research directions

From the consumer behaviour point of view, the buyer typically has unique needs. If consumer's expectation is not a simple standard purchase, but some kind of individually customized one, the possibility of co-creation arises. For customers with unique requirements, the co-creation preference usually appears in the service selection viewpoints. Services may vary based on co-creation content. In this regard both positive and negative experiences were mentioned by the participants of the focus groups, so both the consumer's personality and the type of service can influence the positive or negative outcome of the co-creation. It cannot be ignored whether or not it is a 'trendy' thing to be a co-creator in today's modern consumption philosophy.

Placing the research topic in the theory of services marketing, it can be stated that co-creation is a combination of adaptation and active customer policy. It also provides an opportunity for companies in the development of quality management. Based on the model, it is possible to reveal what is negative in terms of quality perception in the service process, and thus these can be preceded in provision. In this way, the chances of complaint situations can be reduced with co-creation tools. Development of new services, new service attributes can also be incorporated when creating co-creation elements that are important for the consumers. Based on the model it could be a key in service management to rethink the style of communication with the customer. After all, the less standardized the service, the greater the scope for performance, the more it is possible to determine how the service will develop during the common creation of value with the customer.

To sum up, the focus group discussions identified the elements of consumers' service expectations for co-creation and their structure. According to this, the expectations related to mutual value creation can be described by five dimensions – communication, value proposition, accessibility, flexibility and experience, with determinant variables like the complexity of the service, the activity expectations of the consumer and personality types. This coherences are worth considering in service management. It can be concluded from the model that on the service provider side, the development of co-creation and the development of service management faces difficulties by the numerous consumer segments with different activity levels. This may vary with the inherently high or low co-creation content of the services, or the personality type of the consumers carrying introversion or extraversion as dominant features. It follows that segmentation policy plays an important role in the management of common value creation, which can be eased by the creation of personas related to each consumer type.

As for further research directions, the validation and generalizability of the personality typology and co-creation attitude model could be tested through a quantitative survey. One of the key questions for further quantitative analysis is whether co-creation attitude segments can be distinguished. From the qualitative results, it can be perceived that there are some consumers who really take co-creation opportunities into consideration while choosing a service, and willing to co-create in the service process, others do not. It is expected to be detectable on a sufficiently large sample. The subject of further investigation may be that if the model is seen by a service provider, what do he/she prefers in management, where do he/she places the emphasis? Moreover, in the context of another series of focus group interviews, for the purpose of model validation, it is also worth asking consumers whether they find this structure acceptable or whether there is anything that could be added to it. In addition, the research can be extended to other age groups, because although there is not assumed a significant loss of information in the present exploratory research, it is possible that the inclusion of additional age groups moderates the existing results. Perhaps, to explore how value creation or potential negative co-creation (so-called destruction) appears in online communities as a special service area, netnographic research could be conducted.

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