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Space Tourism as a New Experience: A Research on Gen-Z

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Abstract

Space tourism will start to attract more attention in terms of the fact that tourist areas in the world are becoming more ordinary day by day, and in this process, it offers a new experience area to users of Gen-Z. In this context, the existing literature needs to reveal the perspective and intention to use Gen-Z, a newly developing field in parallel with the developments that constitute an important potential user group in this process. This study aims to reveal the factors that affect the intentions of Gen-Z tourists to avoid space tourism within the framework of the push-pull-mooring (PPM) model, which focuses on continuing or changing the current situation of users. In this study, a sample of potential space tourism users in the Gen-Z was formed, and hypothesis tests were conducted using the SmartPLS package program. The findings showed that perceived risk and lack of confidence as push factors, attitude, and travel planning self-efficacy are effective on the intentions of Gen-Z tourists to avoid space tourism. It was observed that the pull factors discussed in the study did not have a statistically significant effect on the avoidance intention of space tourism.

Keywords: space tourism, avoidance intention, PPM model, Gen-Z

Introduction

Throughout human history, exciting discoveries have been a focus of attention. With the development of technology, people who need to travel to existing and newly discovered destinations have started to take the first steps of the transition to the space age by developing and changing travel options over time (Arıca et al., 2022). With the acceleration of space-related studies, countries conducting space flights have increased the possibility of interest in space travel. These developments in space have led to space tourism being viewed as a new entertainment and adventure to be explored (Annadurai et al., 2011). After the 1967 Apollo 11 mission to the Moon, interest in space travel increased, but the pace of development slowed due to high costs. In today's world, with technological developments, space travel has become more cost-effective (Pásková et al., 2021). These decreasing costs and increasing interests have increased the number of space travel companies over time and encouraged many businesses to take initiatives in this field. Public and/or private businesses/organizations created for space

travel have initially conducted studies to carry out suborbital travel. These studies on space travel have led to an increase in competition within the space industry (Sheetz, 2020).

Space travel is not only the main focus of entertainment, adventure, and exciting pursuits but also has social and economic benefits. The greatest benefit of these travels, which are evaluated in the context of space tourism, is expected to be in terms of natural resources. The Earth has experienced an 80% reduction in resources, and this reduction process has continued rapidly. Since 1971, humans have consumed more natural resources than Earth can produce each year. This situation has worsened, and the entire consumption process has been pushed back to earlier dates. Considering this consumption process, it is seen that space-related developments are important in the medium and long term for Gen-Z, the next generation of society. These developments will also play a role in shaping the social-economic-environmental concerns of Gen-Z.

Space tourism allows tourists to experience a vast and largely unexplored space that captures their imagination and provides the potential to create new opportunities for commercial space ventures by encouraging the development of technologies in this field. In terms of touristic travel, space tourism is seen as an area that offers opportunities for adventure and exploration. Space tourism is becoming interesting for tourists as the world is becoming less adventurous and less intriguing for humans, who are curious beings by nature (Cole, 2015). Accordingly, it seems inevitable that the touristic areas in the world are becoming more and more ordinary day by day and that space tourism will start to attract more attention in this process, especially in terms of offering a new experience area to Gen-Z members. Gen-Z, which is seen as the most comprehensive potential user group of space tourism, is at the center of research on space tourism because they live in a period of intensive use of technology and have a lifestyle that closely follows technological developments (Senbir, 2004).

Members of Gen-Z, defined as a self-developing creative generation (Samitra & Rozi, 2017), are very fond of the pleasures created by the world with the resources brought by the era they were born in and technology, which is considered the pioneer of these resources (Haddouche & Salomone, 2018). Members of Gen-Z, who constitute the main dynamic of the near future and witness many events and changes (Çalışkan, 2021), are seen as potential consumers of space tourism. The touristic activities of Gen-Z members, called *digital tourists* by Setiawan et al. (2018), depend on many factors. At this point, three factors that affect the travel experiences of Gen-Z stand out. The first is the events that take place in the country where the Gen-Z individual lives, the second is the destination effects that cover the sociopolitical, cultural and physical characteristics of the Gen-Z individual, and the third is the effects with global consequences (climate change, technological developments, etc.) (Robinson & Schänzel, 2019). In this context, although members of Gen-Z seem to be close in age to space tourism, it can also be observed that members of this generation exhibit an avoidance intention space tourism. Although high costs, physiological-psychological dangers, climate problems and the unknown make Gen-Z cautious about space tourism, science fiction movies, simulations, games and the desire to explore are the factors that bring Gen-Z closer to space tourism.

In this direction, the PPM model, which constitutes the main focus of this research, provides a framework for users' avoidance intention processes such as adoption, continued use, or avoidance. The model, which consists of push factors that push users away from processes, pull

factors that encourage users to use processes, and mooring factors that guide the willingness to change processes, is used to understand user behavior (Wang et al., 2020). The PPM model has been used to understand users' avoidance intention services or service providers (Yoon & Kim, 2023; Olya & Han, 2022; Haldorai et al., 2019; Hsieh et al., 2012), switch service providers (Chen et al., 2023; Djasmy & Sobari, 2023; Zhao et al., 2023; Nugroho & Wang, 2023; Dogra et al., 2023; Lisana, 2022), and adoption intention (Tang & Chen, 2020; Handarkho & Harjoseputro, 2019). In general terms, the PPM model, which focuses on whether users continue or change their current situation, offers an important structure for understanding user behavior.

In this context, the research suggests that the PPM model can provide a useful framework to reveal the factors that may have an impact on Gen-Z's avoidance intention space tourism. The unique value of the research is to reveal the avoidance intention of the newly developing space tourism in terms of Gen-Z. In addition, the research is expected to contribute to the space tourism literature. In addition, it is envisaged that the findings of the project may have an impact on the decisions of decision makers and policymakers regarding the processes in emerging space tourism activities.

Literature Review

PPM Framework

The PPM model, which has gained importance in the human migration literature and enables the temporary definition of why individuals migrate from one place to another, has emerged as a part of the human geography literature. In the PPM model, human behavior is examined by considering the factors that push people away from where they are (push), factors that attract people towards new places (pull), and factors that facilitate people's decision to move from one point to another (mooring) (Fu et al., 2021).

Push factors (Jung et al., 2017), which refer to the negative factors that push people away from the situation they are in, allow evaluations to be made regarding users switching service providers, avoiding or accepting services when evaluated in terms of service systems. In switching service providers, negative factors that are effective in users' transitions from one service provider to another are seen as push factors. In the case of adoption or avoidance of new or existing services, users' perceptions of the service (e.g., service quality, service failures, price, trust) are considered push factors that influence users' avoidance of services. Pull factors (Jung et al., 2017), which positively influence people's movement to new destinations, emerge in the context of service systems as factors that positively influence service users' attitudes towards service providers or new/existing services. Attractive factors, such as relative usefulness and relative ease of use, which are also important indicators of loyalty to service providers, are seen as attractive aspects of services for users (Hsieh et al., 2012; Polat, 2021). Contextual factors that facilitate individuals' transition to a new situation include personal, social, and cultural contexts in terms of service systems (Jung et al., 2017; Hou et al., 2011; Chang et al., 2014; Olya and Han, 2022). Contextualization factors, which emerge as facilitating elements in the relationship between service providers and/or direct services and users, positively affect users through factors such as subjective norms, variety seeking, and social image congruence (Al-Mashraie et al., 2020).

Push Factors and Avoidance Intention

Perceived risk, which is the first variable discussed in the context of push factors in this research, refers to situations such as consumers making the right decision at the purchasing decision stage and avoiding negative consequences to be satisfied with the result. Consumers' perceived risks in decision-making and purchasing processes are important determinants of consumption trends for products and services (Mitchell & McGoldricks, 1996; Özer & Gülpınar, 2005). The uncertainty of possible risks and the complexities in defining the process are at the forefront of space tourism, which includes different experiences for tourists in terms of travel and accommodation experiences compared to traditional methods. Numerous psychological and physiological uncertainties have been observed in the evaluation of space development and related technologies (Spero & Stone, 2004; Yadav & Pathak, 2016). Additionally, although their technological inclination may be high, Gen-Z tourists, who are among the potential users of space tourism, are seen to be more sensitive to economic, social, and ecological risks. Based on this information, the first hypothesis of this study was formulated as follows:

- **H_1:** There is a statistically significant relationship between the perceived risk and avoidance intention of Gen-Z about space tourism.

The last variable addressed in the context of push factors in this study was lack of trust. Trust, a socio-psychological concept, is defined as the integration of concepts such as certainty, expectations, motivation, partnership, cooperation, solidarity, mutual obligation, and working together (Meikle-Yaw, 2008; Sesliokuyucu & Polat, 2020; Arıca et al., 2023). Space tourism, which involves technically difficult processes, is dangerous in many respects, negatively affecting the trust of potential space tourists in space tourism. Gen-Z individuals, the most comprehensive group in terms of the number of participants of the space tourism future, are becoming the primary target as potential space tourists because they have a lifestyle that exists in a period of intensive use of technology and continues to develop with technology (Senbir, 2004). However, users who have not reached or been provided with sufficient awareness will not be able to reach this positive perspective by assuming that space tourism is not technically safe. Based on this information, the first hypothesis of this study was formulated as follows:

- **H_2:** There is a statistically significant relationship between perceived lack of trust and avoidance intention of Gen-Z about space tourism.

Pull Factors & Avoidance Intention

Looking at the pull factors within the scope of the research, it is observed that the tourist experience is one of the existing pull factors. A concept that is more important than the various events experienced by tourists and has the potential to create a lasting memory in the minds of consumers is called experience (Azevedo, 2010; Arıca, 2023). Accordingly, tourists direct their purchasing tendencies according to their potential experience. The degree of memorability of an experience allows consumers to get closer to that experience. In this context, today's tourists, who we can classify as post-modern consumers, may desire surreal or fantastic experiences. Space tourism, which is a product of the post-modern paradigm and is gradually developing, is a striking example of these experiences (Collins, 2006; Otto, 2009). Today, it is determined that the consumer class closest to the term post-modern consumer is Gen-Z. The rapid and easy adoption of space tourism by Gen-Z members (Haddouche & Salomone, 2018), who shape their experiences in line with entertainment, permanence, socialization and self-renewal, is among the

changes expected in the near future. However, very few people have experienced space tourism. Aware of this, Gen-Z members may tend to avoid space tourism, which is a threshold of unknowns in terms of experience.

- **H_3:** There is a statistically significant relationship between perceived experience and avoidance intention of Gen-Z about space tourism.

Another pull factor in this research is the opportunity for exploration. Various tourism activities throughout history create additional value and increase direct marketing opportunities (Karabati et al., 2009). In this direction, tourists may encounter various economic and social opportunities during their travel. Space tourism, which is the center of new developments and unknowns today, may become the ultimate point of such opportunities in the future. From this point of view, it can be observed that members of Gen-Z, who are expected to encounter virtual intelligence in business life in the future, will develop new business areas and new ways of working as a result of space tourism activities (Vizjak & Alkier, 2009). However, it is also possible that members of Gen-Z, who do not want to take risks, who want to transfer their capital in a different direction and who tend to evaluate conventional opportunities, may want to avoid space tourism, which is quite costly and involves various risks.

- **H_4:** There is a statistically significant relationship between the perceived opportunity for exploration and avoidance intention of Gen-Z about space tourism**.**

Social benefit, which is included as a pull factor in the research, is the collective benefit realized by people in the same context to improve their overall standard of living, which is achieved by working towards a specific goal (Pol & Ville, 2009). Based on this definition, it can be predicted that tourists will prefer touristic activities with social benefits, and that they will realize these preferences in many personal and social aspects. Considering such preferences of tourists, space tourism may be among the future preferences of tourists for the benefits of the social environment created during the process and for the advancement of science. When we look at today's generation classifications, it can be observed that Gen-Z is the generation that adopts and pays the most attention to the types of social benefits we have listed. It can be predicted that members of Gen-Z, who prioritize social returns when choosing tourism destinations (Haddouche & Salomone, 2018), will perceive space tourism as a type of tourism that will provide benefits. However, since the social benefits of space tourism are not clearly defined and there is a possibility that it may cause social harm while it is expected to provide social benefits, it is also possible that Gen-Z members may tend to avoid it.

- **H_5:** There is a statistically significant relationship between the perceived social benefit and avoidance intention of Gen-Z about space tourism.

Another attractive factor of this research is hedonic value. Hedonic value reflects a consumption approach focused on pleasure and entertainment rather than utility (Holbrook & Hirschman 1982). Therefore, hedonic consumption brings to it the meaning of focusing on the pleasure of consumption and pleasure from consumption (Polat & Seyrek, 2022). Hedonic value varies depending on generations and as a result of the research, it has been observed that members of Gen-Z tend to consume more hedonic consumption compared to other generations. The reasons for this tendency are that Gen-Z members have high energy, are entertainment-oriented and follow fashion (Aytekin & Ay, 2015). In this direction, members of Gen-Z, who continue their development with space games, simulations and movies, are expected to turn to space tourism, which can be a source of pleasure and entertainment. In addition to this situation, the desire for

pleasure of Gen-Z members may not be fully realized due to the fact that space tourism is narrow in time and costly in price. It is likely that members of Gen-Z, who will make predictions about this situation, will tend to avoid space tourism.

- **H_6:** There is a statistically significant relationship between perceived hedonic value and avoidance intention of Gen-Z about space tourism.

Epistemic value, another pull factor, emerges as the value perceived by individuals for arousing curiosity, providing novelty, or desiring to acquire knowledge (Sheth et al., 1991). Therefore, services that satisfy the desire for knowledge, have the potential to provide innovation and arouse curiosity have epistemic value (Hirschman, 2016). In this respect, space tourism embodies all the functions of epistemic value. Gen-Z, who are potential consumers of space tourism with a predisposition to epistemic value, may be inclined to experience space tourism thanks to their curiosity about everything new and their habit of satisfying this curiosity with new options other than the traditional ones (Tuncer et al., 2022). From another perspective, the possibility that the information and innovation provided by space tourism may be contrary to the information and innovation expected by Gen-Z members may change their perspective on space tourism in a negative way. Therefore, it can be predicted that Gen-Z members with a negative perspective may exhibit an avoidance tendency towards experiencing space tourism.

- **H_7:** There is a statistically significant relationship between perceived epistemic value and avoidance intention of Gen-Z about space tourism.

Mooring Factors & Avoidance Intention

Attitude, which is the first variable considered within the scope of mooring factors in the research, expresses the effect of purchasing behavior, consumption habits, and brand loyalty exhibited by consumers in the decision and conclusion stages of the tourist activity they have purchased or will purchase. The quality of tourist experiences has a decisive influence on both satisfaction levels and loyalty (Reisinger, 2009). Attitude also plays an important role in the relationship between consumers' tourist experiences and avoidance intentions, tourists' destination choices, and subsequent tourist travel behavior. In particular, tourists seeking strange or different cultural experience activities may avoid some tourism activities because of their attitudes and avoidance intentions (Kim & Kang, 2019). As space tourism is different and non-traditional from other types of tourism, it is also effective in determining tourists' avoidance intentions towards space tourism services. Gen-Z has a profile that seeks touristic experiences where they can exhibit interactive and versatile attitudes such as exploring local culture, experiencing different food and beverage experiences (Malý & Czaban, 2020). In line with this information, the attitudes and avoidance intentions of space tourism as a new field, especially of Gen-Z consumers about space tourism, may affect the sector's position in the market.

- **H_8:** There is a statistically significant relationship between attitude and avoidance intention of Gen-Z about space tourism.

The second variable addressed by the mooring factor is the variety seeking for touristic activities. Variety seeking refers to consumers' desire to gain different experiences and perspectives by interacting with people from different cultures, ethnicities or other groups (Kim et al., 2022). This is also important in innovative fields such as space tourism. Previous research has shown that consumers with a high need for variety are more open to innovative tourism activities such as space tourism. Therefore, offering new and innovative experiences can reduce consumers'

avoidance behavior in innovative tourism areas (Olya & Han, 2020). Young consumers, especially Gen-Z, may be different and more sensitive to the search for diversity than other generations. This Gen-Z profile, which seeks variety during their touristic activities and prefers travels that include different cultures, may also tend to avoid space tourism due to their security concerns. At the same time, the space tourism sector, which is only accessible to the rich and ethically questionable (Toivonen, 2020), may become a tourism sector that Gen-Z members may not prefer due to factors such as environmental impacts and high costs.

- **H_9:** There is a statistically significant relationship between variety seeking and avoidance intention of Gen-Z about space tourism.

Self-esteem, which is the third variable addressed within the mooring factor of research, refers to the result of making a personal evaluation by considering personal experiences, expectations, and environmental conditions (Rosenberg, 1965). Self-esteem is a critical construct that can influence tourists' behavior and decision-making processes regarding the travel service they purchase (Lazaroiu et al., 2018). The sense of well-being and self-esteem of a person who wants to have a personalized tourism experience and feel different (Toivonen, 2017) can increase with the realization of the desire to discover new places and experience different cultures (Kiper & Altay, 2019). As space tourism is a new type of travel, consumers' self-esteem may have a positive or negative effect on their preference for this type of travel. This clearly demonstrates the tourism sector's psychological impact on consumers and its positive impact on self-esteem. The rapid consumption habits and fast interaction that emerged with the development of technology have the same psychological impact on Gen-Z consumers. Accordingly, avoidance behavior is a common response to fear or anxiety and can manifest in various ways in the tourism context (Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

- **H_{10}:** There is a statistically significant relationship between self-esteem and avoidance intention of Gen-Z about space tourism.

Self-efficacy (travel planning), another variable addressed within the mooring factor in the research, refers to people's belief in their ability to fulfill the situations they will perform or be in. Self-efficacy affects tourists' experiences with their vacation plans. Accordingly, the higher the self-efficacy of consumers, the lower their avoidance intention tourism. Tourists with high self-efficacy participate more in tourism activities and are more satisfied with their experiences (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011). In addition, tourists with low self-efficacy may avoid tourism activities and feel anxious about traveling (Chu & Choi, 2000). Therefore, self-efficacy is important in new types of travel, such as space tourism. Gen-Z has a very high level of self-efficacy, with both a predisposition to technology and an interest in innovative ideas (Sadowska & Czubała, 2019), but they may tend to avoid some risky activities due to safety concerns.

- **H_{11}:** There is a statistically significant relationship between travel planning self-efficacy and avoidance intention of Gen-Z about space tourism.

Personal innovativeness, the last variable addressed within the mooring factor of the research, refers to the change process that individuals put forward to find creative solutions to negative situations in their work and life. In this process, individuals use their internal motivation to generate new ideas, develop and apply different perspectives (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010; Arıca et al., 2023; Birtek et al., 2023; Sesliokuyucu, 2023). Touristic experiences help them renew themselves and avoid stress, while also contributing to their personal development (Seraphim & Hag, 2019). In such cases, personal innovativeness impacts consumer preferences.

Accordingly, Gen-Z may not only see touristic experiences as a vacation opportunity, but also as an opportunity for learning and personal development. Getting to know about different cultures, having new experiences, and renewing themselves are important for this generation, which is innovative and open to learning (Lam, Hsu, and Chou, 2019). Due to the innovative travel opportunity characteristic of space tourism, it can be predicted that personal innovativeness has an impact on the avoidance intentions of Gen-Z consumers.

- **H_{12}:** There is a statistically significant relationship between personal innovativeness and avoidance intention of Gen-Z about space tourism.

Material & Method

In this study, a questionnaire form created as a result of a literature review was used to test the factors that affect the avoidance intention from space tourism of Gen-Z, who are potential future users of space tourism. While preparing the questionnaire questions, all scales were adapted to reflect the research context better, and the studies listed in Table 1 were used.

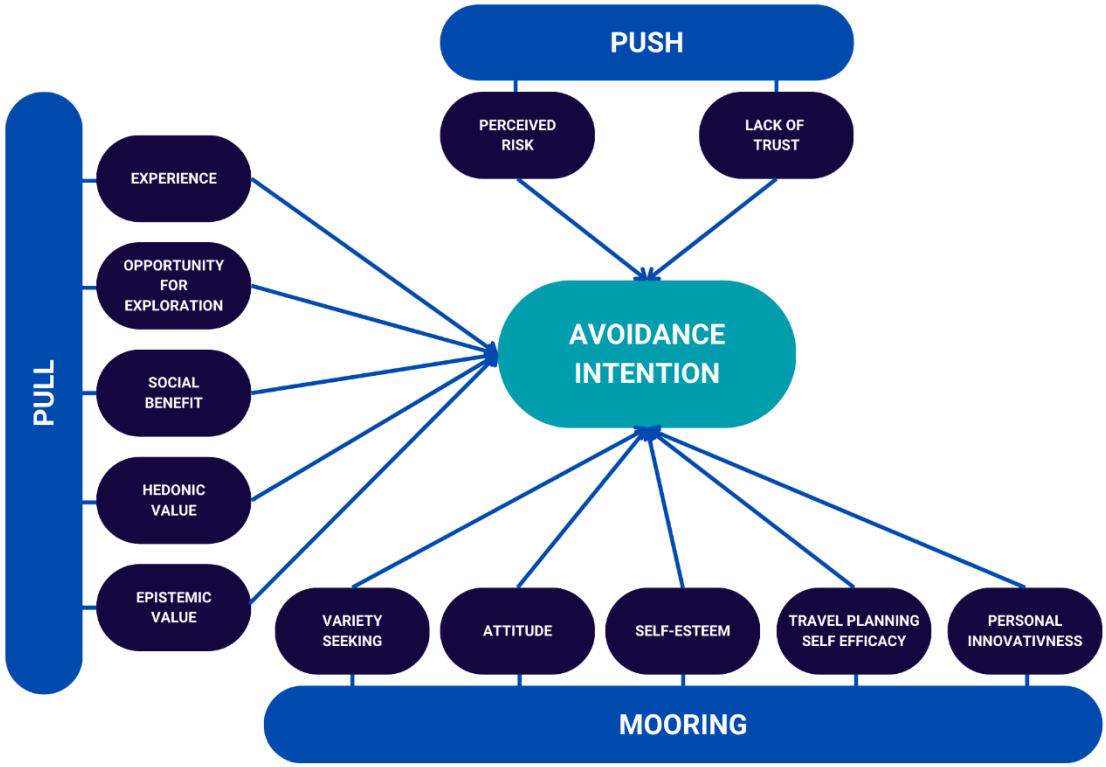
Table 1. Scales and References

PPM Construct	Factor	Reference	Item Number
Push	Perceived Risk	Tseng and Wang, 2016	7
	Lack of Trust	Lombart and Louis, 2014; Loureiro and González, 2008	3
Pull	Experience	Manthiou et al., 2016	3
	Opportunity for Exploration	Jung et al., 2017; Mathiou et al., 2016	3
	Social Benefit	Tussyadiah, 2016	3
	Hedonic Value	Tussyadiah, 2016	3
	Epistemic Value	Williams and Soutar, 2009	3
	Attitude	Michaelidou and Christodoulides, 2011	5
	Variety Seeking	Jung et al., 2017	4
Mooring	Self-Esteem	Amendah and Park, 2008	3
	Personal Innovativeness	Handarkho and Harjoseputro, 2020	3
	Travel Planning Self Efficacy	Jin et al., 2016	4
	Avoidance Intention	Speck and Elliott, 1997; Yang and Kahlor, 2013	3

To verify the validity of the questionnaire's structural content, a comprehensive literature review was conducted, and opinions were obtained from academics and tourists. To evaluate the dependent and independent variables of the study in the first part of the questionnaire, which was created in the form of two subtitles, statements prepared using a 5-point Likert scale were included. The second part of the questionnaire included questions regarding participants' demographic information. In this context, a conceptual model of the study was created, as shown in Figure 1.

The data set of the study was collected online between 10-25 May 2023 from the sample of individuals in the Gen-Z. Participants were asked to confirm their participation in the study, and those who agreed to participate were allowed to continue the survey. IP restrictions were introduced in the online platform settings to prevent re-entry via the same device. Data from 236 participants, who answered the questionnaire correctly and without errors, were included in the analysis.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model



The distribution of the participants' demographic information (gender, education, frequency of travel, and income) is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Participants Demographic Statistics

Gender	**f**	**%**	**Education**	**f**	**%**
Female	138	58,5	High School	12	5,1
Male	98	41,5	Associate	47	19,9
Total	236	100,0	Bachelor	170	72,0
Income	**f**	**%**	Post-Graduate	7	3,0
<8506 TL	162	68,6	Total	236	100,0
8507 TL-11500 TL	34	14,4	**Travel Frequency**	**f**	**%**
11501 TL-14500 TL	15	6,4	More than once a month	30	12,7
14501 TL-17500 TL	6	2,5	Once a month	50	21,2
17501-21500 TL	8	3,4	More than once a year	90	38,1
21501 TL<	11	4,7	Once a year	36	15,3
Total	236	100,0	Once a two year	30	12,7
			Total	236	100,0

The SmartPLS package program was used to investigate the relationships between variables. The expressions of the factors in the study, and the validity and reliability test results related to these factors are presented in Table 3. The reliability of the variables in the model, composite reliability (CR), was assessed using Cronbach's alpha and rho A, for which a cutoff value of 0.7 was used. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) used to test convergent validity was evaluated with a threshold of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2014).

Table 3. Measurement Model Statistics

Construct	Items	Factor Loadings	α	Rho_A	CR	AVE
Perceived Risk	PR1	0,603	0,858	0,872	0,892	0,543
	PR2	0,776				
	PR3	0,847				
	PR4	0,769				
	PR5	0,744				
	PR6	0,695				
	PR7	0,702				
Lack of Trust	LOT1	0,817	0,813	0,822	0,889	0,728
	LOT2	0,882				
	LOT3	0,858				
Experience	EXP1	0,820	0,842	0,880	0,903	0,756
	EXP2	0,912				
	EXP3	0,874				
Opportunity for Exploration	OFE1	0,777	0,799	0,897	0,874	0,699
	OFE2	0,847				
	OFE3	0,880				
Social Benefit	SOC1	0,889	0,818	0,843	0,890	0,730
	SOC2	0,835				
	SOC3	0,839				
Hedonic Value	HED1	0,883	0,867	0,870	0,919	0,790
	HED2	0,906				
	HED3	0,877				
Epistemic Value	EPI1	0,778	0,735	0,758	0,849	0,652
	EPI2	0,777				
	EPI3	0,865				
Attitude	ATT1	0,851	0,873	0,875	0,908	0,663
	ATT2	0,801				
	ATT3	0,795				
	ATT4	0,838				
	ATT5	0,785				
Variety Seeking	VSE1	0,899	0,924	0,927	0,946	0,815
	VSE2	0,858				
	VSE3	0,930				
	VSE4	0,923				
Self-Esteem	SES1	0,851	0,755	0,829	0,850	0,657
	SES2	0,697				
	SES3	0,872				
Personal Innovativeness	PIN1	0,891	0,780	0,864	0,866	0,685
	PIN2	0,851				
	PIN3	0,733				
Travel Planning Self Efficacy	TPS1	0,719	0,801	0,822	0,868	0,623
	TPS2	0,830				
	TPS3	0,790				
	TPS4	0,813				
Avoidance Intention	AVO1	0,807	0,886	0,931	0,929	0,814
	AVO2	0,946				
	AVO3	0,947				

Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) value, which was used to test discriminant validity, was preferred in this study because it outperformed traditional methods. Table 4 presents the HTMT results for the factors included in the model. For HTMT, the threshold value of 0.9, which is

accepted in the literature, was taken as the basis (Henseler et al., 2015), and discriminant validity was realized for all variables in the model.

Table 4. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	PR	LOT	EXP	OFE	SOC	HED	EPI	ATT	VSE	SES	PIN	TPS
LOT	0,864											
EXP	0,129	0,118										
OFE	0,151	0,204	0,893									
SOC	0,103	0,082	0,648	0,807								
HED	0,133	0,120	0,791	0,763	0,707							
EPI	0,130	0,144	0,751	0,768	0,774	0,784						
ATT	0,129	0,143	0,718	0,751	0,621	0,649	0,657					
VSE	0,153	0,091	0,661	0,638	0,471	0,561	0,674	0,730				
SES	0,260	0,197	0,641	0,639	0,627	0,606	0,718	0,773	0,658			
PIN	0,338	0,273	0,562	0,611	0,563	0,512	0,728	0,619	0,593	0,885		
TPS	0,213	0,203	0,512	0,510	0,409	0,491	0,559	0,405	0,420	0,515	0,661	
AVO	0,487	0,544	0,417	0,425	0,364	0,430	0,416	0,444	0,298	0,361	0,397	0,176

Note. PR: Perceived Risk; LOT: Lack of Trust; EXP: Experience; OFE: Opportunity for Exploration SOC: Social Benefit; HED: Hedonic Value; EPI: Epistemic Value; ATT: Attitude; VSE: Variety Seeking; SES: Self Esteem; PIN: Personal Innovativeness; TPS: Travel Planning Self Efficacy; AVO: Avoidance Intention

Analysis & Findings

Table 5 presents the results of the variance inflation factor (VIF) values tested before the hypothesis tests of the variables discussed in this study. When the VIF values were examined, it was observed that the values of all variables were below the cutoff point (<5) accepted in the literature (Hair et al., 2017). In this regard, it was revealed no multicollinearity between the variables used in this study.

Table 5. Inner VIF values of the structural model

	AVO
AVO	
PR	2,236
LOT	2,170
EXP	2,898
OFE	3,367
SOC	2,331
HED	2,492
EPI	2,361
ATT	2,514
VSE	2,185
SES	2,700
PIN	2,642
TPS	1,457

After factor analysis, reliability, and validity tests, 5000 preloaded path coefficients were used to test the relationships in the model. The direct effects of the model variables on avoidance intention space tourism are presented in Table 6.

Perceived risk (H1; β=0.198, $p<0.05$) and lack of confidence (H2; β=0.275, $p<0.01$), which were push factors in the model, had statistically significant and positive effects on avoidance intentions. None of the factors included as pull factors in the model was found to have a statistically significant relationship with the avoidance intention space tourism. Among the attachment factors, attitude (H8; β=-0.198, $p<0.10$) and travel planning self-efficacy (H12; β=0.149, $p<0.05$) were statistically effective in avoiding space tourism. Among the attachment variables, attitude had a negative relationship with avoidance intention, while travel planning

self-efficacy had a positive relationship. Hypotheses H_1, H_2, H_8, and H_{12} were supported, while the other hypotheses were not supported statistically.

Table6. Direct effects and hypothesis tests

Paths	Paths Coeff.	STDEV	f^2	T statistics	P values	Conclusion
PR -> AVO (H_1)	0,198	0,077	0,031	2,567	0,010	Supported
LOT -> AVO (H_2)	0,275	0,077	0,058	3,557	0,000	Supported
EXP -> AVO (H_3)	-0,122	0,113	0,009	1,085	0,278	Not supported
OFE -> AVO (H_4)	-0,008	0,102	0,000	0,074	0,941	Not supported
SOC -> AVO (H_5)	-0,030	0,070	0,001	0,433	0,665	Not supported
HED -> AVO (H_6)	-0,141	0,104	0,014	1,353	0,176	Not supported
EPI -> AVO (H_7)	-0,088	0,074	0,006	1,188	0,235	Not supported
ATT -> AVO (H_8)	-0,198	0,104	0,027	1,904	0,057	Supported
VSE -> AVO (H_9)	0,048	0,073	0,002	0,657	0,511	Not supported
SES -> AVO (H_{10})	0,057	0,086	0,002	0,662	0,508	Not supported
PIN -> AVO (H_{11})	-0,087	0,090	0,005	0,969	0,332	Not supported
TPS -> AVO (H_{12})	0,149	0,070	0,027	2,125	0,034	Supported

Note. R^2=0,386

Conclusion

In this study, which deals with the avoidance intentions of Gen-Z members, who are potential users of space tourism, within the scope of the PPM model, the findings were examined under three sub-titles within the PPM framework.

First, the impact of perceived risk and lack of trust as push factors in the PPM framework on avoidance intention space tourism was tested. Push factors, which are considered to distract users from services that they are users of or may display intention to use, can be effective in cases of avoidance or acceptance in service systems. Perceived risk, an important antecedent in the decision-making stages of tourist travel, affects travel preferences financially, personally, functionally, and socially (Reisinger and Mavondo, 2005; Boksberger et al., 2007). If the perceived risk affecting the preferences of tourists due to the uncertainties in the service processes are low, the decision-making and adoption processes of the tourists are positively affected, while an increase in these risks leads to the emergence of avoidance intention (Dowling and Staelin, 1994). Lack of trust, which is considered another push variable, expresses tourists' perceptions of insecurity that may arise from deficiencies in technical and equipment aspects. Space tourism, which involves the use of rockets designed using advanced technology, is an area with high security expectations for tourists. For this and several other reasons, it is important that the services and equipment provided for space tourism are well designed in terms of tourists' perceptions of trust (Crouch et al., 2009). As a result, push factors, such as perceived risk and lack of trust, may play an effective role in the avoidance intention space tourism and may have an impact on the behavior of potential users.

The second frame considered in this study, within the scope of the PPM model, was the pull factor. Considered within the scope of pull factors leading to the adoption of new or existing services or avoidance of using these services, it has been observed that experience, perceived opportunity for discovery, social benefit, hedonic value, and epistemic value factors do not statistically affect the avoidance intention space tourism for the Gen-Z, which is the sample of this study. At this point, the most important point to be stated is that space tourism is still in the development stage, and it can be stated that Gen-Z tourists cannot clearly perceive uncertainties in this regard. The fact that factors such as social interaction and experience sharing, which are at

the forefront of the Gen-Z, cannot be met in terms of space tourism, which has significant uncertainties, can be seen as a decisive factor in this relationship.

The third framework, considered within the scope of the PPM in this study, is the mooring factor. In the context of the study, among the factors of context (Olya and Han, 2022), which express the variables that increase the users' intention to use new systems or have a negative effect on their avoidance of these services, it has been revealed that attitude and travel planning self-efficacy have a statistically significant effect on the avoidance intention space tourism. The fact that knowledge and awareness are higher in this generation than in other generations can be shown as the main reason for the negative relationship between the intentions and attitudes of Gen-Z tourists to avoid space travel. In addition, the attitudes they displayed in their previous travel experiences may negatively affect their avoidance intentions (Kang et al., 2019). Travel planning self-efficacy behavior, which is statistically significant but positively affecting, reveals that the Gen-Z tourists participating in the research had a low profile in terms of travel planning self-efficacy. Considering that tourists with high self-efficacy participate more in tourism activities (Nunkoo and Ramkissoon, 2011), it can be stated that this relationship may be due to the participant profile. In addition, it is predicted that mooring elements will work more effectively with an increase in the knowledge and experience of space tourism.

This study's findings have several practical implications. It is important to develop tourist perceptions regarding the touristic dimensions of space and space technologies, which is still a developing field, and to present an introductory and descriptive infrastructure in this context. This will contribute to the elimination of uncertainties and the greater adoption of these processes, especially for potential users of space tourism. In addition, it is thought that presenting information about processes through virtual reality and/or augmented reality to the Gen-Z, who have a high technological aptitude, will provide better training for potential users and increase efficiency and productivity in relation to sustainability.

This study has some limitations. The most important limitation of the study is that only the Gen-Z living in Turkey can be selected as a sample. The use of only the survey application was another limitation of this study. In future studies, we plan to use technological infrastructure (such as AR, VR, and Metaverse applications) that include pre-test and post-test applications, which are thought to contribute to the space tourism experience.

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