ASSESSMENT OF CONVENTION CENTERS FROM USERS' PERSPECTIVE: APPLICATION OF IMPORTANCE-PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

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I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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ABSTRACT

ASSESSMENT OF CONVENTION CENTERS FROM USERS' PERSPECTIVE: APPLICATION OF IMPORTANCE-PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

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This study firstly aims to identify facility features of the convention centers and then propose a method in order to identify users' priorities and evaluate what extent these were provided by the convention centre. Data has been collected using self-administered questionnaires from three group of users; attendees, employees and meeting planners. The study has been conducted in İstanbul Lütfi Kırdar Convention and Exhibition Center as a case, because of being the most remarkable convention center of Turkey. Each participant will be required to assess this convention center in terms of their priorities of expectations and features provided. The results have been evaluated statistically, and significant differences between the level of importance and performance of the facility features have been presented.

This research is expected to be useful for constitution of design criteria of convention centers and effective management of the facilities, in terms of both identifying the features of convention centers and providing a method evaluating the performance of the facilities from the users' perspective.

Keywords: convention center, convention tourism, facility management, importance-performance analysis

ÖZ

KONGRE MERKEZLERİNİN KULLANICI PERSPEKTİFİNDEN DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ: ÖNEM-BAŞARIM ANALİZİ UYGULAMASI

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Bu çalışma öncelikle kongre merkezlerinin özelliklerini belirlemeyi, daha sonra bu özelliklere ilişkin kullanıcıların önceliklerini ve bunların kongre merkezleri tarafından ne ölçüde sağlanabildiğini değerlendirmeye yarayan bir yöntem önermeyi amaçlamaktadır. Veriler katılımcı, kongre organizatörü ve kongre merkezi çalışanları olmak üzere üç farklı kullanıcı grubuna dağıtılan anketlerle elde edilmiştir. Anket çalışması Türkiye'nin en başarılı kongre merkezi olması nedeniyle Lütfi Kırdar Kongre ve Sergi Sarayı'nda yürütülmüştür. Katılımcılardan bu kongre merkezini ve sunulan özellikleri kendi beklenti ve öncelikleri doğrultusunda değerlendirmeleri istenmiştir. Sonuçlar istatistiksel olarak değerlendirilmiş, merkezin özelliklerindeki önem ile başarım seviyeleri farklılığı ortaya konulmuştur.

Bu çalışmanın, hem kongre merkezlerinin özelliklerinin tanımlanması yönüyle bu tesislerin tasarım kriterlerinin oluşturulmasında, hem de tesislerin kullanıcı perspektifinden değerlendirilmesini sağlayan bir metot sunması yönüyle tesis yönetimi alanında yararlı olacağı düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: kongre merkezi, kongre turizmi, tesis yönetimi, önem-başarım analizi

To My Parents,

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the second half of the twentieth century, an explosion was observed in number of meetings. The main reason of this situation was a new comprehension about the importance of information exchange in technical, political, social and cultural fields. Despite the rapid developments in communication technology, it could not substitute for meeting face-to-face and obtaining information directly from experts. This new vision was also observed in commercial field by constitution of new corporate organizations. Large corporations, particularly multinational companies, hold the meetings frequently in order to keep the organizational unity all over the world. Meetings were also held for product launching in commercial field.

Increasing number of meetings created a new tourism movement by its effect on travelling and accommodation. This tourism type called convention tourism has significant benefits, such as extending the tourism season throughout the year and increasing the tourism revenue. In recent years, convention tourism has made a rapid advance in tourism sector and has nearly 30% share in total revenue of tourism.

In seventies, the developed countries noticed the high potential on demand and directed investments towards the convention tourism. Differently from other tourism types, the main asset of this type is a man-made supply, called convention centre, which is the main investment area of convention tourism. Effective investment and management of these facilities, i.e. convention centres, bring into prominence in convention market and provides more demand for destinations.

There are numerous studies dealing with the convention tourism, however, few of them have focused on the convention centres and their features. This study aims to identify and quantify the feature priorities in a convention centre from the perspective of users. Initially the argument, the problem and the necessity of the study is underlined in this chapter, and it is followed by statement of objectives. It continues with a subsection procedure, the stages taken through the investigation process are introduced. The chapter concludes with a section titled disposition, where a summary of material presented in the thesis is given.

1.1. Argument

The features provided in a convention facility are crucial for the success of meeting organizations. Required service and need of the organization finds its architectural medium in convention centres. As convention centres are regarded as main assets of convention industry, the destinations that intend to get more shares in this sector have to initially provide admirable conditions in convention centres.

Turkey, as being an attractive destination and located in a strategic location, has the potential of advance in the convention tourism. However, it has not made desired progress and has not reached the desired number of conventions, yet. The main reason of this situation is lack of investment on the convention centres and deficiency of existing ones in terms of features and services.

As mentioned before, the features and services provided by a convention centre affect the success of convention organizations directly. There can be many barriers during the organization that may obstruct its smooth operation and this may be result in failure. This may also affect the preferability of the convention centre in the market. Therefore, *the ability of describing and measuring the constitutional features of convention centres is important and timely in order to enable effective design of these facilities and also effective investment in convention tourism*. Thus, this study is prepared in the direction of the necessities about identifying and quantifying the

features of convention centres and evaluating the success of these venues taking into consideration of users' priorities.

This research can be useful for architects in order to determine the design criteria for user-oriented facilities. The findings can also help to convention professionals, especially facility managers and investors, in terms of using resources to create better experiences in convention venues and positioning their tourism assets effectively. Other groups that can make use of this study are constituencies associated with the convention industries, such as convention organizers and convention destination bureaus/companies that market convention centres.

1.2. Objectives

The main aim of this study is *to explore tangible features that users encounter in a convention centre, to rank their relative importance and to evaluate what extent these features were provided by the convention centre.* In order to carry out this objective, it is aimed;

- to identify the features of convention centres, initially.
- to suggest a technique that quantifies both importance of these services and performance of the convention centres then.
- to implement the technique on a major convention centre in Turkey

This study has the potential to provide a means of identifying and quantifying the features of the convention centres and priorities of users to success user-oriented convention venues, so that better planning and management can be done.

1.3. Procedure

In order to carry out the study, a detailed literature survey is prepared. The focuses of the survey are;

- exploration of convention tourism as the constituent phenomenon of the convention venues
- identification of convention centres and their features

After the literature survey, importance-performance analysis is examined in order to measure the level of priority and fulfilment of the facility features provided by a selected convention centre. According to this technique, a questionnaire has been conducted among the users. Parameters of the questionnaire were obtained from the previous studies and literature survey. Results of the questionnaire are presented with tables and figures. Inferences regarding importance-performance differences are discussed in conclusion. The related research questions of this study may be;

- What are the features and users' priorities in a convention centre?
- How can they be measured?

1.4. Limitations and Delimitations

This study is focused on the purpose-built and detached convention centres. Other venues that give service to convention organizations like conference centres of hotels, universities, etc. are all ignored. Because of this reason, the studied venues of Turkey are selected as being detached convention centres of the country.

The application of assessment method is limited with one convention centre of Turkey because of inconvenience of other centres' activity calendars in terms of convention organization. The other limitation is that the questionnaire is conducted on attendees just for one convention because of time restriction of this thesis study.

1.5. Disposition

Second chapter of this study focuses on the literature survey regarding the concepts related with convention centre. Firstly, the concept of convention is mentioned. The

scope and historical background of the concept is clarified in this chapter. Then, the convention tourism, as being the constituent phenomenon of the convention venues, is defined in the same chapter. Effects and importance of this tourism type is mentioned in order to comprehend why it should be incentivized. Lastly, convention venues and convention centres are studied in this chapter. The features of convention centres and convention centres in Turkey are examined in terms of location, space& function, and technical aspect in order to state features provided by these venues.

Subject of the third chapter is study material and method. As the focus is Turkish convention industry, the study material of this research is approved to be a convention centre in Turkey. This convention centre is selected as İstanbul Lütfi Kırdar Convention and Exhibition Centre (ICEC) by virtue of the comparative assessment of convention centres in Turkey. The studied group is determined as all user groups of convention centres, i.e. employees, meeting planners and attendees. This study is conducted with all user groups, because each of them experiences the space differentially and has different priorities in facility features.

As a method, importance-performance analysis (IPA) is defined in order to measure users' priorities on facility features provided by ICEC. The questionnaire used for the analysis and its parameters that are obtained from the previous studies are also introduced in third chapter.

The fourth chapter includes the results of the questionnaire. Statistically significant differences are highlighted between the level of importance and performance of the facility features of the convention centre. These importance-performance gaps are also discussed in this chapter.

In the conclusion chapter, comments are made according to the results of the IPA. This also reveals the weakness and strengths of the case by giving suggestions for decision makers like facility managers and architects.

CHAPTER 2

SURVEY OF LITERATURE

This chapter entails a literature survey that covers related topics about subject domain. These are mainly grouped under three sub-sections that are;

- The Concept of Convention
- Convention Tourism
- Convention Centres

2.1. The Concept of 'Convention'

The word 'Congress' comes from the Latin word 'Congressus' and means 'get together, gathering, meeting'. However, this word has a common usage in U.S.A. differently from its ordinary meaning, which means 'Parliament, Nation Assembly'. Because of this situation, the word 'Convention' is preferred in international literature for the 'meeting' sense of the word.

It is possible to coincide with various definitions of 'convention' in the terminology. However, two of the most comprehensive definitions are made by H. L. Zankl and M. Accola & G. Gamma. Firstly, H. L. Zankl defines a convention as "it is a temporary assembly, especially a meeting of visitors over various subjects routing a specific purpose" (Karasu, 1985). The other definition is made by M. Accola and G. Gamma in accordance with the items included in concept of convention. These items are;

Subject: A meeting upon a certain subject
Object: Participants
Purpose: Interactive data exchange
Time: Short and limited
Border: A decisive programme

In this context, M. Accola and G. Gamma make the definition as "convention is a kind of meeting held in one or more days with a determined programme, and especially attended by visitors from outside the meeting destination for the purpose of data exchange on issues of science or professional branches which needs expertness" (Karasu, 1985).

2.1.1. The Types and Classifications of Meetings in the Scope of Convention

When the literature is examined, it is seemed that the words 'congress', 'convention', 'conference', 'seminar' and 'meeting' are usually used in lieu of each other. Although they are not synonyms and have slightly differences in terminological meanings, these concepts are used to use for the same purpose.

Conference: These are less formally organized and aperiodic meetings that are held in technical, scientific and commercial field. They are presented by specialists, and encourage collective participation among the attendees. The number of attendees may range up from 30 to 150 or more.

Workshop: Small group meetings held in larger organizations that aim to discuss a specific problem or analyzing a specific case.

Seminar: Meetings of small groups (usually fewer than 30 people) that are held for learning a subject or getting information and experience directly from an expert.

Symposium: The meetings which discussions and manifests are presented on a specific subject by specialists with different ideas.

Colloquium: An education-focused meeting where academic people make a declaration and answer the questions related with a scientific subject.

Convention: The extraordinary meeting that is mostly held in order to make up a law or to make an agreement on a subject. It is more formal than conferences. Convention has also a meaning as annual or total membership meeting.

Congress: Congresses are general sessions facilitating a formal exchange of information and views on a specialistic issue. They are held usually with the aim of resolving problems and held annually or at periodic intervals with high rate of attendance.

The concept of 'congress' and 'convention' have a general usage in practice differently from other types. These two terms comprise not only the meeting types that they embody, but also other kinds of meetings such as conference, seminar, symposium etc. These types can be classified according to their purpose and number of delegates.

According to Purpose: Meetings are divided into 4 groups according to their purposes:

a) *National and international meetings:* Purpose is information exchange
b) *Seminars and courses:* Purpose is licence and master education
c) *Product introduction meetings:* Purpose is to promote new products and to instruct sales& marketing techniques to the salesmen.
d) *Award and incentive meetings:* Purpose is encouragement of sales activities.

According to Number of Delegate: Meetings are divided into 3 groups according to number of attendee.

a) *Up to 50 delegates:* seminars, colloquiums, workshops, panels, commission meetings, round table meetings, supervisory committees
b) *50 to 300 delegates:* General committees, conferences, symposiums
c) *Over 300 delegates:* Congresses, conventions, general committees

2.1.2. Historical Development of the Convention Phenomenon

According to UIA reports, the first known international congress was held in Rome between the dates 10 March 1681 and 8 June 1681 in medicine field. However, in International Congress Literature, the Vienna Congress between the dates 18 July 1814 and 9 June 1815 is given as the first modern and the longest international congress probably because of the political importance it carries (Türsab, 1991).

While, only five international congresses were held per year between 1681 and 1860, the number reached to one hundred at the end of the 19th century. In 1900, 232 congresses were held all over the world and 202 congresses of them were in Paris. Therefore, Paris had the biggest market share in the world with the rate of 90%. (Özen, 1986)

When we search the congress activity in US, it is seen that the first meeting was held in 1896 for commercial purpose by a group of businessmen of Detroit. Henceforth, advantages of meeting organizations were comprehended by associations, and these organizations became more common. Mid 1950's is the period of progression in travelling for convention. In that period, because of the expansion in post-war economy, Americans increasingly travelled by means of newly constructed interstate highway system.

After the Second World War, the number of congresses has increased rapidly because of the progress in science, economy and culture. Moreover, development of the international organizations also affected the number of congresses positively. According to the Yearbook of International Organizations (YIO), which is the

release of Union of International Associations (UIA), 1O58 international congresses were held in 1958. This number increased to 1758 in the year 1959, to 2201 in the year 1964, to 2365 in the year 1967 and to 2728 in the year 1968. These numbers show the rate of increment as 157% in 10-year period between 1958 and 1968.

2.1.3. Features of the Convention

Features of conventions may vary according to durational, national and attendee limits of the meetings.

a) *Durational Limits of Conventions:* Time duration is usually limited 4 to 5 days for most of the conventions. However, it can be coincided with the conventions with shorter duration (1 or 2 days) or longer duration (6 to 14 days). It is assumed that longer duration estranges meetings from the main purpose and the required quality

b) *National Boundaries of Conventions:* In national congresses, most of the delegates that attend the meeting are citizens of the host country. These conventions have cost advantage and shorter durations (1 to 3 days) comparing to international ones.

   In order to describe a convention as 'international', it has to have the representative of at least 3 different nations. These congresses have duration 4 to 7 days and have more complicated organization. While more modest facilities are utilized in national congresses, upper class of catering and accommodation facilities are used in international ones. When a national congress is held in a foreign country it is called a foreign national congress.

c) *Attendee Limits of Conventions:* In the literature and some market analysis reports, the minimum limit is accepted as 15 or 20 people in a congress. Maximum limit is unspecified; however it is rarely found a congress with more

than 2000 people. In fact, regardless of the number of delegates, even the smallest congress is very important in terms of its touristy and economic contribution.

2.2. Convention Tourism

In order to define the term 'Convention Tourism' or 'Congress Tourism', it is necessary to define the words 'congress' and 'tourism' separately. As mentioned before, congress is a periodic session facilitating formal exchange of information and views on any specialty issue with the aim of resolving problems. Tourism can be defined as the temporary, short-term movement of people to destination outside the places where they normally live and work, and their activities during the stay at each destination. It includes movements for all purposes.

In accordance with foregoing definitions of 'congress' and 'tourism', we can define the 'Convention Tourism' as *all relations and activities that occur as a result of travelling from people's own dwellings or workspaces with the aim of information and experience exchange on any specialty issue* (Karasu, 1985). Convention tourism comprises the touristy activities derived from not only congresses but also other kinds of meetings such as symposiums, conferences, seminars etc.

New developments show that tourism trends have changed all around the world for the last 2 or 3 decades. Ongoing focus on Sea-Sand-Sun factor may cause inadequate positioning and losing competitive force for countries in term of new trends. Because of that, Turkey has to use its tourism potential in new trends, new sources, and new area of employment in order to gain place in the world market. The words "new trends" refer to popular kinds of alternative tourism, such as faith tourism, golf tourism, thermal tourism, etc. Moreover, the most highlighted kind of the alternative tourism is convention tourism.

Convention tourism is a kind of 'dual tourism' (*Amphibien-Tourismus*) because it consists of two different activity, meeting and recreation (Karasu, 1985). The main activity in this kind is congress. In other words, the main reason of people for travelling is to attend a meeting. Then, the 'tourism' aspect of the convention tourism can be regarded as a complementary part. However, touristy attractiveness of the host town and the facilities is very incentive for delegates to attend the congress.

2.2.1. Effects of the Convention Tourism

Because of being a type of tourism, convention tourism possesses generally all positive effects of tourism phenomenon. Meetings develop the host countries economically and also contribute to the improvement of infrastructure and superstructure of the destinations. Moreover, congresses have positive social and cultural effects by means of providing publicity of countries.

In this study, effects of convention tourism is analyzed with 2 sub-titles; economic and socio-cultural effects. However, it is known that even socio-cultural and political effects are founded on economic effects, because all improvements in tourism sector have a basis in accretion of trading volume.

2.2.1.1. Economic effects

Convention tourism is a more profitable type of tourism than the other kinds. It has 30% of share in world tourism income, although it has only 10% share in tourist number. This means that congress tourists spend nearly 3 times more than other types of tourists. However being a paying concern, wrong planning may cause prohibitive costs in investments, which may result reducing in benefits of convention tourism.

Tourism has more contribution to the economy than the exportation. Because of import and indirect taxes, there may be a decline in exportation of countries; however this consolidates advantageous position of tourism against the exportation. Although there are visa fee and passport taxes, they are very small quantities comparing to import taxes. Additionally, tax refund which places great strains on the state economy is not applied in tourism differently from exportation. This is also an advantage of tourism in economy (Şakarcan, 1987).

Convention tourism may be a good source of foreign exchange for developing countries with outstanding liability. This depends on the value of native money. If the money of the country is valuable, the number of tourist will be less because of the high expenses for tourists (Aksoy, 2001). Moreover, convention tourism is very systematic and guaranteed kind, as congresses being organized at least 2-3 years before. This differs convention tourism from other kinds in the sector, which is very fragile toward the economic fluctuations and socio-politic incidents.

Expenses of the delegates and their companions constitute the economic basis of convention tourism. According to a report of International Congress & Convention Association (ICCA), average per capita expense of the delegates attending to the international congresses is 1742 $ in 2004. For the same year, average per capita expense of the holiday tourists is 692, 2 $. This difference can also be seen in the price of a congress package, which is nearly 2 times more than a holiday package. “While a holiday package has nearly 600$ price, a congress package is sold 1150$ per person” (Tosun, 1994). Furthermore, congress delegates make more expenses because of two reasons; firstly being high-income people, secondly travelling and accommodation fees are generally paid by their corporations or organizer institutions.

Expenses of companions; such as assistants, partners etc. , are also very important in terms of exchange input to the host town. The number of the companions, accordingly the expense of the companions, is related with several factors. First one is the place and the size of the congress. Attendance of the companions rises when

the host destination of the congress has touristy attractiveness. The second one is the content of the organization. Less social activities in the program and the attendance obligation of the delegates to the meetings reduce the attendance of the companions. Entertainment activities, cocktails, parties, fashion shows, shopping tours are some programs that redound the attendance and also exchange input of the companions. The last factor is income level of the delegates. While the expenditure of the delegate is generally paid by the companies that he/she work, the expenses of the companion is paid by delegate. So, ability of the delegate to undertake the expenses of the companion affects the attendance and number of the companions.

Other ways of exchange input that conventions provide are listed below (Aksoy, 2001):

- Rent paid for the convention centre
- Fees paid to specialized companies for congress organizations
- Fees paid for printing of meeting documents, brochures and posters for advertising
- Payment of the attendees in the host country for extra layover before or after the congress
- Payment for the receptions organized by tourism institutes of some countries.

Another vital effect of the convention tourism on economy is creating job opportunities. While preparing a meeting organization, construction, travel and other sectors that provide technical service get into motion. Furthermore, sectors such as catering, communication, accommodation, souvenir, rent a car etc. become more active during the congresses. The employment increase that convention tourism provides can be observed under 3 groups (Baytok, 1998):

Group 1: Convention tourism creates additional deploy in hotels, restaurants and other vice-enterprises in tourism sector. Moreover, it provides longer period of employment in seasonal enterprises with its extensive effect on tourism season.

Group 2: It constitutes side sectors, and consequently more personnel can employ in these new sectors. Employees in convention centres, interpretering field or employees specialized on congress organization are examples for this group.

Group 3: According to M. Oppermann, every 100.000 delegates provide additional employment opportunity to 1000-1900 people in other sectors. This supports that convention tourism provide additional investment and deploy in not only its side sectors but also other related sectors such as food, construction, etc.

2.2.1.2. Socio-cultural effects

Tourism is a social phenomenon because of being on human basis. Tourists provide new social interaction by the way of contacting with local people. This interaction is two-directional. Tourists affect the destination, the local people, and their socio-cultural environment; however they are also affected by these factors. According to O.M.Sezgin and Y.Acar (1991), this bidirectional interaction strengthens the relations between societies, enlightens people about different beliefs and conceptions and reinforces peaceful coexistence of the societies.

Congresses cause different societies to become closer, and also assist in recognition of each other. As having upper-income, higher-education and higher-cultural level, delegates affect the local people in positive manner. Thus, convention tourism contributes to people in social growth, cultural exchange and development of world view.

The most effective factors on public opinion are media and tourism all over the world. Attendees of a congress introduce the host countries affirmatively by the effect of experiencing a successful organization. They may prefer the host country for a longer-period of holiday, or recommend people around for the travel decisions. Because of being qualified, specialized and authorized people, the meetings of the delegates are followed by the public by means of press or broadcast. So, the host

country obtains the opportunity of advertising itself and gains popularity among the other destinations. This situation provides the country to be preferable for other major organizations.

The last affirmative effect of convention tourism is observed on cities. Conventions keep the host cities well-cared by supplying the facilities of cleaning, restitution, construction of infra-superstructure etc. This development affects not only the host cities but also the local population. People living in convention cities demand travelling to different places, learning different cultures and training foreign language. Consequently, people modernize themselves and improve their socio-cultural structure.

2.2.2. Importance of the Congress Tourism in the World

Convention tourism has the trade volume of 150 billion dollars for the first 3 years of the 21st century. This share corresponds to 30% of the international tourism and travelling trade. According to WTO, international tourism income is 735 billion dollars in 2006. With the acceptation of convention tourism's 30% share, it is predicted that convention tourism has 220 billion dollars income in 2006.

Extant growth rate and the continuation of the conditions for development of the convention tourism predicate that this tourism type will continue its upward advance in future. According to Union of International Association (UIA), in the year 2006, 8871 meetings that meet UIA criteria were hold in 212 countries and 1521 cities (UIA Statistics, 2007). When this is compared with the number of meetings in 1900, it is seen that the most effective factor arousing the countries is appreciable increase in congresses market. The percentages of distribution to the continents are shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1.Percentage distribution of international congresses to the continents (Source: UIA)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Europe	56,19	57,66	56,7	58,3	56,8	57,3	59
America	22,29	21,15	21,21	20,9	20,3	20,4	18,5
Asia	13,08	12,8	13,7	12,9	14,9	14,6	15,3
Africa	4,03	4,25	4,6	4,8	4,8	4,8	4,5
Australia/Pacific	4,41	4,14	3,8	3,1	3,2	2,9	2,6

As it is seen in table 2.1., Europe has the biggest share, nearly 58%, in terms of hosting to the international congresses. Europe is alternated secondly by America with 20% share and thirdly by Asia with 15% share. Africa and Australia/Pacific are at the bottom of the list with 4% and 3% shares consecutively. When the distribution change over the years is taken into consideration, the decline in market shares of America and Australia/Pacific is seen obviously. In spite of the fluctuation in share, Europe keeps its leadership over the years. Ranking of countries is seen in Table 2.2.

Tablo 2.2. Ranking of the countries in terms of hosting congresses in 2006 (Source: UIA)

Rank	*Country*	*No.of meetings*	*Percentage (%)*
1	USA	894	10,08
2	France	634	7,15
3	Germany	434	4,89
4	Holland	391	4,41
5	Austria	382	4,31
6	Spain	362	4,08
7	Britain	350	3,95
8	Finland	325	3,66
9	Italy	324	3,65
10	Singapore	298	3,36

As it is seen in Table 2.2., USA is the leader country in the ranking. It is alternated by some West European countries such as France, Germany, Holland and Austria.

North and South European countries - such as Spain, Italy and Finland – come after the western countries in ranking. When the table is observed, it is obviously seen that 8 of the top ten countries are European countries in the ranking of world's congress market. Moreover, these ten countries comprise nearly 50% share of all congress market.

Table 2.3. Top ten metropolises in convention market in 2006 (Source: UIA)

Rank	*City*	*No. of meetings*	*Percentage (%)*
1	Paris	363	4,09
2	Vienna	316	3,56
3	Singapore	298	3,36
4	Brussels	179	2,02
5	Geneva	169	1,91
6	Helsinki	140	1,58
7	Barcelona	139	1,57
8	London	118	1,33
9	Amsterdam	117	1,32
10	New York	93	1,05

As it is seen in Table 2.3, most of the cities in top ten ranking are European cities, and this is similar to the ranking of the countries. However, the leading city is the capital of France, contrary to expectations, not a city of the leading country, USA. Moreover, the only American city in the list, New York, is at the back rank. This situation indicates that, high market share and the convention facilities of USA are distributed to different destinations in the country. In other words, distribution of these facilities and market share is more homogeneous in USA compared to Europe.

As it is seen in table 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3, the leading continent is Europe, leading country is USA and the leading city is Paris in convention market. Assessment of makings of the leader locations in convention tourism is vital for the countries in order to advance in convention market. When the market distribution of these locations is observed, a correlation can be seen between their economic–politic efficiency and

their market share. Besides the effective position of destinations in economy and political field, other factors raising the countries or cities are listed below:

- Having required qualifications in terms of infrastructure and superstructure facilities, particularly having adequate number of convention venues
- Hosting the head offices of international unions, institutions, associations and multinational corporations (for instance; OECD in Paris, IMF in USA, NATO and EU in Brussels)
- Location in economically developed and geographically convenient region
- Touristy attractiveness of the destinations
- Government support and proper marketing strategies

2.2.3. Importance of the Congress Tourism in Turkey

Turkey hosted to international congresses in 1969 for the first time. These congresses were "International Congress of the Red Cross" and "International Congress of the World Chamber of Commerce". These organizations were hold successfully and Turkey won the other countries' approval (Özen, 1986). However, Turkey's market share in world congress tourism and the contribution of convention tourism to the Turkey's economy haven't been evaluated accurately for a long time, because of the insufficient data in this field.

Turkey has not been recognized as a convention country until close term. The event that highlights Turkey in the congress market is HABİTAT II. After Turkey's successful hosting to the HABİTAT II organization in 1996, the importance of convention tourism has been comprehended by the country properly.

Before 1996, Turkey has no convention oriented venue. HABİTAT II brought forth the Lütfi Kırdar Sport Hall's reconstruction as a convention centre. After the Lütfi Kırdar Convention Centre, TÜYAP started to construct a new fair and convention centre in İstanbul Beylikdüzü. Rise in supply has progressed in Turkey with the construction of new convention centres in Antalya -named Glass Pyramid- and in

İstanbul Ayazağa. All these investments are the initial efforts that affect our market share positively for the future.

Other than the rise in supply, another case affecting the growth of convention tourism in Turkey is the demand of international conventions. Successful results in reputable organizations bring in effective advertising and marketing opportunity to the Turkey. Some important congresses held in Turkey are the World Productivity Congress, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Summit, General Meeting of WTO and 22nd UIA World Congress of Architecture.

The rise in demand of Turkey may progress if some difficulties are solved in the convention area. Some problems in this area are lack of comprehensive convention venues, inadequate capacity and technical supplies of existing ones, deficiency in advertisement and marketing of the country. However, the major requirements in order to be a prosperous convention destination are listed as below (Badur, 2004):

- Variety of meeting venues
- Modern and comfortable accommodation facility
- Touristy attractiveness
- Convenient and comfortable means of transportation
- Hospitality of public administrators for the delegates
- Appropriate marketing activities to the visitors' demand.

The requirements above are also the factors that compose the supply structure of the convention tourism. Differently from other types, convention tourism is mostly composed of artificial supply sources. Meeting halls and accommodation facilities are attributed as the main supply factor of this kind. Sufficient infrastructure, accessibility, natural and historical attractiveness are the other vital sources that reinforce main supply.

According to the result of Foreign Visitors Departure Questionnaire of the State Institute of Statistics (2005), the share of the visitors with the purpose of attending a

meeting, conference, etc. is 2,76% of the total visitors. It can be calculated that if the 21 million visitors came to Turkey in 2005, the population of the visitors coming for the meetings is 579.600 people. If we assume that each visitor spent 1700 $, then we obtain that the annual income from the convention tourists is 98, 5 million $. However, this result shows that Turkey has the share of only 6 per thousand in the world convention market amounting to 150 billion $.

Besides the income share, number of meetings is another important data in order to predicate the place of the Turkey. According to the UIA Statistics of the year 2003, Turkey has only 9 per thousand shares with 85 meetings. It is in the 32nd rank with this share, ranging after the Russia and South Africa. İstanbul, as being the most popular city of Turkey in congress tourism, has the share of 6 per thousand with 58 meetings arranged in 2003. It is in the 27th rank, ranging after Athens. Both UIA Statistics and the ICCA Statistics of the year 2004 (as shown in Table 2.4 and 2.5) predicate that İstanbul hosts nearly 67% of the meetings organized in Turkey. The other important convention destinations of the country are Ankara, İzmir and Antalya, however, they haven't placed at the upper ranks of the statistics yet.

Table 2.4. Ranking of top ten country and Turkey acc.to number of meetings (2004)

Rank	*City*	*No.of Meetings*
1	Barcelona	107
2	Singapore	103
3	Vienna	103
4	Berlin	95
5	Hong Kong	87
6	Paris	84
7	Copenhag.	73
8	Lisbon	67
9	Budapest	66
10	Beijing	65
24	**İstanbul**	**37**

Table 2.5. Ranking of top ten city and İstanbul acc.to number of meetings (2004)

Rank	*Country*	*No.of Meetings*
1	USA	337
2	Germany	288
3	Spain	283
4	France	228
5	Britain	217
6	Italy	191
7	Holland	189
8	Australia	155
9	Japan	136
10	Austria	133
33	**Turkey**	**55**

As shown above, İstanbul is in 24th rank with 37 meetings in 2004. Moreover, İstanbul is projected to outrival Athens, Rome and London, and place to 15th rank with 70 scheduled congresses between the years 2005-2016 (Türsab Ar-Ge, 2006).

As shown in Table 2.5, Turkey is in 33rd rank with 55 meetings. However, it is in 27th rank in respect of attendance figures. The reason of this difference is that attendance figures of the congresses in Turkey are above the average of the world. According to ICCA, while the average of attendance in congresses is 683 persons all over the world in 2004, it is 733 persons in Turkey for the same year. As a result, Turkey places in upper ranks if the ranking is predicated on attendance figures instead of meeting numbers. Moreover, Turkey is projected to rise in 22nd rank in respect to the scheduled congress between the years 2005 and 2016 (Türsab , 2006).

When Table 2.2 and Table 2.3 are observed, it is seen that the ranking of countries and cities are different from data in Table 2.4 and Table 2.5. It is not a contradiction. On the contrary, this difference grows out of the different criteria used in statistics of UIA and ICCA. That is the reason of different rankings in the tables.

2.3. Convention Venues as Main Supply Source of the Convention Tourism

Convention tourism has a different supply structure than the other kinds of tourism. Differently from other types, most of the supply sources are artificial in convention tourism. Convention buildings are regarded as main supply among these sources. Accommodation facilities, scenic beauties and historical attractions are other supportive sources in convention tourism (Baytok, 1998).

In the analysis of convention buildings, it is seen that there are various alternatives of venues for different meeting types. One type of these venues is purpose-built venues, called *convention centres* which provide broad facilities for well-attended meetings. Another type is *convention hotels* which enable to meet various services besides conventions; such as accommodation facilities. The other alternative is *conference*

centres of universities or other educational institutions. Although these venues supply convenient conditions for meetings, they may be insufficient in terms of accommodation and recreation facilities. Convention venues can be listed as below:

- Convention Centres
- Hotels
- Universities
- Concert halls and Theatres
- Conference halls of some corporations and public institutions

Among these venues, only convention centres are attributed as purpose-built venues for congresses. These centres have various meeting halls in different size and feature. These venues have also capability to meet side-services which directly affect the success of a congress organization. Concert halls and theatres serve mainly for different activities. These venues may be inadequate to meet all requirements of congresses; thus, they are preferred just in case of need.

In literature, the meeting venues that work within another management structure (i.e. a segment of a larger organization), such as hotels or public institutions, are generally called 'conference centre'. These buildings are mainly designed for the meeting activity, but unlikely convention centres, they carry on business within another management structure. They give service to smaller groups comparatively, i.e. convention centres give services to well-attended meetings. At this juncture, a conference centre can be defined as "venues that are designed and outfitted with required equipment for meeting organizations, and act within other enterprises" (Aymankuy, 2006). According to this definition, features of a conference centre can be summed up as below:

- It acts within another management structure
- It is an ancillary unit and gives an ancillary service
- It is designed for meeting purpose and outfitted with all required equipments; such as acoustic, illumination, audio-visual etc.

- Its target market is generally the meetings up to 100 persons. However in recent years, some enterprises tend to expand capacity for the meetings more than 500 persons in order to get more market share. Conference centres can be divided into 6 groups according to their features:

Table 2.6. Classification of the conference centres and their features (Source: Penner, 1991)

Type	***Features***
1- Executive Conference Centre	It hosts specialized meetings of middle-to-upper level. Meetings are about training, strategy and planning. They typically range from 20 to 300 people.
2- Resort Conference Centre	It hosts business, incentive, reward or training meetings of middle-to-upper level. It has extensive recreational facilities. Occupancy rate is up to the seasonal demand.
3- Corporate Conference Centre	It hosts family companies' meetings of low-and-mid level. It also hosts to outside organizations and provides facilities if company policy permits.
4- Non-residential Conference Centre	It locates in urban or suburban areas where high concentration of corporate headquarters exists. It does not offer guestrooms.
5- University Conference Centre	It locates in campus. It has limited dining, recreation and accommodation facilities. It hosts to education and scientific meetings
6- Not for Profit Conference Centre	It locates often at remote locations. It hosts generally to religious, educational or associations' and foundations' meetings of small-to mid size.

The most widespread type is resort conference centre in Turkey. These centres are expanded their capacity and facilities by the effect of rising demand. Although they are ancillary venues, they become capable to compete with purpose-built convention centres in terms of capacity and facilities. Some types of conference centres have no

case in Turkey, such as executive conference centres. Making investment into these different types creates variety in supply for meetings with different requirements.
In spite of different definitions above, Waldrop claims that there usually exists no difference from design point of view but management based (Waldrop, 1990). "Much of the difference lies in the facility's marketing plan. As a general rule, 'executive' conference centres are looking for a higher -and-business upper and middle-manager- by offering plush accommodations, amenities, and other appointments. 'Resort' centres emphasize their recreation in order to attract groups who want to meet and play" (Shaw, 1990).

While surveying the literature, it is seen that the term 'convention centre' and 'conference centre' are used synonymously, and the classification above is also used for convention centre. However, as mentioned before, these two concepts are different from each other in terms of their dependency and target market. Although expansion in capacity and facility of conference centre makes it capable to compete with convention centre, being an ancillary venue within another enterprise differentiates it from convention centre.

Another confusing usage is observed in the concept of 'convention centre'. This term has two usages in the sources; first one is defining the purpose-built venues for conventions, and second one is defining the cities or destinations that host convention organizations. In this study, the term 'convention centre' is used for the first meaning only. For the second meaning, 'convention city' or 'convention destination' terms will be used.

2.3.1. Convention Centre and Its Development Process

In sixties, congress organizations were thought with hotels. All meetings were hold in hotels regardless of the size and the field of the activity, because there were no alternative venues for organizers. This situation has been changed by the constitution

of convention centres later. Constitution of these centres has increased demand in meetings, accordingly capacity of conventions and organizer's tendency to this field.

Development of the convention centres can be best observed in U.S.A. These centres have been consistently increasing in numbers since the 1970's. More than 100 new convention centres were constructed in the country until mid 1980's. By the year 1989, U.S.A. had 331 convention centres, and this refers to 50% increase in ten year period thus far (Hoyle et al, 1989). Today, there are nearly 770 convention centres in U.S.A.

After the 70's, an explosion in convention centre construction has been observed all over the world by the effect of quite optimistic previsions about the future of convention tourism. At that term, every country entered for a race of acquiring the largest convention centre of the world. Firstly, 'Neue Heimat', that has the capacity of 10.000 people and 17 meeting halls, opened in Hamburg in 1973. This building was the largest convention centre of the Europe thus far. Shortly after Neue Heimat, 'Palais des Congress' was constructed in Paris and held the title of 'the largest of the Europe'. This title was gotten by 'Berlin International Congress Centre' (ICC Berlin) in 1979 with its 300 m length, 85 m width and 40 m height. ICC Berlin is also one of the two largest convention centres of the world with its capacity of 20.000 people. The other top-notch is Chicago's McCormick Place with its 150.000 m² area (Aymankuy, 2006).

The competition in having the largest convention centre of the world keeps going among the countries as a prestige war. Ruth Messinger, member of the New York County Council, compares this situation to the armament race between countries, and describes this tendency as problematic. Some critics defend the opinion that U.S.A. has reached the market saturation, and convention centres have developed in upper limits. Moreover, it is emphasized that the development in convention centres has to keep up with the development of convention market in terms of demand-supply balance (Aymankuy, 2006).

There are different opinions about the multi-purpose usage of the convention centres. One of them defends the multi-purpose use, because utilization rate of the convention centres for congress purpose is only 20-25%. According to this view, these venues should be hired to artistic, scientific, technical and political activities by reason of economy and getting place in local people's life (Özen, 1986). Some examples for this view are Atlanta Olympics in 1996 at the Georgia World Congress Centre and Mr. World 1996 Organization in Lütfi Kırdar Convention Centre.

The opposite view to multi-purpose use of the convention centres defends that these centres have to be specialized and detached venues for meeting and fair activities. According to George G. Fenich (1992), there are two criteria in order to define a venue as convention centre; first one is being detached, i.e. a convention centre doesn't operate within another enterprise. A second criterion is that activities performed in these centres have to be in the type of convention or trade fairs.

Venue alternatives for the meeting organizations were mentioned before. Preference rates of these venues are given below in Table 2.11.

Table 2.7. Venues for Meetings of International Associations (Source: Aymankuy, 2006)

Venue	Percentage (%)
Convention Centres	44,3
Hotels	29,7
Universities	12,8
Others	13,2

As it seems in Table 2.7, the most-preferred venues are convention centres for international meeting organizations. The rates refers that nearly three-fourths of meetings are organized in convention centres and hotels.

According to a study of UIA, venue preferences of the organizer institutions are given below (Aymankuy, 2006):

- convention centres with the rate of 38%
- hotels with the rate of 30%
- universities with the rate of 19%
- other venues with the rate of 9%
- No preference with the rate of 4%

Data above shows the importance of the convention centres in congress market. Constitution and rapid development of these centres tend to rise in preference of organizers on these venues.

2.3.2. Features of The Convention Centres

Convention centres become a need of contemporary world, and also a symbol of the cities that they belong. As is known, architecture is one of the best media that reflects the cultural assets. These venues have to be distinctive in location and architectural manner, because they are prestigious buildings of the cities and constructed for specialized activities. Required features of a convention centre can be analyzed under 3 titles; location features, spatial and functional features, and technical features.

2.3.2.1. Location Features

Required features for location of a convention centre are described below:

- A convention centre should locate near to downtown. If these centres locate uptown, this may obstruct the desired communication between convention attendees and local people; thus, this may result with reduction of positive socio-cultural effect of convention tourism.
- It should locate in a quiet location

- It should be near, preferably in walking distance, to accommodation and catering facilities
- Accessibility of the convention centre should be convenient. Particularly, means of access should be sufficient to airport and accommodation facilities. Public transportation should be also provided to downtown.
- It should have adequate parking lot

2.3.2.2. Spatial and Functional Features

These features will be examined under 4 subtitles; general features, capacity, main spaces and ancillary spaces.

General features

A common opinion states that especially elevations of a convention centre should have national or local architectural style in order to reflect the culture affiliation. However, architectural style of a convention centre should reflect the era and the urban fabric that it belongs. Materials and the construction technique should also be in high quality. Moreover, interior design and technological equipment should meet the contemporary requirements of convention activities.

Capacity

What should be the capacity or the size of a convention centre? This is a controversial subject. As mentioned before, the competition of having the largest convention centre has been going on among the countries since 1970's. However, recent studies show that enormous venues, particularly ones that operated by public, generally make loss. Main reason of this situation is high construction cost and high running cost of these enormous centres.

According to Prof. Klaus Wever, specialist on convention centre projects in Berlin University claims that mid-scale venues with full equipment and averagely 1200 people capacity are demanded more in congress market. He also claims that because of increase in number of small and mid-scale conventions in future, big venues with more than 1500 people capacity will lose their market share. For instance, meetings with 100 delegates show increase 20% annually, however meetings with 750 delegate show only 6% increase annually. Contrary to expectations, 'Jumbo Congress' with more than 2000 delegates couldn't register a noteworthy increase in number. Thus, demand on mid-scale venues has outstripped the supply by the effect of orientation to these centres.

Some studies seek optimal values for the number of meeting spaces in a convention centre and ideal capacity of them. One of these studies offers an analysis in Table 2.8 for the capacity and the meeting spaces of a convention centre with maximum 1500 delegates capacity:

Table 2.8. Meeting spaces and capacities for a convention centre (1) (Source: Karasu, 1985)

Meeting space	*Unit*	*Capacity*	*Total capacity*
Auditorium	1	1500	1500
Symposium Hall	1	600	600
Main Meeting Hall	2	300	600
Small Meeting Hall	2	150	300
Main Seminar Room	4	80	320
Small Seminar Room	6	50	300
Conference Room	10	20	200
TOTAL			3820

Another study suggests an analysis about the meeting spaces and capacities as listed below (Pirinççioğlu, 1996):

- A main hall with 2000 people capacity and flexible layout allowing to use for banquet
- 2 halls with 200 people capacity, and partible use for meetings of 100 people
- At least 100 committee and study rooms with 20-40 persons capacity
- An exhibition hall with 10.000 m² width

In the recent years, opinions of congress organizers are taken during design process of the convention centres in order to determine their demand about optimal size and spaces of the venues. A study of the International Association of Professional Congress Organizers (IAPCO) and the European Community Commission aims to determine the requirements for a convention centre. According to this research, required meeting spaces and their size are listed below:

- Main hall with required high capacity
- A hall with 50% capacity of the main hall
- Two hall with 25% capacity of the main hall
- A hall with 15% capacity of the main hall (the other halls can be had by dividable use of the main hall)

According to this analysis, required meeting spaces and their capacities in a convention centre with maximum 2000 people capacity should be as in Table 2.9:

Table 2.9. Suggested meeting spaces and their capacities for a convention centre (2)

Meeting spaces	*Unit*	*Capacity*	*Total Capacity*
Auditorium	1	2000	2000
Main Hall	1	1000	1000
Middle Hall	2	500	1000
Small Hall	1	300	300
TOTAL			4300

In some sources, it is suggested that the total capacity of secondary halls should be equal to main hall. Table 2.9 also gives a close result to this view.

Main Spaces

Entrance Court: It is the circulation heart, central point of the assembly as a nucleus with conference activities in one side, banquette activities in another and the exhibition activities in the other. In entrance court, the visitors are welcomed and directed towards the activity court, security controls and the basic information about the centre is given to the visitors. Because of being welcoming and initially impressive space, it should be large enough and designed architecturally in a special character. This space should connect with all other units. It should have security, ticket office, cloakroom, front desk, first-aid room, WC, and VIP reception room.

Meeting Halls: Number and capacity of meeting halls were mentioned before. Under this title, the arrangement of the meeting halls will be mentioned.

Two important factors that should be considered in seating arrangement are providing good communication and comfort of the delegates. Audio-visual aids of the halls, placement of stage, aisles for traffic flow (access to fire exit, WC etc.), flow of catering service are some of the cases that should be taken into consideration in order to obtain attendees' comfort. Standard furnishing such as seats, tables, platform of announcer, sets the layout of the hall. A convenient layout provides comfort in communication between delegates and speakers, and comfort in access to seats in case of leaving the hall for urgent needs. Because of this reason, placement of seats and stage is one of the most important factors that directly affect success of a congress organization.

Meeting halls with different seating arrangements or flexibility of the halls for different arrangements provide venues more preferability chance in convention market. Three preferred seating layout is described below (Aymankuy, 2006):

a) Theatre style: This layout is preferred usually for the conventions with 500 people or more.

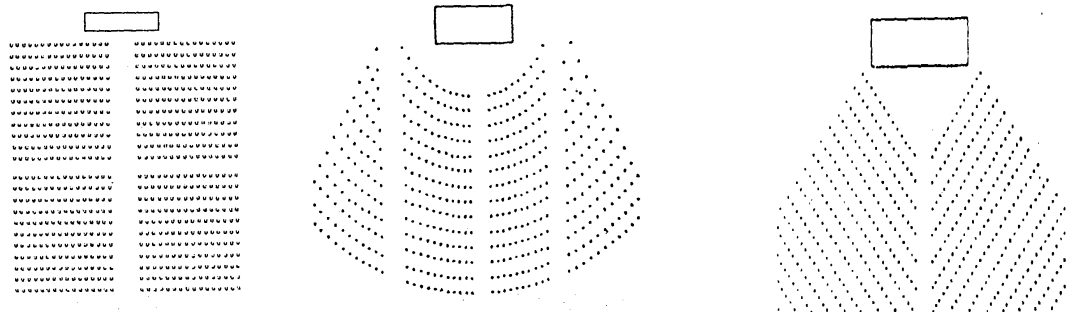


Figure 2.1. Theatre style, conventional – semicircle shape – V-shaped . (Aymankuy, 2006)

b) Classroom style: If the delegates are required to taking notes during convention, then this layout is preferred. Delegates can make use of the desks in front for taking notes. Microphone and volume control may also fit on the desks.

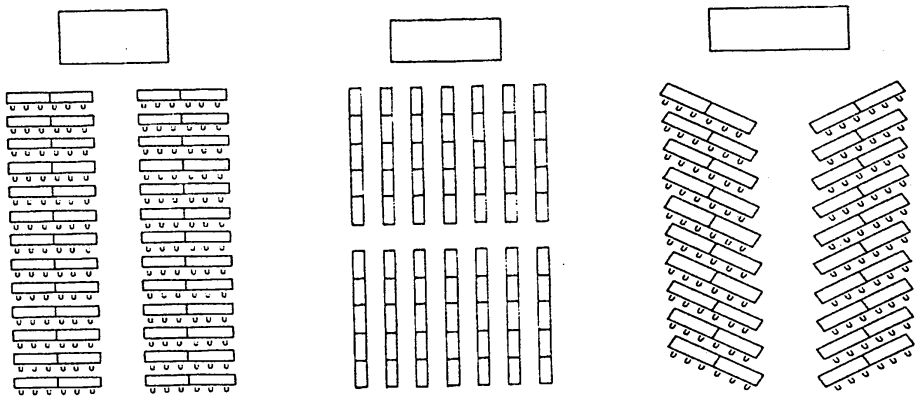


Figure 2.2. Classroom style, conventional – vertical – V-shaped (Aymankuy, 2006)

c) Conference Style: In convention organizations, attendees of the congress may be divided into smaller groups for workshops or other studies. These groups generally consist of 15 -120 people. These workshops or small meetings are vital for interactive opinion exchange, because they provide delegates the chance of discussion and give their detailed opinion about the subject.

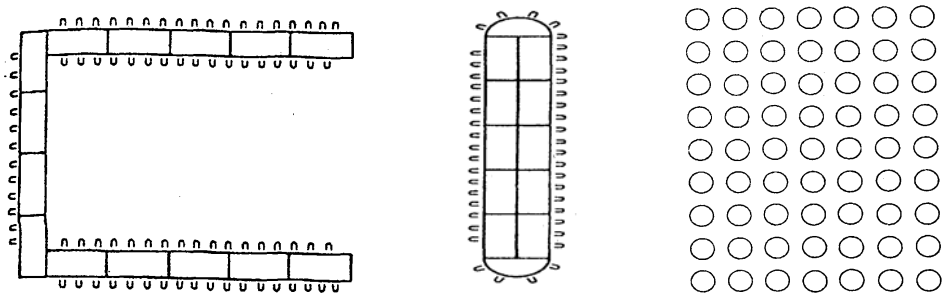


Figure 2.3. Conference Style , U-shaped – Oval table – Banquet . (Aymankuy, 2006)

The other factors, except seating arrangement, that should be taken into consideration in design of meeting halls are listed below (Baytok, 1998):

- Stage could be seen easily by each attendee. If possible, it should be an adjustable stage for different size and height.
- Air conditioning and heating system should perform well. Height of the ceiling should be sufficient.
- Illumination should be considered for each hall. Darkening should be provided when needed. It should controlled by central system.
- Entrance/exit and access to the meeting halls for handicapped people should be considered
- Audio-visual installation should perform well. Required equipment for multivision, film projection and screening should be provided. Moreover, teleconference system and audio-visual record system should be present.
- Easiness of access to WCs and breakout rooms should be considered
- Seats of the hall should be comfortable for long-period sitting
- Materials used in halls should be fireproof

Committee or study rooms: These rooms are multifunctional. They should have transitions with meeting halls and entrance hall. VIP reception room should also be present

Offices and dressing rooms: Illumination and air conditioning should be considered in detail. Each dressing room should have shower and WC.

Exhibition Hall: Congress and exhibitions may be thought two separate activities. However, these activities have become integrated in recent years, as most conventions are organized with concomitant exhibitions.

Exhibition is an opportunity for exhibitor in order to introduce and market new goods or services to consumers. It is also an opportunity for convention delegates and visitors in order to keep abreast of the latest developments about new goods and services.

Respects that should be considered while designing an exhibition hall of a convention centre are listed below:

- Exhibition hall should be close to meeting halls and catering units.
- Entrance of visitors should be separate from service entrance
- Height of the ceiling, width of the doors, illumination, waste/clean water system, electricity and telephone line, air conditioning, capacity of goods lift and all other special equipments should have taken into account during planning phase.

Catering Units: Important aspects of planning the catering units are listed below:

- Specific ventilation for the units where foods are prepared.
- Sufficient area to store
- Sufficient area for kitchen according to capacity of service
- Aisles for treat service

Ancillary Spaces

Ancillary spaces enhance functionality of the convention centre. Services that facilitate the main activities are performed here. These spaces can be listed as below:

- Information office
- Convention secretariat office
- Offices for convention organizers and
- Administration offices of convention centre
- Documentation room (photocopy, printer etc.)
- Press room (space where the equipments of telephone, fax, telex, etc. exist)
- Breakout rooms
- Simultaneous translation rooms (at least 3 room)
- Security room
- First aid room
- Cloakroom
- WCs and WC for handicapped
- Technical spaces (HVAC room, generator room, costume and decor storage, rest rooms for personnel etc.)
- Parking lot (it must be large enough and have partitions for the vehicles of handicapped people and VIP, also heavy goods vehicles. Accesses for visitors and heavy vehicles should be separated)
- Bank branch, cargo agency, airlines agency (for only very large centres)

2.3.2.3. Technical Features

Convention centres should have some technical equipment. These equipments are listed below:

- HVAC system
- Illumination system

- Simultaneous translation system and headphones
- Film projector (epidiascope)
- Overhead projector
- Darkroom equipment
- Slide machine
- Microphone system
- Teleconference-videoconferencing system
- Satellite broadcasting system
- Audiovisual recording equipment
- Printers and photocopy machines
- Computers with internet connection
- Wireless internet collection
- Telephone, fax, telex machines
- Fire warning and fire-extinguishing systems
- Security system (security cameras etc.)
- Generator
- Lifts (for visitors, service and fire separately)

2.3.3. Convention Centres in Turkey

Turkey's supply in convention centres will be examined under this title. Three detached convention centres of Turkey, Lütfi Kırdar Convention and Exhibition Center, Glass Pyramid and TÜYAP Beylikdüzü Fair and Convention Center will be analyzed in terms of their location, spatial-functional and technical features. Convention centres under construction and conference centres are out of scope of this study.

2.3.3.1. İstanbul Lütfi Kırdar Convention and Exhibition Centre

Figure 2.4. İstanbul Lütfi Kırdar Convention and Exhibition Centre (www.arkitera.com)

İstanbul Lütfi Kırdar Convention and Exhibition Centre (ICEC) was constructed between the years 1948 and 1952 by the governor of İstanbul named Lütfi Kırdar. This facility was firstly designed as a sport and exhibition centre by an Italian architect named P.Vietti Violi. It firstly hosted to the World Wrestling Championship, and then it had given service to many sport competitions as being the only indoor sport hall of İstanbul for many years.

At the beginning of 90's, Turkey faced up to the need of a convention centre for the upcoming HABITAT organization which was decided to hold in Turkey. Therefore, Lütfi Kırdar Sport and Exhibition Centre converted into a convention centre in 1996. It is currently the largest convention centre of Turkey in blast.

Building plot of the ICEC has been hired to the Tourism Ministry for 49 years by İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality. Then, the Ministry established a company for the management of the facility in 1993, called UKTAŞ (International Congress Centre Management Inc.). UKTAŞ was established by public and private sector cooperation with %25 lot of the Ministry and 75% lot of private sector. The company has 120 partners comprising of leading companies and constitutions in tourism sector

as well as the Culture and Tourism Ministry, the Tourism and Travel Agencies Foundation (TURSAV) and Association of Turkish Travel Agencies (TURSAB). It has spent 43 million USD in order to convert the facility into a convention centre and equip the building with convention technologies.

Location Features

Figure 2.5. Location of ICEC (www.icec.org)

ICEC locates in Harbiye where is attributed as business and culture centre of İstanbul. It is centrally situated in the city and allows easy access by means of public, domestic and international transportation. The centre is 23 km away from Atatürk International Airport, 5 km from Sirkeci train station, 500 m from Taksim metro station and 100 m from Harbiye bus stop on the Taksim-Şişli line. Because of its central location, ICEC is within walking distance to the entertainment and shopping facilities, and most especially to the hotels some of which are operated by international chains. İstanbul provides nearly 14800 rooms for accommodation by 110 hotels with 3, 4 or 5 stars.

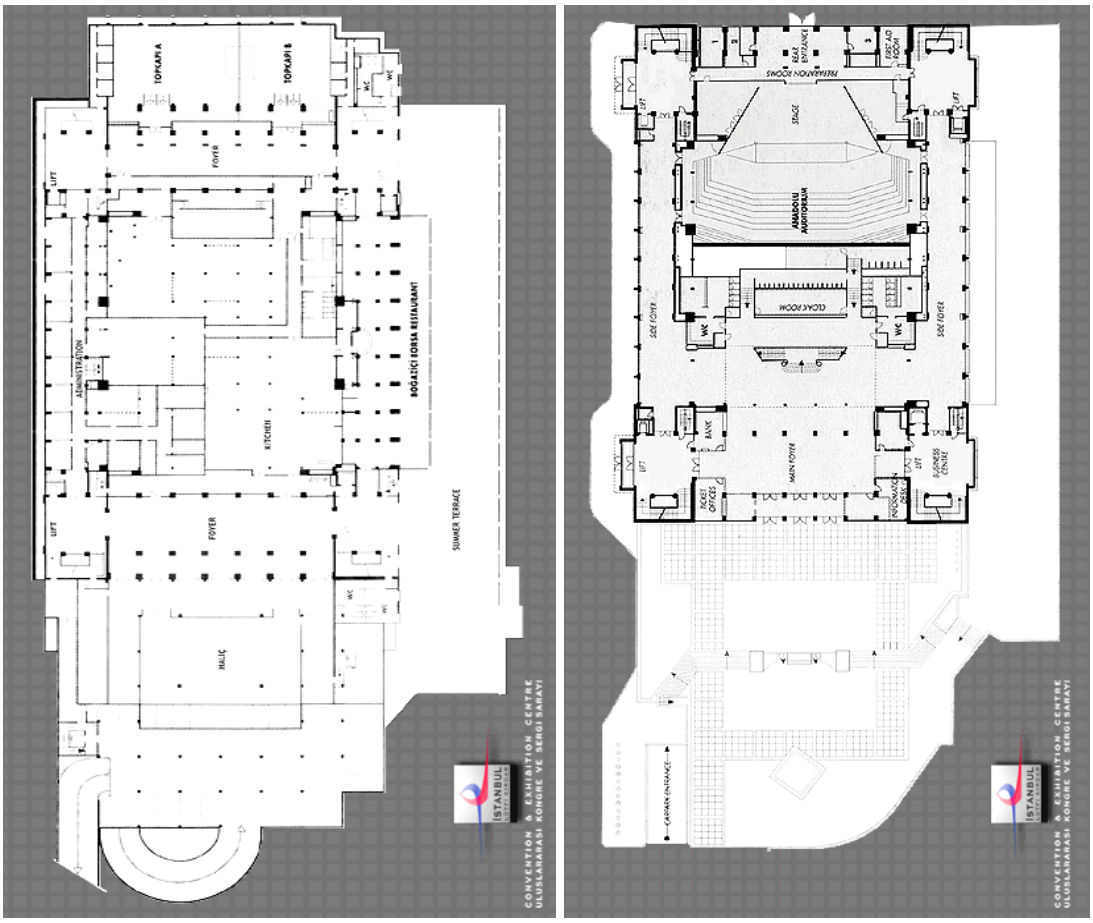
Spatial and Functional Features

ICEC has 2 buildings; main building and Rumeli building. Main building has an auditorium, called Anadolu, including 2000-armchair and simultaneous translation system in 12 languages. This building also has 4 meeting halls, called Haliç, Dolmabahçe, Topkapı and Marmara, between the capacities of 350 to 650 people. These halls can be separated into smaller spaces by means of soundproof separators. Main building comprises 14 rooms with the capacity of 15 to 50 people for meetings of smaller groups. Except the meeting spaces, it has 5 VIP rooms and a restaurant with the capacity of 300 people. This building is connected with the Rumeli Building.

Rumeli Building has started to give service as a trade fair and exhibition centre in 1999 and UKTAŞ became the investor and operator of this facility. It is the first example of "Exhibition Space Management Supporting Convention Centres" in Turkey. Rumeli Building has 7000 m² area in two levels and its main hall has a floor area totalling 2,100m² and 7 m high. It can be divided into two soundproof rooms by separators allowing the hall to be used for two different events simultaneously. The lower level of the building gives service for exhibition, fair and banquets with its 3000 m² area. Rumeli has also a VIP lounge, 5 executive boardrooms, a restaurant with 130 person capacities, a garden with Bosphorus view and 3000 m² area.

Table 2.10. Halls of the ICEC and their capacities (Source: www.icec.org)

Hall	Fl.	m²	Capacity				Usage
			Theatre	Class.	Cockt.	Banquet	
Haliç	L	600	650	350	700	600	conference, banquet
Topkapı A/B	L	410	450	240	500	450	conference, banquet
Topkapı A	L	230	250	150	300	200	seminar, banquet
Topkapı B	L	170	200	120	250	160	seminar, banquet
Anadolu	G	2482	2000	-	-	-	congress, concert, gala, opera
Dolmabahçe A/B/C	1	440	350	175	500	450	conference, banquet
Dolmabahçe A	1	152	160	100	160	160	seminar, banquet
Dolmabahçe B	1	132	130	80	140	140	seminar, banquet
Dolmabahçe C	1	142	150	90	150	150	seminar, banquet
Marmara	2	385	500	300	500	420	seminar, company meetings, banquet
Sultan 1	2	50	50	35	40	40	seminar, workshop
Sultan 2	2	27	15	10	15	15	seminar, workshop
Sultan 3	2	27	15	10	15	15	seminar, workshop
Sultan 4	2	58	50	35	40	40	seminar, workshop
Levent 1	2	17	25	20	25	15	workshop,sekretariat
Levent 2	2	17	25	20	25	15	workshop,sekretariat
Levent 3	2	17	25	20	25	15	workshop,sekretariat
Levent 4	2	17	25	20	25	15	workshop,sekretariat
Levent 5	2	17	25	20	25	15	workshop,sekretariat
Barbaros 1	2	17	25	20	25	15	workshop,sekretariat
Barbaros 2	2	17	25	20	25	15	workshop,sekretariat
Barbaros 3	2	17	25	20	25	15	workshop,sekretariat
Barbaros 4	2	17	25	20	25	15	workshop,sekretariat
Barbaros 5	2	17	25	20	25	15	workshop,sekretariat
Rumeli Sergi S.	-	3000	-	-	2500	1750	fair, exhibition, cocktail, banquet
Rumeli Ball R.A/B	-	4000	3000	1750	3500	3000	conference, fair, exhibition, banquet
Rumeli Ball R. A	-	1050	1250	750	1750	1000	conference, banquet, gala, wedding cerem.
Rumeli Ball R. B	-	1050	1250	750	1750	1000	conference, banquet, gala, wedding cerem.



Lower Level Ground Level

First Level Second Level

Figure 2.6. Floor Plans of ICEC (www.icec.org)

Technical Features

ICEC has comprehensive technical equipment related with vision, sound and lighting. Some technical potential are listed below:

- wireless internet connections
- video conference system
- video recording and VCD or DVD production
- streaming (live or recorded)
- generator
- UPS system
- simultaneous interpreting facilities for 12 languages (permanently installed or using infrared transmission as required)
- infrared receiver and headphones
- 720 seats for classroom style and microphone system for delegates
- Sound, lighting, stage control rooms, video pre-wiring
- High-performance electronic overhead and overhead projection
- Slide projector

Assessment of ICEC

ICEC is the most remarkable convention centre of Turkey because of spatial variety and high technical installation that it possesses. Some potential that make it advantageous are listed below:

Being in a central location of Istanbul: This provides easy access to the convention centre by means of all transportation types. Another positive side of ICEC's location is being close to hotels, culture centres, historical buildings, entertainment centres and shopping centres. This makes it preferable by users because of providing good accommodation and recreation facilities.

Spatial variety: Spaces in ICEC have various design and capacity. Different functions of the convention centre, which have different characteristics such as congress, exhibition and banquet organizations, take place in customized spaces. Moreover, there are different choices for congress organizations such as auditorium, halls on a level place or rooms. This variety in space affects the extension in preferability by organizations which require different capacity and features. Flexibility of space capacity which is obtained by means of soundproof separators is also increase the marketing chance of ICEC in the sector.

High-standard technical installation: Main requirements of convention organizations; such as simultaneous interpreting facilities, monitory system, video conference systems, stage control and other audio-visual systems are all used with high technology in ICEC. This increases its preferability by users.

2.3.3.2. Antalya Sabancı Convention and Fair Centre – Glass Pyramid

Figure 2.7. Antalya Sabancı Convention and Fair Centre (www.vaksa.org.tr)

After Turkey became aware of the importance of convention sector in mid 90's, investments on convention centres have progressed with the construction of Sabancı

Convention and Fair Centre in Antalya. The centre was designed by the architects Levent Aksüt and Yaşar Marulyalı, and constructed by Sabancı Foundation. After entering into the service in 1997, right of usage was assigned to Antalya Metropolitan Municipality. This venue is the second largest convention centre of Turkey after the ICEC.

Location Features

Figure 2.8. Location of Glass Pyramid

Glass Pyramid is located in Hasan Subaşı Culture Park which settles in 700.000 m² area in Konyaaltı. This park is a recreation area which is designed as a cultural complex consisting of cultural buildings, restaurants, artificial pond etc. Despite being uptown, it allows convenient access from the city centre by means of public transportation.

Although it has located uptown, being in a culture complex provides some recreation and accommodation facilities. Beach Park, Aqualand, Antalya Tennis Club, Antalya Sheraton Hotel and Hillside Su Hotel all locates close to the convention centre. It is also close to the airport and bus terminal in 11 km and 6 km distance respectively.

Spatial and Functional Features

Glass Pyramid has 4500 m² base area and 2 floors. It has pyramidal roof which is constructed by space frame and thermopane. The height of the roof is 22.76 m. The building is surrounded by 4 circular pools which have 2500 m² total area. Access of the centre is provided from four sides by bridges on these pools. Glass Pyramid has 5 halls for meeting, fair and exhibition activities. The halls and their features are listed below:

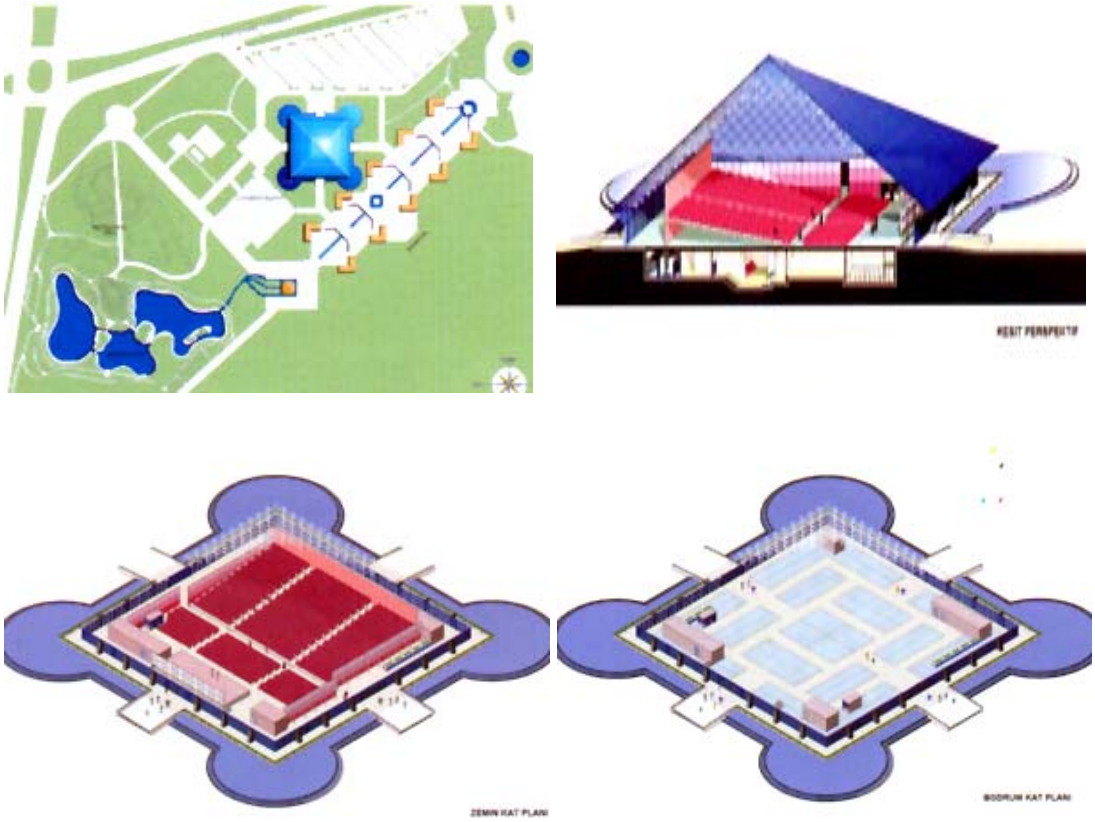


Figure 2.9. Plans of the Glass Pyramid (www.mimdap.org)

Table 2.11. Halls of the Glass Pyramid and Their Capacities

Hall	**Floor**	**Area**	**Capacity**	**Usage**
Toros	Ground	4000	2400	congress, fair, exhibition
Meltem	Basement	386	440	conference
Düden	Basement	281	332	conference
Hall 1	Basement	90	50	meeting, exhibition
Hall 2	Basement	90	50	meeting, exhibition

Technical Features

In comparison with ICEC, Glass Pyramid has limited technical equipment related with convention organizations. Some technical potential are listed below:

- simultaneous interpreting facilities for 4 languages
- multivision system
- generator
- Sound and lighting systems
- overhead projection and video projection
- slide projector

Assessment of Glass Pyramid

The advantages and disadvantages of Glass Pyramid can be listed as below:

Being in uptown location: Glass Pyramid locates in Antalya which is one of the most attractive cities with its natural beauty in Turkey. This makes it advantageous in terms of getting more demand in convention sector. However, uptown location of the convention centre alienates it from the daily experience of local people. This causes dimishment of socio-cultural effect of convention phenomenon.

Lack of spatial variety: Although Glass Pyramid is suitable for the mega organizations in terms of its main hall capacity, there is lack of spaces for the activities with 500-750 people capacity which have more market share than mega conventions in the sector. Moreover, banquet activity as a main service area of convention centres is not supported in Glass Pyramid. In other words, there is lack of customized space for banquet activity which may take place in a convention organization. This convention centre can be regarded as limited or inflexible designed for organizations in different requirements when it is compared with ICEC.

Limited technical installation: Technical requirements of convention organizations, such as audio-visual systems, are met in minimum level in Glass Pyramid. Technical facilities are limited and they are not high technology application. This decreases its preferability by users.

2.3.3.3. İstanbul TÜYAP Beylikdüzü Fair Convention and Congress Centre

Figure 2.10. TÜYAP Beylikdüzü Fair Convention and Congress Centre (www.tuyap.com.tr)

TÜYAP (Tüm Fuarcılık Yapım A.Ş.) is a fair corporation which is established in 1979. The corporation has initially used Hotel Etap Marmara and İstanbul Sports & Exhibition Centre for its early organizations, however increasing demand in fair

sector created need in larger spaces for organizations. Hereupon, TÜYAP constructed İstanbul Exhibition Centre in 1987 firstly, and then a modern venue conforming to international standards in 1996, called TÜYAP Beylikdüzü Fair and Convention Centre.

Location Features

Figure 2.11. Location of TÜYAP Beylikdüzü (www.tuyap.com.tr)

TÜYAP Fair Convention and Congress Centre locates in Beylikdüzü between the two highways, TEM and E-5. Although it locates uptown, it has convenient accessibility because of its proximity to airport and two important highways. Moreover, TÜYAP provides access by means of service vehicles to the convention centre from various locations in the city, such as Taksim, Atatürk Airport, Bakırköy Seabus Port and Esenler Bus Terminal.

Because of being uptown, TÜYAP is not close to the entertainment and shopping facilities, and most especially to the hotels. In other words, there is lack of accommodation, catering and entertainment facilities near the TÜYAP Centre. This situation makes it dependent to the city centre.

Spatial and Functional Features

TÜYAP Beylikdüzü is the largest fair venue of Turkey with its 60000 m² open and 60000 m² closed area. Its facilities are listed below:

- 10 exhibition halls adjustable for multi purposes in 42000 m² area in total
  - 3 halls with a convertible capacity of 10.000 each, for conference, concert and meeting activities
  - 2 meeting halls with a convertible capacity of 4000 each
  - 3 meeting halls with a convertible capacity of 2000 each
  - Large convertible halls where 10.000 people may dine at the same time
- 11 meeting halls of various sizes from 50 to 750, furnished for special purposes over a total area of 8000 m², are available for meetings, seminars and private conversations
- 7 different cafeterias and 1 a la carte restaurant, and 2 fully equipped industrial kitchens with a capacity to serve 10,000 simultaneously
- Visitor and participant car park for 4500 vehicles and parking lot for TIRs
- Gas station, supermarket, fast food and drive-through restaurant, tourism information and travel office

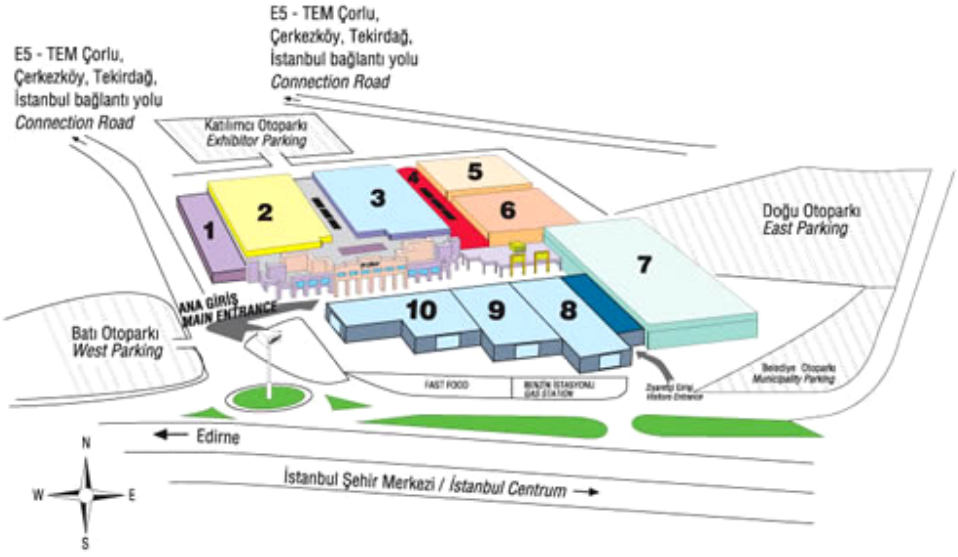
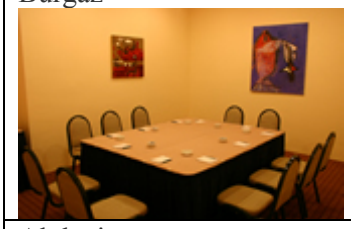


Figure 2.12. Site plan of the TÜYAP Beylikdüzü (www.tuyap.com.tr)

Table 2.12. Meeting Halls of TÜYAP and Their Capacities (Source: www.tuyap.com.tr)

Hall	Floor	Area (m^2)	Capacity (person)		
			Theatre	Banquet	Cocktail
Karadeniz 	Foyer 1	305	191	-	-
Ege 1 	Foyer 1	60	50	40	50-60
Ege 2 	Foyer 1	60	50	40	50-60
Sedef 	Foyer 2	84	70	50	80
Interexpo 	1st Floor	579	750	350	450
Marmara 	1st Floor	290	300	150	200
Büyükada 	2nd Floor	117	100	70	90

Table 2.12. (continued) Meeting Halls of TÜYAP and Their Capacities

Hall	Floor	Area (m^2)	Capacity (person)		
			Theatre	Banquet	Cocktail
Heybeli 	2nd Floor	114	100	70	90
Kınalı 	2nd Floor	68	60	40	60
Burgaz 	2nd Floor	22	15	-	-
Akdeniz 	Foyer 3	179	150	100	150

Technical Features

In comparison with ICEC and Glass Pyramid, TÜYAP Beylikdüzü doesn't have comprehensive technical equipment related with convention organizations. Some technical potential are listed below:

- wireless internet connections
- video (VHS/ Pal System) and sharp vision for video
- generator

- lighting and sound system
- overhead projection
- slide projector

Assessment of TÜYAP Beylikdüzü

TÜYAP Beylikdüzü Fair and Convention Centre hosts more than 50 organizations, 14.000 attendees and 2 million visitors in every year. The advantages and disadvantages of the venue can be listed as below:

Being close to main traffic arteries: While considering the fair organizations as main function of the venue, TÜYAP Beylikdüzü has convenient location for transportation of goods because of being close to main arterial roads. However, its uptown location makes it far from accommodation & recreation facilities and also daily life of local people, which affects the preferability of the venue for convention organizations negatively.

Insufficient convention space despite the high capacity: When it is assessed in terms of capacity, TÜYAP Beylikdüzü can be regarded as the largest fair and convention venue of Turkey on account of its restaurant with 10.000 people capacity, exhibition space with 42.000 m² and convertibility of this exhibition space to a meeting space with 10.000 people capacity. However, high capacity usage of this space for convention activities may be enabled in excluding term of fair organizations. In other words, customized spaces for convention activities are limited with the capacity of 750 people at most, and this situation points that the initial mission of TÜYAP Centre is fair organizations instead of conventions.

Moreover, there are some difficulties in practice while converting an exhibition space to a convention space. Adaptation in some spatial and technical requirements of convention organizations; such as acoustic of hall, simultaneous interpreting facilities and listening equipment etc., is possible in theory, however, is not

preferable in practice because of physical and technical difficulties it has. As a result, when the activities in TÜYAP Beylikdüzü are observed, it is seen that nearly most of them are fair organizations, but not conventions. This makes TÜYAP Beylikdüzü as the largest fair centre instead of the largest convention centre of Turkey.

Insufficient technical installation: TÜYAP Beylikdüzü is an insufficient venue in terms of convention activities. As mentioned before, it is lack of simultaneous interpreting facilities and listening equipments, which is vital for international convention organizations.

CHAPTER 3

MATERIAL AND METHOD

It is vital for both convention and construction industries, to describe features of the convention centre and measure the users' priorities in order to enable user-oriented design of these facilities and also effective investment in this field. Identifying the features of convention centre has been treated by the literature survey in previous chapter; however, how users' priorities can be measured, i.e. method of this assessment, is still ambiguous.

This chapter entails the material and method that cover related topics about subject domain. These are mainly grouped under three sub-sections that are;

- Selection of the Convention Centre for the Case Study by means of the Comparative Analysis
- User Groups of the Convention Centre
- Assessment Method: Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA)

3.1. Material

As the focus is users' priority and performance of convention centres of Turkey, the study material of this research is approved to be a major convention centre in Turkey and its users. This venue is selected for case study after the comparative analysis of convention centres mentioned in Chapter 2. The studied group is determined as all user groups of the convention centre, i.e. employees, meeting planners and attendees.

The reason of studying with three groups is that each of them experiences the space differentially and has different priorities in facility features.

3.1.1. Selection of the Convention Centre for the Case Study by means of the Comparative Analysis

In preceding chapter, the convention centres in Turkey have been analyzed separately in terms of their location, spatial & functional and technical features. In this chapter, a comparative assessment is made on these centres in order to determine the most successful venue among them, and also select the centre for the case study. Comparative analysis is made again by 3 sub-titles:

Location Aspect: As mentioned preceding chapter, location of a convention centre in the city is very important in terms of its operating and preferability by users. Being near a downtown location provides a convention centre both being a part of the social life of city and being near to all facilities of the city for users. Easy accessibility is also an advantage of a downtown location.

When three convention centres of Turkey are observed in terms of location, it is seen that only ICEC meets the criteria of being in downtown location. This provides it being near to accommodation, culture, entertainment and shopping facilities, and also easy accessibility by means of all transportation type. This situation has a significant contribution on success of the ICEC in convention market. However, the same positioning determination has not been applied for Glass Pyramid in Antalya and TÜYAP Beylikdüzü in İstanbul. Glass Pyramid locates in uptown location inside a culture complex, and TÜYAP in between 2 main highways but again in uptown location. This positioning alienates these venues from the socio-cultural life of the cities, and diminishes preferability rate comparing to ICEC. Additionally, there may be some difficulties in accessibility of such centres because of problematic transportation infrastructure of metropolises in Turkey. As a result, ICEC is more successful than the other convention centres in terms of location aspect.

Spatial and Functional Aspect: While planning the convention centres, it is primary to determine the size of target market and the scope of business served. This initial decision affects the next step that designing the spaces purpose-oriented according to activities holding in the centre. Thus, a convention centre should have spaces in different characteristics; such as auditorium, conference hall, seminar room, exhibition hall, banquet hall etc., in order to serve to different activities.

When 3 convention centres are compared in this context, it is seen that the ICEC and TÜYAP have spaces in order to serve 3 main function of convention centres; congress, exhibition/ fair and banquet. Particularly, ICEC has differential spaces for these functions, such as auditorium, conference hall, meeting room, exhibition hall, ballroom etc. Moreover, it has the flexible spaces adapting to various capacities by means of soundproof separators. However, Glass Pyramid is limited in term of both variety of spaces and flexibility of existing spaces for different capacities. It has no differential space for banquet activity and no hall for middle-scale meetings (about 500 people). As a result of this comparison, ICEC is more successful than the other two convention centres in terms of spatial and functional aspect.

Technical Aspect: Technical features are vital for performance of the venue. This aspect is complementary of other two aspects. In other words, no matter how the location and the spaces are, the venue with insufficient technical installation affects the result of organization and user satisfaction, consequently success of the venue negatively.

As analyzed separately in preceding chapter, it is seen that ICEC has high standard technical installation comparing to the other convention centres. Main requirements of convention organizations, such as simultaneous interpreting facilities and audio-visual systems, are all used in ICEC satisfyingly. However, technical facilities of Glass Pyramid are limited and they are not high technology application. Worse than the Glass Pyramid, TÜYAP Centre is insufficient for the convention organizations because of lack of simultaneous interpreting facilities and listening equipments which is vital for international convention organizations. As a result, like the first

two aspect, ICEC is also prevailing convention centre in terms of technical aspect. Because of the superiority in all of these 3 aspects, ICEC is determined as the material for the case study.

3.1.2. User Groups of the Convention Centre

Users of a convention centre can be divided into 3 groups, including attendees, meeting planners and employees of the convention centre working in convention organization. As mentioned before, the studied group of this research is determined as all of these 3 groups, because each has different opinions and priorities about facility features. These groups are examined below for the rest of the study which is conducted by their assessment.

Meeting Planners (Organizers): Meeting planning services are provided by event management& consultancy companies and agencies in Turkey. This group, as being user of convention centre, has special importance because they are decision makers in respect of venue selection. In other words, planners' evaluation of a convention centre is very crucial, because they are the people who deal with facility features most while making a venue selection.

Most of the studies about convention or meeting industry were conducted from meeting planner's perspective. For instance, study of Renaghan and Kay (1987) identified facility-related characteristics that meeting planners use to select a facility. These include;

- The size of the meeting room,
- The complexity of the audio-visual equipment,
- The control of lighting
- The control of climate
- Price.

Another study, which is conducted by Hinkin and Tracey (2003), identified a comprehensive set of physical and service-related characteristics of properties that may influence meeting effectiveness. The meeting planners and employees of travelling firms that participated in the study attached higher priority to;

- Security
- Staff competence of the meeting venue
- Meeting room matters
- Costly extras.

All these studies are valuable in order to understand the priorities and expectations of meeting planners as a user group of convention centres.

Employees: Employees are the user group which experience the convention centres most because of spending all working hours in these venues. They are able to observe the deficiencies in a venue consciously, so their evaluation is also valuable in order to identify weakness and strengths of a convention centre.

Attendees: It is right to say that attendee is "consumer" among the user groups, while planner and employee are regarded as "supplier" of the service provided in a convention centre. Attendees can be regarded as a kind of customer according to marketing jargon, because their satisfaction - in parallel with demand- determines the success of the convention. This is why the opinions of attendees are significant in order to assess a convention centre and its features.

Although most of the studies were conducted from the perspective of meeting planners, a recent study of Breiter and Milman (2006) has important contributions to explore the service priorities and needs of attendees in a convention centre. The study was also a first step in describing and measuring the features and services provided by a major convention centre in U.S.A. The result of the study indicated top priorities for attendees regarding the convention centre's facility services and features as;

- overall cleanliness of the convention centre,
- a well-maintained facility,
- helpfulness of guest services personnel,
- directional signage within the convention centre,
- availability of high quality lodging near the convention centre,
- sufficient restrooms throughout the facility
- ability to get cell phone signal.

This study is valuable in terms of understanding the priorities and expectations of attendees and constitution of the method in order to evaluate the convention centre.

3.2. Method

By understanding the importance and performance aspects of facility features from the users' perspective, large convention centres can be designed and managed to maintain a competitive edge in marketplace. For this purpose, it is important to determine a proper assessment method that measures both users' priorities and sufficiency of facility features from the users' perspective. The selected method for this research and its way of application is mentioned in detail under this title.

3.2.1. Assessment Method: Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA)

Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) can be defined as an easily-applied technique for measuring attribute importance and performance together in order to further the development of effective marketing programs. The theoretical background for the instrument development was based on the theory originally developed by Martilla and James (1977), where importance and performance of products or services are measured on a set of selected attributes.

According to Martilla and James, firms conducting attribute research to measure consumer acceptance of particular features of their marketing programs frequently encounter problems in translating the results into action. Two problematic factors are;

1- Management may find it difficult to understand the practical significance of research findings expressed in terms of “coefficient of determination” and “levels of stress”

2- The research may have examined only one side of the consumer acceptance question - either attribute importance or attribute performance- rather than both.

Empirical researches demonstrate that consumer satisfaction is a function of both expectations related to certain important attributes and judgements of attribute performance. In light of these considerations, importance-performance analysis has been found to be a useful technique for evaluating the elements of a marketing program (Martilla and James, 1977).

N. Slack considered a relationship between importance and performance, and theorized that target levels of performance for particular product attributes should be proportional to the importance of those attributes. In other words, importance is seen as viewed as a reflection of the relative value of the various quality attributes to users (Slack, 1991). According to Barsky (1995) , lower importance ratings are likely to play a lesser role in affecting overall perceptions, while higher importance ratings are likely to play a more critical role in determining user satisfaction. The objective is to identify which attributes, or combinations of the attributes are more influential on users’ behavior and which have less impact. Lovelock et al. stated that importance-performance analysis is an especially useful management tool to “direct scarce resources to areas where performance improvement is likely to have the most effect on overall user satisfaction”. It also has the benefit of pinpointing which service attributes should be maintained at present levels and “those on which significant improvement will have little impact” (Lovelock et al.,1998).

The Importance-Performance Analysis conceptually rests on multi-attribute models. This technique identifies strengths and weaknesses of an offering in terms of two criteria that users use in making a choice. One criterion is the relative importance of attributes. The other is users' evaluation of the offering in terms of those attributes. A particular application of the technique starts with an identification of the attributes that are relevant to the choice situation investigated. The list of attributes can be developed after surveying the relevant literature and/or conducting focus group interviews. Moreover, a set of attributes pertaining to a particular service (or goods) are evaluated on the basis of how important each is to the user, and how the service or goods is perceived to be performing relative to each attribute. This evaluation is typically accomplished by surveying a sample of users. After determining those attributes that are worthy of subsequent examination, users are asked two questions. One relates to the salience of the attributes and the other to the supplier's own performance in terms of delivery of these attributes.

Importance is typically measured prior to the actual consumption experience and performance is measured after the experience has been completed. Results are typically presented on a two-dimensional grid which consists of vertical and horizontal axes scaling the importance and performance of mean values both importance and performance scores (Byeong-Yong and Oh, 2002).

By using a central tendency e.g. mean, median or a rank-order measure, the attribute importance and performance scores are ordered and classified into high or low categories; then by pairing these two sets of rankings, each attribute is placed into one of the four quadrants of the importance performance grid (Crompton and Duray, 1985). Mean performance and importance scores are used as coordinates for plotting individual attributes on a two-dimensional matrix as shown in Figure 3.1. This matrix is used to prescribe prioritization of attributes for improvement and can provide guidance for strategy formulation (Kitcharoen, 2004).

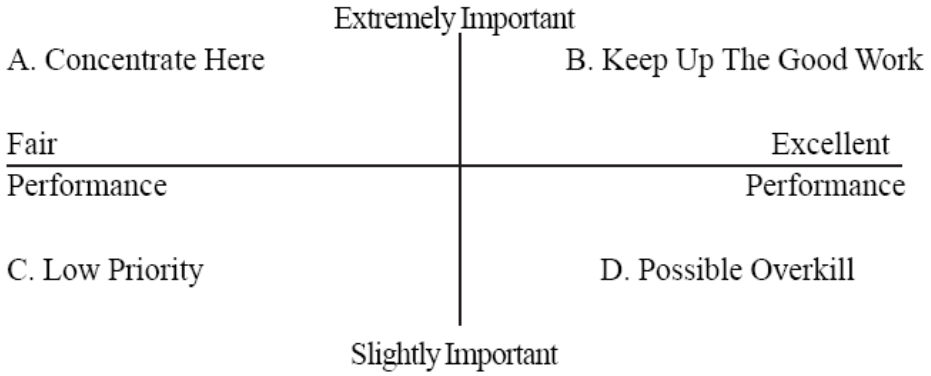


Figure 3.1 The Original IPA Framework (Martilla and James, 1977)

The Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) has been applied in a number of settings with relatively little modification in form. For example; Chon, Weaver, and Kim (1988) applied IPA for the Visitors Bureau of Norfolk, Virginia and Nitse and Bush (1993) used IPA to compare preconceptions of dental practices.

As a tool, IPA has gained popularity among hospitality and tourism researchers for its simplicity and ease of application. Recently, researchers have suggested an approach to tourism destination competitiveness that goes beyond conventional destination attributes to conclude, in addition, generic business factors of competitiveness. For instance, Enright and Newton (2004) used IPA to compare the factors pertaining to the competitiveness of both the destination's attractions and its tourism industry in Hong Kong.

Although, there are some studies regarding to importance-performance analysis of convention industry or destination selection, only a few of them have applied IPA on convention venues. In this context, the study of Breiter and Milman (2006) is worth mentioning as using IPA in order to evaluate the facility services and features of a major convention centre in U.S.A. After that, this method can be presented in order to assess importance and performance level of the constitutional features of a convention centre. This study is designed to address this need by analyzing the constitutional features of Turkey's most remarkable convention centre by IPA.

3.2.2. Development of the Questionnaire and Data Collection

This study has been conducted in two phases. In phase 1, features of a large convention centre have been identified by means of literature review. In phase 2, a questionnaire has been developed based on literature review in order to collect data from users for evaluating importance and performance level of features of Turkey's largest convention centre.

According to literature survey so far, there are three highlighted title regarding to the constitutional features of convention centres;

- location features
- spatial and functional features
- technical features

In order to build up a questionnaire for evaluating the features of a convention centre, it is vital to determine criteria -i.e. variables of the questionnaire- for getting healthy data from users. In this context, literature survey gives some inputs about the features for assessment. These variables are listed below:

- Location of the convention centre in the city (closeness to the city centre)
- Silence of the location
- Closeness of the centre to the accommodation facilities
- Closeness of the centre to the catering facilities
- Accessibility by means of public transportation
- Accessibility to airport and bus terminal from the convention centre
- Sufficient parking lot
- Directional road signage to the convention centre
- Capacity of meeting hall
- Size of the foyer
- Sufficient number of restroom and restroom for handicapped persons

- Easy accessibility to service spaces (restrooms, stairs etc.) from the meeting hall
- Availability of breakout rooms
- Availability of catering units in the convention centre
- Proximity of catering units to the meeting hall
- Placement of the stage
- Seating layout
- Availability of secondary meeting halls for meetings of smaller groups
- Nonexistence of structural elements, such as columns etc., disturbing the angleof sight in the meeting hall
- Easy accessibility of handicapped person to spaces throughout the centre
- Availability of information desk and bulletin board
- Comfort of the armchairs/ chairs in meeting halls
- Efficiency of the illumination system
- Efficiency of the ventilating and air-conditioning system
- Efficiency of the heating system
- Efficiency of the security system
- Efficiency of the audio-visual system equipment
- Availability of elevator for handicapped persons
- Directional signage within the convention centre
- Simultaneous translation system and headphones
- Sufficient public internet access
- Availability of documentation instruments (printer, photocopy machine etc.) for public use
- Availability of communication instrument (telephone-fax etc.) for public use
- Efficiency of the generator
- Efficiency of the fire warning and fire-extinguishing systems

Table 3.1. Items of the Questionnaire

Main titles pertaining to features of a conv. cen.	***Variables***	***Question No. İn questionaire***
Demographic Characteristics	Gender of respondents	1
	Age of respondents	2
	Educational background of respondents	3
	Capacity of the convention that respondent have taken part in organization	4*
	Attendance of respondents to a convention in the past	4
	Likelihood to attend an convention in the future in the said convention center	5
Location Features	Location of the convention centre in the city	6
	Silence of the location	7
	Closeness of the centre to the accommodation facilities	8
	Closeness of the centre to the catering facilities	9
	Accessibility by means of public transportation	10
	Accessibility to airport and bus terminal from the convention centre	11
	Sufficient parking lot	12
	Directional road signage to the convention centre	13
Spatial and Functional Features	Capacity of meeting hall	14
	Size of the foyer	15
	Sufficient number of restroom and restroom for handicapped persons	16
	Easy accessibility to service spaces (restrooms, stairs etc.) from the meeting hall	17
	Availability of breakout rooms	18
	Availability of catering units in the convention centre	19
	Proximity of catering units to the meeting hall	20
	Placement of the stage	21
	Seating layout	22
	Availability of secondary meeting halls for meetings of smaller groups	23
	Nonexistence of structural elements, such as columns etc., disturbing the angle of sight in the meeting hall	24
	Easy accessibility of handicapped person to spaces throughout the centre	25
	Availability of information desk and bulletin board	26
	Comfort of the armchairs/ chairs in meeting halls	27
Technical Features	Efficiency of the illumination system	28
	Efficiency of ventilating and air-conditioning system	29
	Efficiency of the heating system	30
	Efficiency of the security system	31
	Efficiency of the audio-visual system equipment	32
	Availability of elevator for handicapped persons	33
	Directional signage within the convention centre	34
	Simultaneous translation system and headphones	35
	Sufficient public internet access	36
	Availability of documentation instruments (printer, photocopy machine etc.) for public use	37
	Availability of communication instr. for public use	38
	Efficiency of the generator	39*
	Efficiency of fire warning &fire-extinguishing systems	40*

Respondents have been asked to indicate the level of 35 variables pertaining to facility features provided by a large convention centre. The questionnaire is also included items pertaining to attendance to conventions in past, likelihood to attend future conventions and demographic characteristics of users. The variables of demographic characteristics include gender, age and education level and asked to all user groups. However, some variables have been used interchangeably depending on the user group. For instance, the questions 4* in Table 3.1 have been asked to organizers and employees. This variable has been replaced with questions 4 and 5 in the attendees' questionnaire. The questions 39* and 40* have also been asked only to organizer and employee groups, because attendees might have no medium to assess the efficiency of these technical features in that limited time.

The participants have been asked to rate the level of importance of facility features on a 1-5 scale, when 1 represent 'unimportant' and 5 represent 'very important'. The respondents have been also asked to rate the perceived performance or actual experience with these facility features at the convention centre, where 1 represent 'poor experience' and 5 represent 'excellent experience'. Based on the conceptual framework, it is considered that there would be difference in assessment of different user groups, i.e. attendees, organizers and employees. Thus, the results of the questionnaires have been evaluated separately for different groups.

The questionnaire has been distributed to attendees at a two-day long convention held in İstanbul Lütfi Kırdar Convention and Exhibition Centre. The convention was held in Rumeli-A Hall of ICEC which has seating layout in theatre style. Besides the main hall, a seminar room was used for the smaller group meetings and foyer of the Rumeli building was arranged with fairstands of the firms.

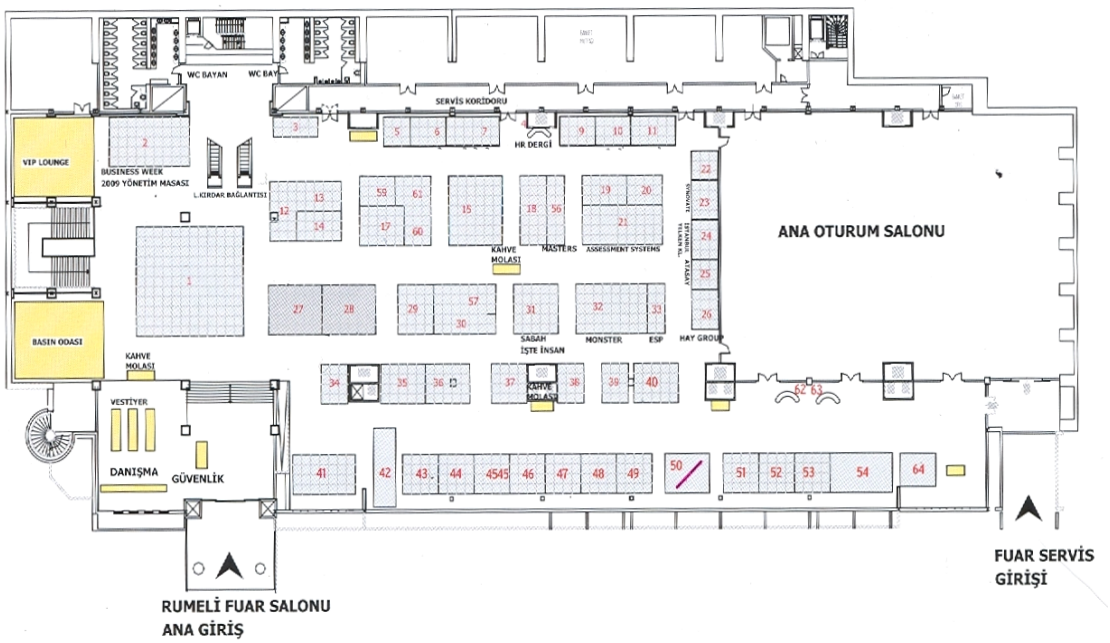


Figure 3.2. Plan of the Rumeli Building

Figure 3.3. Foyer of the Rumeli Building of ICEC

Figure 3.4. Rumeli-A Hall (main meeting hall of the organization) - 1

Figure 3.5. Rumeli-A Hall (main meeting hall of the organization) - 2

Figure 3.6. Seminar room (secondary meeting hall of the organization)

By reason of the fact that the permission has comprised only the breakout sessions, there was very limited time to apply the questionnaire to the attendees. In the first day, the questionnaire has been distributed to 15 employees of the convention centre who deal with convention organizations. The questionnaire has been applied to attendees in the second day of the organization, in contemplation of that attendees would experience the venue more than the first day. The questionnaire distributed in two coffee-breaks of the second day totally in 80-minute duration. The capacity of the organization was nearly 500 people and questionnaires have been distributed to 92 of them.

The questionnaire has been distributed to 4 convention organization companies in Ankara and 2 companies in İstanbul. It applied on totally 56 organizers. Questionnaires have been supplied to companies by way of e-mail and face-to-face meeting.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

This chapter includes the results of the questionnaire distributed to three groups of users. Statistically significant differences will be highlighted between the level of importance and performance of the facility features of the convention centre. These importance-performance gaps will be also discussed in this chapter.

4.1. Assessment of Facility Features from the Perspective of Meeting Planners

General Profile of the Respondents: As mentioned before, the questionnaires have been distributed to 56 organizers by means of e-mail and face-to-face meetings. According to results, the meeting planners that participated in the study represented age group between the 20 and 60. The largest age group represented in the sample were between 21-30 years (55,4%) and 31-40 years (30,4%). Most of the respondents had an university education degree (96,4 %). The gender distribution between females and males was 42,9% and 57% respectively.

Table 4.1 Age of respondent employees of ICEC

Age group	Frequency	Percent (%)
Under 20	0	0
21-30	31	55,4
31-40	17	30,4
41-50	5	8,9
51-60	3	5,4
61-70	0	0
71 or over	0	0
Total	56	100,0

Table 4.2 Educational background of respondent employees of ICEC

Education level	Frequency	Percent (%)
Elementary education	0	0
High school	0	0
University	54	96,4
Graduate	2	3,6
Post-graduate	0	0
Total	56	100,0

Table 4.3 Gender of respondent attendees

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Female	24	42,9
Male	32	57,1
Total	56	100,0

Nearly two-thirds of the respondents indicated that they worked in convention organizations with the capacity of 250- 1000 people. This corresponds to nearly 70% of the respondents worked in organization of mid-scale conventions and remaining 30% of them worked in large-scale ones.

Table 4.4 Capacity of the largest convention that respondent have worked in organization

Capacity	Frequency	Percent (%)
0-250	0	0
251-500	19	33,9
501-1000	20	35,7
1001-1500	7	12,5
1501 or over	10	17,9
Total	56	100,0

Importance and Performance of the Convention Facility's Features: The meeting planners were asked to rate the level of importance of 35 facility features on a 1-5 scale, when 1 represented "unimportant" and 5 represented "very important". The respondents were also asked to rate the perceived performance, or actual experience, of these facility features at the ICEC, where 1 represented "poor experience" and 5 represented "excellent experience".

Table 4.5 Meeting Planners' perception of facility features at the convention centre

No	Facility Features	Level of Importance		Level of Performance		T-test	
		Mean	Std.D.	Mean	Std.D.	T value	Sig.
1	Location of the convention centre in city	4,73	0,56	4,64	0,55	1	N/S
2	Silence of the location	3,86	1,09	3,55	0,78	1,961	N/S
3	Closeness to accommodation facilities	4,64	0,48	4,32	0,81	3,358	0,001
4	Closeness to the catering facilities	3,72	0,95	3,78	0,79	-0,38	N/S
5	Accessibility by public transport.	4,32	0,79	4,14	0,65	1,563	N/S
6	Accessibility to airport &bus terminal	4,14	0,99	3,48	0,91	4,564	0
7	Sufficient parking lot	4,32	0,97	3,34	1,13	4,997	0
8	Directional road signage to conv. centre	4,14	0,86	3,27	1,27	4,359	0
9	Capacity of meeting hall	4,84	0,37	4,43	0,49	5,78	0
10	Size of the foyer	4,52	0,63	4,45	0,5	0,727	N/S
11	Sufficient WC and WC for handicapped	4,55	0,5	3,69	0,77	6,532	0
12	Easy accessibility to service spaces from the meeting hall	4,16	0,63	3,73	0,75	3,373	0,001
13	Availability of breakout rooms	4,27	0,65	3,82	0,66	4,139	0
14	Availability of catering units in conv. c.	3,89	0,68	3,8	0,84	0,726	N/S
15	Proximity of catering units to meeting h.	3,77	0,69	3,91	0,84	-1	N/S
16	Placement of the stage	4,64	0,65	4,27	0,67	3,098	0,003
17	Seating layout	4,67	0,61	4,2	0,8	3,897	0
18	Availability of secondary meeting halls	4,48	0,57	3,96	1,03	3,711	0
19	Nonexistence of structural elements disturbing the sight angle in meeting h.	4,69	0,5	4,09	0,86	6,219	0
20	Easy access. of handicapped thr. centre	4,51	0,61	3,8	0,78	5,739	0
21	Availability of info desk &bulletin b.	4,11	0,73	3,69	0,78	3,305	0,002
22	Comfort of the armchairs/ chairs	4	0,85	3,84	0,91	1,176	N/S
23	Efficiency of the illumination system	4,68	0,54	4,13	0,83	4,538	0
24	Efficiency of ventilating and AC system	4,79	0,49	3,98	0,92	6,381	0
25	Efficiency of the heating system	4,82	0,39	4,05	0,88	6,284	0
26	Efficiency of the security system	4,47	0,63	3,87	0,82	4,401	0
27	Efficiency of the audio-visual system	4,13	1,08	3,64	1,12	3,154	0,003
28	Availability of elevator for handicapped	4,27	0,62	3,95	0,83	2,52	0,015
29	Directional signage within the conv. c.	4,09	0,9	3,89	0,93	1,749	N/S
30	Simultaneous translation system and headphones	3,8	1,25	3,91	1,01	-0,64	N/S
31	Sufficient public internet access	4,18	1,13	4,05	0,9	0,638	N/S
32	Availability of docum. instr. for public	3,75	1,13	3,64	1,07	0,814	N/S
33	Availability of commun. instr. for public	3,73	1,15	3,71	1,09	0,142	N/S
34	Efficiency of the generator	4,37	0,86	4,16	0,73	1,658	N/S
35	Eff. of fire warning & extinguishing sys.	4,57	0,79	4	0,91	3,991	0

The results indicated that capacity of the meeting hall was perceived to be most important aspect of the facility (mean: 4.84), followed by efficiency of heating system (mean: 4.82) and ventilating-air conditioning system (mean: 4.79). The other two important aspects were stated by organizers as location of convention centre in the city (mean: 4.73) and nonexistence of structural elements disturbing the sight angle in meeting hall (mean: 4.69) (Table 4.5).

The findings revealed that closeness of the convention centre to the catering facilities (mean: 3.72) , availability of communication instruments for public use (mean: 3.73) and availability of documentation instrument for public use (mean: 3.75) were the least important features of the convention facility perceived by meeting planners. These were followed by proximity of catering units to the meeting hall (means: 3.77) and simultaneous translation system& headphones (mean: 3.80) as being less important features (Table 4.5).

As far as performance of these features at the İstanbul Lütfi Kırdar Convention and Exhibition Centre (ICEC), the highest scores were attributed to location of ICEC in the city (mean: 4.64), size of the foyer (mean: 4.45) and capacity of the meeting hall (mean: 4.43). Meeting planners were also satisfied with closeness of the ICEC to the accommodation facilities (mean: 4.32) and placement of the stage in the meeting hall (mean: 4.27). On the other hand, the lowest scores of ICEC's performance were attributed to directional road signage to the convention centre (mean: 3.27), sufficient parking lot (mean: 3.34), accessibility to airport &bus terminal (mean: 3.48) and silence of the location (mean: 3.55) (Table 4.5).

A comparison between the level of importance and the performance of the convention facility features yielded 21 out of 35 negative performance gaps. T-tests indicated statistically significant differences between the level of importance attached to each feature and the actual experience of the respondents in the areas of *closeness to accommodation facilities*, *accessibility to airport & bus terminal*, *sufficient parking lot*, *directional road signage to the convention centre*, *capacity of meeting hall*, *sufficient restrooms and restroom for handicapped people*, *easy*

accessibility to service spaces from the meeting hall, *availability of breakout rooms*, *placement of the stage*, *seating layout*, *availability of secondary meeting halls for smaller group meetings*, *nonexistence of structural elements disturbing the sight angle in the meeting hall*, *easy accessibility of handicapped person to spaces throughout the centre*, *availability of info desk & bulletin board*, *efficiency of technical systems (HVAC, illumination, security, audio-visual, fire warning & extinguishing)*, *availability of elevator for handicapped people.*

A visual summary of importance and performance results of the convention centre's facility features gaps is illustrated in Figure 4.1. According to Breiter and Milman (2006), this is a powerful visual presentation of the results since all variables would have loaded in the upper-right hand quadrant of the coordinate axes, indicating high perceptions of importance and performance of convention facility's features.

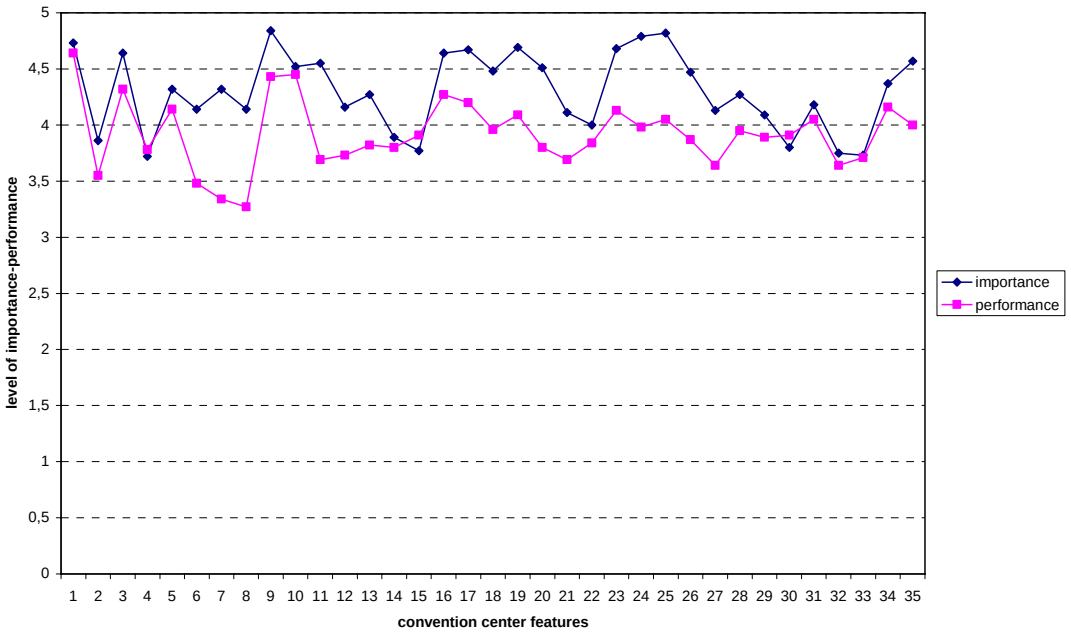


Figure 4.1. Levels of Importance versus Performance from Meeting Organizers' Perspective

4.2. Assessment of Facility Features from the Perspective of Employees

General Profile of the Respondents: As mentioned in Chapter 3, the questionnaires have been distributed to 15 employees of ICEC who deal with convention organizations. According to results, the employees that participated in the study represented age group between 20 to 50 years. The largest age groups represented in the sample were between 21-30 years (46, 7 %) and 31-40 years (40 %). Most of the respondents had a university education degree (86, 7 %). The gender distribution between females and males was 46, 7 % and 53, 3 % respectively.

Table 4.6 Age of respondent employees of ICEC

Age group	Frequency	Percent (%)
Under 20	0	0
21-30	7	46,7
31-40	6	40,0
41-50	2	13,3
51-60	0	0
61-70	0	0
71 or over	0	0
Total	15	100,0

Table 4.7 Educational background of respondent employees of ICEC

Education level	Frequency	Percent (%)
Elementary education	0	0
High school	2	13,3
University	13	86,7
Graduate	0	0
Post-graduate	0	0
Total	15	100,0

Table 4.8 Gender of respondent employees of ICEC

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Female	7	46,7
Male	8	53,3
Total	15	100,0

Importance and Performance of the Convention Facility's Features: As applied to meeting planners, the employees of ICEC were also asked to evaluate 35 facility features of the convention centre. Each feature was evaluated with regard to level of importance on a 1-5 scale, when 1 represented "unimportant" and 5 represented "very important". The respondents were also asked to rate the perceived performance of the features, where 1 represented "poor experience" and 5 represented "excellent experience".

The results indicated that efficiency of ventilating and air-conditioning system was perceived to be most important aspect of the facility (mean: 4.73), followed by efficiency of the audio-visual system (mean: 4.67). Succeeding three aspects; i.e. efficiency of the heating system, availability of elevator for handicapped people and efficiency of fire warning & extinguish system, have the same importance level (mean: 4.60) according to employees (Table 4.9).

The findings revealed that proximity of catering units to the meeting hall (mean: 3.73), availability of communication instruments for the public use (mean: 3.80) and silence of the location (mean: 3.87) were the least important features of the convention facility perceived by employees. These were followed by closeness of the convention centre to the catering facilities, accessibility to airport & bus terminal and availability of secondary meeting halls, as being less important features (mean: 3.93).

As far as performance of these features at the ICEC, the highest scores were attributed to the closeness of the centre to accommodation facilities and its location in the city (mean: 4.73). Employees were also satisfied with availability of secondary meeting halls for smaller group meetings and nonexistence of structural elements disturbing the sight angle in the meeting hall (mean: 4.53). On the other hand, the lowest scores of ICEC's performance were attributed to sufficient parking lot (mean: 3.13), directional road signage to the centre (mean: 3.27), availability of catering units in convention centre (mean: 3.47), accessibility to airport& bus terminal (mean: 3.73) and proximity of catering units to the meeting hall (mean: 3.73) (Table 4.9).

Table 4.9 Employees' perception of facility features at the convention centre

No	Facility Features	Level of Importance		Level of Performance		T-test	
		Mean	Std.D.	Mean	Std.D.	T value	Sig.
1	Location of the convention centre in city	4,53	0,83	4,73	1,03	-1,382	N/S
2	Silence of the location	3,87	0,92	4,47	0,83	-1,718	N/S
3	Closeness to accommodation facilities	4,27	1,10	4,73	1,03	-2,824	0,014
4	Closeness to the catering facilities	3,93	1,22	4,33	1,18	-1,871	N/S
5	Accessibility by public transport.	4,33	1,05	4,33	1,23	0,000	N/S
6	Accessibility to airport &bus terminal	3,93	1,22	3,73	0,96	0,764	N/S
7	Sufficient parking lot	4,13	1,06	3,13	1,41	2,646	0,019
8	Directional road signage to conv. centre	4,20	0,86	3,27	1,03	2,357	0,034
9	Capacity of meeting hall	4,27	1,22	4,13	0,99	0,435	N/S
10	Size of the foyer	4,07	1,03	4,00	1,07	0,269	N/S
11	Sufficient WC and WC for handicapped	4,33	1,23	4,00	0,85	1,160	N/S
12	Easy accessibility to service spaces from the meeting hall	4,00	1,11	4,29	0,91	-1,075	N/S
13	Availability of breakout rooms	4,00	1,13	4,00	1,36	0,000	N/S
14	Availability of catering units in conv. c.	4,20	0,94	3,47	1,41	2,219	0,044
15	Proximity of catering units to meeting h.	3,73	0,88	3,73	1,44	0,000	N/S
16	Placement of the stage	4,40	0,91	4,27	1,10	0,564	N/S
17	Seating layout	4,53	0,83	4,47	1,06	0,367	N/S
18	Availability of secondary meeting halls	3,93	1,22	4,53	1,06	-2,201	0,045
19	Nonexistence of structural elements, disturbing the sight angle in meeting h.	4,40	1,12	4,53	0,74	-0,695	N/S
20	Easy access. of handicapped thr. centre	4,40	1,18	3,87	1,25	2,477	0,027
21	Availability of info desk &bulletin b.	4,29	1,14	3,93	1,00	0,960	N/S
22	Comfort of the armchairs/ chairs	4,36	0,93	4,29	1,27	0,186	N/S
23	Efficiency of the illumination system	4,53	1,06	4,47	1,13	0,323	N/S
24	Efficiency of ventilating and AC system	4,73	1,03	4,40	1,06	2,646	0,019
25	Efficiency of the heating system	4,60	1,06	4,13	1,19	1,825	N/S
26	Efficiency of the security system	4,40	1,12	4,20	1,15	0,676	N/S
27	Efficiency of the audio-visual system	4,67	1,05	4,13	1,25	1,740	N/S
28	Availability of elevator for handicapped	4,60	1,06	3,80	1,26	3,292	0,005
29	Directional signage within the conv. c.	4,27	1,10	4,27	1,03	1,000	N/S
30	Simultaneous translation system and headphones	4,17	1,19	4,17	1,19	0,000	N/S
31	Sufficient public internet access	4,20	1,15	4,27	0,80	-0,250	N/S
32	Availability of docum. instr. for public	4,00	1,31	4,07	1,10	-0,235	N/S
33	Availability of commun. instr. for public	3,80	1,21	3,93	0,96	-0,414	N/S
34	Efficiency of the generator	4,53	1,06	4,47	1,13	0,564	N/S
35	Eff. of fire warning & extinguishing sys.	4,60	1,06	4,07	1,33	1,948	N/S

T-tests indicated statistically significant differences between the level of importance attached to each feature and the actual experience of the respondents in the areas of *closeness of the convention centre to the accommodation facilities*, *sufficient parking lot*, *directional road signage to the convention centre*, *availability of catering units in the convention centre*, *availability of secondary meeting halls for smaller group meetings*, *easy accessibility of handicapped people to spaces throughout centre*, *efficiency of ventilating and air-conditioning system*, *availability of elevator for handicapped people*. Some of these gaps demonstrate that performances of these items exceed their importance ratings. These two items are *closeness of the convention centre to the accommodation facilities* and *availability of secondary meeting halls for smaller group meetings*. The other six items listed above have significant performance gaps according to statistical results.

A visual summary of importance and performance results of facility features gaps from employees' perspective is illustrated in Figure 4.2. Statistically significant gaps of eight items can be seen in this line chart by the numbers corresponding in Table 4.9, i.e. the numbers 3, 7, 8, 14, 18, 20, 24 and 28.

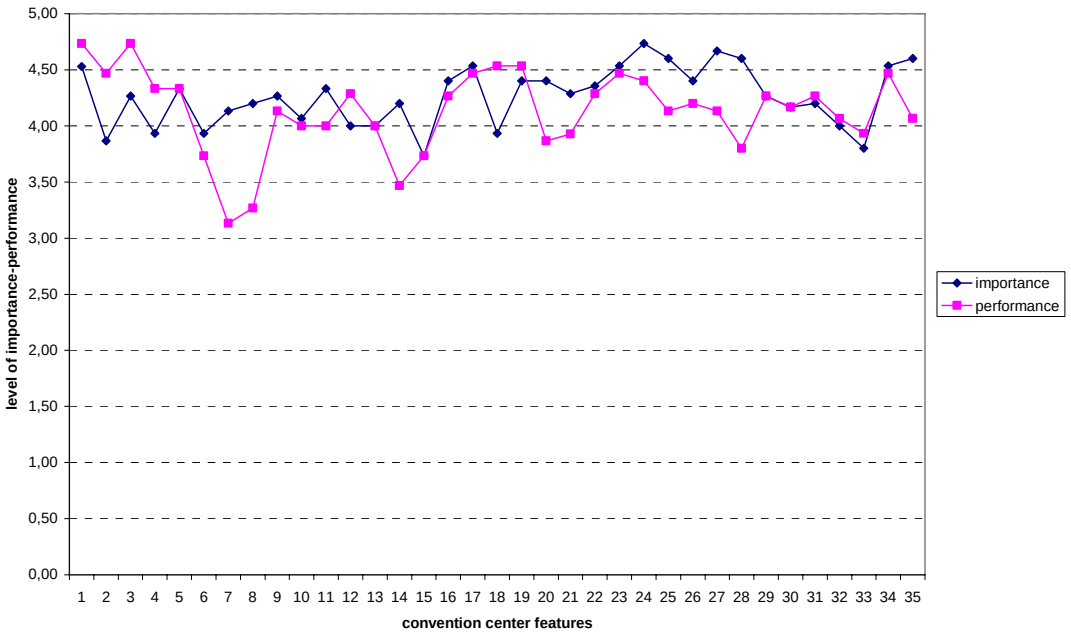


Figure 4.2 Levels of Importance versus Performance from Employees' Perspective

4.3. Assessment of Facility Features from the Perspective of Attendees

General Profile of the Respondents: The questionnaire has distributed to 105 attendees of a convention held at ICEC, 95 of them have returned and 92 of them have been accepted for evaluation. The attendees that participated in the study represented age group between the 20 and 50. The largest age groups represented in the sample were between 31-40 years (48, 9 %) and 21-30 years (47, 8 %). Most of the respondents had a university education degree (67, 4 %). These percentages were directly related to the fact that attendees of this convention were high-educated professionals. The gender distribution between females and males was 58, 7 % and 41, 3 % respectively.

Table 4.10 Age of respondent attendees

Age group	Frequency	Percent (%)
Under 20	0	0
21-30	44	47,8
31-40	45	48,9
41-50	3	3,3
51-60	0	0
61-70	0	0
71 or over	0	0
Total	92	100,0

Table 4.11 Educational background of respondent attendees

Education level	Frequency	Percent (%)
Elementary education	0	0
High school	1	1,1
University	62	67,4
Graduate	27	29,3
Post-graduate	2	2,2
Total	92	100,0

Table 4.12 Gender of respondent attendees

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Female	54	58,7
Male	38	41,3
Total	92	100,0

Most of the respondents have attended a convention held at a convention centre before. Only 10, 9 % of them stated that they have been in a convention for the first time (Table 4.13). Almost all of the respondents indicated that they were likely (48, 9%) or very likely (47, 8%) to attend a convention at ICEC in the future (Table 4.14).

Table 4.13 *Attendance* of respondents to a convention holding at a convention center in past

Attendance to a convention in the past	Frequency	Percent (%)
Yes	82	89,1
No	10	10,9
Total	92	100,0

Table 4.14 Likelihood to attend a convention in the future in the said convention center

Likelihood to attend a convention in the future in ICEC	Frequency	Percent (%)
Very unlikely	0	0
Unlikely	0	0
Somewhat likely	3	3,3
Likely	45	48,9
Very likely	44	47,8
Total	92	100,0

Importance and Performance of the Convention Facility's Features: As applied to the first two user groups, the attendees of the convention in ICEC were also asked to evaluate 33 facility features of the convention centre with regard to the level of importance and performance on a 1-5 scale. Differently from the other two groups, attendees were not required to assess two technical features, i.e. efficiency of

generator and fire warning& extinguishing system. 1 represented “unimportant” and 5 represented “very important” for evaluation of importance level, where 1 represented “poor experience” and 5 represented “excellent experience” for evaluation of performance.

The results indicated that efficiency of ventilating and air-conditioning system was perceived to be most important aspect of the facility (mean: 4.65), followed by efficiency of the audio-visual system (mean: 4.56), location of the convention centre in the city (mean: 4.55) and capacity of the meeting hall (mean: 4.54). Succeeding two aspects; i.e. efficiency of the heating system and placement of the stage in the meeting hall, have the same importance level according to the attendees (mean: 4.50) (Table 4.15).

The findings revealed that closeness of the convention centre to the catering facilities (mean: 3.60), availability of communication instruments (mean: 3.61) and documentation instruments for the public use (mean: 3.63) were the least important features of the convention facility perceived by attendees. These were followed by closeness of the centre to the accommodation facilities (mean: 3.93) and proximity of catering units to the meeting hall, as being less important features (mean: 3.93) (Table 4.15).

As far as performance of these features at the ICEC, the highest scores were attributed to the location of the convention centre in the city (mean: 4.59), closeness of the centre to the accommodation facilities (mean: 4.29) and accessibility by means of public transportation (mean: 4.23). Attendees were also satisfied with the capacity of meeting hall (mean: 4.15) and silence of the location of ICEC (mean: 4.10). On the other hand, the lowest scores of ICEC’s performance were attributed to availability of communication instruments (mean: 3.06) and documentation instruments for the public use (mean: 3.13), sufficient parking lot (mean: 3.29), availability of catering units in the convention centre (mean: 3.36) and availability of elevator for handicapped people (mean: 3.37) (Table 4.15).

Table 4.15 Attendees' perception of facility features at the convention centre

No	Facility Features	Level of Importance		Level of Performance		T-test	
		Mean	Std.D.	Mean	Std.D.	T value	Sig.
1	Location of the convention centre in city	4,55	0,65	4,59	0,67	-0,427	N/S
2	Silence of the location	4	0,94	4,1	0,88	-0,762	N/S
3	Closeness to accommodation facilities	3,83	1,1	4,29	0,76	-3,738	0,000
4	Closeness to the catering facilities	3,6	1,16	4,08	0,89	-3,236	0,002
5	Accessibility by public transport.	4,34	0,96	4,23	0,9	0,856	N/S
6	Accessibility to airport &bus terminal	3,97	1,01	3,44	1,09	3,814	0,000
7	Sufficient parking lot	4,36	0,92	3,29	1,15	6,540	0,000
8	Directional road signage to conv. centre	4,35	0,79	3,4	1,11	6,844	0,000
9	Capacity of meeting hall	4,5	0,71	4,15	0,8	3,242	0,002
10	Size of the foyer	4,11	0,85	4,03	0,81	0,596	N/S
11	Sufficient WC and WC for handicapped	4,44	0,8	3,77	0,96	5,619	0,000
12	Easy accessibility to service spaces from the meeting hall	4,36	0,72	3,88	0,84	4,539	0,000
13	Availability of breakout rooms	4,27	0,79	3,49	0,99	6,289	0,000
14	Availability of catering units in conv. c.	4,07	0,8	3,36	1,1	5,080	0,000
15	Proximity of catering units to meeting h.	3,91	0,9	3,57	1,02	2,435	0,017
16	Placement of the stage	4,5	0,69	3,7	0,9	7,737	0,000
17	Seating layout	4,43	0,81	3,75	0,91	5,682	0,000
18	Availability of secondary meeting halls	4,03	0,86	3,65	0,85	3,489	0,001
19	Nonexistence of structural elements, disturbing the sight angle in meeting h.	4,23	0,87	3,88	0,89	2,971	0,004
20	Easy access. of handicapped thr. centre	4,3	0,91	3,53	1,04	5,607	0,000
21	Availability of info desk &bulletin b.	4,14	0,87	3,52	0,94	5,650	0,000
22	Comfort of the armchairs/ chairs	4,31	0,9	3,51	0,96	5,731	0,000
23	Efficiency of the illumination system	4,4	0,76	4,05	0,78	3,267	0,002
24	Efficiency of ventilating and AC system	4,65	0,65	3,77	0,95	7,836	0,000
25	Efficiency of the heating system	4,54	0,72	3,8	0,93	6,456	0,000
26	Efficiency of the security system	4,32	0,81	3,84	0,84	4,447	0,000
27	Efficiency of the audio-visual system	4,56	0,62	3,86	0,8	7,350	0,000
28	Availability of elevator for handicapped	4,4	0,91	3,37	1	8,007	0,000
29	Directional signage within the conv. c.	4,27	0,74	3,54	0,93	6,181	0,000
30	Simultaneous translation system and headphones	4,19	0,92	3,6	1,02	4,223	0,000
31	Sufficient public internet access	4,07	0,91	3,47	0,98	4,295	0,000
32	Availability of docum. instru. for public	3,63	0,98	3,13	1,02	3,783	0,000
33	Availability of commun. instr. for public	3,61	0,99	3,06	0,99	4,193	0,000

A comparison between the level of importance and the performance of the convention facility features yielded 29 significant differences out of 33 items. In other words, T-tests indicated that only four facility features have no significant gaps between the importance and performance levels with regard to: *location of the convention centre in the city*, *silence of the location*, *accessibility by means of public transport* and *size of the foyer*. Two of 29 items, i.e. *closeness of the convention centre to both accommodation facilities and catering facilities*, demonstrate that performances of these items exceed their importance ratings. Rest of them, i.e. 27 items, has statistically significant performance gaps.

A visual summary of importance and performance results of facility features gaps from attendees' perspective is illustrated in Figure 4.3. As it is seen in line chart, there are significant differences on most of the features' importance and the performance levels. Four facility features, which have no significant gaps, can be seen by number of 1, 2, 5 and 10.

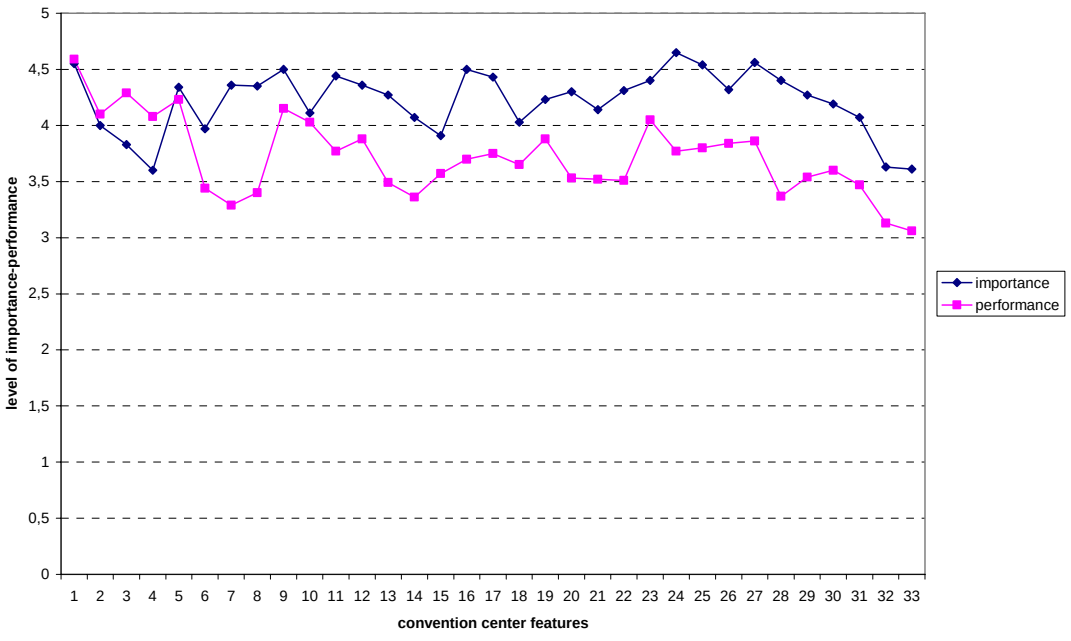


Figure 4.3 Levels of Importance versus Performance from Attendees' Perspective

4.4. Data Plotting of Users' Scores with IPA Matrix

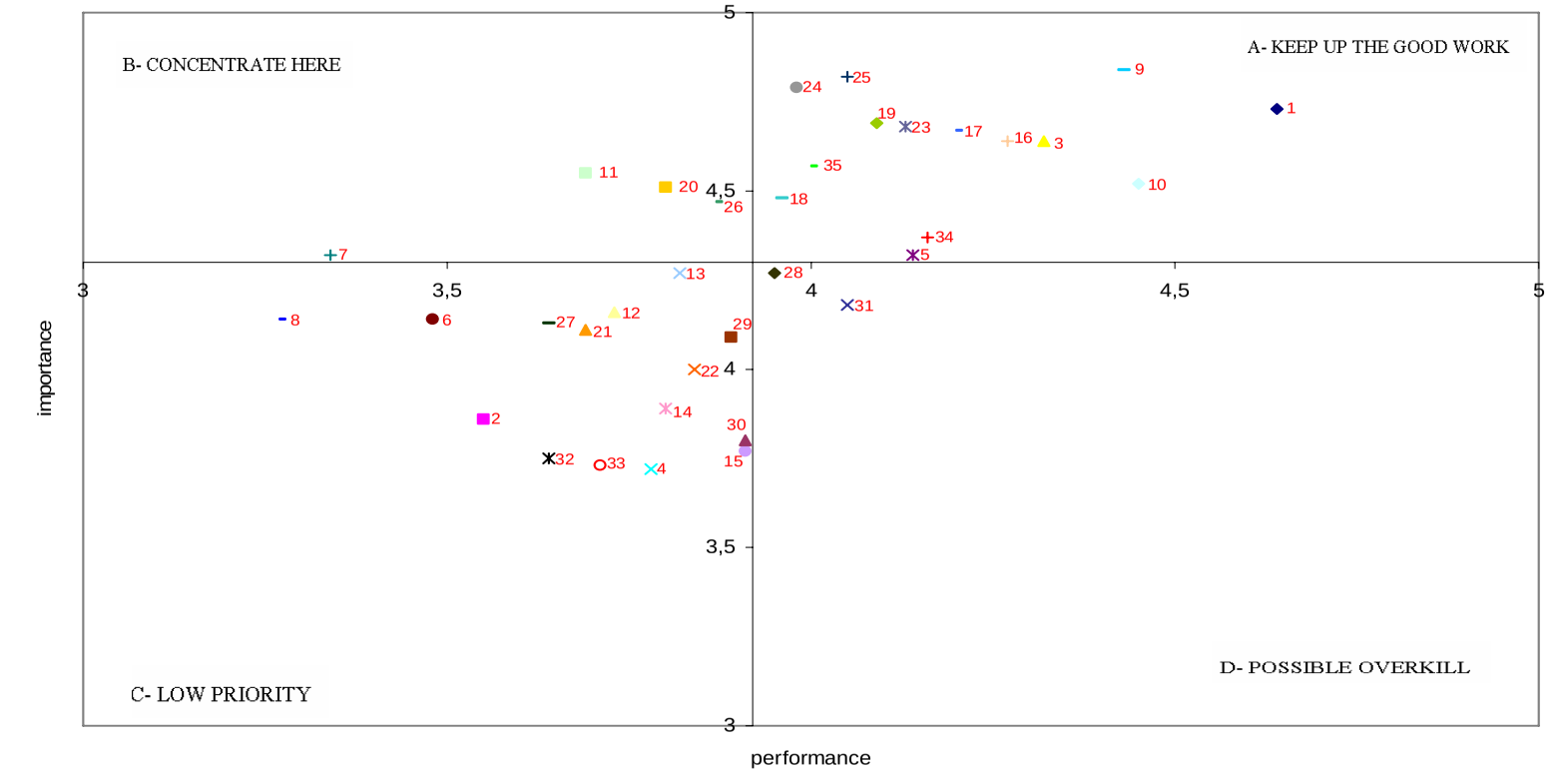
A standard approach adopted by IPA is to combine measures of importance and performance into a two dimensional grid so as to ease data interpretation and elicit suggestions for action. The overall mean scores of importance and performance are then used to create four quadrants within the plot.

Table 4.16 Overall means of importance and performance scores of users

User Group	Overall Mean of Importance	Overall Mean of Performance
Meeting Planners	4,30	3,92
Employees	4,26	4,13
Attendees	4,22	3,72

The Quadrants can be used to generate suggestions. Quadrant A, which includes high importance and high performance level, identifies the attributes that the convention centre should strive to maintain or "keep up the good work". Quadrant B, which includes factors that are high in importance but low in performance, identifies critical areas for improvement where decision makers are recommended to "concentrate here". Quadrant C identifies areas of low priority, including factors in which the convention centre is not particularly successful, or satisfactory, but which are low in importance also. Quadrant D includes factors that are low in importance but high in performance, and thus identifies area as wasted effort or "possible overkill".

Figure 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6 gives the distribution of each facility features onto two-dimensional grid according to assessment of each user group. In this study, it is focused on features in Quadrant A and B, which include high importance level. Numeric variables in figures 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 correspond to facility features as listed in Table 4.5, Table 4.9 and 4.15 respectively.



1= Location of the centre in city 2= Silence of the location 3= Closeness to acc. facilities 4= Closeness to catering f. 5= Accessibility by means of public transportation 6= Accessibility to airport and bus terminal 7= Sufficient parking lot 8= Directional road signage to the convention centre	9= Capacity of the meeting hall 10= Size of the foyer 11= Sufficient number of WC and WC for handicapped 12= Easy access. to service spaces from the meeting hall 13= Availability of breakout rooms 14= Availability of catering units in the convention centre 15= Proximity of catering units to the meeting hall	16= Placement of the stage in the hall 17= Seating layout 18= Availability of secondary meeting halls for smaller group meetings 19= Nonexistence of structural elements disturbing the sight angle in the meeting hall 20= Easy accessibility of handicapped people to spaces throughout the centre 21= Availability of information desk& bulletin board	22= Comfort of seats in meeting halls 23= Efficiency of the illumination system 24= Efficiency of the ventilating and AC system 25= Efficiency of the heating sys. 26= Efficiency of the security sys. 27= Efficiency of the audio-visual system 28= Availability of elevator for handicapped people	29= Directional signage within the convention centre 30= Simultaneous translation system and headphones 31= Sufficient public internet access 32= Availability of documentation instr. for the public use 33= Availability of communication instr. for the public use 34= Efficiency of the generator 35= Efficiency of the fire warning and fire-extinguishing systems

Figure 4.4 Meeting Planners' Scores on the IPA Matrix

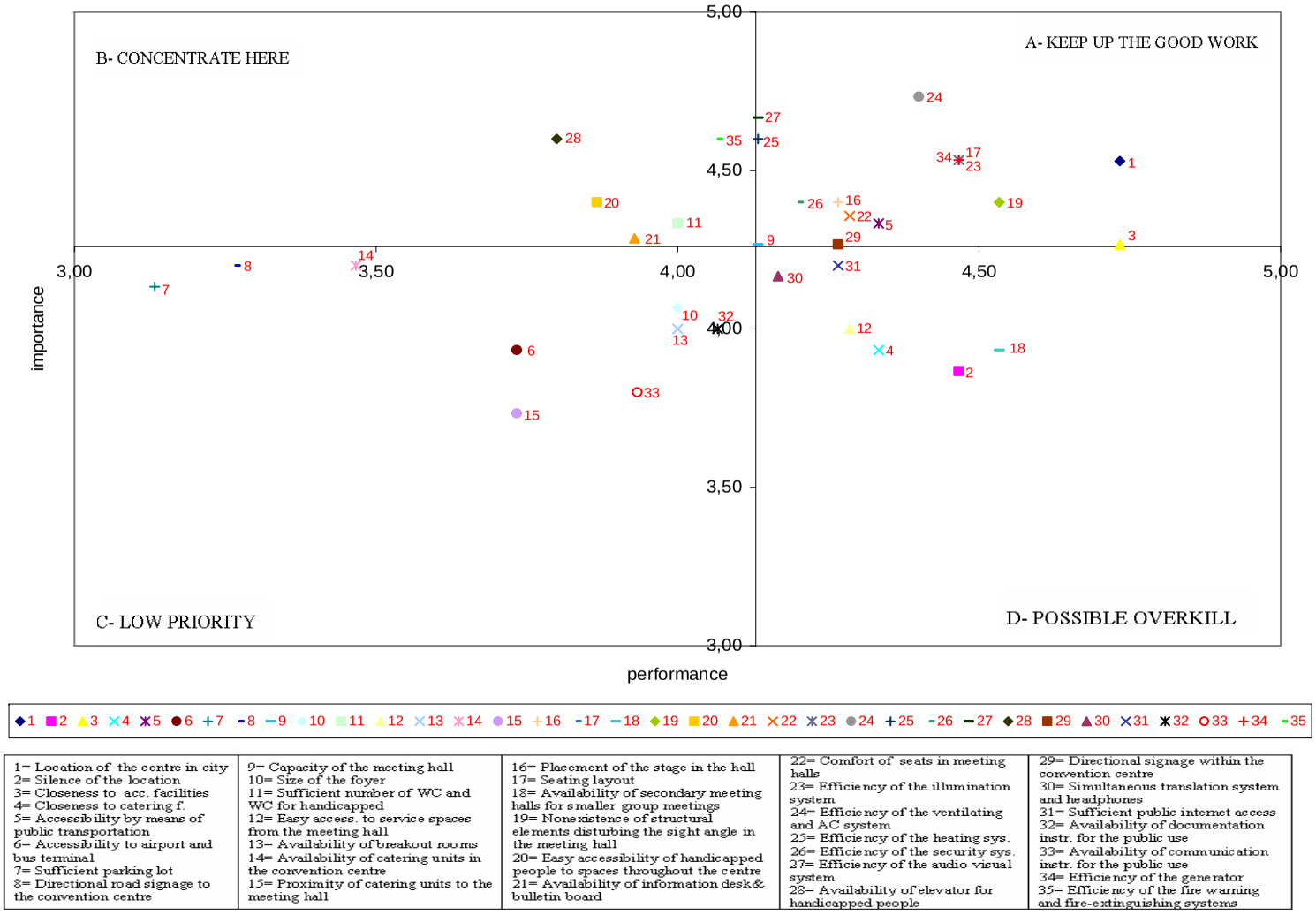
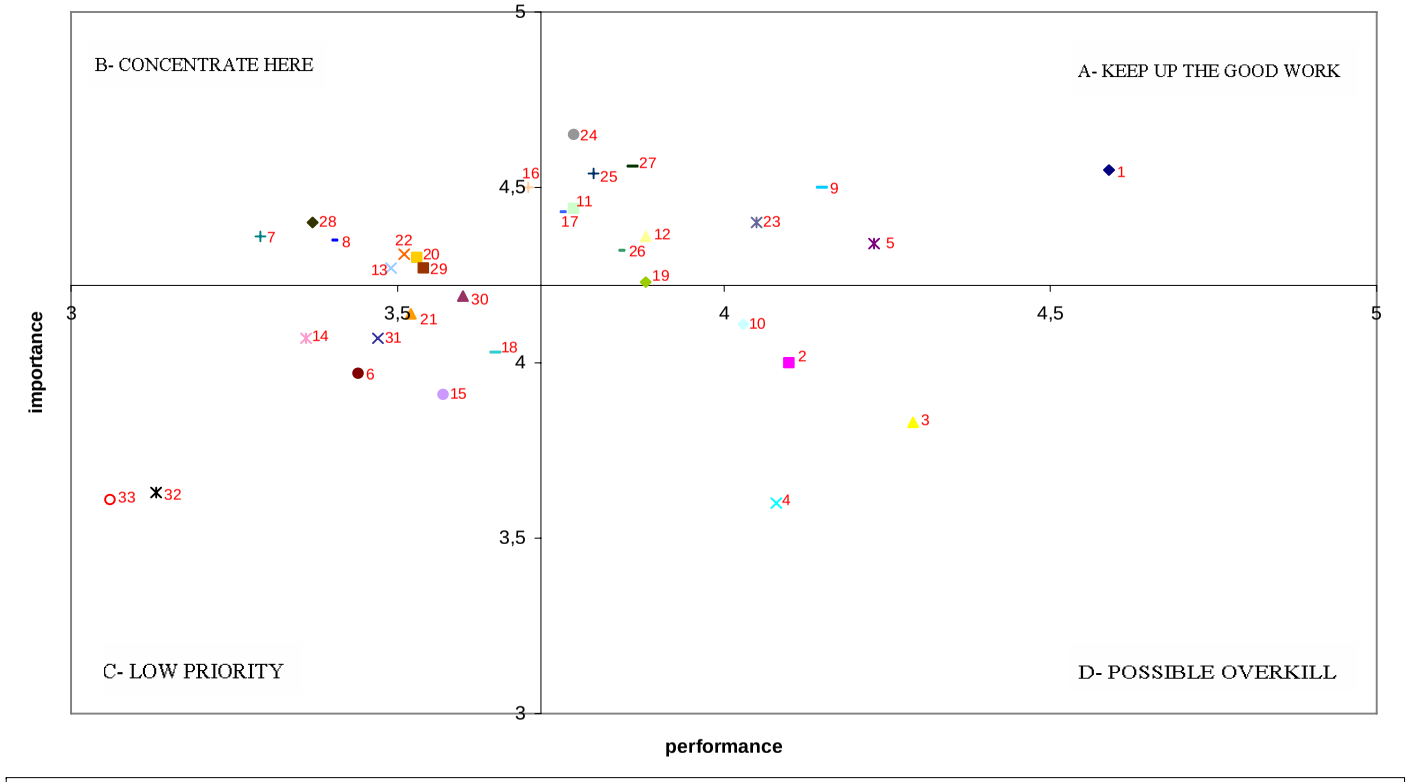


Figure 4.5 Employees' Scores on the IPA Matrix



1= Location of the centre in city 2= Silence of the location 3= Closeness to acc. facilities 4= Closeness to catering f. 5= Accessibility by means of public transportation 6= Accessibility to airport and bus terminal 7= Sufficient parking lot 8= Directional road signage to the convention centre	9= Capacity of the meeting hall 10= Size of the foyer 11= Sufficient number of WC and WC for handicapped 12= Easy access. to service spaces from the meeting hall 13= Availability of breakout rooms 14= Availability of catering units in the convention centre 15= Proximity of catering units to the meeting hall	16= Placement of the stage in the hall 17= Seating layout 18= Availability of secondary meeting halls for smaller group meetings 19= Nonexistence of structural elements disturbing the sight angle in the meeting hall 20= Easy accessibility of handicapped people to spaces throughout the centre 21= Availability of information desk& bulletin board	22= Comfort of seats in meeting halls 23= Efficiency of the illumination system 24= Efficiency of the ventilating and AC system 25= Efficiency of the heating sys. 26= Efficiency of the security sys. 27= Efficiency of the audio-visual system	28= Availability of elevator for handicapped people 29= Directional signage within the convention centre 30= Simultaneous translation system and headphones 31= Sufficient public internet access 32= Availability of documentation instr. for the public use 33= Availability of communication instr. for the public use

Figure 4.6 Attendees' Scores on the IPA Matrix

As it is seen in Figure 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6, 26 out of 35 facility features were perceived as important on average by any user group. They are listed below as:

1= Location of the convention centre in the city
3= Closeness of the centre to the accommodation facilities
5= Accessibility by means of public transportation
7= Sufficient parking lot
8= Directional road signage to the convention centre
9= Capacity of meeting hall
10= Size of the foyer
11= Sufficient number of restroom and restroom for handicapped persons
12= Easy accessibility to service spaces (restrooms, stairs etc.) from the meeting hall
13= Availability of breakout rooms
16= Placement of the stage
17= Seating layout
18= Availability of secondary meeting halls for meetings of smaller groups
19= Nonexistence of structural elements, such as columns etc., disturbing the angle of sight in the meeting hall
20= Easy accessibility of handicapped person to spaces throughout the centre
21= Availability of information desk and bulletin board
22= Comfort of the armchairs/ chairs in meeting halls
23= Efficiency of the illumination system
24= Efficiency of the ventilating and air-conditioning system
25= Efficiency of the heating system
26= Efficiency of the security system
27= Efficiency of the audio-visual system equipment
28= Availability of elevator for handicapped persons
29= Directional signage within the convention centre
34= Efficiency of the generator
35= Efficiency of the fire warning and fire-extinguishing systems

However each of these 26 items were perceived as important by user groups, some facility features inside this group were approved as important by three user groups, commonly. These twelve features which were given importance above average by all user groups are listed below as:

1= Location of the convention centre in the city
5= Accessibility by means of public transportation
9= Capacity of meeting hall
11= Sufficient number of restroom and restroom for handicapped persons
16= Placement of the stage
17= Seating layout
19= Nonexistence of structural elements, such as columns etc., disturbing the angle of sight in the meeting hall
20= Easy accessibility of handicapped person to spaces throughout the centre
23= Efficiency of the illumination system
24= Efficiency of the ventilating and air-conditioning system
25= Efficiency of the heating system
26= Efficiency of the security system

When performance scores of Lütfi Kırdar Convention and Exhibition Centre are observed on IPA Matrix, it is seen that each of the user groups commonly determine the venue very satisfactory in terms of some aspects. These nine satisfactory features of ICEC are listed below as:

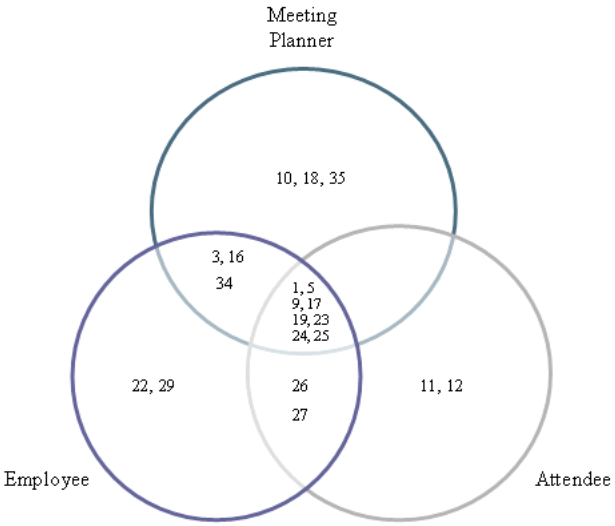
1= Location of the convention centre in the city
3= Closeness of the centre to the accommodation facilities
5= Accessibility by means of public transportation
9= Capacity of meeting hall
17= Seating layout
19= Nonexistence of structural elements, such as columns etc., disturbing the angle of sight in the meeting hall
23= Efficiency of the illumination system

24= Efficiency of the ventilating and air-conditioning system
25= Efficiency of the heating system

Despite its satisfactory aspects, ICEC has some facility features with low satisfactory level. Facility features that were commonly determined as unsatisfactory by all user groups are listed below as:

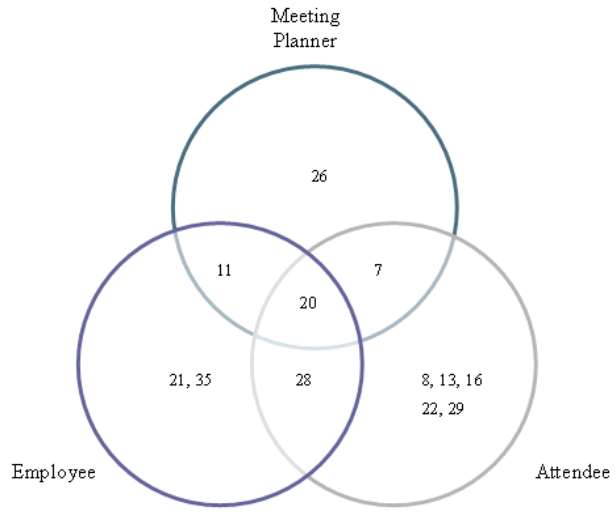
6= Accessibility to airport and bus terminal from the convention centre
7= Sufficient parking lot
8= Directional road signage to the convention centre
13= Availability of breakout rooms
14= Availability of catering units in the convention centre
15= Proximity of catering units to the meeting hall
20= Easy accessibility of handicapped person to spaces throughout the centre
21= Availability of information desk and bulletin board
32= Availability of documentation instruments (printer, photocopy machine etc.) for public use
33= Availability of communication instrument (telephone-fax etc.) for public use

While examining the list of facility features related with performance scores, it should be kept in mind that they are composed regardless of the importance level of these features. When high-importance level is taken into account, we should focus on "Quadrant A: Keep up the Good Work" and Quadrant B: Concentrate Here". The highlighted facility features are shown in Figure 4.7 and 4.8.



1= Location of the centre in the city 3= Closeness to the accom. facilities 5= Access. by means of public trans. 9= Capacity of meeting hall 10= Size of the foyer 11= Sufficient number of WC and WC for handicapped persons 12= Easy accessibility to service spaces from the meeting hall	16= Placement of the stage 17= Seating layout 18= Availability of secondary meeting halls for meetings of smaller groups 19= Nonexistence of structural elements disturbing the sight angle in the meeting hall 22= Comfort of the seats in meeting halls 23= Efficiency of the illumination system 24= Efficiency of the ventilating and AC system	25= Efficiency of the heating system 26= Efficiency of the security system 27= Efficiency of the audio-visual system equipment 29= Directional signage within the convention centre 34= Efficiency of the generator 35= Efficiency of the fire warning and fire-extinguishing systems

Figure 4.7 Facility Features in "Quadrant A: Keep up the Good Work"



7= Sufficient parking lot 8= Directional road signage to the convention centre 11= Sufficient number of WC and WC for handicapped persons 13= Availability of breakout rooms 16= Placement of the stage	20= Easy accessibility of handicapped people to spaces throughout the centre 21= Availability of information desk and bulletin board 22= Comfort of the seats in meeting halls 26= Efficiency of the security system	28= Availability of elevator for handicapped persons 29= Directional signage within the convention centre 35= Efficiency of the fire warning and fire-extinguishing systems

Figure 4.8 Facility Features in "Quadrant B: Concentrate Here"

According to these diagrams, all user groups commonly determines that ICEC should make sure it maintains its strong position in the areas of its location in İstanbul, accessibility by means of public transportation, capacity of meeting halls, seating layouts of meeting halls, nonexistence of structural elements disturbing the sight angle in meeting halls and efficiency of HVAC & illumination systems. Additionally, all user groups commonly determine that ICEC should focus on improving the features of easy accessibility of handicapped person to spaces throughout the centre.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Summary of the work

Convention tourism is a promising tourism type which can be an alternative to "Sea-Sand-Sun" tourism. Its positive effects on economy -such as extending the tourism season, creating new sectors and job opportunities- makes it preferable comparing to other types. Moreover, its socio-cultural contributions to destinations -such as providing opportunity of advertising, gaining recognition all over the world and conducing to modernize the cities and the local people- make this tourism type popular among countries.

Convention tourism has a different supply structure than the other kinds of tourism. Differently from other types, most of the supply sources are artificial in convention tourism. Convention buildings are regarded as main supply among these sources. Accommodation facilities, scenic beauties and historical attractions are other supportive sources in convention tourism.

Turkey, as being an attractive destination and located in a strategic location, has the potential of advance in convention tourism. However, statistics show that Turkey's income in convention industry could not reach to even one percent in the world convention market amounting to 150 billion $. Turkey has not made desired progress and has not reached the desired number of conventions, yet.

The main reason of Turkey's behind position in convention market is deficiency of convention venues in number and qualitative aspects. This deficiency has been

realized at the end of the 90's and new investments on convention facilities have been started to make. However, in order to make efficient investment in this area, it is important to consider on facility features that convention facilities have.

For this respect, this study firstly aims to identify facility features of convention centres. According to the literature survey focusing on convention centres, 3 main titles associated with facility features have been determined as location, spatial& functional and technical features. Then, the existing convention centres of Turkey, i.e. Lütfi Kırdar Convention and Exhibition Centre, Glass Pyramid and TÜYAP Beylikdüzü Fair and Convention Centre, have been comparatively analyzed in terms of their features in order to determine the case for the rest of the study.

Conclusions

This study was an attempt to identify user's priorities on facility in a large convention centre. In order to achieve this, three group of users, i.e. attendees of conventions, meeting planners and employees of the venue, have been taken into consideration and the study have been conducted among these user groups. Obviously, significant differences were statistically found between the level of importance and performance attached by each user group to the majority of the facility features. Moreover, some similarities and differences in expectations among these groups also have been drawn attention in this evaluation.

For instance, attendees and organizers demonstrated more sensitivity on spatial and functional features associated with meeting halls (capacity, placement of the stage, seating layout, nonexistence of structural elements disturbing the sight angle) and ancillary space (easy accessibility to service space from the meeting hall and availability of breakout rooms), while employees did not emphasize these features. However, all of three user groups underlined some location features commonly concerning parking (sufficient parking lot) and accessibility to the centre (directional road signage). These three groups were also commonly sensitive to the items related

with handicapped people (easy accessibility of handicapped people throughout the centre and availability of elevator for them) and the item about efficiency of ventilating- air conditioning system.

The case study that is conducted by application of IPA method on Lütfi Kırdar Convention and Exhibition Centre give some important results in order to understand the strength and weakness of the venue, as being the most remarkable convention centre of Turkey. The results display that ICEC should keep its strong position in the areas of its location in İstanbul, accessibility by means of public transportation, capacity of meeting halls, seating layouts of meeting halls, nonexistence of structural elements disturbing the sight angle in meeting halls and efficiency of HVAC & illumination systems. These strenghts were determined commonly by all user groups. Additionally, all user groups commonly state that ICEC should focus on improving the feature of easy accessibility of handicapped people to spaces throughout the centre.

These performance gaps should alert decision makers -such as architects, facility managers and investors- to direct their priorities to the needs of the users. Since many of the conventions in the convention centre are annual or rotating events, improved experiences for users –particularly for meeting planners and attendees- in these venues should lead these people to be more likely to return for future events held there.

As the expansion of existing convention venues and the development of new facilities continues all around the world, convention centres need to find ways to distinguish themselves and present satisfactory experience for users. The convention centre under study, ICEC, obviously had some strength in terms of its performance on important feature variables, but it can still improve the value it provides to its users.

The information presented in this study about the identification of facility features of convention centres and suggested method for evaluating the users' perception of

these features can help architects and designers in order to make effective and user-oriented planning in design phase of the project. This can be also useful for facility managers in order to determine how to allocate the resources to create better experiences in the building and share the information with the building's investors who also have a vested interest in the continued success of the convention centre. Other constituencies associated with the meeting industry that market convention centres can also make benefit of the results of this study.

Future Studies

While the study was conducted in a single convention centre, inferences could be drawn to other facilities in Turkey or elsewhere. The suggested method, the importance-performance analysis, can be developed in order to evaluate other types of facilities, such as hotels, hospitals etc. for the future studies.

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