



TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL IDENTITY: THE CASE OF ÇAMLIHEMŞİN*

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ABSTRACT

Features such as natural texture, historical heritage, cultural structure, tradition, convention, and social lifestyle constitute the cultural identity of the regions. Cultural identities can undergo some developmental changes with the social interaction brought by tourism movements and advancements over time. This research was carried out to reveal the relationship between the development of tourism and cultural identity in Çamlıhemşin. The data were obtained through the interview technique, which is one of the qualitative research methods. The convenience sampling method, one of the purposeful sampling methods, was benefited in this study. The data obtained from 21 participants of the local community were subjected to descriptive analysis. As a result of the research, it was detected that since the tourist group preferring Çamlıhemşin is predominantly of Arab origin, it leads to the use of Arabic language in the informative texts on signboards and notices, even if not in language use. This situation was met with dislike by the local people. It was also found out that wooden housing structures, one of the most vital features that underline local culture, have been replaced by reinforced concrete structures. Moreover, it was determined that transhumance culture has turned into tourism activities. The relationship between tourism development and cultural identity in Çamlıhemşin was found to be moderate, so suggestions have been developed in line with these results.

Keywords: Tourism Development, Cultural Identity, Local People, Social Change Theory, Çamlıhemşin

TURİZM GELİŞİMİ VE KÜLTÜREL KİMLİK: ÇAMLIHEMŞİN ÖRNEĞİ*

ÖZET

Doğal doku, tarihi miras, kültürel yapı, gelenek-görenek, sosyal yaşam tarzı gibi özellikler yörelerin kültürel kimliğini oluşturmaktadır. Kültürel kimlikler zaman içerisinde turizm hareketleri ve gelişiminin getirdiği sosyal etkileşim ile birlikte değişim ve gelişim gösterebilmektedirler. Çamlıhemşin'deki turizmin gelişimi ve kültürel kimlik arasındaki ilişkinin ortaya çıkarılması amacıyla gerçekleştirilen bu çalışmada veriler nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden olan görüşme (mülakat) tekniği ile elde edilmiştir. Amaçlı örnekleme yöntemlerinden kolay ulaşılabilir durum örnekleme yöntemi ile yerel halktan 21 katılımcı ile yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu kullanılarak elde edilen veriler betimsel analize tabi tutulmuştur. Araştırma sonucunda Çamlıhemşin'i tercih eden turist grubunun ağırlıklı olarak arap kökenli olması dil kullanımında olmasa bile tabela ve levhalarda yer alan bilgilendirme metinlerinde arapça kullanımının yaygınlaşmasına neden olduğu, bu durumun yerel halk tarafından antipati ile karşılandığı, yerel kültürü ön plana çıkaran en önemli özelliklerden biri olan ahşap yapıların betonarmeye, yaylacılık kültürünün de turizm faaliyetlerine dönüştüğü saptanmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda Çamlıhemşin'deki turizm gelişiminin kültürel kimlikle olan ilişkisinin orta düzeyde olduğu görülmüş ve bu sonuçlar doğrultusunda öneriler geliştirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Turizm Gelişimi, Kültürel Kimlik, Yerel halk, Sosyal Değişim Teorisi, Çamlıhemşin

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism can be expressed as an opportunity to contact individuals, cultures, and social structures for cultural exchange as well as a means of communication. As an alternative to the destructive effects of mass tourism, cultural tourism is a far-reaching model that enables the development of local tourism on a global scale in this communication. Cultural tourism aims to position local values and resources in the best way in the global tourism market by separating them from their competitors based on cultural identity. To this end, while preserving local resources and cultural heritage; cultural identity, quality of life and economy strengthen in direct proportion to them. In addition to that, while a variety of products and services are created in the international market, intercultural dialogue is also ensured. As a result of the dialogue, positive and negative effects may occur on the destination and local people. When the literature is reviewed in this context, it may be indicated that there is much research that inspects the positive and negative effects of tourism development on local people (Akova, 2006; Akova et al. 2017; Altanlar et al., 2018; Bertan, 2009; Erkilic, 2019; Filiz and Yilmaz, 2017; Gürbüz, 2002; Kuter and Ünal, 2009; Unur, 2004).

With the development of tourism, the cultural identity of the local people is also affected by tourism. Thus, it is also critical to analyze the relationship between tourism development and the cultural identity of the local people along with investigating their positive and negative effects. In addition to its historical and natural beauties, Çamlıhemşin district has become a center of attraction with its cultural heritage unique to the people of the region. Meanwhile, as the other destinations connected to the Çamlıhemşin are within the transportation network, this region grows to be a point where many tourists interact with the local people. In this study, it was intended to affirm the relationship between tourism development and cultural identity through the views of the local people in a region with a special cultural identity like Çamlıhemşin.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Identity is a concept utilized to depict the individuals and their personalities while talking about individuals. Identity derives from the root of "idem" in Latin and "kim" in Turkish. It expresses human characteristics, belonging, and being one (Aydoğdu, 2004: 117). According to the Turkish Language Association (2020), identity is described as "the whole of the signs, qualities and features that show what a person is like as a social entity." However, identity draws attention to the state of being moral in philosophy and subject in psychology. In sociology, it accentuates the relationship of the individual with society. In this respect, identity may also be defined as the knowledge and experience accumulated in the socialization process produced by society and created by the social structure. (Birkök, 1994; Özdemir, C. 2001). Differentiating daily life routines and changing habits directly reform the identity structure. Because values based on daily life shape the identity (Altuntaş, 2010:4). Besides, in the modern context, the identity is conveyed as multiple components that vary in various situations in the individual, affecting their behavior towards themselves and others and creating the meaning of life (Weigert et al., 1986:27).

People gathering under various conditions and interacting and becoming a group in a common area in a complex way construct the basis of societies. As a result of the adaptation of individuals to their environment they are in and their relations with other people sharing the same environment with these mentioned ones, a common phenomenon emerges. This phenomenon is called "culture". The concept of culture is

the whole of the behaviors that the individual can apply by learning, which are not inherent in human beings and cannot be transferred biologically from generation to generation (Güvenç, 1996:102). On the other hand, cultural identity defines all the cultural values by which a community or different groups that exist within use it to identify themselves (Birkök, 1994:82). In this sense, cultural identity may be construed as all cultural values introduced by communities that live in a region or area, have low population density, and have unique characteristics and customs.

While tourism is one of the crucial factors for the economic development of a destination, it may lead to positive or negative consequences in many ways. Indeed, the local population is the one that is most affected by these results (Işık and Turan, 2018:101; Türker and Türker, 2014:81). When exploring these effects in question, it is indispensable to identify and evaluate not only the economic earnings such as income or foreign exchange but also the factors affecting the social and cultural structure (Berber, 2003:205). Therefore, it is required to resolve the locals' perspectives and expectations, and how their perceptions of tourism are shaped. Moreover, it is fundamental to ensure the sustainability of the positive effects by spreading them over the long term. However, it is mandatory to keep those with negative effects at the lowest level (Özel, 2014:57). In other words, in regions where tourism activities increase their efficiency and where tourism comes along the way, it is decisive to rule the attitude of the local people towards these improvements (Işık and Turan, 2018:101).

Although there are many studies in the literature concerning the relationship between culture and tourism, there are opinions that argue that the sustainability of cultural identity will have negative consequences in the long run as well as those who advocate that it will have positive results for the destination in the context of the effects of tourism (Albayrak and Özmen, 2018; Bataillou and Öter, 2011; Duran, 2011; Greenwood, 1978). For instance, Greenwood (1978) handled tourism within the framework of identity and calculated tourism development as objectification based on capitalist western development. Further, the author argued that this objectification led to the disappearance of local identity and cultural values (Greenwood 1978:130-131). Perceptions and behaviors of local people towards tourism development can be expressed through social change theory. This theory can be operated to illustrate how local people perceive and appraise the effects of tourism on them as a result of support for tourism. This theory also explains the relationship between economic gain by using tourism resources, life expectancy and environmental behavior that shape tourism effects (Jurowski and et al., 1997). Besides, this theory also asserts that the support provided by the locals for the development of tourism may continue as long as the benefits they receive do not exceed the costs incurred by tourism. In this context, it may be worded that it is directly proportional to the benefit of the local people and the benefit that this support will provide for the development of tourism in a region (Allen et al., 1993; Ap, 1992; Harrill, 2004; Jurowski et al., 1997; Lee, 2013).

Local people should be involved in these activities in order to implement the concept of sustainability in tourism products and services. Healthy development and perennality of the region are directly related to the satisfaction of the local people and their positive opinion. As the attitudes and behaviors of the locals are positive and they take an active role in the activities, the tourism sector can cultivate for that related destination. In this framework, there is a parallel link between the satisfaction of the local people and the development of tourism (Çetinkaya and Dedemen, 2013:25). Provided that only pursuing economic interests in tourism planning and applications crops up, then various problems may result in. Consequently, the attitudes of the locals may be inclined to end these efforts. In the planning and implementation process, the

attitudes and behaviors of the local people should be detected in advance. If they support, the reasons why and if they do not, the reasons why should be measured. This situation is of great importance in terms of minimizing the problems that may occur in the long run. As a result of them, the quality of life can be improved with the developed alternatives and protection can be ensured in terms of society (Williams and Lawson, 2001:270).

Destinations with special cultural characteristics that arouse a desire in tourists to visit them may continue to grow and may be able to make an economic contribution in the field of tourism (Albayrak ve Özmen, 2018:135). Destinations become a center of attraction in the context of the cultural wealth they host, and each destination has its characteristics. Identified with the region over time, these characteristics become effective in promoting cultural identity. It is the cultural identity of the region that makes the destination charming in searching by tourist and decision-making stages of tourists and it is one of the factors affecting the development of tourism in the region in question.

In addition to its historical and natural beauties, Çamlıhemşin district of Rize has become a center of attraction with its cultural heritage unique to the people of the region. At the same time, since other destinations connected to Çamlıhemşin are in the transportation network, it has been a one-stop shop for many tourists. As a result of that, importance to the tourism investments was attached in the region and alternative tourism activities were formed and tourism activities have improved with the local people getting economic returns. With this development, the region started to host more visitors and the tourist-local community interaction volume also increased in the region. These signs of progress have had an impact on the identity of the destination.

This study aims to identify the effect of tourism development on cultural identity in Çamlıhemşin region (whether positive or negative) through the attitudes, opinions, and thoughts of the local people. For that reason, the relationship between tourism development and cultural identity was examined in Çamlıhemşin destination by taking the opinions of the local people in terms of lifestyle, cultural structure, belief, architectural structure, language, art, family structure, values, norms, and tourism development.

THE METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

In this research, a qualitative research method was made use of since the research explores the human views and experiences and a case study was carried out as study design. In the case study, factors related to the situation (environment, individuals, process, etc.) are investigated with a holistic approach and focuses on how the factors affect the situation and how it affects them (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2018: 73). In this study, Çamlıhemşin district was handled within the scope of the case study. Qualitative research methods aim to conclude by using written, verbal, and visual resources that mediate the collection of primary or secondary data required to compose the whole or theory itself (Kozak, 2018:27). Therefore, one of the qualitative research methods, interview technique was practiced in this research in order to get feelings, thoughts and opinions about any subject, problem or concept by talking to individuals in the fashion of Q-A (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018: 129-154) and observing them in the meantime (Kozak, 2018: 28). The interview took its place as an effective data collection method in the research field of social sciences in the last quarter of the last century. For example, while researchers examined different aspects of the organizations and their cultural and

symbolic dimensions as research topics, they adopted the interview method as the main data collection purpose (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2018:129).

The population of the research consists of the people of Çamlıhemşin district of Rize. Taking the opinions of the people of Çamlıhemşin about cultural identity and tourism development is the reason that it is a transition point to the other districts.

Collected from the local people in the research, the data were achieved via a semi-structured interview form with the convenience sampling method, which is among the purposeful sampling methods, without any criteria and a probability calculation.

It is known that the interview technique is a method developed to ensure the coverage of all dimensions and questions related to the research problem (Yıldırım and Şimşek 2018:132). Hence, it was intended to diagnose the relationship between cultural identity perceptions and the tourism development attitudes of 21 participants via the interview form. In the study, this sample was considered sufficient since the taken responses repeat one another after some time and the answers received could express the thoughts of the local population in general.

Research questions were formed to get the opinions of the people of Çamlıhemşin by adapting the interview questions created and used by Albayrak and Özmen (2018) in their study on determining the relationship between cultural identity perception and tourism development attitude. The research interviews were held between November 15 and December 30, and the average interview took aşmost 1-1.5 hours. During the interview, the questions were directed sequentially, and the answers given for each question were recorded by taking notes. The data obtained were interpreted by subjecting them to descriptive analysis. Descriptive analysis is the summarization and interpretation of the obtained data under pre-determined themes (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2018:239). Before holding the interview, the purpose and importance of the research were both explained to the participants. An answer was sought to the question of what the relationship is between cultural identity and the development of tourism in Çamlıhemşin.

FINDINGS

Information on the demographic characteristics of the interviewees is given in Table 1.

Table 5- 1: Information on Participants' Demographic Features

Participant Code	Gender	Age	Educational status	Place of birth	Marital status	Profession	Time of Residence
	Male	>31	Graduate	Trabzon	Married	Teacher	6-10 years
	Male	>31	High school	Rize	Married	Officer	10 years and above
	Male	>31	Undergraduate education	Rize	Married	Teacher	10 years and above
	Male	>31	Undergraduate education	Rize	Single	Teacher	10 years and above
	Female	26-30	Undergraduate education	Rize	Single	Artisan	10 years and above
	Female	21-25	Undergraduate education	Rize	Single	Student	10 years and above
	Male	26-30	Undergraduate education	Rize	Single	Tourism manager	10 years and above

	Male	>31	Undergraduate education	Trabzon	Married	Officer	1-5 years
	Female	>31	Undergraduate education	Rize	Married	Tourism manager	10 years and above
	Male	26-30	Undergraduate education	Ankara	Married	Tourism manager	6-10 years
	Female	26-30	High school	Rize	Single	Officer	10 years and above
	Male	26-30	High school	Rize	Single	Security guard	10 years and above
	Male	26-30	Undergraduate education	Rize	Married	Tourism manager	10 years and above
	Male	>31	Undergraduate education	Rize	Married	Tourism manager	10 years and above
	Male	>31	High school	Rize	Married	Artisan	10 years and above
	Female	21-25	High school	Rize	Single	Sales Representative	1-5 years
	Female	>31	High school	Rize	Married	Officer	10 years and above
	Male	26-30	Primary Education	Rize	Single	Artisan	1-5 years
	Male	26-30	Graduate	Rize	Single	Field Guide	6-10 years
	Male	>31	Undergraduate education	Rize	Married	Manager	10 years and above
	Female	26-30	Associate Education	Rize	Married	Tourism manager	10 years and above

As Table 1 is investigated, it may be noticed that of all the participants, 7 are women and 14 are men. Most of them have an undergraduate degree and they are 26 and older. Most of them were born in Rize and have lived in Çamlıhemşin for 10 years and more. Besides, 3 of the participants are teachers, 4 of them are officers, 3 of them are artisans, 7 of them are tourism managers, 1 sales representative, 1 security guard, 1 university student and 1 director of the institution. 12 of the participants are married and 9 of them are single.

Having asked questions to interpret the demographic characteristics of the participants, various questions were asked to the participants to find the answer to the question "What is the relationship between the developing tourism activities in Çamlıhemşin and the concept of cultural identity?", and the opinions of the participants on the cultural identity of Çamlıhemşin region were intended to be measured. The responses obtained were checked out within the framework of cultural identity.

Participants were asked questions related to cultural identity elements in order to find out the cultural identity of Çamlıhemşin and the responses received from the participants are as follows:

"How do you spend your days in Çamlıhemşin? How do you spend your free time?" questions were directed to the participants. It was pointed out that the majority of the respondents usually spend their days at work and that they spare time for their families and friends in their spare time. Moreover, they maintained that as long as the climatic conditions permit, they make highland and nature trips and whereas some of the participants expressed that they especially deal with beekeeping.

"How can you briefly express the culture of Çamlıhemşin?" was asked to the participants and majority of the participants rendered that "family ties are strong in the local culture, food is special, streams and bridges merge with the sky and plant cover, tea production and Tulum(bagpipe)-Horon (the local dance in the region) duo outweigh culture, "Vartevor Festival" is a part of the local culture, and cattle farming exists in the region even if it is partly." An example of the responses of the participants is that "There is a culture where mountain and green, green and blue are intertwined, life is calm in the winter months whereas it is bustling in the summer months, and local culture dominates."

“Are there any changes in the culture of Çamlıhemşin? If there are any, what cultures were Çamlıhemşin affected by?” questions were turned to the participants. The majority of respondents remarked that there are some changes and consequences of these changes in culture are as follows:

“the young people of the local community go to other cities to study at universities, the influence of western culture is felt, many of the incoming tourists are of Arab origin, local dress preferences of women ((for example, socks that can be worn to the knees by women, black rubber shoes underneath and velvet foga and sequin chiffon and puşi (a type of fabric for headcover) on the head) are visible less in the society owing to the requirements of the modern age.” Some of the participants raised the issues of transformation of architectural structures from wood to concrete and complained that transhumance culture started to turn into tourism, expatriate citizens tend to use the highlands as a summer residence. Moreover, livestock farming has decreased much, except for a few plateaus. A participant verbalized: “I think that the culture of Çamlıhemşin got its share from the deformation brought by the century. There are places where culture is preserved, but there are places where culture is not preserved. But the culture of society is on the way to become a Z-generation.”

"Are there physical structures (mosque, etc.) required for people to practice their beliefs in Çamlıhemşin?" was questioned. All of the participants marked that the physical structures were sufficient. Participants also specified that there are physical structures (mosques) located in the high-density plateaus even in the summer months. "What do you think are the architectural features and attractive aspects of Çamlıhemşin?" was asked to the locals, and the participants replied that they are the wooden structures made out of natural stone, which emerged with the climate and conditions of the region, the wooden structures made with Kündekari art, stone mansions with more than 20 rooms, village mansions, combining with art made with local craftsmanship, serender houses made by handwork. It was also exerted that historical castles are engaging in terms of architectural features, but concretion has also increased. One of the respondents highlighted that “The architectural feature of Çamlıhemşin that I like the most is the historical stone bridges, village mansions where stone and wood workmanship are exhibited together. The most extensive aspects of these structures are that they are completely handcrafted.”

“Do the structures in Çamlıhemşin reflect the architectural features and culture you mentioned above? What are your thoughts on the local exterior coating made to reinforced concrete buildings in the district center?” questions were asked to the locals. The majority of the participants unfolded that they substantially reflect the culture, but the new structures tend to be concrete. However, tourists are interested in wooden structures. In addition to these, they also recommended that the new architectural structures should be constructed in a way that reflects the culture, without concrete. They confided that with the application carried out in the district center, coating the exterior surfaces of reinforced concrete buildings according to the local culture is an influential step. One participant tells: "Yes, they reflect the architectural features. However, in recent years, natural beauties have been destroyed by going beyond some local architecture. Especially in some plateaus, concretization is observed instead of wooden structures.”

"Are there any changes/distortions in the language caused by tourism as a result of increasing tourist mobility day by day in Çamlıhemşin?" was questioned and most of the locals replied that depending on the changing world, there have been very few changes in language. They replied that only the style of speech and intonations did not change. They noted that there was no change due to tourism. It has been highlighted

that the marketing efforts for the tourist type alone have negative effects. One respondent says: "Although there is no deterioration in Turkish, which people practice in their daily lives, there is an excessive deterioration in workplace signs, banners, hotel advertisements used especially for Arab tourists. Local tourists are uncomfortable with these."

"Are there artistic activities taking place in Çamlıhemşin? If so, do you think they are enough?" questions were directed to the participants. They pronounced that the district is active in pastry making and an international festival takes place. Besides, on the Ayder Plateau, which is connected to the district, a culture, arts, and nature festival is held in June and a snowman making festival is held in the last week of January every year. Moreover, in cooperation with Ardeşen district, bicycle climbing races are held between Ardeşen and Çamlıhemşin. On the other hand, no common response has been received as to whether they are sufficient. One respondent affirmed: "It can be said that artistic works are more in numbers in Çamlıhemşin compared to many districts of Rize. But I can hardly assess whether they are enough. I can predicate that the young people raised in the region can easily give their free spirits to the arts."

"What is the family structure of the people living in Çamlıhemşin like?" was questioned. The majority of the respondents replied that the patriarchal family structure was more in the past, the nuclear families replaced them day by day. Growing young people started to live in big cities and city centers so all these have an impact on the family structure. Additionally, the majority of respondents added that this situation did not disrupt their kinship ties though and customs and conventions are still meaningful, and women hold a more dominant place in the house.

"What do you think are the values specific to the indigenous people in Çamlıhemşin?" was sought. Participants responded intensely to this question, and explained that the values specific to the indigenous people are: "We have excited personalities, are outspoken, ambitious, and we get angry quickly, we are sensitive to faith and love of homeland, we have craftsmanship for local clothes (puşi and chiffon) and woodwork, we are hospitable, we love the tulum instrument, we love cabbage and muhlama dishes."

The question "Are there any (norms) rituals, traditions, taboos unique to the people living in Çamlıhemşin?" was confirmed by the participants, and most of them added that the customs are still alive. For example, there are "Vartevor Festivals", the customs of getting girls (taking the bride from her father's house), the importance of hosting guests, obedience to elderlies, the fulfillment of the festive (e.g., Ramadan) customs, wearing local clothes at weddings. One respondent signed that there are taboos in some forms such as: "On Friday, there is no fish catching and tree cutting because it brings bad luck. We do not go down, rather we go up on Fridays."

"What do you think are the features that contribute to the tourism development in Çamlıhemşin?" was asked to the participants. The majority of the participants answered this question as especially the plateaus including the Ayder plateau and hot spring, Zil kale, Kale-i Bala, nature, exuberant flowing stream, stone bridges and village houses with local architecture, tea gardens, and people. It was also declared that social media influencers come to the region and they share photos of the region. Thus, it has made a contribution to the development of Çamlıhemşin tourism. In addition to that, it was also figured that a TV series was shot in the region and it had a paramount effect on the increase of tourists.

The locals were asked: "What do you think is the reason for tourists coming to Çamlıhemşin? Why do they prefer Çamlıhemşin?" Most of the respondents answered that because all the features of nature can be seen there. Also, they added that the

presence of plateaus, tea gardens, people reflecting the culture and fresh air. Some of the participants also put forward that people just come here to take photos to share on social media.

To the question of "If there are tourists you interact, what do they usually say about their favorite features in Çamlıhemşin?", the majority of the participants replied that the tourists' favorite features of the region were the untouched nature, plateaus, tea, rain, Zil Castle, waterfalls, stone bridges, watching the sunset over the clouds, tulum (bagpipe) instrument and listening to it, sincere behavior of people.

The locals were invited to answer the question of "What is the behavior of the elderly and young people to protect their cultural characteristics in Çamlıhemşin?" The majority of the participants replied that the elderly are at the forefront of preserving cultural characteristics, while young people are not delicate about this issue.

The participants were asked to answer the question of "Do you think that the cultural texture (material and spiritual) of Çamlıhemşin is preserved?" They responded it in three different ways as "is partly preserved, is preserved and is unpreserved. There is no common answer as to whether the cultural texture is preserved. One of the participants indicated as: "No, there is no cultural texture. It is only on the signboards." Another participant emphasized that "I think the culture has been destroyed. I believe that non-governmental organizations trying to protect the cultural texture are not sufficiently effective." However, another respondent delivered that "I believe that the sensitivity to protect cultural texture still exists. I think that the public also preserves the cultural texture in general."

"Are there any laws, policy, association works, or campaigns carried out in order to protect Çamlıhemşin?" was directed to the locals. Most of the respondents designated that there are a group of non-governmental organizations and studies are carried out, there are works on the protection of endemic plants, organic agriculture is attempted in tea agriculture and policies against illegal construction are carried out.

The findings obtained during the interviews showed that there are losses in preserving the cultural features and ensuring the sustainability that brings the region to the forefront due to the needs of the modern age and as the young people choose to go to western-oriented cities for education. Since tourism is a sector with high economic returns, the structures created by investors do not reflect the architectural features of the region. The fact that the majority of the tourists coming to the region have the same ethnicity negatively affects the social life in the region, and differences in product and service prices are observed.

CONCLUSION

The cultural identity of the regions develops and changes over time as a result of social and other interactions. Therefore, it is possible to comment that the tourism sector is also united with cultural identity, since the tourism sector has a lot of social interactions. Culturally rich regions have become a center of attraction for tourists seeking alternative tourism. These activities, which basically involve the desire to get to know new cultures, directly adjust the environment for the tourist-local people relationship. Thus, these interactions may have several positive and negative influences on the cultural identity of the region.

As a result of the findings obtained in the research, it was found out that the local dishes, hand workmanship, wooden houses and mansions made with handicrafts, stone mansions and historical castles stand out in Çamlıhemşin region. It was also identified that the cultural heritage of the region is actively maintained every year regularly

through festivals of culture, art, and nature. It was observed that there are changes in the language of speech, but these changes are not caused by tourism. Moreover, it has been noticed that there are ordinary changes due to modern age conditions, yet there is no change in sound and intonation or pronunciation. Due to the predominantly Arabic origin of the tourist group that prefers the region, the use of Arabic has become widespread especially in the informative texts on the signs and signboards even if they are not employed in spoken language. It was pinpointed that this situation was met with dislike by the local people. It was detected that the wooden structures, one of the most significant features that make the region stand out, tend to become concrete, and transhumance culture has also turned into tourism activities. On the other side, it was not possible to reach a common opinion about whether cultural identity is preserved or not. It was learned that the existing cultural texture was tried to be protected by non-governmental organizations, but they could not act effectively in achieving so. It was also attained that conservation activities are backed by local people. Further, it was obtained that social media activities, the tendency to share photos, and commercials and shooting films were powerful in gaining recognition and the promotion of the region. As a result of these, it has been ended that there is a boost in the number of tourists coming to the region. It can be verbalized that in line with the obtained results there is a medium level relationship between the development of tourism and cultural identity in Çamlıhemşin. To express tourism development and cultural identity together, suggestions developed for local administrations, tourism business managers and researchers can be expressed as follows:

- Entrepreneurs should be given instruction and training on investment to protect cultural elements and ensure sustainability. It is of great importance to notify the entrepreneurs about the construction of new buildings under the regional texture, and these rules should be implemented by local administrations.

- It should be ensured that local people benefit greatly from the returns of tourism activities. It is a must that the perspective of the people in the region towards the activities be positively shaped and as a result that an awareness that may contribute to tourism development be created.

- The perspective of local people on tourism and the activities in question should be measured regularly, and imperative information should be provided on how the local people may take care of their own culture and how they may act towards other tourist cultures.

- Priority in investments should be allocated to the local people, and the local people should be encouraged with economic support packages in the face of foreign investors.

- Opinions and suggestions of all shareholders such as local people and non-governmental organizations should be taken during the tourism investment, planning and implementation activities, the work to be carried out should be performed as a result of a common decision.

- Activities planned to be executed should be graded based on the region's socio-cultural values, rather than their economic returns.

- Historical buildings should be preserved, restrictions should be introduced by the central government for the transformation from wooden structures to reinforced concrete and to prevent distorted construction.

- It is basic to act on the principle of sustainability in tourism in the course of the decisions and practices of central administrations.

- Handicraft activities that stand out in the region should be developed in coordination with public education centers, and they should be expanded and passed on to younger generations.

In order to develop tourism activities in a region, full support of the local people is required. This study may be fruitful in terms of raising awareness in local people towards tourists and tourism, the central government and other stakeholders' acting with a sense of responsibility based on the information and findings, and creating awareness in the ownership and protection of their cultural identity for the new generation. Carrying out this type of or similar studies at certain time intervals may be constructive for the development of tourism in the region, protection of cultural identity, and sustainability of the values that make up the identity.

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