



ANALYSIS OF VISITOR REVIEWS ON THE CITTÁSLOW EĞİRDİR: THE TRIPADVISOR EXAMPLE¹

Abstract

The primary purpose of this research is to determine visitors' perceptions of Eğirdir and the factors that positively and negatively affect the visitor experience by examining the comments of individuals who visited Eğirdir after it became a slow city. These comments were analysed by content analysis. The themes were evaluated within themselves as positive and negative. The most highlighted themes in the comments are Eğirdir and Lake Eğirdir. In the positive evaluations of the Eğirdir theme, its natural beauty and scenery were emphasized. In contrast, in the negative comments, the construction problem of Eğirdir and the lack of sufficient attention to tourism were noted. The positive comments on the Lake Eğirdir theme stated that it is a magnificent lake and should be seen. The negative comments on the Lake Eğirdir theme mentioned that it was not clean and there were too many flies.

Keywords: Cittáslow, Eğirdir, TripAdvisor

JEL Classification: Q00, Q01, Q20

SAKİN ŞEHİR EĞİRDİR'DE ZİYARETÇİ YORUMLARININ ANALİZİ: TRIPADVISOR ÖRNEĞİ

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Öz

Bu araştırmanın temel amacı, sakin şehir olduktan sonra Eğirdir'i ziyaret eden bireylerin yorumlarını inceleyerek Eğirdir hakkında ziyaretçilerin sahip oldukları algıları belirlemek ve ziyaretçi deneyimini olumlu, olumsuz etkileyen faktörleri belirlemektir. Bu yorumlar içerik analizi ile incelenmiştir. Temalar, olumlu ve olumsuz olarak kendi içinde değerlendirilmiştir. Yorumlarda en fazla vurgulanan genel olarak Eğirdir ve Eğirdir gölüdür. Eğirdir teması olumlu değerlendirmelerinde doğal güzelliği ve manzarası, olumsuz yorumlarda ise Eğirdir'in yapılaşma sorunu, turizme yeterli önem gösterilmemesi vurgulanmıştır. Eğirdir gölü temasında olumlu yorumlarda muhteşem bir göl olduğu ve kesinlikle görülmesi gerektiği belirtilmiştir. Eğirdir gölü temasında olumsuz yorumlarda ise temiz olmaması ve sineklerin fazla olmasına değinilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sakin Şehir, Eğirdir, TripAdvisor

JEL Sınıflandırması: Q00, Q01, Q20

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1. Introduction

Although increasing mobility in cities positively contributes to the economy, it causes serious problems, especially in the use of resources (Demir and Aracı, 2022). Therefore, sustainability is discussed more to reduce the negativities and create a livable environment. Sustainability includes the conscious consumption of resources by paying attention to protecting natural and cultural resources (Ince, İşçioğlu and Oztüren, 2020). Sustainability is a necessity for cities to have better living conditions. At this point, the slow city movement brings together the philosophy of sustainability and slowness (Coşar, Timur and Kozak; 2015). The slow city movement aims to ensure that cities' natural and cultural resources are sustainable and away from negativities. It aims not only to make cities sustainable but also to enhance the experience of local people living in cities and visitors who visit them (Farelnik, Stanowicka and Wierzbicka, 2017).

In this context, the primary goal of this study is to determine Eğirdir's positive and negative themes by reviewing the TripAdvisor comments. Comments were made by residents and strangers who visited Eğirdir, which received the title of slow city in 2017. Investigations are underway in the slow city of Eğirdir (Alagöz, 2020; Başar, 2021; Demir, 2019; İnanır, Uslu and Çaprak, 2019; Morçin and Güneş, 2021; Ongun, Gökdere, Kiliç and Yeşiltaş, 2017; Sarıca, 2020; Tural, 2018). However, only one study takes into account the views of visitors to the slow city of Eğirdir (İnanır et al. 2019). For this reason, it is thought that this study will contribute to the literature in terms of making a general evaluation of the slow city of Eğirdir and determining the current state of the visitors' experiences.

2. Literature Review

Globalization is making a fundamental change by eliminating the notion of localization in spaces (Coşar, 2013). In companies, one of the fundamental pillars of the global world, the concept of time is expressed as a necessary cost element (Öztürk, 2012). As the capitalist order and globalization expand, the concept of "speed" appears in every aspect of life (Çoban, 2010). Contrary to all these situations, the trend towards slow living has been promoted by individuals and societies who oppose endless consumption behaviours, fast living and believe in sustainability (Özkan, 2011). The Cittaslow movement encourages people to be slow. It offers a life away from chaos and density, as well as allows them to devote more time to the work they are interested in daily life (Yurtseven et al., 2010). Slow life enables people to take thoughtful steps with high awareness instead of unconscious behaviours and allows them to spend more time on activities they enjoy doing (Parkins, 2004).

As a result of the meeting of the mayors of Orvieto, Bra, Positano and Chianti in October 1999, the foundations of this formation were laid under the leadership of Paolo Saturnini, the mayor of Chianti. In addition, some decisions that form the basis of Cittaslow, such as preventing environmental pollution, protecting the texture of cities, and protecting local tastes and values, were also taken at this meeting. Finally, after this meeting in 1999, it was officially established in Italy after the mayors of Orvieto, Bra, Positano, and Chianti signed the Cittaslow contract with the thought of spreading the slow-food trend to cities together with Carlo Petrini (Yurtseven et al. 2010). In this respect, Italy is in a vital position to form a Cittaslow (Honore, 2008). Cittaslow is the union of cities created by the 'Slow Food' movement. Cittaslow is based on member status (Knox and Mayer, 2006). Cittaslow aims to improve people's living standards and live high-quality experiences (Miele, 2008).

The Cittaslow formation symbolises the snail, known for its slowness but advancing with confident steps. The snail chosen for the philosophy of slowness expresses sobriety and thinking (Keskin, 2010). In addition, the Cittaslow formation has a "snail flag" flag that gives the right to wave to those who join the network. This flag is a quality sign that symbolises the calm city movement (Sırım, 2012). At the top of the snail, the symbol of Cittaslow, there is a historical

castle and concrete structures that symbolise the features of today's architecture. The historical and current elements of the city are also represented on the orange-coloured snail icon.

Cittáslow recruits new members to the movement by creating an international network. To be a member of this movement, there are seven titles such as environment, local productions, infrastructure, and hospitality; in addition, there are fifty-nine detailed articles and three additional articles containing special conditions. Cities that want to be members of the Cittáslow movement must have a population of less than fifty thousand and are scored on various criteria that must be met. It is expected to get a minimum of 50 points from this scoring. The main headings of the criteria to be scored are as follows:

- Environmental policies
- Social cohesion
- Urban quality of life
- Hospitality
- Partnerships (Slowfood)
- Infrastructure policies
- Policies for agricultural and touristic tradespeople and craftsmen

Apart from these criteria, there is a specific process to being a quiet city. This process consists of the following stages (Yalçın et al., 2012):

- Delivery of the application letter
- Creation of the quiet city candidacy file and informing the city about the subject.
- Payment of the required fee for the application
- Delivery of the created candidacy file
- Making a presentation to the relevant parties in case of approval after the delivery of the file.
- Approval of the membership with the positive result of the application after the examinations.

The slow city movement in Turkey started in 2009 with Seferihisar. Between 2009 and 2022, the number of slow cities was 21. Eđirdir received the title of slow city in 2017. Eđirdir is a destination rich in tourism potential. Rural tourism, faith tourism, cultural tourism, highland tourism and sports tourism are the main types of tourism. In addition, recreational activities such as paragliding, nature walks, and bicycle tours take place. Various research has been carried out within the scope of the slow city of Eđirdir. Ongun et al. (2017) studied the possible effects of Eđirdir's slow city title on rural development. According to the study's findings, it has been determined that the title of the slow city causes an increase in the number of visitors.

Alagöz (2018) evaluated Eđirdir in terms of Cittáslow criteria and stated that natural beauty, history and culture are essential factors in Eđirdir's being a Cittáslow. Tural (2018) said that Eđirdir is advantageous due to its fauna values, climate and water availability. İnanır et al. (2019) reviewed visitor comments. As a result of the examination, the landscape and nature of Eđirdir, Lake Eđirdir in positive experiences, and the factors of promotion and service quality of enterprises are in the foreground in negative experiences. Morçin and Güneş (2021) examined the destination quality of the slow city Eđirdir. As a result of the research, it has been determined that the dimension with the highest value in the quality perception of the visitors belongs to the natural beauty, and the quality of the service affects re-visiting Eđirdir. Başar (2021) and Demir (2020) investigated the slow city perception of local people in Eđirdir. Both studies determined

that the local people's perception of the slow city was high. In addition, Başar (2021) determined that the studies conducted specifically for the slow city are lacking.

3. Method

A qualitative research method was adopted in the study. Document analysis was used as a research technique. Document analysis is used extensively in social sciences and is an essential source of information (Özkul and Demirer, 2012). With the document review, various documents that comprise the research data set are collected, examined, questioned and analysed (Özkan, 2019). Thus, reviewing printed and electronic materials is possible (Bowen, 2009).

Maxqda program was used for content analysis. Maxqda is a qualitative data analysis program that displays the analyzed text and codes and provides the opportunity to present data visually. With this program, it is possible to analyze various data such as interviews, reports, tables, online surveys, focus groups, videos, audio files, literature, visuals and PDF files (Maxqda, 2022).

The research data consists of the comments on the TripAdvisor Web Site made by the individuals who visited Eğirdir between 2018 and 2022. The total number of comments is 186. Comments, content analysis were examined. The themes were determined together with the content analysis. The number of themes are 11. The determined themes were classified as positive and negative. For example, the comments made for the Lake Eğirdir theme were evaluated as positive and negative. Thus, the general profile of visitor experiences for each theme was determined.

4. Findings

Visitor reviews for the quiet city of Eğirdir cover the period from January 2018 to September 2022. There are a total of 186 comments between these dates. These comments were first examined as comment categories and comment language. Findings related to the two criteria are shown in Table 1 and Table 2. When the categorical classification of the comments in Table 1 is examined, a significant part of the comments made is in the category of great (119 comments). In the classification of the writing language of the comments in Table 2, it is seen that the comments were written in 8 different languages, and most comments were written in Turkish.

Table 1. **Category Classification of Comments**

Comment Category	n	%
Fantastic	119	64
Very good	49	26.5
Average	15	8
Bad	2	1
Terrible	1	0.5
Total	186	100

Table 2. **Spelling Language Classification of Comments**

Comment Language	n	%
Turkish	151	81.5
English	22	12
Russian	4	2
Spanish	2	1
German	2	1
Korean	2	1
French	2	1
Japanese	1	0.5
Total	186	100

Table 3 shows the ranking of reviews as positive and negative by theme. The 11 themes have more positive comments. There is very little difference between positive and negative reviews on the subject of prices. The themes most mentioned by visitors in the comments are Eğirdir, Lake

Eđirdir and activities. The less mentioned themes are the promotion of Eđirdir, the local population and cleanliness.

Table 3. Classification of Themes

Themes	Opinions	n	%
Eđirdir	Positive	186	89.4
	Negative	22	10.6
Lake Eđirdir	Positive	147	84
	Negative	28	16
Calm	Positive	52	98.1
	Negative	1	1.9
Cleanliness	Positive	9	64.3
	Negative	5	35.7
Local Foods	Positive	39	90.7
	Negative	4	9.3
Activities	Positive	77	93.9
	Negative	5	6.1
Local people	Positive	10	83.3
	Negative	2	16.7
Restaurant-Cafe Businesses	Positive	49	74.2
	Negative	17	25.8
Accommodation Businesses	Positive	19	79.2
	Negative	5	20.8
Promotion	Positive	3	75
	Negative	1	25
Prices	Positive	11	55
	Negative	9	45

Direct citations are included to support the themes expressed in Table 3 with visitor comment. In the positive evaluations of the Eđirdir theme, it was stressed that the natural beauty, the landscapes and the place of Eđirdir are visible. On the other hand, in the negative comments, the problem of building Eđirdir and the lack of adequate attention to tourism were highlighted.

"It is truly a must-visit city."

"This is a place that those who have the opportunity should add to their route."

"A veritable natural marvel."

"There is an amazing nature."

"What an amazing place to visit and see."

"This is a really beautiful place to go with friends or family."

"It has been neglected."

"I can say that this is a new treasure of the municipality of Eđirdir."

"My lovely Eđirdir has become a typical town in the province."

"The beach is full of large buildings."

"There is unequal construction"

"Eđirdir should put more value on tourism."

Positive comments on the topic of Lake Eğirdir claim that it is a beautiful lake and should be seen. Negative comments about Lake Eğirdir indicated that the lake was not clean and that there were many flies.

"It would be wrong not to see Eğirdir lake."

"Simply awesome."

"You can come to Isparta just to see this lake."

"It gives people peace with its deep blue water."

"Eğirdir Lake is definitely one of the most beautiful places I have ever seen."

"I wish more attention was paid to cleaning..."

"Not clean at all."

"I would like to inform you that if the municipality does not do the necessary things, it will get worse."

"There is a fly problem in the lake."

"You can't walk on a fly."

Most of the observations made in the context of the calm topic are positive. There is one negative commentary. In the positive comments on calm, Eğirdir is said to be a Cittáslow, calm and peaceful. In the negative comments, an unease with loud music was noted.

"Peaceful..."

"It's a quiet place."

"Peaceful place"

"Cittáslow is one of those places."

"Eğirdir, which has taken the title of slow city..."

"Very calm..."

"Nice environment."

"Loud music broadcasting from boats is disturbing..."

The comments on the clean theme state that Eğirdir is generally neat in positive terms and not pure in negative comments.

"The streets are sparkling."

"The environment is clean."

"Some places smell bad up to the island."

"It should be cleaner."

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In terms of local foods, it is seen that foods such as fish, perch, tandoori kebab and ice cream with roses are good and recommended. Negative comments about local foods are especially for the taste of fish.

"You should definitely taste the tandoori kebab there."

"The taste of the tandoori made from the goats of the region is very good."

"Rose ice cream is very good."

"I recommend that they do not return without visiting the fishermen's restaurants and taste the lake bass and carp."

"The fish on the island was great."

"The fish was not very tasty."

In the theme of activities, positive activities are mentioned, while some visitors state that the activities are insufficient. Boat tours, hiking, cycling, rose harvesting are stated as activities.

"You can take a tour with a boat tour."

"You can enjoy the meeting of green and blue by cycling."

"Make sure to take your time and rent a motorboat through the small harbor and wander around the lake for a bit."

"Nice place for long walks."

"Many rose gardens are at your fingertips; If you want to wake up between 05:00 and 06:00 in the morning, you can see how the locals pick roses."

"There's not much to do"

"No activity."

The local people theme is positively mentioned as being hospitable and friendly. Negatively, it is stated that local people are prejudiced against foreign people coming from outside.

"People are friendly."

"Very good at tradesmen and people."

"People are helpful."

"The people of Eğirdir could not get used to tourism."

"When walking around the market, they may give you strange looks as if you came from outer space."

Regarding the theme of restaurant and cafe businesses, it is mentioned that they are sufficient in number and provide good service. At the same time, there are few businesses, and the service provided is terrible.

"There are many restaurants/cafes on the lake shore."

"Many cafes are lined up along the lake in town and along the strip of land that leads to the lake."

"There are restaurants with fish and meat varieties on the island."

"The number of cafes and restaurants that can provide good service is very few."

"Service quality is experienced in places."

"Quality venues should be opened."

In the theme of accommodation enterprises, the service quality of the enterprises is mentioned in the positive comments. In the negative comments, it is stated that the accommodation establishments are of poor quality.

"If you stay in a hotel by the lake, you can also enjoy sleeping with the sound of the waves."

"There are hotels, motels and hostels on the peninsula of Eğirdir."

"Very nice, clean and good hotel."

"It is where we will stay pleased with its old architecture."

"The hotels and hostels on the island are falling into disrepair."

"Because Eğirdir is close to Isparta, I think you should go and see it, and if you're going to stay, stay in Isparta."

"The quality of the accommodation facilities is quite low."

The number of comments on the promotional theme is relatively low. In negative comments, it is mentioned that Eğirdir needs to be promoted more; in positive comments, it is said that it is well known.

"It has made a name for itself with many festivals organized."

"It is not a well-known place."

"It should work harder for promotion."

Finally, on the theme of prices, positive comments mention that prices are generally appropriate in Eğirdir, and negative comments mention expensiveness.

"Prices are reasonable in the area."

"It's an economical place."

"Most of the wages are below average."

"The prices are too high."

"I wouldn't have expected such prices in such a small place."

When the visitor's comments on the slowness of the city of Eğirdir are assessed in general terms, the visitor's satisfaction can be regarded as high. Some themes have higher negative comments and dissatisfaction. Apart from that, visitors' expectations of the slow town of Eğirdir seem to have been satisfied.

5. Conclusion

After Covid-19, changes in tourism demands began to occur (Demir et al. 2021). Instead of crowded destinations where mass tourism takes place, destinations where alternative tourism activities take place, have become more popular. Eğirdir, which hosts more than one type of alternative tourism, gains another added value with its calm city title and becomes a destination frequented by visitors. For this reason, in this study, the comments written by individuals who visited the quiet city of Eğirdir on the TripAdvisor Web Site were examined, and the positive and negative features of Eğirdir were determined.

The review identified one hundred eighty-six comments between January 2018 and September 2022. Most commentaries are written under the category of excellent and very good. The commentaries are primarily written in Turkish, but there are commentaries in 8 languages in general. Analysis of the comments resulted in the identification of 11 themes. They have been coded as positive and negative. It was established that the main themes commented by visitors were Eğirdir, Lake Eğirdir and activities.

In the positive comments of visitors on Eğirdir and Lake Eğirdir, natural beauties, landscapes and being a place to see are mentioned. The positive features highlighted in the other themes are the appropriateness of the activities to be carried out in Eğirdir, the necessity to try local dishes, the overall cleanliness of Eğirdir, the hospitality of residents, a sufficient number of enterprises, the quiet of Eğirdir, the affordable prices. The findings are consistent with previous studies published in Eğirdir (İnanır et al., 2019; Ongun et al., 2019).

In negative evaluations, it is necessary to draw attention to the prominent features of Eğirdir. These negativities are the construction problem of Eğirdir, the lack of attention to tourism, the cleanliness of Lake Eğirdir and the fly problem in the lake, the high prices, the attitudes of the local people towards foreign people, the poor service quality of the enterprises, the inadequacy of promotional activities. According to the positive and negative results, some suggestions regarding the slowness of the city of Eğirdir have been developed. These:

- Implement inspections by scaling up to prevent construction and concreting.
- Make promotions on different platforms by giving importance to the promotional activities of Eğirdir.
- The information that Eğirdir's title of a slow city should be transmitted to visitors. This involves opening the city of Eğirdir's slow social media accounts and publishing promotional videos.
- Pay attention to the cleanliness of Lake Eğirdir and monitor its cleanup on a periodic basis.
- Work to improve the quality of corporate service.
- More affordable pricing for visitors.
- The behavior of the local population towards visitors should be more positive.

Some research suggestions were also highlighted. Positive and negative qualities can be determined by evaluating the comments of visitors to hotels, restaurants and recreational areas in Eğirdir. How different experiences of visitors to Eğirdir before and after the quiet city can be looked at. Visitor experiences compare to other slow cities.

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