

## **Refugee crisis (RC) after the Arab Spring (AS) and its impacts on Turkish tourism industry: The case of Istanbul**

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### **Abstract**

The Arab Spring began as social movements in Middle East and shortly after uprisings, regime changes and civil wars emerged. Apart from all, more than five million people are forced to refuge from Syria to neighbouring countries. The article is intended to explore the effects of the refugees on Turkish tourism industry with evidences from Istanbul. A semi-structured elite interviews have been used as the data collection method. Eight face to face interviews are conducted in Istanbul with scholars, professionals and specialists from different areas and study fields. Five common themes are derived from the collected data. These are illegal employment, tourism investment, tourism demand, social conflict and tourist experience. The case study makes important theoretical contribution to the tourism literature since it examines the impacts of refugee crisis with a different perspective of migration-led tourism.

**Keywords:** Arab Spring (AS), Refugee crisis (RC), Tourism-migration nexus

### **Introduction**

Until the beginning of Arab Spring (AS), as a consequence of the radical foreign policy decisions; Turkish government opted to practice a more flexible visa regime with neighbouring countries to strengthen the economic, political and socio-cultural relationships (Dede, 2011). Arguably, this approach was a necessity to eradicate the hostility remaining from Cold War (Akturk, 2013). Quoting from Davutoglu (Former Prime Minister of Turkey);

*“... not integration but reintegration with our neighbours will continue. Antep and Aleppo, Edirne and Plovdiv or Filibe, Istanbul and Selanik, Izmir and Athens, Rize and Batumi will be reintegrated... (MFA, 2011).”*

In order to achieve this goal, between the years of 2009 and 2010 Turkey lifted visa requirements with key Arab countries such as Syria, Libya, Jordan and so on through bilateral agreements. However, the political crisis, riots, civil wars and terrorist attacks in Middle East undermined this process. In parallel with this, changes occurred on the general policy of Middle East countries (Anderson, 2011) and their neighbours such as Turkey. In this environment, it would be naive to think that tourism industry and tourism activities in Turkey and Middle East will not be affected due to aforementioned developments. Hence, the political and social incidents in Middle East have substantial potential to shape the tourism activities in the region. Particularly, political instabilities, conflicts and their results had key

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roles in this process since the security problems are the Achilles' heel of the tourism activities (Neumayer, 2004).

In the light of aforesaid arguments; it can be clearly stated that AS and its aftermaths have visually left some effects on Turkey in many aspects but the tourism activities seem to be the victim of this process in particular. Additionally, as implied, the nitty-gritty of Turkish tourism industry is the future threats of AS (Fargues & Fandrich, 2012). In this context, the most important threats originated from Syria since Turkey has a direct border with Syria. For this reason, the developments in Syria is directly threatening Turkey. AS triggered many economic, social, security and political problems in Turkey. However, the most important threat perhaps became the refugee crisis in this process. Hence, refugee crisis created permanent social, economic, cultural, demographic and political problems while other conflicts temporarily affect the neighbouring countries in the aspects of economy and security.

On the other hand, there are some studies exploring the relationship between migration and tourism though these studies generally investigate the effects of voluntary migration such as tourism-led migration and migration-led tourism. However, there is no sufficient attention towards investigating the effects of refugees on tourism industry. For this reason, the effects of the Refugee Crisis (RC) on tourism industry is determined as the focal point of the study to fill a gap in the literature. As for the empirical analysis, Istanbul is chosen for various reasons. Firstly, Istanbul is one of the most visited city in the world. Istanbul is attracting almost 10 million tourists each year. Secondly, according to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR), the refugees allegedly in Turkey stay in Istanbul (UNCHR, 2016). These reasons rendered Istanbul as a suitable area to analyse the effects of refugees on tourism.

### **Aftermaths of AS and Root Causes of RC**

The Arab Region countries and communities including Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Palestinian Territories, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen and Iraq share the similar culture, geography, life styles and mentality. Hence, any development in one of them can influence the other in social, political and economic aspects. For this reason, AS successively occurred (Lotan et al., 2011; Amin et al., 2012; Dodge, 2012). The AS and revolution first started in Tunisia by a man setting himself alight in public after his business had been shut down by government. By the means of social media, the video of this protest spread out to other groups and finally caused uprisings along the country (Goodwin, 2011; Dalacoura, 2012). Following these uprisings, the president of Tunisia, Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali fled to Saudi Arabia. Tunisian protests sparked a domino effect in the region (Schraeder, 2012). In this sense, one of the country that was affected by the protests was Egypt. Egyptian dissident groups gathered in Tahrir Square. Egyptian uprisings led to resignation of Hosni Mubarak who had been the president of Egypt since 1981 (Nagarajan, 2013). Another country is influenced by riots was Libya and social events in this country continued with the murder of president Moammar Gaddafi (Kamrava, 2014). By the same token, the leader of Yemen is also ousted (Avraham, 2015).

It is possible to sort the root causes of these uprisings as unemployment, the majority of dissatisfied youth, human rights violations and political issues including the current regime (Rifai, 2011). Perchance, because of this reason AS is also called as "Democratization of Islamism". Similar pictures are also painted for Syria too. The fall of Bashar al-Assad is virtually assumed though contrary to popular belief, Bashar al-Assad is not ousted and Baath regime is continued at the expense of civil war in Syria (Serwer, 2012). Post-Arab Spring period made a beginning (Rabinovich, 2014; Susser, 2015) which is also referred to as "Arab Winter" rather than a spring (Vassefi, 2013).

Aforementioned turmoil and political instabilities in Middle East created three main threats for Turkish tourism industry. Firstly, some terrorist organizations emerged such as Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham's (ISIS), Democratic Union Party (Partiya Yekîtiya Demokrat, PYD) and People's Protection Units (Yekîneyên Parastina Gel, YPG). However, the most serious terrorist threats are created by ISIS. At the first glance, ISIS may seem like an ordinary marauding paramilitary force (Gambhir, 2015) though it is such a powerful terrorist organization that besides the numerous attacks, lootings, ransoms, it controls up to %40 of Iraqi wheat production and most of Syrian's oil and gas production (Cockburn, 2014; Woertz, 2014). It also has a growing number of sympathizer from many countries. For instance, it is claimed that 50 British women have joined to ISIS (Sherwood et al., 2014). Indeed, ISIS is not just terrorizing in Middle East but it became a global threat (Jenkins, 2015). Consequently, ISIS and other terrorist organizations became a significant security threat for the tourism activities in Turkey.

Secondly, unexpected political upheavals are erupted among third countries. However, the most violent political conflict has occurred between Turkey and Russia. Turkish army downed Russian plane due to the air space violation. Immediately after, Russia restricted imports from Turkey and most of Russian tour operators stopped selling vacation packages to Turkey (MacFarquhar, 2015). In a sense, the conflict in these countries directly influenced the tourism demand for Turkey. Thirdly, the civil war in Syria and other developments forced people to flee from their old countries to relatively safer places particularly Turkey.

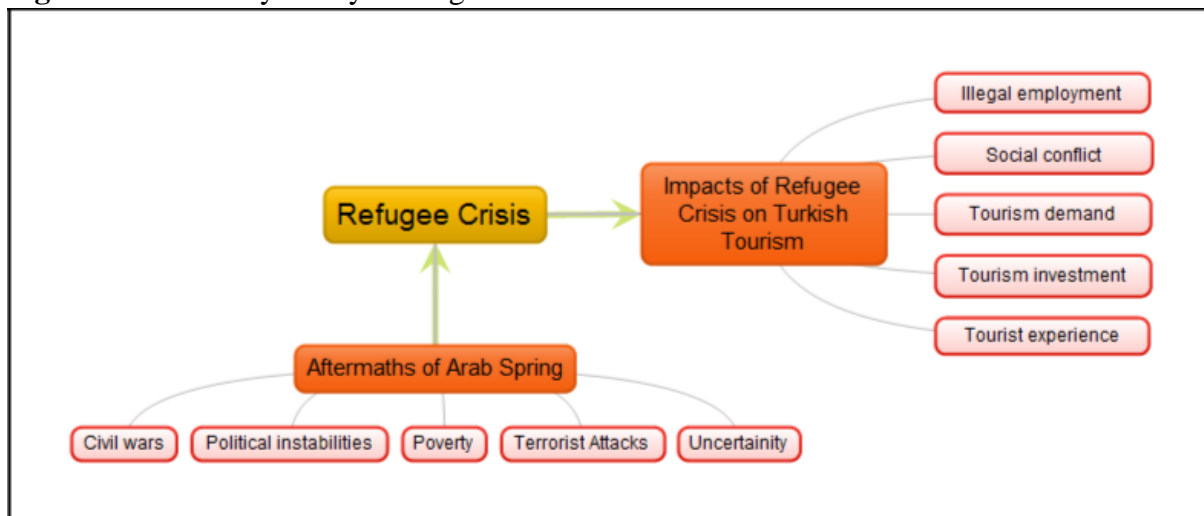
### **Refugee Crisis**

As it is partially mentioned above, AS have potential to affect the performance of Turkey in many areas including foreign policy, security, economy and so on. However, RC is determined as the focal point of the study for two main reasons. Firstly, it is evident that there is a relatively modest literature that endeavours to clarify the relationship between migration and tourism, impact of migration on tourism or impact of tourism on migration. Notwithstanding, none of the study embraces social, cultural and economic effects of RC on tourism industry at once.

On the other hand, there are some studies that examine the relationship between migration and tourism though these studies generally deal with the migration movements which has commercial motivations such as entrepreneurial migration and labour migration. Another stream of the literature investigates the migration of people who has peripatetic life styles. In this regard, rural-urban migration, retirement migration and second homes are second type of migrations that are examined in the context of tourism (Williams & Hall, 2000; Paniagua, 2002; Benson & O'reilly, 2009; Jackiewicz & Craine, 2010).

The common feature of these migrations which are handled in cited studies is the voluntary characteristics (i.e. tourism-led-migration, migration-led-tourism). The distinctive feature of the human movement which is explored in the scope of this study is the different push and pull factors of migration. In parallel with these differences, it can be said that the study gained rare findings which can make substantial contribution to the literature. Hence, refugees have completely different behaviours than voluntary migrants. In this sense, it may be claimed that this paper can be one of the unique studies since it does not examine the tourism-migration nexus but examine the impacts of RC on tourism industry as can be seen from Figure 1.

**Fig. 1.** The summary of key findings



However, it should also be kept in mind that RC is a human movement that is totally different from other migrations though it is a very difficult task to put the RC in a migration category since there is considerable confusion about grouping human movements. Nevertheless, the RC mainly has the feature of forced migration since refugees did not have power to decide to leave from fatherland (Petersen, 1958).

Addition to above argument, another reason that led authors to focus on RC is the quantity of refugees. RC that took place is one of the biggest human movement of history. For this reason, it is considered worth to explore the effects of RC on tourism industry. According to the statistics of UNCHR a total of almost five million Syrians have taken refuge in various countries. Meanwhile, Turkey has admitted more than half of these refugees (UNCHR, 2016).

## Methodology

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the effects of RC on tourism industry with references from Istanbul. In this sense, as RC has recently taken place, statistics or written materials such as articles, books, reports etc. were not sufficient to analyse the impacts of RC on Turkish tourism industry. There are only few number of written sources that partly deal with RC though those do not specifically examine the phenomenon in the context of tourism industry. For this reason, experts and scholars are addressed. Qualitative research methods have been used to shed light on this type of little known and complex research topics (Barker et. al, 2002: 72-93).

## Data collection technique

The semi-structured interview has been employed as data collection technique since a semi-structured interview does not have the limitations of structured interviews owing to its flexibility to enquire for participants' observations as well as giving opportunity to researchers to prompt with participants about the research topics. (Barribal & While, 1994; Mathers et al., 1998). The harmony between characteristics of semi-structured interviews and the complex nature of the research topic is taken into consideration in choosing this method.

## Sample

Eight face to face interviews have been conducted with diverse experts, professionals and scholars from different areas and study fields. The structure of sample is designed based on Patton's (1990) maximum variation sampling strategy which permits researchers to get high-

quality, unique and rich data through its heterogeneity. In this sense, core competency of scholars can be listed as labour economics (P1), journalism (P2), political science and international relations (P3 and P4) and tourism management (P5 and P6). On the other hand, one of the professional was the chairman of one of the most influential tourism union in Turkey (P7). The second industry professional who has PHD related to Middle East tourism market and was also the owner of a travel agency serving for tourists from Middle East (P8).

The interviewees being concentrated in the areas of AS, RC, Arab Region, Middle East, Tourism Policy and Planning and similar issues that played a significant role to render the findings of the study more reliable. From this aspect, the data collection technique can also be referred to as elite interviews since all participants are experts in their fields. Where they are knowledgeable about research topic and can provide better insights into research (Harvey, 2011; Cetin, 2014). All of the scholar also had scientific research about AS, RC or Tourism Policy and Planning.

To determine the sample size, theoretical sampling technique is used which suggests ending interviews if similar responds emerge. As Glaser and Strauss" (2009) claim to getting similar or same feedback for the same questions indicates that the research has come to the saturation point. Thus within the scope of research, eight interviews are made and each interview has taken an average of 40-50 minutes. Finally, recorded interviews are typed verbatim then notes are coded systematically and analysed. Consequently, five common themes are obtained.

### ***Findings***

The result of research indicates that RC affected Turkish tourism in several ways. These effects generally occurred in different aspects of industry though some socio-cultural effects also emerged. Three of the five research themes confirm that RC is affected the industry in the employment, investment and demand areas. On the one hand, content of other two themes indicates that local people as one of the most important stakeholder of the industry also encountered some social problems. Likewise, research outcomes also indicate that tourist experiences are also influenced in a negative way due to the behaviours of refugees.

#### ***Theme 1: Illegal Employment***

Undoubtedly, refugees are in the need of income to survive except those who stay in refugee camps. In this context, P7 declared that refugees head for western part of Turkey which is relatively developed and naturally have plenty of job opportunities. Most of the participants emphasized that refugees may be employed in various businesses from different industries which do not have an institutional identity. Participants also reached a consensus on that refugees are seen as low cost labour in businesses including hotels, restaurants and catering composing HORECA sector (Joppe, 2012) and travel agencies (Kirisci, 2014). It is also pointed out that this notion is strongly favoured by business owners in Turkey. It is claimed that the wage levels in Hotel and Restaurants are likely to have decreased due to the informal employment of refugees (Balkan & Tumen, 2016).

According to the opinions of participants, it is inferred that other than refugees being seen as low cost labour, there are three main reasons to employ them in HORECA sector. One of these reason is higher informal employment rate of Turkish tourism industry compared to other industries. Secondly, business owners in such places as Istanbul where a growing number of businesses serving for Arabic tourists have a common belief. It is possible to summarize this common belief by the word of P1;

*"For better performance Syrian refugees can be hired for lower salaries instead of Turkish employees besides refugees are capable of speaking Arabic"*

The third reason why Syrians are more likely to be employed in tourism sector can be stated as the job vacancies in stewarding and housekeeping positions. Graduates from related universities or colleges who refuse to take up these jobs as occupations on the grounds of low wages and unfavourable working conditions. For this reason, the refugees are generally employed in tourism jobs which are described as dirty, difficult and dangerous (3D) by International Labour Organization (ILO) (Lee et al., 2011) as well as in other industries. Despite this, there may also be some qualified refugees who can take better jobs in tourism or in other industries. By the same token, a small number of refugees who has work permit are perhaps employed legally. However, at the risk of over generalization, it is possible to say that most of the refugees who are illegally employed work hard and get peanuts.

### *Theme 2: Tourism Investments*

According to the participants", another economic reaction of this process is likely to be seen in the field of tourism investment in short and midterm. It is thought that classifying the investments on the basis of their origin can be useful in order to create a better understanding for present and future effects of RC since the multidirectional and nebulous nature of phenomenon inhibits the measurement of overall effects. In this connection, three main types of investors are determined within the scope of this study as Turkish, Arabic and all other countries which have not been exposed to the AS (i.e. Western Countries). At the first glance, there seems to be a common perception about that the political environment can discourage the potential Western investors due to the location of Turkey which is close to hotspot in Middle East and the attacks of ISIS, YPG and PYD. Addition to that perception, admission of refugees to Turkey may also cause a decrease in the amount of tourism and other sectoral investment.

However, none of the participant pointed out a possible drop in tourism investments at least in short term. As opposed to popular belief, it can be said that most of the participants have the expectation of an increase due to the capital flow from Arabic countries to Turkey. Within this context, one may clearly say that the capital flow from Syria confirms the participants" estimation. In this sense, it is stated that there is an increasing number of firms entering business that belong to Syrian people in Istanbul (Valarini, 2015). On the other hand, small scale businesses are opened by refugees such as ethnic restaurants and grocery stores. In addition to this, it is also stated that cultural and religious background, geographical proximity and political stability rendered Turkey an attractive investment zone in the eyes of Arabic investors. Different from others, P5 declared that;

*"Some changes can be seen in the structure of tourism facilities such as hotels serving for halal tourism instead of traditional hotels that serve for sea-sun-sand (3S) type of tourism..."*

It is possible to say that participants agree regarding the attitudes of Turkish and other group of investors in this process. The reason that led these groups to continue to make investments may rely on two factors. Firstly, it may be said that their concerns are eliminated through the increasing tourism demand, generous incentives of government and the international image of Turkey. Another reason is that since AS turned to winter, tourism investment planned to be made in these countries may change direction. In other words, prevailing chaotic situation and authority gap in some Arabic countries is diverting investors into Turkey. By the same token, some Turkish entrepreneurs can also start to delay their tourism investments to be made in Middle East.

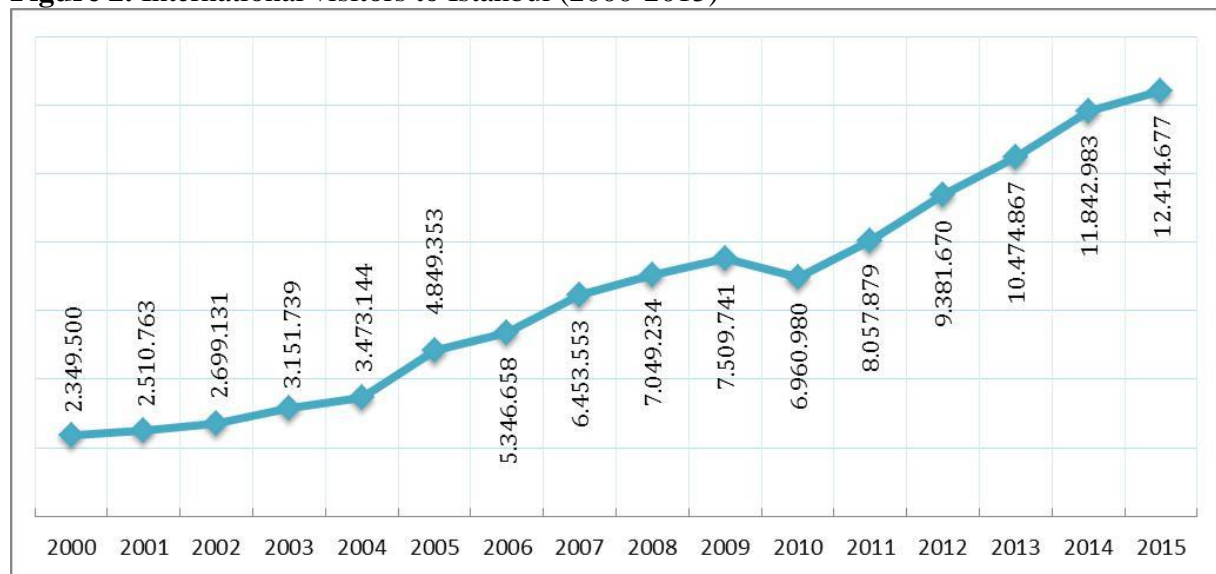
### *Theme 3: Tourism Demand*

It is stated by participants that social changes and news about refugees may also have an effect on tourism demand for Istanbul. By keeping in mind the different types of tourist, the

impacts of the refugees on tourism demand for Turkey may be analysed under a classification since there are various types of effects mentioned by participants. In this context, in terms of evaluating foreign tourist demand effects, the participants mostly claimed that there would not be quantitative decrease in the long or midterm owing to cheap price policy which provide competitive advantage to Turkey among tourism destinations in Mediterranean Region (Tosun, 1997). As can be seen from Figure 2., there is no quantitative decrease in numbers of inbound tourists.

Participants also mentioned that there is a media hype in European Union (EU). Most of the journals tarred Turkey and Arabic countries with the same brush. Turkey is defined as dangerous zone because of geographical proximity to hot spot and having open door policy to refugees. However, it is specified by most participants that there is and will not be a reduction on tourist numbers coming from EU countries thanks to being accessible, familiar, quality but cheap tourism product. However, it is also estimated by P5 that there will be a short term decrease in some types of tourism demand which consist of a minority of people who are wealthy, well-educated, and people who like cultural tours and alternative tourism types (Fielding & Shortland, 2011). Nevertheless, if such official statements or direct interventions continue which imply Turkey as a safety-critical chaotic case, there might be a decrease in the number of package tours such as the cancelled package tours from Russia (MacFarquhar, 2015).

**Figure 2.** International visitors to Istanbul (2000-2015)



**Source:** Istanbul Culture and Tourism Office (2016)

However, P6 claimed that existence of refugees will not affect the tourism demand for Istanbul since these types of human movements could have occurred anywhere in the world specifically in recent years. This statements also can be summarized with the words of another participant. In this sense, P7 pointed out that the tourists became apathetic to conflicts. By quoting him;

*“In Tel Aviv, despite the fact that the bombs explode, tourists still go to beaches...”*

Lastly, it is also voiced by some participants that some countries’ hospitality industry affected from AS positively since tourists prefer travelling to safer places such as Malaysia (AlBattat et al., 2013). In the same manner with Malaysia, Turkey can be one of the winners of this process. As for domestic tourism demand, it is stated by P5 that number of visits can decrease in some tourism destinations such as Gaziantep, Hatay and Mersin which are close to hot spot.

In brief, none of the participants mentioned any possible drop in foreign and domestic tourism demand for Istanbul.

#### *Theme 4: Social Conflict*

One of the most important stakeholder of tourism industry is local residents who live in the destination (Swarbrooke, 1999). Thus, by interpretation of participants' opinions, there might be some crucial effects of refugees on local residents. It is already known that even if people who share a common culture can have conflicts due to different personalities and education levels. In this sense, all of the participants claimed that conflicts will be inevitable between locals and refugees unless refugee flow stops.

P4 stated that due to the common ground in the religious values, acceptance and tolerance of locals are high. However, most of the participants stated that even if locals show hospitality to refugees, the tolerance of the locals may have been lowered as a result of the events that has brought dissatisfaction. According to the report which is gathered by collaboration of Center For Middle Eastern Strategic Studies (ORSAM) and The Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV), the social problems between locals and refugees are listed as polygamy, abuse of children and women, social, ethnical and sectarian polarization, growing drug and woman trafficking, urban sprawl, child labour, demographic change and insecurity due to growing refugee population (Gwadz et al., 2009; Orhan & Gundogar, 2015).

Depending on the participants' opinions, it is concluded that the effects of RC can be witnessed as social conflicts particularly stemming from illegal employment of the refugees instead of locals, aggressive attitudes of refugees, illegal use of electricity, etc. and it is feared that these problems will intensify in the long term. In this context, it is also stated that refugees may often be misidentified as tourists because of their foreign language and culture. It is interpreted by P5 that if undesirable events continue to take place in their lives, local residents may reflect similar hostile attitudes that they have shown against refugees towards any tourist as defined by Doxey's (1975) irritation index.

#### *Theme 5: Tourist Experience*

Perhaps, creating memorable tourist experience is pivotal for sustainability of tourism activities in a destination. In a similar manner, offering quality tourist experience makes more contribution to the companies than service characteristic and product features and leads to competitive advantage (Cetin & Bilgihan, 2016). However, offering tourist experience is relatively a harder task than improving physical quality of services because of its emotional structure. If experience conflicts with expectations of tourist, dissatisfaction will be inevitable. In this sense, participants mentioned that possible undesired interactions between refugees and tourists can cause sense of stress.

It is thought that dividing these possible effects into two parts on the basis of refugees living conditions can be reasonable since these types of social interactions are uncontrollable and may occur in various forms. In this sense, there seems two groups of refugees as the rich and the poor though it is very difficult to distinguish them statistically. However, there may be some clues based on participants' observations. As stated by participants, refugees generally are not allowed to buy or rent a proper house due to the legislation, attitudes of landlords and other similar reasons even if they have purchasing power. For this reason, except for the poor ones staying in refugee camps, streets, parks, slums and elsewhere, some refugees (i.e. economic migrants) can afford to stay in hotels permanently. Naturally, refugees staying at hotels share the same ambience with tourists. In the context of this situation, P5 who has notable publications related to tourist experience pointed out that refugee families are generally crowded and have different habits and life styles than tourists coming from West



since refugees are not in holiday mood. Hence, they may disturb the tourists for various reasons which could be anything from refugees' life style to habits such as unusual way of dressing, polygamy etc. which do not meet the general expectations of Western tourists.

Furthermore, as it is discussed above, poor refugees can have an influence over experiences of tourist in a different way. Observations gained from the majority of participants indicate that some refugees panhandle particularly in the most attractive tourism spots to get money or food since some of them suffer from meeting their felt-needs. In line with this, these refugees can be considered as thieves by tourists due to their views even if they are not. This perception can naturally lead tourists to have a feeling of insecurity which is undesired and damaging the image of the destination.

There is another possible effect taking its source from both groups. Above discussion confirms that some refugees either have small businesses in touristic places or work in locally owned businesses. As was intimated, there is an increasing number of Arabic tourists that travel to Istanbul. The main motivations of most tourists are to escape from daily routine or get to know a new culture, facing with Arabic businesses and Arabic staff during their travels can displeas those Arab tourists. In other words, they may feel themselves at their hometown rather than travelling abroad.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has investigated the effects of RC on tourism industry in Istanbul based on the observations of participants and literature review. However, attacks and threats of terrorist organizations and political conflicts between countries that emerged in Post-Arab Spring period are also referenced as needed alongside RC in order to clarify the matter. Very clearly, both literature review and empirical findings of the study are inadequate to measure the impacts of RC on tourism industry in Istanbul for some reasons. Firstly, written materials, statistics and other sources are limited since RC is a recent issue. Secondly, the empirical findings of the study only reflect the observation of participants in Istanbul. In this circumstances, it seems impossible to make definitive conclusions. For this reason, comprehensive qualitative and quantitative analysis should be made in Istanbul and elsewhere such as smaller coastal and inland cities. However, it should be noted that unsettled issues in Middle East perhaps render the findings of study meaningless. By keeping in mind the aforementioned limitations, some conclusions can be made.

The paper has five main findings and none of them asserts any serious effect on tourism industry in Turkey, at least in the context of Istanbul. Firstly, as can be seen from Figure 2. tourism demand for Istanbul has continued to increase. Indeed, it is a very difficult task to measure the effects of RC on tourism demand. Nevertheless, based on the participants' opinions, it can clearly be stated that RC is not affected tourism demand for Istanbul in a negative way and there is no evidence that confute the statements of participants. Secondly, by the same token, none of the participants pointed out any possible drop in tourism investment. Although no specific data is found to confirm the observation of participants, it may be said that capital flow from Middle East has made positive contribution to the tourism industry in Istanbul particularly in the context of small-scale tourism businesses. That is to say, tourism investments and tourism demand for Istanbul are not affected negatively in general.

In the contrary to above discussion, other findings of the study mentioned some negative effects of refugees on tourism industry. One of that finding is about the employment of refugees instead of local people in tourism businesses. In this sense, one side of this finding reveals that the 3D job opportunities in the tourism industry facilitate and contribute to the integration of refugees. However, other side indicates that illegal employment of refugees in

tourism businesses influence the dissatisfaction of citizens. Indeed, the factor that increasing local dissatisfaction is not limited with the employment of refugees. As intimated before, the problems may range from illegal electricity usage to overcrowding in public transportation. In a similar vein, it is also pointed out by some participants that behaviours of refugees can also increase the discontentment of tourists. In this regard, it may be said that there is no evidence that identified refugees as the source of dissatisfaction since both locals and tourists show hospitality and tolerance to refugees.

Based on the above argument, it can be said that the most important effect of refugees on tourism industry is the illegal employment of them. Turkey perhaps have few main choices. First, to develop socio-economic plans and make regulations. For instance, employment of refugees with work permit can be allowed by government. This way integration of refugees to the social and working life can be fostered, but this can probably sustain the dissatisfaction of locals since applying this choice necessitates considerable financial supports and will probably increase the rate of unemployment. Hence, there is a considerable number of refugees and Turkey has already spent more than US\$ 8 billion on refugees (Aiyar et al., 2016). That is to say, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to solve this problem with the internal dynamics of Turkey. In this regard, it is obvious that financial support of international donor agencies and developed countries are needed. However, both donor agencies and developed countries remained reluctant to aid refugees from the beginning of RC until now. Nevertheless, it seems unrealistic to eradicate the overall effects of refugees on tourism industry unless the number of refugees decreases.

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