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Evaluation of tourism students' responses to ethical dilemmas

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ABSTRACT

Tourism contributes to the economic, social and environmental development of destinations, but it can also have negative impacts. When dealing with the impacts of tourism, managers or employees are often faced with conflicting situations or dilemmas and may make decisions that are difficult or unethical for the other party affected by the decision. In order to prepare students to deal with the complex ethical decisions they will face in their careers, this study examined the perspectives and decision-making approaches of students studying at Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University (NEVU), Faculty of Tourism. The questionnaire technique was used as the data collection method in the study. As a result of the study, it was found that students evaluate ethical decisions related to environmental scenarios with higher ethical sensitivity. In the study, it was found that the students of Tourism Guidance Department showed higher ethical sensitivity towards environmental dilemmas. Another important finding of the study is that students adopt different ethical theories depending on the type of dilemma they face when making ethical decisions.

1. Introduction

International tourism data show that in 2023, 1.3 billion people participated in international tourism, generating US$1.5 trillion in receipts (UNWTO, 2024). According to the UNWTO (2024), tourism is the world's fastest-growing industry, often the main export category for many countries, creating much-needed jobs and development opportunities. In 2023, tourism continued to be a key driver of economic growth and job creation, supporting destinations in both developed and emerging economies. As international tourism continues to grow and expand, it is more important than ever to rethink tourism policy and management.

The tourism industry is important for economic growth, cultural interaction and social development. For this reason, many countries prioritize the development of the tourism industry. However, tourism development brings not only positive impacts but also some negative environmental, socio-cultural and economic impacts (Archer *et al*., 2005). Considering these negative impacts of tourism activities, it is clear that the growth of the industry must be sustainable. This will reduce the impact of negative activities of tourism stakeholders, especially those that may harm the environment, society or a group of people.

Tourism stakeholders are constantly faced with ethical issues where they must make decisions that may harm the environment, society or a particular group (Weeden, 2002). For example, this may be the case when building tourism facilities in an area where local people live. The construction of these facilities may bring economic benefits to the area by generating income and employment, but it may also cause harm, such as real estate speculation, increased cost of living, devaluation of local traditions, and natural destruction (Paes & Azevedo, 2016). These positive and negative impacts of tourism activities on society, the economy, and the environment raise ethical dilemmas in decisions about these activities.

These ethical dilemmas faced by tourism stakeholders, and the unethical decisions made because of these dilemmas, sometimes result in costs that are difficult or impossible to recoup. For example, a study conducted by Vallen and Cadado (2000) with general managers (GMs) of the largest hotels in various states in the U.S. revealed that there is a strong perception that employees and managers in the tourism industry do not always behave ethically. They also found that GMs' estimates of the annual cost of unethical decisions in their organizations ranged from less than $10,000 to more than $500,000, with an average cost of more than $100,000. This example shows that tourism stakeholders need to calculate the costs of their decisions when faced with ethical dilemmas and take them into account for sustainable tourism development. One way to do this is to prepare tourism students, as future managers, for the ethical problems and dilemmas they may face in the

Research Paper

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future. Therefore, when considering ethical issues or dilemmas related to tourism, it is necessary to see how future managers perceive such dilemmas when they arise and what kind of decisions they make.

Numerous studies have been conducted on the ethical awareness and orientations of students in various disciplines (Reidenbach & Robin, 1988; Singh, 1989; Woods & Berger, 1989). However, only a few studies have examined the ethical perceptions and orientations of hospitality students (Akova & Çalık, 2008; Akyurt & Mıhçı, 2019; Freedman & Bartholemew, 1990; İyitoğlu, 2012; Kaya, 2019; Stevens, 2001; Whitney, 1989). Limited research has been conducted on the ethical perspectives or decision-making approaches of tourism students (Aslan & Kozak, 2006; Hudson & Miller, 2005; 2006; Nazari, 2014; Paes & Azevedo, 2016; Şeker & Unur, 2018). In this study, the decision-making approaches and orientations of students of Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University (NEVU) Faculty of Tourism towards ethical dilemmas were investigated. It is extremely important to understand the types of decisions students make when faced with ethical dilemmas, and to prepare students for the complex ethical decisions they will face in their careers. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the ethical awareness and orientations of tourism students and to evaluate their decision-making approaches in the face of ethical dilemmas they may encounter in their professional lives. Students' perspectives and decision-making approaches to ethical dilemmas were assessed through scenarios. In this way, it was possible to determine what kind of decisions future managers can make in possible ethical dilemmas and problems they may encounter in the industry.

2. Ethical Decision Making in Tourism

Ethical decision making refers to a logical process in which the morally correct action in a situation with conflicting options is determined through systematic reasoning (Berggren *et al*., 2002). Many models of ethical decision-making have been developed in the literature (Dubinsky & Loken, 1989; Ferrell & Gresham, 1985; Hunt & Vitell, 1986; Rest, 1986; Trevino, 1986). Jones (1991) notes that each of these models has some aspect that contributes to the understanding of the ethical decision-making process, but none of them goes beyond suggesting that the characteristics of the moral issue affect the ethical decision-making process. For this reason, Jones (1991) synthesized these ethical decision-making models and introduced a new model. The synthesized decision-making model explicitly includes the characteristics of the ethical issue as an independent variable. According to Jones (1991), ethical decision making depends on the issue, and the characteristics of the moral issue itself are collectively referred to as moral intensity. The moral issue is an important determinant of ethical decision making and behavior. Jones (1991, pp.374) argues that each ethical issue can be represented in terms of its moral intensity, which is a construct consisting of six components: magnitude of consequences, social consensus, likelihood of impact, temporal proximity, proximity, and intensity of impact. All of these components influence an individual's ethical decision-making behavior with respect to the issue.

The above models of ethical decision-making are useful for understanding the ethical decision-making process of individuals. However, to better understand the heterogeneity of individuals' ethical decision-making or ethical behavior, it is necessary to understand the pure forms of ethical thought, i.e., the theoretical building blocks of eclectic reality. There is a tendency in the ethics literature to focus on the theories of teleology and deontology. However, a full understanding of the ethical evaluation of individual behavior requires an examination of other theories that have been developed (Fennel & Malloy, 1999).

Theory of Justice: The most influential and fundamental concepts of justice theories come from the writings of Aristotle. Aristotle developed the principle of fundamental justice, which emphasizes that equals should be treated equally and unequals should be treated unequally. This principle of fundamental justice, which states that a minimum of justice is the rule, does not explain how equality is to be determined. However, philosophers have argued that when people or their achievements are unequal, some principles should be applied in the distribution of justice, such as a person's need, personal effort, and social effort. It is also argued that these principles can be supplemented (Reidenbach & Robin, 1990).

Relativism: The main point of these theories is that all normative beliefs are a function of a culture or an individual. Therefore, there are no universal ethical rules that apply to everyone. What is right for one person or society may not be right for another. According to this theory, the values and behaviors of people in one culture do not necessarily govern the behaviors of people in another culture because ethical rules vary from culture to culture (Reidenbach & Robin, 1990). Relativists reject the idea that there are universal ethical principles and argue that differences in ethical perspectives are more than subtle preferences or traits that vary from society to society. Ethical perceptions can be fundamentally different from individual to individual and from culture to culture. Consequently, according to these theories, a universal concept of right or good behavior is not possible, and any attempt to globalize moral behavior amounts to moral colonialism (Fennel & Malloy, 1999).

Deontology: This theory is based on the work of Immanual Kant (1788/1977). Kant argued that ethical behavior is a function of one's good will or duty. These duties to others are many and varied. They are guided not by inclination or instinct, but by reason (which is unique and universally shared by all human beings). According to this theory, we have a duty to pay our debts, take care of our children, and tell the truth because it is the "right" thing to do. This

primary ethical rule is called the "categorical imperative" (Fennel & Malloy, 1999; Reidenbach & Robin, 1990).

Teleology: Teleological or consequentialist theories include all theories that measure morality by the consequences of actions. The two most controversial teleological theories in modern philosophy can be explained by the question of whether the evaluation of consequences should focus only on the individual or whether the evaluation should include society as a whole. If the answer is that the evaluator should only consider consequences for the individual, the ethical theory is called egoism. If the answer is to consider society as a whole, the theory is called utilitarianism. Teleological theories, unlike deontological theories, are goal-oriented and concerned with the consequences of actions. If individuals or societies benefit as a result of the action, then the action is ethical. How the action is performed is secondary (Fennel & Malloy, 1999; Reidenbach & Robin, 1990).

3. Ethical Dilemmas in Tourism

Dilemma is literally defined as a discussion or problem that forces a person to follow one of the undesirable options, usually one of two options (TDK, 2025). Other definitions of the word dilemma include a problematic situation or a situation in which you have to make a very difficult choice between things that are usually of equal importance (Oxford Learner's Dictionary, 2025). An ethical dilemma is a special type of dilemma that involves moral principles and norms. Ethical dilemmas refer to situations in which an individual must choose between two alternatives, both of which are considered morally unacceptable. The decision maker is in a conflicted state of mind and must analyze the problem more thoroughly in order to make the best decision under the circumstances. In most cases, the individual will have to make a compromise. The main characteristics of an ethical dilemma are: it presents two alternatives; it reflects a conflicted situation; both alternatives are morally unacceptable; the alternatives are analyzed through the lens of moral principles and require in-depth analysis of all relevant aspects (Puiu, 2023).

When faced with an ethical dilemma, the decision maker considers his or her own moral principles and values. There is no right answer to an ethical dilemma, and this answer also depends on the cultural context of the decision maker. According to Dignum (2019) decisions following ethical dilemmas are different because people have different perspectives, come from different cultures, have different religions, and have different political views. Ethical dilemmas are related to a person's cultural background because an individual's moral values determine the solution to a dilemma, and many of these answers are influenced by one's culture.

Tourism is an important industry that generates income and employment, provides socio-cultural interaction, and contributes to environmental improvement in many countries. However, in addition to these positive impacts, it also generates negative economic impacts, such as damage to the natural environment and the socio-cultural values of local people, as well as creating opportunity costs. This creates ethical dilemmas and problems for tourism stakeholders. For example, a hotel planned to be built on agricultural land or in a forested area may contribute to the region in terms of income and employment, but at the expense of agricultural products and the benefits derived from the forested area. It may also lead to land speculation.

Concerns about the impact of tourism activities on natural resources and the environment are part of another ethical dilemma associated with these activities. Large numbers of tourists visiting a destination contribute to negative environmental impacts such as pollution of natural areas such as national parks and beaches, increased energy demand in the destination, destruction of coral reefs, deforestation, destruction of natural vegetation. A few examples of these situations can be given. The Thai authorities decided to restrict tourism in Maya Beach, which was made famous by Hollywood movies, because it was facing an environmental disaster due to tourism (Tourism Agency, 2018). A similar situation occurred on Mt. Everest, the highest mountain in the world. Mt. Everest and the surrounding Sagarmatha National Park were in danger of becoming the "world's highest garbage dump" because tourists visiting the mountain and mountaineers climbing to the summit left their garbage behind. However, the Nepalese government does not want to set quotas for climbing the peaks due to concerns about loss of revenue (NTV, 2024). Because of these and similar negative impacts in many destinations around the world, important ethical dilemmas such as developing or limiting tourism can be experienced.

Marnburg (2006) conducted a study on how students, as potential managers in the tourism industry, conceptualize the ethical dilemmas they may face in the future. According to Marnburg (2006), the dilemmas faced by the students include building a large resort in a natural area, sexual harassment, meat trade that can harm the health of customers with serious infections, petty theft, illegal embezzlement, prostitution in hotels, racism, and discrimination. Marnburg (2006) conducted a study on how students, as potential managers in the tourism sector, conceptualize the ethical dilemmas they may face in the future. According to Marnburg (2006), the dilemmas faced by the students include building a large resort in a natural area, sexual harassment, meat trade that can harm the health of customers with serious infections, petty theft, illegal embezzlement, prostitution in hotels, racism, and discrimination. Hudson and Miller (2005) found that even when tourism students prioritize the natural environment over other issues as a result of tourism, they ultimately do not understand ecology and its links to tourism and do not fully appreciate the dilemmas. In another study, the same authors (2006) found that significant differences in ethical decision-making were limited to the Deontology and

Utilitarianism subscales in the economic scenarios, that UK students were more teleological in their ethical decision-making, and that there was no significant interaction between scenario and country for the relativism theory. Paes and Azavedo (2016) found that students showed ethical attitudes toward the dilemmas presented in the scenarios, but the majority had difficulty reaching an ethical stance when it came to economic dilemmas. Similarly, Akova and Çalık (2008) found that tourism students, who are likely to work as managers in the sector in the future, generally disapproved of unethical behavior, but remained undecided about some unethical issues to which customers are very sensitive. Aslan and Kozak (2006) found that students rated environmental and socio-cultural scenarios as more ethical than marketing and employee relations scenarios, possibly because the behaviors in the scenarios also benefit society. According to the results of the research, scenarios that are considered less ethical benefit the individual. As can be seen, tourism activities pose ethical dilemmas that are difficult to decide. Considering the ethical dilemmas related to tourism, it is important to see how future managers perceive such dilemmas when they arise and prepare them for the future.

4. Research Methodology

The aim of this study is to investigate the ethical awareness and orientations of the students of the Faculty of Tourism of NEVU and to evaluate their decision-making situations in the face of ethical dilemmas they may encounter in their professional life. In order to achieve this goal, the questionnaire technique was used as the data collection method. The Multidimensional Ethics Scale (MES) developed by Reidenbach and Robin (1988) and adapted by Hudson and Miller (2005; 2006) was used in the study. The MES was developed for use in business contexts and has the advantage of identifying specific forms of moral reasoning by providing insight into the cognitive ethical reasoning process. The Ethical Awareness Scale measures the extent to which participants believe a particular action is unethical according to the ethical theories of justice (fair distribution of rewards and punishments), relativism (there are no universal standards of moral values, only cultural norms), deontology (the idea of universal truths and principles that should be followed regardless of circumstances), and utilitarianism (ethical decisions are made in terms of expected outcomes, which removes the universality of decisions and subordinates principles to context) (Hudson & Miller, 2006). This scale was adapted for this study and a Likert-type scale of 10 items (1=strongly disagree,...4=strongly agree) was used within the framework of the four ethical theories described above (justice, relativism, deontology, and teleology). The MES also includes items measuring ethical intention and general orientation. Ethical intention was measured with two items. One in the first person (I would do the same action) and one in the third person (my peers would do the same action) to reduce social desirability bias. The final item of the scale measures the participant's overall level of ethical orientation (action is ethical). In addition to the MES scale, students were asked to provide demographic information.

The study used six scenarios developed by Hudson and Miller (2005; 2006) on ethical dilemmas that can arise in the tourism industry. The scenarios were adapted to the culture of the Turkish tourism industry. The scenarios reflect the three main dilemma areas (economic, social and environmental) in the tourism industry. Scenarios 1 and 5 are based on social dilemmas, scenarios 2 and 4 are based on environmental dilemmas, and scenarios 3 and 6 are based on economic dilemmas (Hudson & Miller, 2005). The population of the study consists of students studying tourism at the undergraduate level at NEVÜ Faculty of Tourism. The convenience sampling method was used in the study and the questionnaires were administered to the students attending the courses. The students were asked if they would like to participate in the study and were given explanations on how to fill in the questionnaire. As a result, a total of 186 usable responses were obtained.

5. Findings

Before analyzing the data, it was determined whether the collected data met the conditions of normal distribution and whether they were reliable and valid. Skewness and kurtosis coefficients were used to determine the normality of the distribution of the data for each ethical scenario. Skewness and kurtosis values were found to be between -1 and +1 (Hair *et al*., 2019). Again, the factor analysis of the validity of the statements in each scenario confirmed the previously mentioned dimensional structure (4). The Cronbach's alpha values for each of the four dimensions in the six scenarios exceeded the value of 0.70 suggested by Nunnally (1967).

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Students

Demographic Characteristics		Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Female	119	64,5
	Male	67	35,5
Department	Gastronomy and Culinary Arts	88	47,3
	Tourism Management	40	21,5
	Tourism Guidance	58	31,2
Grade	1	30	16,1
	2	70	37,6
	3	46	24,7
	4	40	22
Course or Training on Business Ethics / Professional Ethics	Yes	83	44,6
	No	103	55,4

Source: Author's own elaboration

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the students. The sample contained more females (64,5%), while the proportion of male students was 35,5. The distribution of the sample according to departments was Gastronomy and Culinary Arts (47,3%), Tourism Guidance (31,2%) and Tourism Management (21,5%). Most of the samples were in the 2nd year (37,6%). Of the

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations by Social Dilemmas

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Justice	2,39	0,88
… is fair	2,40	0,89
… is just	2,48	0,85
… is morally right	2,29	0,90
Relativism	2,40	0,84
… is acceptable to my family	2,40	0,85
… is traditionally acceptable	2,37	0,84
… is culturally acceptable	2,41	0,83
Utilitarianism	2,35	0,87
… produces the greatest benefit to all	2,32	0,87
… maximises benefits while minimises harm	2,39	0,87
Deontology	2,50	0,89
…does not violate an unspoken promise	2,48	0,88
… does not violate an unwritten contract	2,52	0,89

Source: Author's own elaboration

students who participated in the study, 44,6% had previously taken a course on ethics.

Table 2 shows the means and standard deviations for the social dilemmas. With 1 representing the negative form of the scale item (strongly disagree) and 4 representing the positive form of the item (strongly agree), means and standard deviations were calculated for social dilemmas by ethical dimensions. Analyzing the table, it can be seen that the deontology dimension has the highest mean score (2,50). Therefore, it can be said that the students who participated in the research think that the decisions made in the ethical dilemma situations in the scenarios do not violate a verbal or written contract. The lowest mean score in the social dilemma scenarios belongs to the Utilitarianism dimension (2,35). In this case, it can be said that the students believe that the decision in question does not provide the highest benefit for both parties.

Table 3 shows the means and standard deviations for the environmental dilemmas. With 1 representing the negative form of the scale item (strongly disagree) and 4 representing the positive form of the item (strongly agree), means and standard deviations were calculated for environmental dilemmas by ethical dimensions. Analyzing the table, it can be seen that the deontology dimension has the highest mean score (1,93). Therefore, it can be said that the students who participated in the study believe that the decisions made in the environmental dilemma scenarios do not violate a verbal or written contract. The lowest mean score in the environmental dilemma scenarios belongs to the justice dimension (1,64). In this case, it can be said that students believe that the decision in question is not fair, reasonable and morally correct.

Table 4. Mean Scores and Standard Deviations by Economic Dilemmas

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Justice	1,85	0,87
… is fair	1,87	0,88
… is just	1,91	0,88
… is morally right	1,79	0,85
Relativism	1,92	0,90
… is acceptable to my family	1,85	0,87
… is traditionally acceptable	1,97	0,91
… is culturally acceptable	1,94	0,91
Utilitarianism	1,89	0,87
… produces the greatest benefit to all	1,86	0,85
… maximises benefits while minimises harm	1,93	0,89
Deontology	2,00	0,92
…does not violate an unspoken promise	2,00	0,92
… does not violate an unwritten contract	2,01	0,92

Source: Author's own elaboration

Table 4 shows the means and standard deviations for the economic dilemmas. With 1 representing the negative form of the scale item (strongly disagree) and 4 representing the positive form of the item (strongly agree), means and standard deviations were calculated for economic

Table 3. Mean Scores and Standard Deviations by Environmental Dilemmas

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Justice	1,64	0,82
… is fair	1,62	0,80
… is just	1,68	0,83
… is morally right	1,64	0,81
Relativism	1,72	0,85
… is acceptable to my family	1,67	0,82
… is traditionally acceptable	1,76	0,88
… is culturally acceptable	1,74	0,84
Utilitarianism	1,66	0,83
… produces the greatest benefit to all	1,67	0,83
… maximises benefits while minimises harm	1,65	0,83
Deontology	1,93	0,93
…does not violate an unspoken promise	1,93	0,93
… does not violate an unwritten contract	1,94	0,92

Source: Author's own elaboration

Table 5. Mean Scores for Each Dilemma by Ethical Dimension and Department

Scenario	Justice			Relativism			Utilitarianism			Deontology		
	GCA	TM	TG	GCA	TM	TG	GCA	TM	TG	GCA	TM	TG
Social	2,39	2,29	2,45	2,45	2,28	2,38	2,37	2,21	2,42	2,52	2,38	2,56
Environmental	1,70	1,68	1,53	1,80	1,68	1,63	1,73	1,63	1,57	2,00	1,89	1,86
Economic	1,89	1,92	1,76	1,97	1,98	1,81	1,93	1,91	1,81	2,05	2,01	1,91

Source: Author's own elaboration

dilemmas by ethical dimensions. Analyzing the table, it can be seen that the deontology dimension has the highest mean score (2,00) in economic scenarios, as in other scenarios. Therefore, it can be said that the students who participated in the study approached the scenarios related to economic dilemmas more deontologically and believed that the decisions made did not violate a verbal or written contract. The lowest mean score in the scenarios related to economic dilemmas belongs to the dimension of justice (1,85). In this case, it can be said that the students think that the decisions in question are not fair, reasonable and morally correct.

Table 5 shows the distribution of mean scores and standard deviations by department according to different ethical approaches to social, environmental, and economic dilemmas. In the table, mean scores were calculated for each dilemma by ethical dimension and department, with 1 representing the negative version (strongly disagree) and 4 representing the positive version (strongly agree) of the scale item. The table shows that all students are more sensitive to environmental scenarios in their ethical decisions. Tourism Guidance students are more sensitive to environmental dilemmas (1,53), while Tourism Management students are more sensitive to social dilemmas (2,29). According to the results in the table, students in all departments evaluate utilitarianism more negatively in social dilemmas, justice in environmental dilemmas, and justice in economic dilemmas. However, it can be said that deontology is the ethical approach that students in all departments consider most in their ethical decision-making processes. Therefore, it can be said that students believe that the decisions made in the dilemmas mentioned in the scenarios do not violate any verbal or written agreement. The results in the table show that ethical decision-making behavior is influenced by the type of ethical dilemma encountered and that there is a stronger, more principled environmental ethic among students.

Table 6 presents two main dimensions of ethical evaluation, namely ethical intention and ethical orientation, for the three different dilemma types. With 1 representing the negative form of the scale item (strongly disagree) and 4 representing the positive form of the item (strongly agree), mean scores were calculated for each dilemma by ethical intention and ethical orientation. Social dilemmas have the highest mean ethical intention (2,44) compared to other dilemma types, while environmental dilemmas have the lowest mean ethical intention (1,76). The mean ethical intention for economic dilemmas (1,97) is higher than for environmental dilemmas, but lower than for social dilemmas. In the case of social dilemmas, it can be said that students tend to make less ethical decisions and perceive such situations as less ethical. The table shows that environmental dilemmas are considered more ethically important by students. It can be said that students are more

Table 6. Means and Standard Deviations for Ethical Intention and Ethical Orientation by Ethical Dilemmas

		Mean	Standard Deviation
Social Dilemmas	Ethical intention	2,44	0,90
	I would undertake the same action	2,42	0,91
	My peers would undertake the same action	2,46	0,89
	Ethical Orientation	2,14	0,64
	The action is ethical	2,14	0,64
Environmental Dilemmas	Ethical intention	1,76	0,88
	I would undertake the same action	1,68	0,84
	My peers would undertake the same action	1,84	0,91
	Ethical Orientation	1,79	0,51
	The action is ethical	1,79	0,51
Economic Dilemmas	Ethical intention	1,97	0,91
	I would undertake the same action	1,89	0,89
	My peers would undertake the same action	2,05	0,92
	Ethical Orientation	1,90	0,57
	The action is ethical	1,90	0,57

Source: Author's own elaboration

Table 7. Mean Scores for Each Dilemma by Ethical Intention, Ethical Orientation and Department

Scenario	Ethical Intention			Ethical Orientation		
	GCA	TM	TG	GCA	TM	TG
Social	2,50	2,24	2,47	2,12	2,11	2,19
Environmental	1,82	1,80	1,64	1,85	1,71	1,77
Economic	1,96	2,00	1,91	1,93	1,94	1,83

Source: Author's own elaboration

likely to believe that both they and their peers can make ethical environmental decisions.

Table 7 shows the distribution of mean scores according to ethical intention, ethical orientation and field of study in each dilemma situation. It can be seen that the students of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts have the highest ethical intention in the social dilemmas, with a mean of 2,50. The average ethical intention of the students of Tourism Guidance is 2,47. The students of Tourism Management have the lowest ethical intention with 2,24. Therefore, in social dilemmas, students from the Department of Tourism Management show higher ethical sensitivity, while other departments show lower ethical intention. Although the average ethical intention of all students is low in environmental dilemmas, it can be said that students of Tourism Guidance are more sensitive to environmental dilemmas than students of other faculties (1,64). In this case, it can be said that the ethical sensitivity of all students is high and that all students deal with environmental dilemmas with more ethical concern.

6. Conclusion

Tourism is an industry that has both positive and negative economic, social and environmental impacts on destinations. When it comes to negative impacts, many ethically challenging dilemmas arise and decision making becomes difficult. Therefore, it is important for future tourism managers to better understand the ethical dilemmas they face and to identify the types of decisions they can make when faced with ethical dilemmas in order to manage these situations and prepare for the future. This study was conducted to investigate the ethical awareness and orientations of students of the NEVU Tourism Faculty as future tourism managers and to evaluate their decision-making situations in the face of ethical dilemmas they may encounter in their professional life.

Scenarios were used to assess students' ethical awareness and orientation. The scenarios reflected the three main dilemma areas (economic, social and environmental) in the tourism industry. The scenarios evaluated decisions made in ethical dilemma situations using the theories of justice, relativism, utilitarianism and deontology. The results of the study showed that students used different ethical approaches to ethical decision making depending on the type of scenario. Students who participated in the study showed higher ethical intention and lower ethical orientation in social dilemmas. This finding suggests that students are less likely to believe that decisions made in social dilemmas are ethically correct but still have more ethical concerns about such decisions. Social dilemmas are perceived by students as less ethical but still have an important place in the ethical decision-making process.

In the study, ethical decisions related to environmental scenarios were rated as more ethically sensitive by all students. The low mean of ethical intention in relation to environmental dilemmas may indicate that these decisions are perceived as more ethically complex and sensitive by students. When evaluating the scenarios related to environmental dilemmas, it can be said that students put more emphasis on their ethical concerns and accepted that environmental problems require more serious ethical responsibilities. The low mean ethical orientation scores for environmental dilemmas indicate that such decisions are considered less ethical by students and are generally subject to more difficult ethical evaluation. Evaluations of economic dilemmas are positioned between social and environmental dilemmas. The study found that the average ethical intention for economic dilemmas was relatively low. This situation shows that decisions related to economic dilemmas are ethically questioned by students and that students feel the need to reflect on these decisions.

As a result of the research, the differences between the departments in the evaluation of ethical dilemmas are striking. The study found that students from the Department of Tourism Guidance showed higher ethical sensitivity to environmental dilemmas. As a result of this finding, it can be said that students in this department have a more developed environmental awareness and take environmental problems more seriously. In addition, the study found that students from the Department of Tourism Management were more sensitive to social dilemmas and had higher ethical intentions compared to other departments. One of the key findings of the study is that students adopted different ethical theories depending on the type of dilemma they faced when making ethical decisions. While the deontological approach was more associated with all of the students' decisions in all three scenarios, the justice theory was more emphasized, especially in relation to environmental and economic dilemmas. Therefore, it can be said that students make ethical decisions more in line with the pursuit of utility and justice.

In conclusion, this study showed that environmental ethical decisions require more ethical sensitivity than social and economic dilemmas, and that students generally considered the decisions made in the scenarios to be less ethical. These findings suggest that ethics education in tourism should focus more on environmental and social ethics. In this case, it may be recommended to strengthen training programs on environmental ethics, to emphasize environmental ethics issues more in tourism education and to discuss environmental ethical decisions more. As decisions related to social dilemmas are evaluated by students with lower ethical intentions, more interactive educational methods can be used to raise awareness of social ethics. Applied learning methods such as social responsibility projects, group work and ethical decision-making simulations can help students become more sensitive to social ethics issues.

In this study, the ethical awareness and orientations of undergraduate tourism students were evaluated on a limited sample. Therefore, the study can be repeated on a

larger sample. Six different scenarios for ethical dilemmas were used in the study. Therefore, new studies can be conducted by increasing the number of scenarios and differentiating the scenarios. In future studies, the ethical awareness and orientations of undergraduate and associate degree students can be compared by taking the evaluations of students studying tourism at associate degree level. In addition, studies can be conducted in which the ethical awareness and orientations of those currently working in the industry are compared with the evaluations of students receiving tourism education.

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Evaluation of Tourism Students' Responses To Ethical Dilemmas

Abstract

This study uses multi-criteria decision-making (MCDM) approaches to evaluate carbon footprint reduction strategies in sustainable tourism. The tourism sector is a significant component of the global carbon footprint due to energy consumption, water usage, and greenhouse gas emissions from transportation. Therefore, effective policies need to be developed to reduce the environmental impact of tourism activities. This study presents a model to identify and rank carbon footprint reduction strategies using MCDM methods.

The AHP (Analytic Hierarchy Process) and TOPSIS (Technique for Order of Preference by Similarity to Ideal Solution) methods were used to evaluate carbon footprint reduction strategies in the tourism sector based on multidimensional criteria. The results indicate that renewable energy use, energy efficiency improvement, and waste management strategies play a critical role in reducing the carbon footprint. The findings demonstrate the effectiveness of MCDM models in achieving sustainability goals in the tourism sector.

Keywords: *Ethics, Tourism Ethics, Ethical Dilemmas in Tourism, Ethical Education in Tourism.*

Authors

Full Name	Author contribution roles	Contribution rate
Duygu Eren:	*Conceptualization, Methodology, Data Collection, Validation, Writing- Original Draft, Writing- Review & Editing*	*100%*

Author statement: *Author(s) declare(s) that All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.* ***Declaration of Conflicting Interests:*** *The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article*

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