

A Situation Analysis On The Convenience Of The Hotel Businesses' Accessibility Standards: Case Of Konya Province¹

Otel İşletmelerinin Erişilebilirlik Standartlarının Uygunluğu Üzerine Bir Durum Analizi: Konya İli Örneği

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ÖZ

Sadece Avrupa'da değil, aynı zamanda tüm dünyada artan yaşlı ve engelli nüfusun özel bir destek ve hizmete ihtiyacı bulunmaktadır. Turizm endüstrisinde de erişilebilir bir turizm olarak yeni ortaya çıkan ve gelişen Erişilebilir Turizm yeni bir pazar geliştirmiştir. Erişilebilir turizm, mobilite, vizyon, işitme ve bilişsel boyut da dahil olmak üzere erişim gereksinimlerine sahip kişilerin, evrensel olarak tasarlanmış turizm ürünlerinin, hizmetlerinin ve ortamlarının teslimi yoluyla bağımsız, eşit ve saygın bir şekilde işlemlerini sağlamaktadır. Uluslararası erişilebilirlik standartlarına uygun olarak bu çalışmanın amacı; Konya ilindeki 30 otelin otopark alanları, yaya yolları ve kaldırımları, basamakları ve merdivenleri, otellerdeki toplam oda sayıları, otellerin sınıflandırılması ve engelli asansörlerin durum analizleri yapılmıştır. Çalışmanın sonucunda, çoğu otelin erişilebilirlik standartlarına uygun olmadığı ancak bunun için istekli oldukları ve yetkili kişilerin bu konuya daha çok önem vermeleri gerektiği ortaya çıkmıştır.

ANAHTAR KELİMELELER

Uluslararası Erişilebilirlik standartları, Engelli, Erişilebilir Turizm, Turizm

ABSTRACT

The growing population of elderly and disabled people not only in Europe but also all over the world needs a special support and service, developed the new emerging new niche as an accessible tourism in tourism industry. Accessible tourism enables people with access requirements, including mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive dimension of access, to function independently and with equity and dignity through the delivery of universally designed tourism products, services and environments. In accordance with the International accessibility standards this study aims to do a situation Analysis on the 30 hotels' Parking Areas, Pedestrian Roads and Sidewalks, Steps and Stairs, Total Room Numbers in the Hotels, The Classification of the Hotels and the Disabled Elevators in the Hotels in the province of Konya.

KEYWORDS

International Accessibility Standards, Disabled, Accessible Tourism, Tourism

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INTRODUCTION

According to United Nations World Tourism Organization (2011) (UNWTO), tourism which is a central economic driver for socio-economic development in a variety of areas and destinations throughout the world, is a diverse industry. With airlines, travel and tour agents, hotel industry, ferry companies, information technology industry and host community of tourism destination, tourism is a whole transportation action. Akgungor, Candemir, Goksu Ozgen, (1998) states that the emerging original and different niche for accessible tourism in the tourism industry is developed by means of the need of special support and services throughout the world by disabled and elderly people. Thanks to accessible tourism people have the opportunity to have to access requirements, including mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive dimension of access, to function independently and with equity and dignity through the delivery of universally designed tourism products, services and environments. Individuals with wheelchairs, other devices or disabled tourists who use aids are included (Akgungor, Candemir, Goksu Ozgen, 1998).

As all tourists, tourists who have disabilities also desire to spend their time without any restriction in popular tourist destinations. Again Akgungor, Candemir, Goksu Ozgen, (1998) reports that the disabled tourists need specific assistance and support at specific destination. The specific support to disabled tourist depends on the standard service of public transportation, accommodation and travelling services. Nevertheless, the core of service provider should include extra service, gift, bonus or economic benefits. Natural disasters, wars and birth related disabilities are some of many reasons that increase the population of the human beings with disabilities, worldwide. The development of positive attitudes towards disabilities and legal regulations for infrastructure has also reflections to tourism industry and the market of people with disabilities (PWD) has become an important niche market for tourism. Comprising especially developing countries, many states make an effort for this group to participate into tourism. The current situation is that tourism facilities are generally designed for people who do not have disabilities and therefore when PWD participates tourism activities they have difficulties. To overcome these difficulties and challenges certain arrangements should be done.

1. DISABLED AND ACCESSIBLE TOURISM

1.1. DISABILITY

Burnett & Baker , (2001) indicates that disability is hypothesized as being a multidimensional experience for the person involved. There may be effects on organs or body parts and there may be effects on a person's participation in areas of life. As in Buhalis, Michopoulou, Eichhorn & Miller, (2005) similarly, in International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) three dimensions are determined which are: body structure and function (and impairment thereof), activity (and activity restrictions) and participation (and participation restrictions). As it is mentioned in the ICF the role of physical, social and environmental factors have significant role in participation the activities (Darcy, & Dickson, 2009).

1.2. DISABILITY IN TOURISM

Because there are increasing number of studies on tourism and disability, these studies gained importance in the last two decades. According to Australian Bureau of Statistics, (2004) tourists with disabilities, their motivations and information needs; market dynamics; cross-country comparisons; approaches to disability discrimination; general and supplier attitudes towards people with disabilities (PWD); whole of life approaches, and the specific needs of people with vision impairment. The following notable studies have identified the constraints faced by tourists with disabilities as (Daniels, Rodgers & Wiggins 2005) market dynamics (Burnett & Baker, 2001) motivations information needs, cross-country comparisons. These are some of the areas that are under attention.

1.3. ACCESSIBLE TOURISM

Thanks to Accessible tourism people have the opportunity to have access requirements, including mobility, visualization, hearing and intellectual aspect of access, to function independently and with fairness and self-respect through the delivery of unanimously designed tourism products, services and environments. It includes people in wheelchairs self-sufficiently or with helper, walking stick or aids, disabled tourist with trolleys and weighty luggage, visual and hearing impairments, seniors, families with pushchairs and, pregnant women who can frequently move anywhere as their wish.

According to the purpose of the necessary data or variety of classifications the description of disability generally varies as it is stated in (Akgungor, Candemir, Goksu Ozgen, 1998).

In addition, impairment is defined as any loss or abnormality of Psychological, physiological or anatomical structure of function (International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities, and Handicaps, 1976). For a long decades accepting and appreciating the meaning of disability as part of human life span has been part of research and policy. Although accessible tourism is a new emerging issue all over the world, most of the countries are pursued the by the law in tourism destination providing barrier free access at destination. As a consequence of all these portions and policies A whole of life approach of accessible tourism is estimated that nearly 30% of a population will have access requirements at any point in time, and most people will have a disability at some stage during their life.

1.4. ACCESSIBLE TOURISM MARKET IN THE WORLD

With the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities the awareness of ‘ Accessible Tourism For All’ became common throughout the world (ADA, Americans with Disabilities Act, 2010). Despite the fact that accessible tourism has a rather high market in terms of tourism the academic studies, which are conducted, are inadequate (ADA, Americans with Disabilities Act, 2010). By the European Commission where a stakeholder analysis has provided an insight into the complexities of accessible tourism, the understanding of the importance of tourism market has gained importance through the research commissioned. Globally, there are around 1 billion people with disabilities and the World Health Organization estimates that one in four households have a disabled member (World Health Organization and World Bank, 2011). This implies that on a daily basis 2 billion people live with disability, either directly or indirectly. Aging because of increasing of chronic health problems worldwide is one of the other reasons that increase the number who have disabilities. World Health Survey defines that the number of people living with disabilities over the age of 15 as 785 million (15.6 per cent) and Global Burden of Disease (Global Burden of Disease) study estimates the number of people with disabilities as 975 million (19,2 per cent). Therefore as it is mentioned before conducted studies always imply the rapid increase of people with disabilities. The total number of disabled people is nearly half of the world's population, if restricted number of elderly people, pregnant women, children and their families are added. The governments have the responsibility to provide accessible tourism for disabled people (World Health Organization and World Bank, 2011). People who have disabilities are assumed, as the world's largest minority by the United Nations and therefore, it became the world's largest special market for the tourism industry. As it is valid in all areas in tourism also legislations, which are effective for people with disabilities, have been neglected for many years and the implementation of legal regulations to take effect gradually started slowly. However, legal regulations participated the people with disabilities have become much more mobile than in the past and gained the various economic and social benefits, in the increasingly closer to travel and tourism activities . Businesses in the tourism sector compete intensely with each other on quality, price, service offering and the charm. Accessible businesses provide an additional attraction for the customers and gain a significant competitive advantage. Likewise, the current level of access to tourism enterprises can vary considerably. Disabled people create large and growing market for both business and leisure travel in the world and the European Union. Researches show that people with disabilities are loyal customers and they go to again destinations that offer good accessible facilities (ADA) Americans with Disabilities Act, 2010).

2. INTERNATIONAL ACCESSIBILTY STANDARDS FOR HOTEL BUSINESSES

2.1. Parking Area

If the guest is coming with his/her guest to the hotel, parking areas (Darcy & Dickson, 2009) gain importance within the framework of accessibility. It is more economical to allocate parking space for people with disabilities in the public car parks, as parking for the disabled only have a high cost nowadays. According to Article 4 of the parking regulation; It is necessary to allocate 5% of all parking area for the disabled. United Nations suggested to allocate at least 1 car park area in the parking areas which have smaller paces than 50 vehicles, for 50 vehicles at least 1 parking area for the disabled in the areas which are for between 50- 400 vehicles.

According To The US Barriers To Accessibility Standards in Davies & Beasley, (1994) the number of parking spaces that should be for the disabled in the hotels according to the total number of parking spaces is given below Dunya Engelliler Vakfi (DEV), (2010) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), (2010).

Table 1: Parking Area Standards for Disabled

Number of Total Parking Area	Minimum Disabled Parking Space
Between 1-25	1
Between 26-50	2
Between 51-75	3
Between 76-100	4
Between 101-150	5
Between 151-200	6
Between 201-300	7
Between 301-400	8
Between 401-500	9
Between 501-1000	2% of the total
Above 1000	1 disabled park area for each 100 parking area above 20 and 1000

Resource: ADA, 2010:65

2.2. Pedestrian Roads and Sidewalks

In order for pedestrians and sidewalks to be suitable for the use of disabled, it is first necessary to arrange these areas in such a way that the wheelchair can be comfortably moved. According to, World Foundation for the Handicapped, Accessible Design Guide, and the width of the pedestrian path should be at least 1.1 m. This minimum width is necessary for pedestrians using a wheelchair and passing by. The preferred width for a pedestrian using a wheelchair and passing by is 1.5 m . According to WHO, (2012) the minimum width for a wheelchair user is 90 cm, while a width of 120 cm is required for side-by-side movement of a wheelchair user, and a width of 150 cm is required for a two-wheelchair to pass side by side. In addition, a disabled person using a cane requires an area of about 70 cm to walk and a person who uses an armchair require a width of 80 cm. According to Turkish Standards, the width of the road to be watched at the entrance should be at least 3cm and at least 2m in the garden roads

2.3. Steps and Stairs

Where the ramp length exceeds 2 m, it is necessary to have alternative stepped entrances. Constant step sizes make it very convenient for people with disabilities. At the same time, the physically handicapped, who are able to walk, instead of the long ramps. prefer to use the stairs where there are not too many steps made in accordance with the rules. Similarly, visually impaired people can use a properly constructed stairs easier. In this respect, rather than simply crossing the level differences with ramps, ramps and stairs need to be arranged together.

Stairs are also the most problematic, issue for the disabled

Escalators are not suitable for disabled The stairs used by the visually impaired should be planned perpendicular to the walking direction to allow them to approach from the side. If this is not possible, the starting point of the stairs should be very well specified with suitable materials and equipment (UNWTO , 2011).

2.4. Disabled Elevators

For many years in our country, the disabled and the relations with the buildings and the environments that they have been trying to reach have been tried to be provided with ramps which are generally designed incorrectly and can not be used. Ramps that were improperly engineered and generally added later on the structure were particularly impractical in terms of the use of disabled. If the structures are multi-storied, the function of the ramps has completely disappeared. This has often been attempted to overcome in ways such as back or lapping for disabled, and in some rare cases they have been moved from point to point in unsafe ways with simple crane and lever assemblies. However, for the last 10 years, disabled elevators depending on the development of the community have been started to be recognized and used. Although there re no standards or regulations in our country regarding disabled elevators, platform-type disabled lifts operating vertically are partly covered. Disabled elevators work with 2 principles. The first type is elevators with a hydraulic motion mechanism working in the vertical direction and generally has 5 stops and a travel distance

of 15 m. The second type is single or multi-rail systems that are installed parallel to the stair or ramp profiles (WHO, 2012)

3. INTERNATIONAL SYMBOLS RELATED TO DISABLED

There are some signs that direct our daily lives. These signs are informatory signs, signage, signboards that shows places and similar signage Signs are generally salient, easy to read, unspecified and brief. Some International symbols are as follows. In this context signs and their must features are as follows;

Fig 1: International Symbols Related To Disabled



Resource: Turkey disabled’s Education and Solidarity Foundation 2009:36

Signage:

- They should be consistent.
- The highest reading rate should be between 90-140 cm.
- There should be a color difference between the board and its frame
- The alphabet used in the signs should be clear.

Sensory Signs

- In terms of the standard alphabet and numbering, the letters should be 1.6-5 cm in size and at least 0.8 mm in anaglyph.

Signboards That Show Places

- Symbol / numbers embroidered on the inclined surface should be 100 cm high.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. The Purpose and the Significance of the Study

The purpose of the study is to do a situation analysis on the accessibility standards of Hotel businesses within the framework of Accessible Tourism in the province of Konya. Therefore; the significance of the study is to find out whether the hotel businesses in Konya province are in accordance with the international accessibility standards and to reveal the potential of hotel businesses towards disabled in the Province of Konya and also to contribute to the literature and the sector by determining the deficits in disabled tourism applications.

4.2. Research Design /Method

To find out the appropriateness for accessible tourism of the hotel Businesses in Konya, this study is performed as quantitative field research. First of all, the evaluation form was prepared on the hotel businesses’ convenience to international accessible standards by benefiting from European Union, American disabilities Act and The Institution of Turkish Standards. To determine in which hotel businesses these forms should be conducted The list of current hotels which are Tourism And Municipal Certified Hotels were taken into consideration from The Ministry Of Culture And Tourism. Towards the data obtained from The Ministry of Culture and Tourism either with direct communication or via fax or e-mail these evaluation forms were conducted. Again the obtained data were analyzed by using SPSS 21. Programme.

4.3. Sample of the Study

The study sample consists of the Hotel Businesses in the province of Konya which own either Tourism Establishments Certificate or Municipal Certificate. The population of the study is 37 hotels, which have

Tourism Establishments Certificates, and 79 Municipally certificated hotels in the province of Konya. The sample of the study consists of only 30 hotels, which have either Tourism Establishments Certificates or Municipal Certificates. The list of the hotels are as follows;

Table 2: Sample of the Study

Place	Classification	Number
KONYA	3 Starred	8
KONYA	4 Starred	9
KONYA	5 Starred	5
KONYA	Boutique Hotels	1
KONYA	Municipally Certificated	7

4.4. Limitations of the Study

As in almost every study, this current study may have some limitations. This study is conducted with only 30 hotels out of 37 hotels, which have either Tourism Establishments Certificates, or 79 Municipally certificated hotels in the province of Konya, which have variety of features. The evaluation form, which was prepared to evaluate the convenience of hotel businesses in the province of Konya to the international accessibility standards, takes time and effort. Therefore; some of the hotels rejected to participate in the research both because of the company policy and some shortcomings in the standards of international accessibility standards. Another limitation of the study is the drawback of the hotels in case the shortcomings were reported to the related departments.

5. FINDINGS

Findings of the study consist of the quantitative data obtained from the evaluation forms conducted to determine the convenience of the hotels businesses in the province of Konya to the international accessibility standards.

5.1. Total Room Numbers in the Hotels

The room numbers of hotel businesses, which were subjected to the evaluation form, are as follows;

Table 3.:Total Room Numbers in the Hotels:

	Frequency	Percentage
Between 1-79	10	33,3
Between 80-159	6	2
Between 160-239	9	3
Between 240-319	5	1,6
Total	30	100,0

When the total number of the room numbers of the hotel businesses, which participated in the study, examined, hotel businesses 33,3, % own rooms between 1-79, 2% of the hotels own room numbers between 80-159, 3% of the hotel businesses own room numbers between 160-239, and 5% of the hotels own rooms between 240-319.(Table 3)

5.2. The Classification of the Hotels

Hotels, which participated in the study and answered the evaluation forms, are stated in the following table;

Table 4: The Classification of the Hotels

Place	Stars	Frequency	Percentage
KONYA	3	8	2,6
KONYA	4	9	3
KONYA	5	5	1,6
KONYA	Boutiques	1	0,3
KONYA	Municipally Certificated	7	2,3
TOTAL		30	

When the hotel classification within the framework of the hotels which participated in the study examined, it is seen that 2,6 % of the hotels in Konya are 3 starred, 3% of the hotels are 4 starred, 1,6 % of the hotels are 5 starred, 0,3 % of the hotels are boutique hotels and 2, 3 % of the hotels are Municipally certificated.

5.3. Parking Areas in the Hotels

Table 5: Parking Areas in the Hotels

Parking Area	Frequency	Percentage
Convenient	14	46,6
Not Convenient	16	53,4
Total	39	100,0

Within the framework of the study when the findings which belong to the hotels that participated in the study, out of 30 hotels only 14 of the hotels have convenient parking areas according to the international standards in terms of both their enough dimensions and their appropriateness for the usage of disabled. 14 of the hotels either don't have convenient parking area dimensions or they lack parking areas.

5.4. Pedestrian Roads and Sidewalks in the Hotels

One of the issues that should be examined within the framework of hotels' accessibility standards are the convenience of Pedestrian Roads and sidewalks. This study consists of the convenience of Pedestrian Roads and Sidewalks in terms of their width-depth-height values.

Table 6: Pedestrian Roads and Sidewalks in the Hotels

Pedestrian Roads and Sidewalks	Frequency	Percentage
Convenient	18	60
Not Convenient	12	40
TOTAL	30	100,0

When the hotels convenience to the accessibility standards are examined, it is seen that out of 30 hotels in the province of Konya, 18 of the hotels have convenient dimensions of Pedestrian Roads and Sidewalks and 12 of the hotels don't have convenient dimensions for the disabled.

5.5. Steps And Stairs In The Hotels,

Within the framework of the international accessibility standards, hotels' steps and stairs convenience for the disabled use is examined. The hotels inside steps and stairs' and outside steps and stairs 'width-depth-height values. are taken into account. Findings obtained are as follows;

Table 7: Steps And Stairs In The Hotels

	Frequency	Percentage
Convenient	16	53,4
Not Convenient	14	46,6
Total	30	100,0

As it is seen in the table 7, 16 of the hotels which participated in the study have convenient steps and stairs for the disabled use in terms of their width-height and depth values and 14 of the hotels are not convenient.

5.6. Disabled Elevators in the Hotels

Table 8: Disabled Elevators in the Hotels

Elevators	Convenient	Not Convenient	Total
Dimensions/Features	11	19	30
Mirrors	18	12	30
Audio Alarm Systems	16	14	30

As it is seen in Table 8, elevators for disabled in the Hotels are examined in terms of elevator dimensions, mirrors in the elevators and Audio Alarm Systems in the elevators. According to the table, 11 hotels are evaluated as convenient and 19 of them evaluated as not convenient in terms of the elevators' dimensions. 18 hotels have mirrors in their elevators, 12 hotels don't have mirrors in their elevators and 16 hotels have Audio Alarm Systems.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, there are many issues to discuss on the Convenience of the Hotel Businesses' Accessibility Standards. In our study some of the issues as total Room Numbers in the Hotels, Steps and Stairs in the Hotels, The Classification of the Hotels, Pedestrian Roads and Sidewalks in the Hotels, Disabled Elevators in the Hotels and parking areas are discussed. It is seen that in the province of Konya many hotels are aware of the international standards however because of some limitations they can't meet all the standards. All barriers should be reduced to gain some market shares of people with disabilities. As is stated in (Bulgan & Carikci, 2015) providing the necessary structural and service elements for individuals with disabilities to perform tourism activities without any difficulties like other healthy individuals is a prerequisite for countries to benefit from disabled tourism in tourism sector. Legal and administrative arrangements plays an important role to receive this market and universal design for people with disabilities' active participation should be enacted as accessible transportation and transportation systems, environmental and structural spaces, and touristic destinations. As this is a chain system these dynamics should be arranged carefully. If Turkey's situation is considered, Turkey has positive seasonal features, perfect and original enterprises and entrepreneurs and therefore she has the ability receive a significant share from accessible tourism market from public and private sectors. Lately, the legal regulations (laws, regulations, circulars, etc.) have gained momentum, and have begun to change viewpoints for the involvement of disabled. If work on necessary but not sufficient legal regulations, environmental and public spaces, the structural areas, transportation systems and tourist destinations don't lose motivation, the Turkish tourism sector may have the chance to take a significant share from the accessible tourism market nationally and internationally. It shouldn't be forgotten that all these arrangements are planned to fulfill the fundamental right of all people to participate in travel and tourism activities.

Efforts should be made to implement necessary and sufficient legislations, structures and vehicles in universal design which will upgrade the quality of life and to benefit from tourism activities of people with disabilities. Thus leadership of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and being in coordination and cooperation with all stakeholders is important. Otherwise, it will be impossible to get a significant share from accessible tourism market, which is a very important and specialist market and to realize the tourism vision of Turkey in 2023. In addition, it is estimated that the number of disabled population will increase gradually (Burnett & Baker 2001: 4). Therefore, it is foreseen that disabled individuals have an important market share in the tourism sector and countries that want to get a share from this market segment in the coming centuries will be competing with each other.

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