

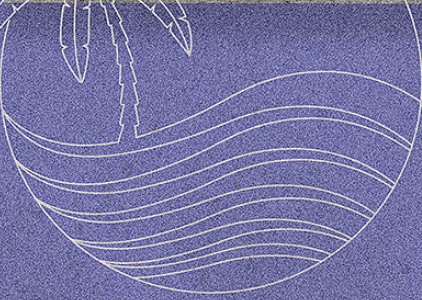


ANADOLU UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF TOURISM

TOLEHO

Journal of Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality
Volume 6 Issue 1

2024



Odunpazarı is the old town in Eskişehir, Türkiye.

Odunpazarı means "Wood Bazaar" and known as the meeting point of thousands within the realm of tourism mobilities today. The district is famous for the traditional Ottoman Houses which have been around for centuries and reflects the beauty of traditional Turkish social life. Likewise, Kursunlu Külliyesi, as a 500-year-old social complex, is a must-see place with its facilities such as Kurşunlu Mosque and Mevlevi Lodge. Visitors can enjoy attractions such as Odunpazarı Modern Museum, Wax Sculptures Museum, and Turkish Bath Museum during their time in town. It is quite easy to get to the town by public transportation. Odunpazarı awaits for wanderers' visit and offers them a joyful experience in each moment.

Eskişehir Midas-Yazılıkaya City

This archaeological site is on the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List, which includes the most important cultural heritage of the Phrygians (9th-7th century BC) such as rock-cut monuments built in the name of the mother goddess Cybele, as well as rock-cut settlements, ancient road ruins, rock-cut cisterns and tombs. The monumental or small-scale religious monuments, carved into the rocks in Midas City and Yazılıkaya Valley reflect the deep respect and devotion of the Phrygians to the Mother Goddess Matar Kubileya, who symbolizes nature with all its vitality. Also the city is named after the famous Phrygian king Midas (740-700 BC). Midas Yazılıkaya City, is the most valuable cultural treasure the Phrygian Region, with its unique monuments in the world.

eISSN : 2687-3737

Published online biannually under the supervision of Anadolu University Faculty of Tourism.

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Peer-Review Policy**Ethical Principles and Publication Policy****Copyright Principles****Abstracting and Indexing****Appreciations To Reviewers**

Dear Readers, Researchers, and Practitioners,

After 5 years of publication, it is with great pleasure that we welcome you to the latest Journal of Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality issue. In this issue, the articles presented delve into various aspects of tourism, leisure, and hospitality industries, aiming to reflect the latest developments in the field. The tourism industry is undergoing continuous transformation, influenced by technological advancements, and understanding these changes has become crucial for achieving success in the sector. The studies and analyses featured in this issue provide a solid academic foundation for tourism and hospitality management. The articles encompass not only theoretical research but also practical applications within the sector. This approach seeks to serve as a valuable resource for anyone tracking innovations in the tourism industry.

I sincerely thank our authors, reviewers, and editors for their contributions. I hope our esteemed readers find this issue insightful.

I wish you a healthy and productive reading experience.

Best regards,

İnci Oya Coşkun
Editor-in-Chief

Journal of Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality



eISSN : 2687-3737



Determinants of organizational stress: A research the framework of attribution theory¹

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ABSTRACT

Stress, which has various dimensions, is a reaction that can disrupt the daily routines of living things in terms of physiology and psychology. Organizational stress is a situation that can cause disruption in the joint work of people focused on the same goal. Stress experienced in organizations is considered reasonable up to certain levels. However, an intense stress environment can lead to a number of problems such as poor performance, communication disorders, and desire to leave work. Identifying stress sources and examining their causes in depth is of great importance in preventing intense stress and keeping stress at a reasonable level. Identifying organizational stress sources and their causes will provide strategic convenience for managers and enable businesses to achieve organizational success. This research is aimed to determine the sources of organizational stress and to associate the stress dimensions that stand out as a result of the research with attribution behavior. Within the scope of the research were examined data of 590 hotel employees. Data were analyzed with the SPSS Programme. The dimensions of organizational stress were determined by Explanatory Factor Analysis. As a result of the research, stress originating from the manager and employee relations, which is one of the prominent dimensions of organizational stress, has been associated with external attribution behavior. Stress stemming from organizational structure, which is another prominent dimension, has been associated with internal attribution behavior. For managing the external attribution behavior, it is necessary to provide appropriate working conditions within the enterprise. For managing internal attribution behavior, an effective communication environment should be established.

KEYWORDS

Stress, Organizational Stress, Organizational Stress Sources, Attribution Theory, Hotel Businesses

¹ This study derived from the master's thesis titled "A Research on Organizational Stress Levels and Departmental Relationship in Hotel Businesses" by Gözde KUMAŞ under the supervision Asst. Prof. Didar SARI ÇALLI (Ph.D).

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Received 03.05.2023; Received in revised form 01.02.2024; Accepted 05.02.2024

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e-ISSN: 2687 - 3737 / © 2021 The Authors. Published by Anadolu University

<https://doi.org/10.48119/toleho.1291862>

INTRODUCTION

Organizational stress is a situation experienced as a result of unexpected developments that may occur at any stage of the processes followed to reach the predetermined goals in the business environment. Organizations are structures where human resources with multiple cultural backgrounds and visions coexist. Although the working conditions are kept at a reasonable level for the employer, the appropriate environment for employees to reveal the expected performance may vary from person to person. For organizations to achieve common goals as a whole, it will not be sufficient to identify the main sources of stress alone. At this point, to solve the problem experienced, it is necessary to examine human psychology in depth. Providing healthy working environments to employees will contribute greatly to reducing the stress experienced at reasonable levels. Because recommendations for stress management generally consist of a series of suggestions such as stress training and improving the working environment. For example, according to Işık et al. (2021), sharing tacit knowledge within the organization plays a role in employees' creative work behaviors and the development of a healthy team culture. Therefore, such positive developments within the organization indicate the existence of reasonable levels of stress. The reasons affecting human psychology and behavior in organizations are examined from the perspective of organizational stress in the context of internal reasons and discussed from a micro framework in this study. However, in labor-intensive industries that are quite open to the outside world, such as the tourism industry, many macro parameters such as health, economy, technology, and climate change are effective in the success of the organization. Within the scope of the tourism industry, national and international travel is carried out intensively in the summer and winter months. The effects of the Covid-19 epidemic that occurred all over the world in 2020 were also seen largely in tourism. For example, according to the research of Dogru et al. (2023b), while international chain hotels experienced a significant loss of customers due to the epidemic, organizations providing Airbnb services were able to remain in a more advantageous position because they offered a more isolated service. Therefore, employees in hotel businesses have encountered stressful factors such as job loss. According to Al Akasheh et al. (2024), the factors that cause job loss are mostly salary imbalance and overtime. From a tourism perspective, it has been determined that the employee turnover rate during the Covid-19 pandemic period varies depending on the US tourism economy. In other words, it has been determined that if US tourism revenues increase, the employee turnover rate decreases (Dogru et al. 2023a). In an industry such as tourism, which is based on a broad basis of economics, economic variables are of great importance in relations between countries. According to Dogru et al.'s (2019) research, while the appreciation of the US dollar did not affect the long-term tourism trade relationship with Mexico, it disrupted the bilateral tourism trade balance with Canada and the UK. Beyond these, it has been determined that tourism development and economic growth are related in countries such as Turkey, Germany, and China, but such a relationship cannot be detected in Spain (Isik et al., 2018). In other words, the changes caused by tourism and its reflections on tourists and tourism workers in social and economic dimensions over time vary according to countries. These changes directly affect people's quality of life. Thus, people may have different psychological structures during tourism activities. The fact that studies in the field of tourism mostly focus on the fields of technology, innovation, and sustainability (Işık et al., 2022) is evidence that the tourism industry is extremely sensitive to the external environment. Studies in the literature in recent years in different disciplines have also drawn attention to the importance of green energy consumption for the sustainability of resources (Aslan et al., 2024; Hassan et al., 2024; Lee et al., 2023; Skovgaard & Asselt, 2019; Visser et al., 2019). Thus, energy-saving practices have been suggested. Therefore, in increasing organizational success, it is important to examine human psychology in- depth, taking into account macro and micro variables. People can sometimes exhibit active and sometimes passive behavior in the face of macro and micro factors affecting organizations. Studies have shown that people are sensitive to certain social issues, but fail to take action and take steps to solve the problem (Klenert et al., 2018; Carattini et al., 2017). There are studies in the literature that address the relationship between support for green policies and social norms, attitudes, and personal impact (Konc et al., 2021; Szekely et al., 2021; Ulph & Ulph, 2021). To prepare the environment that will enable people

to take action and to improve the situation in question, increasing public support and sensitivity to social change and expectations are recommended by policy makers (Lipari et al., 2024). It would be healthy to carry out improvement works by taking into account all segments of society in social improvements. Because, according to the study of Andre et al. (2021), the negative views of American citizens towards those who have a high belief in climate change prevent collective mobilization and slow down the measures to be taken on climate change. It is also stated that in this case, it may be useful to address the issue with various theories that can be used to explain social relations in analyzing the underlying causes of people's behavior (Teodoro et al., 2021). This study, it is aimed to make sense of the underlying causes of the factors that reveal organizational stress sources with Attribution Theory.

Today, the fact that the main capital is qualified human resources in terms of businesses managed with contemporary management approaches also shows the importance given to people and their comfort. According to Elmadag and Ellinger (2018), although organizations provide suitable conditions according to the structure of the work by authorized persons, a stressful work environment such as insufficient social relations between employees and incompatibility with organizational culture will hurt the performance of employees. Authorized persons should be aware of this situation, which has a detrimental effect on overall performance, and offer solutions promptly. Pu et al. (2024) concluded that the emotional burnout of employees in the hospitality industry positively affects their intention to leave. Situations that reduce overall performance must be noticed by authorized persons in a timely manner and they must propose solutions. On the other hand, stress experience can also be shaped depending on how people evaluate the subject. While some people find the main source of the problem in themselves as a result of an objective evaluation, take precautions quickly, and manage the stress, some people can easily throw the source of the problem to the outside environment and find a logical reason. In this case, an excuse is prepared for the inevitable low performance.

This study aims to determine the dimensions of organizational stress experienced in hotel businesses and to deal with the relevant dimensions in the context of attribution theory. Considering the prominent dimensions of organizational stress in the context of attribution theory demonstrates the originality of the research. The fact that stress and attribution behavior have not been associated in another study in the tourism literature constitutes another unique aspect of the research. Explaining the main basis of the problems experienced in businesses according to the prominent dimensions of organizational stress, based on theoretical foundations, expresses the importance of the study. In addition, providing suggestions on measures to control organizational stress and attribution behavior represents another importance of the study. The research problem: "Can be explained by attribution behavior the reasons that create organizational stress sources?" was designed as.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Stress and Organizational Stress

Stress, the concept expressed as "Estrica" in Latin and "Estrece" in old French, was used to describe various negative emotions such as grief and distress in the 17th century. Since the 18th century, it has been used to express the situations that arise as a result of the pressure and use of force against any object or person (Pehlivan, 1995, p. 5). In the first definition of the concept of stress made by Commons in 1914, it is seen that it is considered as the process of strengthening the physiological structures of individuals, which deteriorate due to adverse environmental conditions (Düzgün, 2014, p. 3). Hans Selye, one of the leading figures in stress, draws attention to the fact that stress causes behaviors that appear suddenly (Erdogan, 1996, p. 270). The general name of the sudden behavioral change in organizational structures is defined as occupational stress (Yokkang, Weixi, Yalin, Yipeng, & Liu, 2014, p. 8). Interpersonal tension in organizations, the pace of change in companies, and developments in technology stand out as factors that trigger organizational stress (Shahsavarani, Marzabadi, & Hakimi Kalkhoran, 2015, p. 232). According to Griffin and Moorhead (1986, p. 230), maintaining a moderate level of organizational stress has a positive effect on performance.

Cranwell-Ward and Abbey (2005) drew attention to the destructive effect of stress as a result of not being able to maintain its moderate existence. It is stated that the formation of this destructive effect depends on the roles of the individual in interpersonal relations and the ability to manage them. The intensity of possible sources of stress and limited time are two important factors that feed the stress formation stages (Eren, 2001, p. 304). The first of these phases is the alarm period when it is realized that a certain job cannot be done at the desired standards (Spiers, 2003, p. 24). In the alarm period, the non-specific behaviors exhibited by the body now return to normal and a resistance period occurs in which the individual adapts to the stressful environment to a large extent (Ajgaonkar, 2006, p. 21). One of the two important ways that the individual will choose during the resistance period is to get maximum efficiency from the work done by managing stress. The other is to experience the exhaustion stage, which is the last stage, by not being able to manage stress (Organ & Bateman, 1991, p. 383). The behavior that should be done in an environment of stress is to see stress as an opportunity and to reach an environment that will provide efficiency from the work done as soon as possible. In the literature, the factors that cause organizational stress are discussed under certain headings. The shift working order in the organizations and the employees not getting enough quality sleep (Boggild & Knutsson, 1999, p. 85), the existence of tools and equipment that will endanger the health and safety of the individuals in the working environment (Koçak, 2012), the lack of time planning to fulfill the responsibilities (Zuzanek, 2004, p. 133), the emergence of excessive workload as a result of not being distributed among the employees in a planned way, and the formation of monotony due to simplification of the work (Ajgaonkar, 2006) express the dimension of organizational stress arising from the work structure. Factors such as the over-sized organizational structure and the inability to perform the audit properly (Tonus, 2016, p. 137), the lack of healthy communication and cooperation between the departments (Yılmaz, 2012, p. 116), the failure to offer appropriate wages and promotions to deserving employees by the managers (Senemoğlu, 2017:31), refers to the dimension of stress arising from the organizational structure. Injustice between performance and rewarding (Taouk et al., 2019), role conflict as a result of unclear duties and responsibilities (Yonkkang, 2014, p. 8), imbalance between performance expectation and salaries (Batista, 2018, p. 17), factors such as lack of a healthy work program and lack of career development (Hitt et al., 2011, p. 251) express the dimension of stress arising from organizational politics. Table 1 includes sample studies about organizational stress sources of different businesses in the tourism sector.

Table 1 compiles studies that investigate sources and levels of stress in the tourism sector. These studies also delve into various topics related to stress, including organizational citizenship, emotional intelligence, emotional labor, creativity, turnover, burnout, toxic behaviors, organizational commitment, self-esteem, leader-member interaction, and the role of gender. A unique aspect of this research not commonly addressed in related literature is its examination of attribution behavior. Across the studies in Table 1, a consistent finding emerges: organizational stress triggers negative behavioral changes, such as deterioration in interpersonal relationships and increased desire to quit due to a damaged work ethic. These negative behaviors demonstrably lead to an increase in customer dissatisfaction, reduced performance, and increased burnout.

Table 1.
Sample Studies on Organizational Stress Sources

Author (s)	Year	Aim	Analysis	Result
Özbay & Semint	2023	Investigate organizational stress factors in food and beverage businesses in Serdivan, Sakarya.	Frequency and factor analyses were conducted on data collected from 158 employees.	Working environment and interpersonal relationships are major stress sources.
Türkseven & Ege	2021	Identify organizational stress sources for hotel managers in Marmaris' four and five-star establishments.	Data from 420 front office personnel were analyzed using a combination of techniques including analysis of variance, correlation, regression, and independent sample t-tests.	Organizational stress impacts employee motivation. Organizational structure and organization person relations are key stressors.
Mert et al.	2020	Examine the relationship between organizational citizenship and organizational stress. A study was conducted on an airline transportation team operating in Turkey.	The study analyzed data from 645 participants through simple linear regressions, multiple linear correlations, and multiple linear regressions.	Organizational stress negatively affects organizational citizenship behaviors.
Choi et al.	2019	Analyze the influence of emotional intelligence and emotional labor on burnout in hotel front-office employees.	Regression analysis was conducted on data from 344 hotel employees.	Emotional intelligence and emotional labor help reduce job stress.
Ayaz	2019	Pinpoint work stress sources for tourist guides in Turkey.	One-way ANOVA was used to analyze data from 395 tourist guides.	Work structure and low-wage policies contribute to increased perceived stress. Problem-solving approaches were found to be minimally effective in reducing stress.
Şimşek & Cin	2019	It is aimed to determine the causes of organizational stress in accommodation businesses.	This study explores a cause-effect relationship drawn from a secondary source review.	Organizational structure and work environment are primary stress factors. Training aligned with technological advancements is recommended to minimize stress.
Lin & Ling	2018	Investigate the sources and potential consequences of stress.	Data were collected and analyzed from 1645 employee-supervisor pairs in 49 tourism regions in China. A hierarchical linear model was used for the analysis. Correlation and regression were also performed with factor loadings.	Stress may not always negatively impact individuals.

Author (s)	Year	Aim	Analysis	Result
Akça & Beydilli	2018	Explore the relationship between job stress and the creative process.	Correlation, regression, and additional statistical tests on data from 47 kitchen employees in Kütahya.	Moderate positive correlation found between stress and creativity. Interpersonal relationships least impactful stressor.
Aybas & Kosa	2018	Test the link between occupational stress and job commitment in tour guides.	Correlation and regression.	Occupational stress acts as a mediating factor on job commitment, though high-intensity stress doesn't directly affect it.
Demirci	2017	Examine the effect of role stress on leader-member interaction and turnover intention in Istanbul's food and beverage businesses.	Correlation and regression tests.	Stress negatively impacts both interaction and turnover intention.
Bora	2017	Identify the sources of work stress	One-way t-test on data from 364 employees across 39 hotels.	Human resources department plays a key role in stress management. Stress management crucial for quality performance and service. Healthy working environments recommended to reduce stress.
Gedik et al.	2017	Determine the stress sources for personnel in five-star Antakya hotels.	Factor loadings, correlation, ANOVA, and T-tests on data from 284 individuals.	Lack of self-confidence found to be a major stressor. Organizational structure and policy factors less impactful.
Akdu & Akdu	2016	Investigate the relationship between emotional labor, job stress, and burnout in tour guides.	T-test, correlation, and regression tests on data from 109 Istanbul guides.	Significant positive correlation found between job stress and burnout. Increased stress leads to increased burnout.
Biçki	2016	Investigate the relationship between job stress and burnout in Istanbul service sector employees.	Correlation and regression tests.	Job stress hinders personal achievement and exacerbates emotional burnout and depersonalization.
Unur & Pekerşen	2016	Examine the consequences of the link between work stress and toxic behaviors.	Correlation and regression tests on data from 449 cooks.	Job stress leads to aggressive behaviors in Turkish five-star hotel enterprises, indicating a strong positive correlation with toxic behaviors.
Saltık	2016	Measure stress levels of employees in Istanbul four and five-star hotels.	Correlation and regression analyses on data from 397 employees.	Limited promotion opportunities emerged as the most stressful factor.

Author (s)	Year	Aim	Analysis	Result
Sardavor	2015	Explore the connection between organizational stress and performance perceptions in Azerbaijani five-star hotels.	Regression on data from 412 hotel employees.	Organizational stress negatively impacts all department employees and reduces perceived performance.
Akgündüz	2015	Analyze the effects of role stress and self-esteem on performance of Kuşadası hotel employees.	Factor load, correlation, and regression analyses on data from 227 employees.	Role conflict and ambiguity were found to increase stress and decrease performance.
Sampson & Akyeampong	2014	Identify the causes of work stress in 296 front office employees.	Factor analysis.	Issues like promotion, role conflict, communication problems, and workload significantly increase stress.
Şahin	2014	Measure job stress and organizational commitment of Istanbul travel agency employees.	Factor load, Mann-Whitney U, and correlation tests on data from 269 employees.	No significant relationship found between organizational stress and commitment.
Tiyce et al.	2013	Analyze stress levels of Australian hotel, casino, and club employees.	Focus group interviews with 165 participants.	All employees experience some stress, influenced by factors like working conditions, uncertainty, manager communication, and shift patterns.
Wan	2013	Determine job stress levels of Chinese casino middle managers.	Focus group interviews with 40 managers.	Role ambiguity, excessive workload, and customer complaints increase stress. Managers reported using social media to manage stress.
Chuang & Lei	2011	Measure job stress levels and job satisfaction of Southern Nevada chef cooks.	Factor analysis on data from 152 cooks across 25 casinos.	Work-family conflict found to be the highest stressor. High stress was shown to decrease job satisfaction.
Uzun & Yiğit	2011	Investigate the relationship between organizational stress and commitment in five-star Antalya hotels.	Pearson correlation, variance analysis, and t-tests on data from 97 middle managers.	Emotional commitment decreases as organizational stress increases.
Chiang et al.	2010	Examine job stress factors in hotels and catering.	Correlation and regression tests.	Increased stress highlights the need for work-life balance practices.
Kim et al.	2009	Analyze the role of gender in stress factors for Korean hotel employees.	Correlation and regression on data from 320 employees.	Work stress has a stronger impact on female employees.

Author (s)	Year	Aim	Analysis	Result
Akova & Işık	2008	Identify stress factors in Istanbul five-star hotels.	Factor analysis and importance level analysis for 380 participants.	Organizational structure is the main stressor, and experienced stress negatively affects performance. Most participants are from front office, food & beverage, and housekeeping departments.
Sökmen	2005	Compare stress levels by gender among middle and upper-level managers in Adana four and five-star hotels.	T-test on data from 62 managers.	Male managers experience more stress. Job structure is the main source of stress.
Aydın	2004	Determine the stress sources for four and five-star hospitality employees across Aegean Region's Izmir, Aydın, Manisa, Denizli, Uşak, and Afyon provinces.	Chi-square test on data from 792 employees.	Workload, insufficient salary, and unclear working hours are the main stress factors. Most participants are from front office, housekeeping, and food & beverage units.
Law et al.	1995	Identify stress sources in 14 Australian tourism regions.	Open-ended interviews with 102 front office employees.	Work structure issues are a major source of stress.

Attribution (Causality Attribution) Theory

Attribution theory is mostly used in the field of management sciences (Bettman & Weitz, 1983) to predict the behaviors that individuals' inferences about the causes of the events they experience are likely to affect their future behavior directly or indirectly (Heider, 1958:138). The founder of the theory, Heider, in his study titled "Naive Psychology", argues that behaviors emerge depending on two power elements: individual characteristics such as ability, temperament, intention and effort, and environmental characteristics such as luck and difficulty of the task (Specht et al., 2007, p. 536). Focus of control, which expresses the power of control of the individual, who is a social being, over the events that affect him, is one of the important subjects of attribution. While it is seen that people with a developed internal control center take responsibility for their behavior, individuals with a tendency to an external control center believe that the environment will decide the events they will experience (Mansourian & Ford, 2007, p. 660), in addition, they take a passive attitude in the face of conditions related to a fatalistic approach without making any effort to change the current situation (Struthers et al., 2001, p. 170). Weiner, who developed Heider's studies, considered attribution as linking the reasons for the success or failure of individuals to a set of results (Chen et al., 2009, p. 181). Weiner pointed out that the factors affecting performance are shaped by the perceptions of individuals and stated that performance depends on prominent factors such as perceived ability, luck, effort, and job difficulty (Specht, et al., 2007, p. 537). The causality attribution process of individuals is shaped in three steps. The internal factors of the perceiver are shaped within the framework of previously owned elements in the context of knowledge, motives, and beliefs. Internal or external causes are attributed to the relevant behavior, and the result of the perceiver emerges in the form of behaviors, emotions or expectations (Slocum, 2007).

Stress, in general, refers to the whole of the reactions of individuals to events they experience outside of their usual situations. Organizational stress, on the other hand, refers to the reactions of people to changing events as a result of the situations encountered in each step necessary for the fulfillment of the relevant work in the working environment. If people do not feel any pressure, coercion, or difficulty related to the events they have experienced or are likely to experience, or if they perceive all these at a reasonable level, they can experience stress at a certain level and advance the process. On the other hand, if the changes created by the external environment force the person in terms of knowledge, skill, and comfort, stress emerges gradually. Attribution theory explains how people make sense of behavior and the result of this behavior. According to the theory, people either find responsibility for any behavior that occurs in themselves or assign it to someone else. From this point of view, it's possible to say that the reason for the stress experienced may vary in the context of the person-induced or the meaning ascribed to the environment. In Freese and Zapf's (1999) study on the relationship between stress and attribution with the environment, it was noted that can be effective in people's attribution behaviors factors such as strong-weak relationships with the environment, time management, and different stressor perceptions. According to the study of Struthers, Millers, Boudens, and Briggs (2001) in which attribution (causality attribution) among their colleagues is explained, it has been revealed that weak social ties with other employees are effective based on low performance of employees. In a study on the perception and attribution of employees' efforts and abilities (Specht, Fichtel, & Meyer, 2007), it was determined that customers experience satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the provision of the relevant service, based on different behavioral indicators.

In this study, it has been determined that the satisfaction felt towards the person who provides the service is mostly caused by the person receiving the service, and the dissatisfaction with the service is shaped by the understanding that there is not enough effort for quality service. In these case studies, it is seen that individuals are social beings whose communication with the environment is inevitable. In this direction, in organizations where human resources that may have various sensitivities in the psychological sense coexist, each employee can be affected positively or negatively by his/her environment independently. The change created by this effect on the psychology and behavior of the individual can sometimes be seen as intense stress and low performance, and sometimes as an opportunity for change, and can be the trigger of behaviors

that will lead to success. The most important point to be considered in removing the obstacles in front of success and development in organizations is to determine from whom or what causes the reasons that lead individuals to stress and low performance.

In the case studies in the literature, attribution behavior has been discussed within the scope of the reflection of the success of individuals in social relations to performance, and the determination of how the effort and talents of service providers are attributed to customer satisfaction. The study in which stress and attribution behavior is associated (Freese & Zapf, 1999) has not been researched within the scope of the tourism sector. At this point, it is thought that how the main source of stress experienced by employees is evaluated by individuals with various psychological structures in hotel businesses that have intense human resources in terms of both employees and customers can be explained through attribution theory. From this point of view, the research problem: "Can be explained by attribution behavior the reasons that create organizational stress sources?" was designed in the form.

METHODOLOGY

Scientific and ethical rules were followed in all processes of this research titled "Explanation of Organizational Stress in Hotel Businesses with Attribution (Causality Attribution) Theory". No changes were made to the collected data. This work has not been sent to any other academic publication platform. "Ethics Committee Approval" was obtained with the decision numbered 30/18 at the meeting of Sakarya University of Applied Sciences Ethics Committee, dated 31.03.2023, and numbered 30.

The data collection tool used in this study is the questionnaire technique, which is one of the quantitative research methods. Before the questionnaires were distributed to the participants, a pilot study was conducted with 30 people to determine whether there were questions in the scale that the participants did not understand to avoid possible errors that may arise in the data obtained. The data obtained through 590 questionnaires filled by employees in four and five-star hotels in Istanbul were analyzed via SPSS.

The universe refers to the participants for whom the results of the research are desired to be generalized. The sample, on the other hand, refers to a small cluster that is taken from this universe by observing certain rules and is accepted to represent the universe from which it was taken from the widest framework (Karasar, 1999, p. 109). The universe of this research consists of the employees of a total of 703 hotels with 4 and 5 stars in Istanbul, according to the data of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2019). Due to the rich historical and cultural architecture of the city of Istanbul, it is seen as the most popular destination of Türkiye in all seasons by local and foreign visitors and stands out among other cities in terms of the number of tourists hosted and the expenditures made. For this reason, the province of Istanbul was chosen for the field study. According to the August 2019 data of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, General Directorate of Investments and Businesses, there are a total of 105 five-star and 131 four-star hotels with tourism operation certificates in Istanbul (yigm.ktb.gov.tr.2019). During the research process, the existence of hotel businesses that have a tourism business certificate but are not included in the current list of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism was determined. This situation has led to the inability to determine the exact number of hotel businesses and hotel employees that make up the universe. Since it is difficult to reach all employees due to time and cost constraints, the "Easy Sampling" technique, which is one of the non-probabilistic sampling techniques, was used due to its advantages in practice. The main purpose of this frequently used technique is to include all respondents in the sample, in line with the understanding that the most easily reached participant is the most ideal (Coşkun, Altunışık, Bayraktaroğlu, & Yıldırım, 2015:142). A questionnaire was applied to 590 employees who were thought to represent the universe and who were positive to the request to fill out the questionnaire and express the sample of this research. The data obtained with the convenience sampling technique were obtained from 24 five-star and 42 four-star hotels. Sampling error is defined as the difference between the values to be reached in the case of a complete census and the values obtained as a result of the evaluation made in line with the selected sample. The size of the selected sample also determines the sampling error and the precision of the values to be reached with this sample. In light of the

hypotheses determined in various studies, the confidence interval can be determined with rates such as 95% and 99% (Sencer & Sencer, 1978, p. 495). The sample size, which was found to be acceptable in the largest population size (Sekaran, 1992, p. 253) and line with the 95% confidence interval, and which was assumed not to be repeated in the obtained data, was determined as 384 (Erdoğan & Yazıcıoğlu, 2004). The fact that the number of participants included in this research is 590 shows that the sample of this research has the competence to represent the universe of the research.

The field study for data collection was carried out between December 2019 and March 2020. The survey questions were prepared by making use of the studies conducted in the past years on the determination of organizational stress factors and the determination of the effects of organizational stress on employees. The first part, it is aimed to determine the level of organizational stress. For this purpose, the organizational stress scale consisting of 35 statements and 4 sub-dimensions was used by Aydın (2004) by making use of the studies of Saldamlı (1999) and Ertekin (1993) and adding new judgments. To add the dimension of “the effect of managers on organizational stress” in this survey study, the scales used by adapting are as follows: As a result of the literature review by Saldamlı (1999), four statements were taken from the organizational stress scale consisting of five sub-dimensions with 56 statements. Four statements were taken from the organizational stress scale consisting of 39 statements and seven sub-dimensions, which were created as a result of a literature review by Sampson and Akyeampong (2014). Three statements were taken from the organizational stress scale consisting of 34 statements and nine sub-dimensions created by Jin, Sun, Jiang, Wong, and Wen (2018) in the conclusion of the literature review. To determine the level of agreement with the statements in the scale, a 5-Point Likert Type Scale was used as “1- Very little, 2- Little, 3- Moderate, 4- Much, 5- Too much”. In the other part of the questionnaire, to determine the demographic characteristics of the participants, gender, age, department, their position in the business they are in, and how many years they have worked in the business and the tourism sector were asked. In the other part of the questionnaire, to determine the demographic characteristics of the participants, they were asked about their gender, age, department, position in the business they are in, how many years they have worked in the business they are in, and how many years they have worked in the tourism sector.

In the research, it was aimed to determine the sources of organizational stress and to associate the stress dimensions with attribution behavior. For this purpose, all departments in hotel enterprises were included in the scope of the research. The findings of the study are important in terms of examining the organizational stress levels obtained from all departments and providing a holistic view to hotel managers in order to analyse stress. Another important point of the research is to offer suggestions for the sector against the changes that organizational stress and attribution behavior may create on the functioning of the organization. Within the scope of the research, associating the prominent dimensions of organizational stress levels with the Attribution Theory has added a unique dimension to the study in terms of being an approach that is not encountered in the literature. As a result of the research findings, it is predicted that can be examined with different models of organizational stress and attribution behaviors. It is thought that this situation shows that the research can be scientifically beneficial. In addition, revealing which attribution behaviors are caused by organizational stress will bring advantages such as increasing positive social relations in enterprises and decreasing labor turnover rate. Thus, it will provide both social and economic contributions to businesses (Işık et al., 2024). Modern management approaches are used more effectively in four and five-star hotel businesses. In this regard, the fact that four and five-star hotel establishments were selected due to the research subject constitutes a limitation of the research. The number of participants is also limited due to employees working at a busy pace during the day, not wanting to participate for personal reasons or company policies. At the same time, the limited time to complete the research and the fact that only the prominent organizational stress dimensions were discussed in the context of the relevant theory in line with the scale used in the research are other factors limiting the study.

FINDINGS

Findings For Reliability Analysis and Explanatory Factor Analysis

The reliability of a test or scale indicates that the data to be obtained from it will also be reliable. A scale with a high level of validity has a high level of reliability. This situation reveals the close relationship between validity and reliability (Coşkun et al., 2015, p. 124). The Cronbach's Alpha (α) value of a scale is in the range of $0.80 \leq \alpha < 1.00$, indicating that it provides a high level of reliability (Kalaycı, 2017, p. 405). Factor analysis, on the other hand, refers to reducing a large number of expressions that have a common meaning among them to a smaller number to increase their intelligibility and interpretability (Coşkun et al., 2015, p. 264). To determine the reliability of the scale, the value reached as a result of the Cronbach Alpha test performed before the factor analysis was determined as (0.964). Since the Cronbach Alpha value is over 0.80, it was determined that the reliability of this scale was high. To interpret the KMO value resulting from the validity analysis, the classification in Table 2 created by Kalaycı (2017) was taken into account. The minimum KMO value, which is generally considered appropriate by the researchers, is 0.70 (Coşkun et al., 2015, p. 268).

Table 2

Classification of KMO Values

KMO Value	Comment
0.90	Perfect
0.80	Very Good
0.70	Good
0.60	Middle
0.50	Weak
Below 0.50	Unacceptable

Source: Kalaycı (2017).

In Table 3, according to the results of the Bartlett Sphericity Test related to the organizational stress scale, the KMO value is (0.958), while the Bartlett value is less than 0.05. The results show that the adequacy of the scale used to determine the organizational stress levels for factor analysis is at a "perfect" level.

Table 3

KMO and Bartlett Sphericity Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Value		,958
Bartlett Sphericity Test	Approximate Chi-Square	16819,857
	Degrees of Freedom	1035
	Meaningfulness	,000

The Results of Explanatory Factor Analysis of The Organizational Stress Scale

To measure statistical significance, as shown in Table 4, factor loads above (0.512) in all studies with a sample of more than 100 are sufficient (Coşkun et al., 2015, p. 283).

Table 4

Minimum Values of Factor Loads by Sample Size

Sample Size	Factor Load
50	0,722
100	0,512
200	0,384
300	0,298
600	0,210
1000	0,162

Source: (Coşkun et al., 2015, p. 283)

Nine of 46 expressions used in factor analysis were excluded from the analysis because their factor loads were less than (0.512). In the conclusion of the factor analysis applied to the organizational stress scale with 37 statements, 5 factors were formed. The method of "determining the number of factors by the researcher" was used to determine to what extent organizational stress affects hotel employees according to the departments they are in. In the conclusion of the analysis, the expressions were gathered under the relevant dimensions as manager-employee relations (12 expressions), organizational structure (9 expressions), work structure (6 expressions), organization and interpersonal relations (5 expressions), and physical conditions in the work environment (5 expressions).

Table 5
Results of Explanatory Factor Analysis Regarding the Organizational Stress Scale

Expression	Faktor Loads	Self Value	Percentage of Variance Explained	Cron. Alfa
Factor 1: Manager – Employee Relations				
Lack of authority to decide how to handle expectations about my job	,790	17,721	15,474	,937
The lack of my manager’s support for the decisions I make	,764			
The lack of a consistent management style of our manager	,760			
My manager's inability to solve internal problems immediately	,746			
Not being allowed to make decisions on my own	,732			
Most of the decisions are made by my manager	,730			
The tension between me and my department manager	,640			
Not showing enough sensitivity to our requests and reports by the upper level (ignoring)	,611			
Nepotism of the managers	,532			
The inability of managers to provide adequate training in professional issues	,525			
Inability to get support from colleagues and managers	,520			
Factor 2: Organizational Structure				
Lack of clear responsibilities for the job	,696	2,467	12,977	,878
Poor communication within the organization	,664			
Doing two conflicting jobs at once	,660			
Incompatibility in authority and responsibilities	,651			
Insufficient salary and wage imbalance	,611			
Injustice in performance appraisal and promotion	,606			
Injustice in the distribution of duties	,588			
Not having enough authority to make decisions	,586			
Inability to participate in decisions	,539			
Factor 3: Organization and Interpersonal Relations				
Hostile behavior by coworkers	,768	2,181	10,796	,873
Conflict between employees	,752			
The prevalence of gossip in the workplace	,631			
Excessive competition among employees	,551			
Having problems in subordinate-superior relations	,528			

Expression	Faktor Loads	Self Value	Percentage of Variance Explained	Cron. Alfa
Factor 4: Work Structure		1,702	9,204	,786
Excessive correspondence and bureaucracy	,711			
Shift work order	,690			
Difficulty doing the job in full view	,600			
Being responsible to more than one supervisor at the same time	,554			
Highly disciplined work environment	,542			
Excessive workload	,530			
Factor 5: Physical Conditions in the Business Environment		1,602	7,359	,747
Very noisy work environment	,746			
Lack of necessary tools and equipment	,627			
Hot or cold working environment	,611			
Here is the presence of danger	,598			
Lack of lighting	,539			

Note: Explained variance 55,811; Inference Method: Principal Component Analysis; Rotation Method; Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation.

Looking at the results in Table 5, it is possible to measure statistical significance with factor loads ranging from 0.790 to 0.520. The dimensions that make up the organizational stress scale explain 55,811% of the total variance. The manager-employee relationship dimension has the highest disclosure rate with 15.474%. Another dimension with a high explanatory rate of 12,977% is the organizational structure.

Reliability Analysis Results of the Organizational Stress Scale

The reliability analysis results obtained after the factor analysis of the organizational stress scale are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Reliability Analysis Results of the Organizational Stress Scale After Factor Analysis

Scale	Dimensions	Cronbach's Alfa
	Manager–Employee Relations	,937
	Organizational Structure	,878
Organizational Stress Scale	Work Structure	,873
Physical Conditions in the Work Environment		,786
Organization and Interpersonal Relations		,747
Total		,959

According to the results shown in Table 6 above, the reliability coefficient of the organizational stress scale was determined as 0.95. According to the result, it is seen that the scale has a high-reliability level. Organizational stress represents the dimensions of manager-employee relations (0.93), organizational structure (0.87), work structure (0.87) and physical conditions in the work environment (0.78), organization, and interpersonal relations (0.74). It is possible to say that the statements that indicate have very high reliability.

Demographic Characteristics of Organizational Stress Scale Participants

The demographic characteristics of the participants within the scope of the research are shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7
Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Variables		Number of People (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	172	29,2
	Male	418	70,8
Age	18-23	88	14,9
	24-29	255	43,2
	30-35	161	27,3
	36-41	60	10,2
	42 and over	26	4,4
Department	Front Office	196	33,2
	Housekeeping	143	24,2
	Food and Beverage Support and Staff	128	20,8
	• Technical Services (15)	123	20,8
	• Accounting (13)		
	• Sales & Marketing (15)		
	• Purchasing (Supply) (15)		
	• Human Resources (20)		
	• Risk Management and Security (20)		
• Others (5)			
Position in Business	Manager	159	26,9
	• Senior Level Manager (19)		
	• Middle Level Manager (80)		
	• Lower Level Manager (60) Employees		
	Employees	431	73,0
Working time in the Business	Less than 1 year	183	31,0
	1-3 years	267	45,3
	4-6 years	90	15,3
	7 years and more	50	8,5
Working time in the Industry	Less than 1 year	47	8,0
	1-3 years	148	25,1
	4-6 years	181	30,7
	7 years and more	214	36,3

DISCUSSION

Stress, mostly experienced in the face of unexpected situations, can cause various behavioral changes in people. These behavioral changes can manifest themselves in many ways, such as depression, burnout, being open to making mistakes, poor performance, and absenteeism. Organizational stress is an inevitable event in hotel businesses, which have intense human resources and various business structures that need to be acted together and harmoniously. In this sector, where seasonality and labor turnover rate is high, employees may be under intense stress due to the absence of work (presenteeism), often compromising their health and comfort for fear of losing their job.

According to Perrewe and Zellars (1999), people's behaviors against the stress they experience by being exposed to different stressors can be shaped by different emotions that mediate the emergence of this behavior. At this point, it is possible to say that people can have different sensitivities in the face of different events. Green and Mitchel (1979), on the other hand,

touched on the leader-member interaction and pointed out that attribution behavior can be shaped depending on what kind of image managers have in the minds of employees. Emotionally sensitive individuals will often be prone to finding problems in the external environment. Similarly, employees who do not have effective communication with their managers will be likely to easily see the source of any problem as their manager. This approach also shows that people have external attribution behavior. On the other hand, there are different studies in the literature (Pervin, 1989; Schneider, 1983), which draw attention to the fact that individuals have high control over their behaviors and can manage their emotions professionally. Considering that people who can manage their emotions professionally are psychologically strong, these people will be ready to take action to make the necessary changes by easily taking this responsibility if they are responsible, instead of attributing the problems to an external cause. Therefore, it is possible to evaluate these people as people who are prone to internal attribution behavior.

Addressing the research problem, the study first identified the core dimensions of organizational stress. Notably, it highlighted the potential for hidden stress factors within these prominent dimensions, suggesting the organizational stress scale's limitations in capturing the full picture. Existing literature on organizational stress confirms its detrimental impact on behavior, particularly disrupting interpersonal relationships (Türkseven & Ege, 2021; Mert et al. 2020; Bilgili & Tekin, 2019; Tonbul & Aykanat, 2019; Altan, 2018; Demirci, 2017; Akdu & Akdu, 2016; Unur & Pekersen, 2016; Tiyce et al., 2013; Chuang & Lei, 2011).

As a result of this research, it was determined that the highest stress indicator reached was caused by the relations between managers and employees. When the expressions in the scale are examined, statements such as "nepotism of the managers" and "my manager's inability to solve internal problems immediately" express the approach of the employees with external attribution behavior. Another prominent stress indicator is the reasons arising from the organizational structure. When the expressions in the scale are examined, statements such as "inability to participate in decisions" and "not having enough authority to make decisions" draw attention. Considering these statements, it can be said that employees who are inclined to internal attribution behavior experience high stress. This research revealed that stress primarily stems from manager-employee relations and, to a lesser extent, situations arising from the organizational structure. Notably, it demonstrates how these prominent dimensions of organizational stress— manager-employee relationships and organizational structure—can be explained through the lens of attribution behavior, specifically the tendency to assign causality. This is because attributional behavior is related to whether or not the source of a problem can be identified. In the determination to be made, people's interests and social selves can also be determinative. For example, lack of self-confidence (Gedik et al., 2017) and inadequate self-esteem (Akgündüz, 2015) cause an increase in organizational stress. Thus, errors may occur in healthy decision-making mechanisms of individuals. Another study found that people's internal attribution tendencies towards success and failure vary depending on the perceived importance of the situation. In addition, it is known that extrinsic attribution tendency increases in long-term planning for the future and controllability. This situation is effective in the phenomenon of cynicism, which explains the commitment of individuals to the organization and their sense of belonging (Taslak & Dalgin, 2015).

On the other hand, some sample studies in the literature (Tozkoparan, 2021; Akça & Beydili, 2018; Aybas & Kosa, 2018; Şahin, 2014) have shown that organizational stress does not cause a significant negative effect at high levels. At this point, it is possible to say that organizational stress that is not high enough can often create internal attribution behavior, that is, employees can find the source of the problem in themselves without any benefit. For example, when customer complaints increase, hotel managers may find the source of the problem in employees' lack of skills. In this case, employees may state that the main factor causing the problem is the lack of equipment in order to defend themselves with the fear of dismissal. In this case, as a result of intense stress, people will show external attribution behaviour. Otherwise, if there is a problem in the lack of skills of employees in an environment where stress is not intense, this situation can be easily accepted and measures can be taken without fear of dismissal.

While women can be more affected by stress than men in environments where organizational stress is experienced (Kim et al., 2009), it has been determined that men are also affected by stress more than women (Sökmen, 2005). Therefore, it can be said that people's demographic characteristics may also play a role in attribution behaviors. The majority of the participants included in this research (70.8%) are male with 418 people. The majority of the participants (43.2%), consisting of 255 people, are between the ages of 24-29. Interestingly, while demographic characteristics like age and gender haven't been consistently linked to organizational stress in research, marital status has emerged as a significant factor, as demonstrated by Nas & Torun (2022). However, contrary to the inference made in this research, it has been determined in the literature that demographic differences do not have an effect on organizational stress (Çökük, 2018). In the study conducted by Kızgın and Dalgin (2012); students' attributional behavior in success and failure situations; It was concluded that there was a significant difference between genders in terms of luck, effort, difficulty and talent factors. In other words, it is possible to say that a demographic factor such as gender has some effects on organizational stress and therefore attribution behaviors.

Although it shows a balanced distribution, within the scope of this research, the participants mostly (33.2%) work in the front office department. While the existing literature on organizational stress includes department-specific studies, the focus has primarily been on front-office (Türkseven & Ege, 2021; Choi 2019; Sampon & Akyeampong, 2014; Law et al. 1995) and food and beverage (Akça & Beydili, 2018; Demirci, 2017; Chuang & Lei, 2011), in some studies are discussed both (Akova & Işık,

2008; Aydın, 2004). The majority of later organizational stress studies concentrate on tour guides and travel agency employees. A key novelty of this study lies in its comprehensive examination of organizational stress across all departments within the hotel industry. Additionally, employees are mostly (73.0%) from the non-managerial group. The majority of employees (45.3%) have been working in their company for 1-3 years, and in the sector (36.3%) they have been working for 7 years or more. Therefore, within the scope of this research, mostly front office employees, relatively short-term employees, and men have a greater role in associating stress factors arising from manager- employee relations with external attributions, and stress factors arising from the organizational structure with internal attributions. The fact that front office employees, who are the unit that interacts the most with customers, their unit managers, other unit employees, and managers, are predominant in the research may be a reason for turning to external attribution in any problem. The scope of the research included mostly non-managerial groups; It may have led to external attribution due to reasons such as greater workload and communication intensity. In addition, it is thought that the fact that employees do not work in the same company for many years is a situation that increases external attribution as a cause of organizational stress. Organizational stress has been linked to a range of negative outcomes, including burnout, decreased job satisfaction, and increased turnover intentions (Biçki, 2016; Saltık, 2016; Sardavor, 2015; Uzun and Yiğit, 2014). Existing studies on organizational stress in tourism lack a strong theoretical foundation. The synergy between organizational stress and attribution theory forms the cornerstone of this research, offering a fresh perspective and distinguishing it from traditional approaches to stress studies in the field.

Therefore, given the research question's focus on whether attribution behavior explains the reasons behind organizational stress sources, it is reasonable to hypothesize that individuals with strong attributional tendencies likely play a significant role in identifying the sources of concentrated organizational stress.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Scientific and ethical rules were followed in all processes of this research titled "Explanation of Organizational Stress in Hotel Businesses with Attribution (Causality Attribution) Theory". No changes were made to the collected data. This work has not been sent to any other academic publication medium. "Ethics Committee Approval" was obtained with the decision numbered 30/18 at the meeting of Sakarya University of Applied Sciences Ethics Committee, dated 31.03.2023, and numbered 30.

The problem of this research is "Can the reasons that create organizational stress sources be explained by attribution behavior?" was designed in the form. The value reached as a result of the Cronbach Alpha test performed before applying factor analysis to the organizational stress scale used in the research is (0.964). The fact that this value is above 0.80 indicates the high level of reliability of the scale. In the continuation of the study, the validity and reliability analysis was applied to the relevant scale, and factor analysis was applied. Thus, the dimensions of organizational stress have been reached. The relevant dimensions were determined in light of the existing literature and by the researcher's collection of the relevant statements under certain headings.

In the research, sample studies are included on organizational stress sources of different businesses in the tourism sector. A qualitative approach prevails in 4 of the 30 studies under the theoretical framework heading of the research (Şimşek and Cin, 2019; Tiyce et al., 2013; Wan, 2013; Law et al., 1995). Qualitative studies are available focus group interviews, or secondary source scanning and analyses based on cause-effect relationships. The remaining 26 studies employed survey techniques similar to the data collection method used in this research. Notably, the data analysis techniques in this study, such as Cronbach's alpha, Bartlett's sphericity test, and exploratory factor analysis, show significant overlap with those used in other studies. Importantly, this research distinguishes itself from all previous studies in two key ways: firstly, it comprehensively examines organizational stress levels across all departments within hotel businesses within the tourism industry, and secondly, it pioneers the integrated analysis of organizational stress and attribution theory in the context of tourism research. When the findings obtained as a result of the research are examined, the main reason for the stress that arises in the dimension of organizational stress arising from the manager and employee relations can be evaluated as the external attribution tendency of people according to the studies in the literature. People who are prone to external attribution behavior attribute the main source of the problems to an external factor. On the other hand, stress originating from the organizational structure, which is another prominent point of the organizational stress dimension, reflects the internal attribution tendency of people according to the evaluations made in light of the expressions in the scale. Internal attribution, on the other hand, is interpreted as people not ignoring the possibility that the source of the problems experienced may originate from themselves. In addition, this study in conjunction with prior research, indicates that demographic factors could influence the way employees attribute responsibility for organizational stress.

Suggestions

Organizational conditions should be suitable physically and socially to prevent the stress caused by manager-employee relations at a reasonable level and to prevent the stress experienced in this regard from causing external attribution behavior. For the organization to achieve its goals, measures should be taken to obtain maximum efficiency from all the necessary steps of a job. In this sense, it is necessary to make the physical conditions suitable for the positions that need to be physically active in the workplace (Spiers, 2003). The working environment should be arranged in a way that protects the quality of life of people (Yücesoy, 2016). It is necessary to ventilate, illuminate and maintain the general comfort of the environment. The restructuring of the work to alleviate the stressful environment (Luthans, 1999) requires that the work to be done to fully meet the expectations between the manager and the employees should be developed at the points where it is deemed necessary, and the way of doing the work should be changed, updated and shaped according to the requirements of the job and the abilities of the person who will do that job. One of the most important reasons for the disagreements between the employees and the managers is the inability to share the powers and responsibilities equally among the employees in equal positions due to reasons such as favoritism and lobbying. At this point, responsibilities should be clearly stated so that managers can see whether their expectations are met or not, and employees can clearly understand the performance expected from them. So much so that Omolaye and Omale (2013) state that the balanced distribution of responsibilities and workload among employees within the organization is effective in stress management. The results of this research indicate that the importance given to organizational stress management in

manager-employee relations will have an impact on employees' external attribution behaviors. In order to control external attribution behavior, working conditions need to be improved at an optimum level. It is possible to say that examining the sources of stress and becoming aware of external attributional behaviors in this direction will lead to improvement in healthy communication and problem-solving behavior between employees and managers.

To control the stress arising from the organizational structure and not prepare an environment for internal attribution behavior, it is necessary to make sure that the existence of an effective communication environment (Luthans, 1999) is preserved within the organization. Otherwise, employees may think that they do not have successful communication skills and cannot explain themselves adequately. Protecting the work- family harmony of the employees in the organization is also very important to keep stress at a reasonable level. At this point, the social support to be provided to the employees (Greenberg, 1999) will ensure that the employees can both achieve domestic peace and be satisfied with their working conditions. Stress can be experienced at different levels in each individual and can be reflected in different ways. At this point, stress management training (Greenberg, 1999), which will be offered to the employees at regular intervals according to the requirements of the job and the positions of the employees, will enable people to professionally manage the relevant situation under intense working conditions. Thus, employee performance and peace of mind will increase. As a result of this research, it is necessary to provide an effective communication environment throughout the organization to control internal attribution behaviors that may be caused by organizational stress. Thus, it will be possible to ensure employee satisfaction and therefore customer satisfaction.

The tourism industry has a structure that is also affected by the macro environment. For example, during the years of the Covid-19 epidemic all over the world, the tourism industry suffered a great economic loss. For example, in a study conducted in Sri Lanka (Ilangerathna et al., 2024), Covid-19 effects were discussed in 3 dimensions: high awareness, high limitation, and adaptation to the new normal. As a result of the research, it was concluded that there were significant changes in the context of education, healthcare, economy, mobility, psychology, and cultural structure. For this reason, businesses must be sensitive to external factors and be prepared to control employee and business health.

The fact that businesses are environmentally friendly by consuming renewable energy will first make the company environmentally friendly and then the harmony between the employees and the business. Environmentally friendly businesses will be able to facilitate their employees to work in a healthy and work-appropriate environment. Renewable energy consumption reduces carbon consumption and saves resources by reducing the environmental cleaning costs of businesses (Işık et al. 2023b). Moreover, according to Işık et al. (2023a), while economic indicators play a major role in the success of the tourism industry, it is recommended for policy makers to correlate environmental pollution indices with export rates in the tourism industry where natural resources are used as a supply. In this way, businesses will be aware of their responsibilities, and healthy employee relations and high customer satisfaction will be ensured.

The fact that uncertainties in climate policy delay investments in low carbon consumption (Huang, 2023) poses a threat to ecological sustainability. For this reason, policymakers need to act quickly for effective climate policies. Thus, it will be possible to ensure environmental sustainability.

With concerns about climate change and the development of renewable energy technologies, renewable energy consumption has accelerated in some island settlements (Moosavian et al., 2024; Shoaie et al., 2023; Noorollahi et al., 2022). Particularly in destinations with low carrying capacity, emphasis should be placed on renewable energy consumption. This sensitivity is even more important for the sustainability of natural resources. In this way, excess carrying capacity will be brought under control, and factors that may cause dissatisfaction inside and outside the business will be reduced. It will be possible to indirectly see a decrease in employees' job satisfaction and stress levels.

It is known that economic injustices are an important source of stress in businesses. Employees who do not receive sufficient salaries are under intense stress, which also brings about work-family conflicts. Moreover, it is known that economic and political uncertainties play an

important role in tourists' preferences, even in a macro sense. For example, it has been determined that Canadian tourists are more negatively affected by the US economic and political uncertainty than Mexican tourists (Işık et al. 2020). In other words, Canadians reduce their touristic trips to the USA more. Thus, while the country's macroeconomic balance is disrupted, the income levels of tourism workers are also negatively affected. For healthy organizational structures, economic competition with other countries in the macro sense must be taken into consideration.

This research opens avenues for further exploration of demographic differences in attribution behavior within organizational stress by comparing specific characteristics. Additionally, comparative analyses of organizational stress and attribution patterns across diverse tourism sectors could be undertaken using attribution theory to consider possible stress effects. Future studies might further employ qualitative interview methods to delve deeper into these dynamics, or alternatively, conduct hybrid studies combining qualitative and quantitative approaches for a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of organizational stress and its relationship to attribution behavior.

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eISSN : 2687-3737



Assessment of virtual kitchen use intention among Kenyan restaurants: A quantitative research using UTAUT model

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ABSTRACT

Restaurants contribute significantly to economic diversification by creating jobs and generating revenue. While restaurants in Kenya largely focus on the dine-in experience, the growing demand for dine-out consumption, fueled by the proliferation of online food delivery platforms, necessitates the implementation of a new restaurant business model known as virtual kitchen. This study, therefore, applied modified UTAUT2 theory to assess licensed restaurants' intentions to use virtual kitchens in Kenya. The study hypothesis is that performance expectancy, effort expectancy, facilitating conditions, and price value have a significant effect on licensed restaurants' intention to use virtual kitchens in Kenya. The study used a quantitative research approach and correlational research design to survey 149 managers/owners of licensed restaurants in Kenya. The regression analysis results show that performance expectancy, effort expectancy, facilitating conditions, and price value all have a significant effect on the intention to use virtual kitchens. The study not only adds to the existing body of knowledge debate on virtual kitchens by providing informative insights on its adoption in Kenya, but it also contributes to industry practice.

KEYWORDS

UTAUT theory, Virtual kitchens, Licensed restaurants, Kenya

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Received 03.10.2023; Received in revised form 02.02.2024; Accepted 06.02.2024

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e-ISSN: 2687 - 3737 / © 2021 The Authors. Published by Anadolu University

<https://doi.org/10.48119/toleho.1370748>

INTRODUCTION

Technology advancements are emerging as a critical factor in shaping the economies of various countries (Işık, 2011), including Kenya, through the adoption of innovative products and business models that adapt to consumer needs (Dakduk, Van der Woude & Alarcon Nieto, 2023). Although digital transformation is a worldwide phenomenon, new technologies and innovations are not as widely used as they should be (Dakduk et al., 2023). As a result, various theoretical foundations and models, including diffusion of innovation (DOI), technology acceptance model (TAM), and the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT), have been applied to better understand technology adoption (Salahshour, Nilashi & Mohamed, 2018). Among the numerous theories in this context, UTAUT has been widely used as a theoretical framework in research on technology adoption (Dakduk et al., 2023; Kuttimani et al., 2018). Despite its popularity, however, there are emergent discrepancies in study contexts and samples regarding technology adoption by various organizations including restaurants.

The restaurant industry makes up about 27.4% of all enterprises in the hospitality industry, with over 32,000 businesses accounting for 170,790 jobs worldwide (Gouveia, 2021; Martín-Martín, Maya García & Romero, 2022). The restaurant industry in Kenya operates on two business models. The first is the dine-in, in which consumers seeking meal service visit a restaurant (Pyanikova et al., 2020). While the dine-in concept has been successful for decades, technological advancements, changes in consumer trends, and the effects of the COVID-19 epidemic necessitate a change in the business operating model (Dogru, Mody, Hanks, Suess, Işık & Sozen, 2023). Many restaurants worldwide have resorted to an alternative business model: the dine-out (Choudhary, 2019; Gouveia, 2021; Martín-Martín et al., 2022; Pyanikova et al., 2020) by embracing innovative business models that include online food delivery (OFD) (Hong, Choi & Joung, 2023).

As a result, OFD has grown, resulting in the establishment of a global market worth that will be more than \$220 billion by 2025 (Ahuja, Chandra, Lord and Peens, 2021; Lavu, 2023). Despite the demand for dine-out representing a large increase in the restaurant business worldwide, most restaurants in Kenya are characterized by the traditional dine-in restaurant layout that fails to meet this demand (Kairu, 2021). Furthermore, when targeting both dine-in and off-premise clients, dine-in restaurants may face a meal supply shortage, especially when operating at full capacity (Gouveia, 2021; Cai et al., 2022). In Kenya, the emergence of OFD as a dominant force occurred in 2019, mostly facilitated by platform-to-consumer delivery such as Glovo, Jumia Food, Uber Eats, and Bolt Food (Kairu, 2022). This has resulted in a significant increase in the demand for OFD services in Kenya (Kairu, 2022) with the development of a novel restaurant business model referred to as virtual kitchen emerging (Cai, Leung & Chi, 2022; Christopher, 2020).

A virtual kitchen, also called ghost, cyber, cloud, commissary, or dark kitchen is a back office concept that has been introduced in the restaurant industry to enhance dine-out capabilities by optimizing OFD services (Cai et al., 2022; Choudhary, 2019; Christopher, 2020; Gouveia, 2021; Kulshreshtha & Sharma, 2022; Lee, 2020). Virtual kitchens are thus food operations that are set up for delivery-only meals and do not have physical storefronts or dining areas (Cai et al., 2022; Christopher, 2020; Hakim et al., 2022; Hakim et al., 2023; Lee, 2020). The adoption of virtual kitchens would benefit restaurateurs by significantly lowering operational costs (Kulshreshtha and Sharma, 2022), increasing productivity, and improving efficiency (Gouveia, 2021; Lee, 2020; Vu et al., 2023). As a result, various restaurant chains worldwide, as well as OFD platforms such as Uber Eats, DoorDash, and GrubHub, are increasingly embracing this concept (Cai et al., 2022; Dyachenko, 2022; Lee, 2020). This phenomenon is thus expected to become a mainstay market, resulting in a \$1.5 trillion business by 2050 (Euromonitor, 2021).

Because virtual kitchens are still a new concept in Kenya (Kairu, 2022), it is important to understand the factors that influence their adoption. As a result, this study investigates the factors that influence the intention to use virtual kitchens among licensed restaurants in Kenya. The study used the UTAUT2 theory to determine the effects of performance expectancy, effort expectancy,

facilitating conditions, and price value on the intention of licensed restaurants in Kenya to use virtual kitchens.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT)

UTAUT model was developed by combining various existing theories and models that were established to help understand technology adoption. The aim was to develop a more comprehensive technology acceptance model, that explains intentions towards accepting technology and uses behavior. Performance expectancy (PE), effort expectancy (EE), social influence (SI), facilitating conditions (FC), behavioral intention (BI), and user behavior (UB) are the six main constructs in the original UTAUT paradigm. The UTAUT model also includes four moderating variables namely age, gender, experience, and voluntariness (Venkatesh et al., 2003). UTAUT was later expanded to UTAUT2 by incorporating additional predictor constructs such as hedonic motivation (HM), price value (PV), and habit; and dropping voluntariness as a moderator (Venkatesh, Thong & Xu, 2012) (see Figure 1).

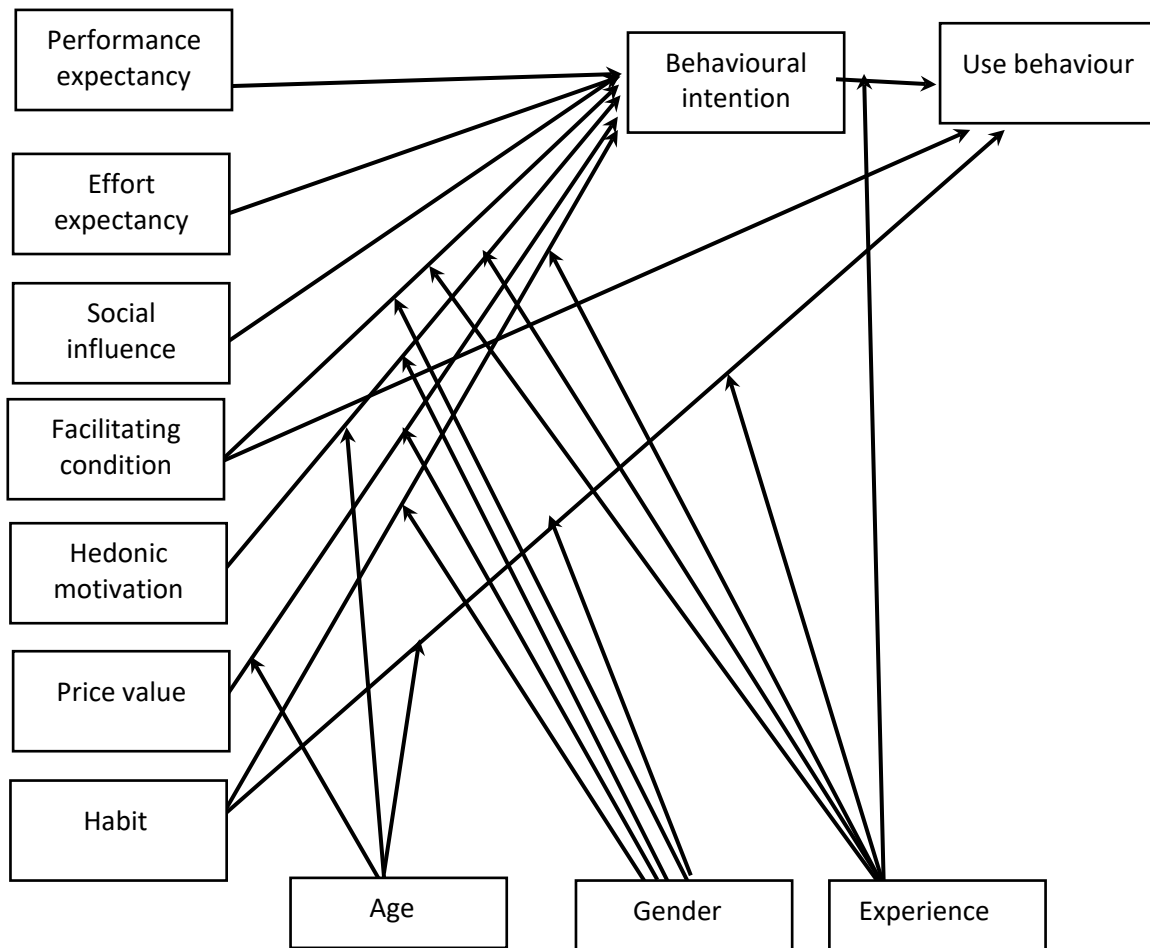


Figure 1. UTAUT 2 Model (Venkatesh et al., 2012)

Virtual Kitchen Adoption

A virtual kitchen is a commercial food operation that focuses solely on meal delivery and has no physical dining areas or storefronts (Ahuja et al., 2021; Cai et al., 2022; Kulshreshtha & Sharma, 2022; Lee, 2020). The adoption of virtual kitchens is thus the incorporation of this business model into current restaurant operations. Several studies (e.g., Cai et al., 2022; Dyachenko, 2022; Gouveia, 2021; Hakim et al., 2022; Hakim et al., 2023; Kulshreshtha and Sharma

2022; Ongkasuwan et al., 2022; Vu et al., 2023) have been dedicated to understanding this phenomenon due to its proliferation in various countries and the perceived benefits derived from its adoption.

Despite the significant potential benefits of the virtual kitchen business model (Kulshreshtha and Sharma, 2022; Cai et al., 2022), research on this phenomenon has been skewed toward the demand side (e.g., Cai et al., 2022; Hong et al., 2023; Kulshreshtha & Sharma 2022; Ongkasuwan et al., 2022), with little research delving into the supply side of virtual kitchens. From a demand perspective, previous research has focused on the acceptance and preference for virtual kitchens by customers (Dyachenko, 2022; Hakim et al., 2022; Kulshreshtha & Sharma, 2022; Ongkasuwan et al., 2022). For example, Ongkasuwan et al. (2022) discovered that PE, EE, SI and PV significantly predicted purchase decisions from online service providers in Thailand, China, and the US. While this study is indicative of determinants to use virtual kitchens and their partnerships, the study mainly focused on customers and not directly on adopters of virtual kitchens.

From the supply perspective, the prospects of virtual kitchens and OFD have been examined in various contexts including the US, Indian, UK, Indonesian, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, and Brazilian markets (Choudhary, 2019; Gouveia, 2021; Hakim et al., 2022; Hakim et al., 2023; Vu et al., 2023). Hakim et al. (2023) for instance used data mining and thematic content analysis to investigate the types and characteristics of virtual kitchens in Limeira, So Paulo, and Campinas, Brazil. Their study categorized virtual kitchen models as shell-type (hub), independent virtual kitchen, virtual kitchen in a standard restaurant, franchise, and home-based virtual kitchen.

Few of these studies (e.g., Choudhary, 2019; Gouveia, 2021; Vu et al., 2023) have also attempted to investigate restaurant managers/owners' intentions to adopt virtual kitchens. Vu et al. (2023) used a knowledge-based view of the firms to survey restaurant managers/owners in examining the prospects, challenges, success factors, and future developments of virtual kitchen adoption. Gouveia (2021) used, modified UTAUT to examine virtual kitchen adoption in Portugal. The results of this study indicated that PE and PV significantly predicted virtual kitchen adoption, while EE and FC conditions did not. Given that this was a case study conducted in Portugal, Gouveia's findings would have limited application in other research contexts such as Kenya. Choudhary (2019) through a descriptive case study concluded that virtual kitchen adoption in India is influenced by both internal (e.g., operations, service, logistics, etc.) and external factors (e.g., customer preference, competition, technology, etc.). Choudhary's study, as a descriptive study, fails to show how the identified factors influence the intention to use virtual kitchens.

Application of UTAUT in the Restaurant Industry

Over the past five years, several studies (e.g., Gouveia, 2021; Khalilzadeh, Ozturk & Bilgihan, 2017; Lee, Sung, & Jeon, 2019; Okumus, Bilgihan & Ozturk, 2018; Palau-Saumell, Forgas-Coll, Sánchez-García & Robres, 2019) have applied the UTAUT model to understand technology system use within the restaurant industry in various settings. Gouveia (2021), for instance, applied modified UTAUT to assess adoption of virtual kitchen in Portugal. Palau-Saumell et al. (2019) and Lee et al. (2019) used modified UTAUT-2 to investigate mobile app usage among Spanish restaurant customers and OFDs in Korea, respectively. Furthermore, Okumus et al. (2018) used UTAUT to assess the acceptance of Smartphone diet apps among restaurant customers in the US, whereas Khalilzadeh et al. (2017) used extended UTAUT to investigate the use of NFC-based mobile payment in the US. These are summarized in Table 1 below.

Despite the popularity of the UTAUT theory in technology adoption research, its application is concentrated in research conducted in developed economies of Europe, Asia, and the US (Dakduk et al., 2023; Salahshour et al., 2018). According to the findings of these studies, PE and SI are the dominant predictors of intention to adopt a technology (Dakduk et al., 2023; Venkatesh et al., 2012).

Table 1.

Application of UTAUT Models in the Hospitality and Tourism Context

Author(s)	Research Context	Sample	Model	Statistical Method	UTAUT Variables
Gouveia, 2021	VIRTUAL KITCHENS adoption, Portugal	N = 55	Modified UTAUT	PLS-SEM	PE, EE, FC, PV
Palau-Saumell <i>et al.</i> , 2019	Mobile apps used in Spanish restaurants	N = 1200	Modified UTAUT-2	SEM & CFA	PE, EE, FC, SI, HM, Habit
Lee <i>et al.</i> , 2019	OFDs, Korea	N = 340	Modified UTAUT-2	CFA & SEM	PE, EE, FC, SI, HM, Habit, PV
Okumus <i>et al.</i> , 2018	Acceptance of Smartphone diet apps, USA	N = 395	UTAUT	PLS-SEM	PE, SI & EE
Khalilzadeh <i>et al.</i> , 2017	NFC-based Mobile payment, USA	N = 412	Extended UTAUT	SEM	SI, EE, FC, HM, PE, BI

Contrary to this notion, Karulkar *et al.* (2021) considered EE and FC as the most dominant UTAUT constructs in predicting OFD use intentions. Studies (e.g., Capri, 2021; Gouveia, 2021; Karulkar *et al.*, 2021; Ongkasuwan *et al.*, 2022) that have used UTAUT in examining virtual kitchen adoption in various contexts are also scanty, with conflicting results reported. The current study, therefore, uses modified UTAUT2 to explain the intention of licensed restaurants in Kenya to use virtual kitchens, where the concept is still gaining traction.

The Research Model and Hypotheses

As already indicated, virtual kitchen adoption in Kenya is still a new concept that restaurateurs are exploring as an alternative business model for optimizing off-premise food and beverage consumption via OFDs. The intention to use a technology such as a virtual kitchen is influenced by a variety of organizational factors. UTAUT2 is a widely accepted theory that provides a framework for the factors that influence technology adoption intention.

The current study, while informed by the UTAUT2 model as a theoretical foundation, focuses on the intention to use virtual kitchens by restaurants in Kenya, and thus only four main predictor constructs were considered: PE, EE, FC, and PV. It excludes other predictor constructs such as SI, HM, habit, and moderators, which are thought to influence technology adoption at the consumer level (Venkatesh *et al.*, 2012). Figure 2 shows the research model that guided the current study. According to Venkatesh *et al.* (2012), performance expectancy in this context refers to the perceived benefits that Kenyan restaurateurs believe they will obtain from using virtual kitchens. Based on this, the study hypothesizes that Kenyan licensed restaurants' intention to use virtual kitchens is significantly influenced by performance expectations.

While Kenya's technological infrastructure is not as advanced as that of other developed economies, restaurateurs in Kenya expect virtual kitchen adoption to be simple, as defined by Venkatesh *et al.* (2012). The study further hypothesized that effort expectancy has a significant effect on licensed restaurants' intention to use virtual kitchens in Kenya. Similarly, as a new technology, restaurateurs in Kenya anticipate that virtual kitchens will require the necessary facilities and support systems before they can be implemented. According to the UTAUT2 model by Venkatesh *et al.* (2012) and the preceding studies, the current study hypothesized that facilitating conditions have a significant effect on Kenyan licensed restaurants' intention to use virtual kitchen. Finally, price value is the cost incurred by restaurateurs in the adoption of virtual kitchens (Kuttimani *et al.*, 2018; Venkatesh *et al.*, 2012). Adoption of virtual kitchens in Kenya would necessitate investments in both support systems and technology. On this basis, the current study contends that price value has a significant impact on licensed Kenyan restaurants' intentions to use virtual kitchens.

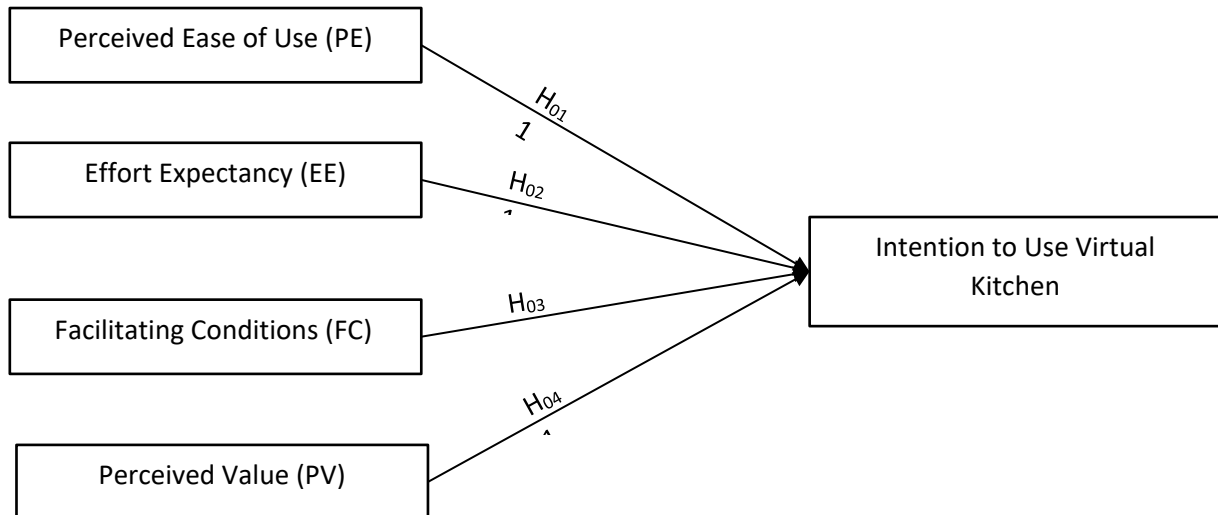


Figure 2. Research Model. Source: Adapted from Venkatesh et al. (2012)

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Approach and Design

This study applied a quantitative research method in which the data was collected using surveys.

Population and Sample

The study targeted the managers/owners of all the 149 licensed restaurants classified as class B facilities in Kenya (Tourism Regulatory Authority [TRA], 2022). TRA is mandated in classifying and licensing hospitality facilities in Kenya. In terms of licensing, the facilities are divided into classes A through H, with restaurants falling into class B (TRA, 2022). Managers/owners of these restaurants were chosen because they are in charge of investment decisions and thus were better placed to provide the needed information for this study.

Data Collection

Self-administered questionnaires were personally distributed to 149 restaurant managers/ owners via the drop-and-pick method with the help of ten trained research assistants. Data collection took place over two months between January and March 2023. In line with Beatty and Willis (2007), the questionnaire for the current study was pre-tested with other non-licensed restaurants representing 10% of the study sample, i.e., 15 restaurant managers/owners drawn randomly across the country.

Variable Measurement

The main variables investigated in this study were the virtual kitchen adoption determinants (as independent variables) and virtual kitchen use intention (as the dependent variable). Four constructs namely PE, EE, FC and PV from UTAUT2 (Venkatesh et al., 2012) were used to operationalize the independent variables. PE, FC and PV were further operationalized using four measurements, while three items were used for EE. Virtual kitchen use intention was operationalized using three measurement items. The scale for the measurement items was adapted from Gouveia (2021) by bringing the Kenyan perspectives into the context. Respondents rated their level of agreement with the measurement items regarding their intentions to use a virtual kitchen on a five-point Likert scale. The Likert scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Validity and Reliability

Content validity index (CVI) was used to assess content validity in line with Polit, Beck and Owen (2007) and Zamanzadeh et al. (2015) procedures. The questionnaire was distributed to

seven hospitality industry experts, who used a three-point Likert scale to rate its suitability. A score of three indicated item's suitability. The pre-test responses revealed no significant deviations among the respondents with a CVI value of > 0.796 suggesting a good content validity (Polit et al., 2007; Zamanzadeh et al., 2015). Furthermore, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to determine construct validity. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the instrument's internal consistency, with a value greater than 0.7 considered satisfactory.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and multiple regression analyses in SPSS version 26. Given the non-complex nature of the proposed research model, multiple regression analysis was used to test the research hypotheses. Before performing multiple linear regression analysis, descriptive statistics were used to examine and evaluate the data and gain insights into the demographic characteristics of the study sample. The data was then subjected to multiple regression analysis, with the dependent variable being 'intention to use virtual kitchens' (INT) and the independent variables being PE, EE, FC, and PV. The means of the measurement items were computed in SPSS to arrive at a single construct in each case. For example, the four PE measurement items would result in a single construct called PE, and so on.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Rate of Response, Reliability and Validity

The distribution of all surveys yielded a 100% response, thereby guaranteeing a comprehensive data set for the study. The reliability test results in SPSS show that the measurement items used to evaluate the constructs of PE, EE, FC, PV, and INT had strong internal consistency, as evidenced by Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from .914 to .952 (see Table 2).

Table 2
Reliability Results

Key Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of items
Performance Expectancy (PE)	.952	4
Effort Expectancy (EE)	.914	3
Facilitating Conditions (FC)	.935	4
Price Value (PV)	.934	4
Intention to Use Virtual Kitchen	.926	3

The EFA conducted using principal component analysis (PCA) and varimax rotation yielded a five-factor solution accounting for 85.96% of the variance, with the factor loadings ranging between .750 and .878 (see Table 3). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure value of .880 indicated that the sample was adequate for the analysis.

Table 3
Construct Validity Results Through the Rotated Component Matrix

Variables	Component				
	PE	FC	PV	INT	EE
EE1					.820
EE2					.832
EE3					.831
FC1		.852			
FC2		.831			
FC3		.840			
FC4		.826			
PE1	.793				
PE2	.878				
PE3	.829				
PE4	.845				
PV1			.750		
PV2			.856		
PV3			.841		
PV4			.858		
INT1				.877	
INT2				.818	
INT3				.869	
% of Variance	19.041%	18.995%	18.681%	14.792%	14.452%
			85.960%		

Note:

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. .880

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square 2744.645

df 153

Sig. .000

Demographic Profile of Respondents and Restaurant Categories

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are shown in Table 4. According to the table, the sample consisted primarily of people aged 40-49 years (40.3%), followed by people aged 30-39 years (27.5%). In terms of gender, the majority (67.8%) of the respondents were male. The majority of respondents (38.9%) had between 5 and 10 years of food and beverage-related work experience, with the fewest (8.7%) having more than 20 years. Most (65.1%) of the respondents were restaurant managers, with 57.7% of the respondents having attained a diploma education level.

The majority (78.5%) of the respondents reported that their restaurant provided takeaway, with the remaining 21.5% indicating intentions to provide takeaway services. Most of the respondents (96%) also stated that their restaurant's meal preparation was done on the premises.

Table 4
Demographic profile of respondents and restaurants

Profile	Freq	%	Profile	Freq	%
<i>Age</i>			<i>Education Level</i>		
20 – 29 Years	13	8.7	Diploma	86	57.7
30 – 39 Years	41	27.5	Undergraduate	63	42.3
40 – 49 Years	60	40.3	Total	149	100.0
50 – 59 Years	22	14.8	<i>Take Away Services</i>		
60 Plus Years	13	8.7	Yes	117	78.5
Total	149	100.0	No	32	21.5
<i>Gender</i>			Total	149	100.0
Male	101	67.8	<i>Take Away Intentions</i>		
Female	48	32.2	N/A	117	78.5
Total	149	100.0	Yes	32	21.5
<i>Experience</i>			Total	149	100.0
< 5 Years	34	22.8	<i>Meal Preparation</i>		
5 – 10 Years	58	38.9	In-Premise	143	96.0
11 – 20 Years	44	29.5	Off-Site	6	4.0
> 20 Years	13	8.7	Total	149	100.0
Total	149	100.0	<i>Position</i>		
<i>Position</i>			Restaurant Manager	97	65.1
Restaurant Manager	97	65.1	Restaurant Owner	3	2.0
Restaurant Owner	3	2.0	Manager and Owner	49	32.9
Manager and Owner	49	32.9	Total	149	100.0
Total	149	100.0			

Determinants of Virtual Kitchen Adoption

The multiple linear regression analysis results (see Tables 5, 6, and 7) show that all predictors, namely PE, EE, FC, and PV, had significant effects on the intention to use virtual kitchens ($F [4, 144] = 20.662, p. < 01, R^2 = .365$). This means that the four predictors account for 36.5% of the variance in licensed restaurants' intention to use virtual kitchens in Kenya. Of the four UTAUT constructs considered in this study, FC emerged as the most critical predictor of intention to use virtual kitchen among Kenyan licensed restaurants ($\beta = .215, t = 2.374, p < .05$), followed by PV, PE and EE in that order (see Table 7). Previous research, on the other hand, found PE (e.g., Dakduk, 2023; Karulkar et al., 2021; Venkatesh et al., 2012) and EE (Karulkar et al., 2021) as the most dominant UTAUT predictors.

Table 5
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.604 ^a	.365	.347	.69286

Note:

- a. Predictors: - (Constant), Effort Expectancy (EE), Facilitating Conditions (FC), Performance Expectancy (PE), Price Value (PV)

Table 6
ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	39.675	4	9.919	20.662	.000 ^b
	Residual	69.129	144	.480		
	Total	108.804	148			

Note:

a. Dependent Variable: Intention to use Virtual Kitchen (INT)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Effort Expectancy (EE), Facilitating Conditions (FC), Performance Expectancy (PE), Price Value (PV)

Table 7
Regression Coefficients

Model	USTC		STC	t	Sig.	COS	
	B	STE	Beta			TOL	VIF
(Constant)	.638	.360		1.772	.078		
Performance Expectancy (PE)	.195	.092	.192	2.131	.035	.545	1.835
Effort Expectancy (EE)	.187	.093	.173	2.000	.047	.591	1.693
Facilitating Conditions (FC)	.215	.091	.202	2.374	.019	.611	1.635
Price Value (PV)	.206	.099	.182	2.073	.040	.575	1.740

Note:

a. Dependent Variable: Intention to use Virtual Kitchen (INT)

USTC - Unstandardized Coefficients; STC - Standardized Coefficients; COS - Collinearity Statistics; STE - Std. Error; TOL – Tolerance; VIF – Variance Inflation Factor

Effect of Facilitating Conditions on Intention to Use Virtual Kitchens

The findings show that FC was the most important construct in predicting virtual kitchen use intentions among licensed restaurants in Kenya. FC entails the availability of necessary infrastructure and structures for the successful implementation of a virtual kitchen. According to the current study findings, a percentage increase in the perception that relevant structures and infrastructures are available to support virtual kitchen use increases the intention to use virtual kitchens by about 0.22% among licensed restaurants. The findings suggest that for licensed restaurants in Kenya to adopt virtual kitchens, it is critical to assess the availability of necessary infrastructure and structures to facilitate the transition to a more streamlined delivery model. These would include the availability of production and packing equipment, the availability of space, the incorporation of technology such as point-of-sale (POS) systems and online food delivery platforms (OFDs), as well as the logistical aspects associated with forming partnerships with delivery companies.

Given that virtual kitchen adoption in Kenya is still in its early stages, restaurateurs in Kenya are more likely to form intentions when they perceive the facilitating conditions to be favorable for the virtual kitchen model's implementation. The current study's findings agree with those of Ongkasuwan et al. (2022), who discovered a statistically significant relationship between FC and virtual kitchen adoption in Thailand, China, and the US. This finding adds to previous research that found FC had a significant effect on intentions to use OFD services (e.g., Capri, 2021; Hakim et al., 2023; Karulkar et al., 2021). The study's findings, however, contradict those of Gouveia (2021), who found no statistically significant impact of facilitating conditions on the use of virtual kitchens in Portugal.

Effect of Price Value on Intention to Use Virtual Kitchens

According to the current study's findings (see Table 7), the second most important UTAUT construct in predicting licensed restaurants' intentions to use virtual kitchens in Kenya was PV. The study findings generally indicate that a percentage increase in the perception that virtual kitchen use will result in lower operational costs in comparison to the resulting benefits increases

intention to use virtual kitchens among licensed restaurants by approximately 0.21%. PV, in this context, refers to the cost of licensed restaurants in Kenya adopting virtual kitchens. Restaurant managers/owners are constantly aware of their operating costs and will only consider strategies that offset their costs in comparison to the benefits realized. In this regard, restaurateurs would incur initial investment costs related to production and packaging equipment, as well as rental costs in some cases. Additional expenses would include those associated with partnering with delivery companies and OFD platforms such as Uber Eats, Glovo, and Jumia Food, as well as commissions paid out. The perceived benefit of venturing into virtual kitchens, on the other hand, must outweigh the perceived cost of operating a traditional restaurant. When compared to operating a traditional restaurant, using a virtual kitchen would result in lower initial investment costs, lower rental costs, lower staff costs, and lower marginal cost of operation.

According to the study findings, managers/owners of licensed restaurants in Kenya will be more willing to use virtual kitchens if they believe there will be a significant reduction in operational costs when compared to the accruing benefits of virtual kitchen use. While partnering with delivery companies, OFDs linkage, and commissions paid to delivery personnel will incur additional costs, the benefits realized, such as reduced costs associated with in-house staff and rental units, would outweigh the costs incurred. The study findings support those of other researchers (e.g., Gouveia, 2021; Ongkasuwan et al., 2022), who discovered that PV had a significant impact on virtual kitchen adoption. The study also corroborates other previous findings (e.g., Cai et al., 2022; Capri, 2021; Hakim et al., 2022; Kuttimani et al., 2018; Palau-Saumell et al., 2019; Vu et al., 2023) that used UTAUT to understand technology adoption in other similar contexts and concluded that PV had a significant impact on technology adoption intentions.

Effect of Performance Expectancy on Intention to Use Virtual Kitchens

PE was the third most important UTAUT construct that predicted Kenyan licensed restaurants' intention to use virtual kitchens (see Table 7). PE refers to the perceived benefit that managers/owners of licensed restaurants in Kenya will gain from using virtual kitchens in carrying out their business operations. According to the study findings, a percentage increase in the belief that virtual kitchens will result in positive outcomes increases the intention to use virtual kitchens among licensed restaurants by about 0.20%. In this case, performance metrics would include both operational (e.g., increased service delivery efficiency, innovation capacity) and financial metrics (e.g., reduced cost of operations, enhanced profit margins, energy usage, ecological footprint, uncertainty etc.) (Işık et al., 2024, 2023a, 2023b, 2021, 2018, 2017, 2020, 2014; Masud et al., 2024; Pasigai et al., 2024; Anas et al., 2023; Bulut et al., 2023; Dogru et al., 2023a, 2023b; Faroog et al., 2023; Han et al., 2023; Islam et al., 2023a, 2023b; Jabeen et al., 2023; Karagoz et al., 2023, 2021; Koscak et al., 2023; Ahmad et al., 2022; Alvarado et al., 2022a, 2022b, 2022c; Deng et al., 2022; Ongan et al., 2022). In line with the study, restaurant managers/owners are more likely to implement virtual kitchens if they believe it will improve restaurant performance. Licensed restaurants in Kenya would benefit from the use of virtual kitchens in terms of fulfilling takeaway orders placed through OFD systems. This would increase the convenience and speed with which online orders are fulfilled, thereby increasing restaurant sales productivity. The findings are consistent with those of Gouveia (2021) and Ongkasuwan et al. (2022), who found that performance expectancy predicted virtual kitchen adoption significantly. Other studies that have used UTAUT to understand technology adoption (e.g., Capri, 2021; Dakduk, 2023; Hong et al., 2023; Karulkar et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2019; Palau-Saumell et al., 2019; Vu et al., 2023) have found similar results. For instance, Hong et al. (2023) in their study indicated that PE significantly affected the adoption and use of online food delivery systems. Unlike Dakduk (2023) and Karulkar et al. (2021), the current study, while significant, did not identify PE as the most dominant UTAUT construct in predicting technology intention.

Effect of Effort Expectancy on Intention to Use Virtual Kitchens

The EE construct was the least dominant UTAUT construct that significantly predicted the intention to use virtual kitchens by Kenyan licensed restaurants (see Table 7). In this regard, EE is the degree of convenience and ease experienced when using virtual kitchens. Though virtual

kitchens function in the same way that traditional kitchens do, they are technologically advanced kitchens designed to maximize delivery. It is therefore expected that the operation of the virtual kitchen and its technological application will be easily understood by its adopters or users among licensed restaurants in Kenya. According to the study findings, a percentage increase in the belief that virtual kitchen use will be simple increases the intention to use virtual kitchens among licensed restaurants by about 0.19%.

The study suggests that managers/owners of licensed restaurants in Kenya are more likely to adopt virtual kitchens if they believe that their adoption will be an easy process free from any technicality and complexity. It should be simple for users to transfer the process of preparing meals for takeaway orders to a virtual kitchen. As a result, managers/owners of these Kenyan restaurants should find it simple to learn about and use the virtual kitchen platform. The connection between virtual kitchens and OFD platforms in Kenya like Jumia Food, Uber Eats, and Glovo should be seamless. The partnering process should also be simple for restaurateurs to consider investing in such a business model. The findings of this study are consistent with those of Ongkasuwan et al. (2022), who discovered a significant relationship between EE and virtual kitchen adoption. The results also concur with a similar study by Capri (2021), which found that EE substantially predicted OFD utilization. The findings further corroborate previous research (e.g., Palau-Saumell et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2019; Okumus et al., 2018; Khalilzadeh et al., 2017), which used the UTAUT framework to assess the role of EE in determining intention to use various technologies in the restaurant industry. The results, however, contradict Gouveia's (2021) finding that EE had no statistically significant impact on the acceptance and utilization of virtual kitchens in Portugal.

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The primary goal of this study was to look into the factors that influence virtual kitchen adoption among licensed restaurants in Kenya using a modified UTAUT2 theory. The study relied on four UTAUT2 constructs, namely PE, EE, FC and PV to predict the intention to use virtual kitchens. Data was collected from managers/owners of 149 licensed restaurants in Kenya and subjected to multiple linear regression analysis.

The study discovered that all four constructs: FC, PV, PE, and EE were significant predictors of licensed restaurants' intention to use virtual kitchens in Kenya, in that order of importance. The study shows that before adopting such a concept, managers/owners of licensed restaurants in Kenya should first evaluate the availability of the relevant conditions, including infrastructure and structures, required for the successful adoption of virtual kitchens. The study also suggests that before implementing such a concept, restaurateurs in Kenya should weigh the cost implications of the investments against the perceived benefits. The findings further, emphasize that licensed restaurants in Kenya should only use virtual kitchens if they believe it will result in positive outcomes. Finally, the study reveals that restaurant owners and operators in Kenya should consider the ease of use of virtual kitchens before implementing them to streamline their business operations.

Research Limitations

While this study presents some intriguing findings about the adoption of virtual kitchens among licensed restaurants in Kenya, it does have some limitations. The research begins with a recognition of the scarcity of scientific literature on the virtual kitchen business model. As a result, this study should be regarded as preliminary, particularly in Kenya. Second, the study only looked at licensed restaurants in Kenya and did not look at other restaurant types. It's unclear whether these establishments would be interested in the virtual kitchen business model. As a result, the study's findings may differ and these findings should only be applied to licensed restaurant businesses in Kenya. Finally, the research was strictly quantitative in nature. Given that the virtual kitchen is still a new phenomenon in Kenya, more in-depth research using a qualitative lens would be interesting.

Recommendations for Future Studies

Given that the current study focused solely on licensed restaurants, it is necessary to investigate and compare the adoption of virtual kitchens by restaurant categories not included in this study. Future research should also look into how a virtual kitchen partnership with OFD affects the intention to use virtual kitchens in Kenya, as well as the role of other stakeholders in the virtual kitchen adoption process. Future studies should also examine how contextual factors like restaurant location, target markets, and years of operation would affect adoption intentions of virtual kitchens. This current study can be expanded by conducting a mixed-method study on virtual kitchen adoption in Kenya to gain a better understanding.

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eISSN : 2687-3737



The effect of tourists' relationship with nature on global social responsibility awareness within the scope of last chance tourism

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ABSTRACT

Last-chance tourism includes tourists' visits to destinations under the threat of extinction to see them for the last time. In this type of tourism, tourists' nature-protective behaviors can be an essential factor in preventing the rapid deterioration of the region. This study aims to reveal whether the relationship with nature impacts global social responsibility in last-chance tourism. Data was collected within the purposive sample using the questionnaire technique. In the analysis phase, regression analysis was performed to reveal the effect of the relationship with nature on global social responsibility. The findings indicate that self-identity, perspective, and experience, which constitute the sub-dimensions of the relationship with nature variable, significantly affect the ecological behavior sub-dimension of global social responsibility. In addition, experience and self-identity significantly affect action orientation, one of the other sub-dimensions of global social responsibility, and perspective affects altruistic behavior.

KEYWORDS

Last Chance Tourism, Relationship with nature, Global social responsibility

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Received 14.10.2023; Received in revised form 20.02.2024; Accepted 18.03.2024

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e-ISSN: 2687 - 3737 / © 2021 The Authors. Published by Anadolu University

<https://doi.org/10.48119/toleho.1375893>

INTRODUCTION

Threats such as global warming, environmental pollution, and destruction pose significant problems for the sustainability of natural resources. Global warming, primarily due to unconscious human activities, causes climate change. This situation affects weather movements, creates seasonal imbalances, leads to rapid consumption of resources, and poses a danger to wildlife (Ahmad et al., 2014). Imbalances in climate movements bring about rapid negative environmental changes. People may want to travel to places they perceive as "endangered" due to the deterioration of the natural environment and the threat of extinction of unique natural beauties and landscapes (Dawson et al., 2011). Last-chance tourism, which emerged in this context, involves tourists traveling to places threatened with extinction due to human interventions or global climate events, with the perception that they may be unable to revisit them (Zerya, 2018). Tourism destinations that are in danger of disappearing, cultural/natural areas, and features of local cultures may stand out as elements that should be seen and experienced by tourists as soon as possible (Dawson et al., 2015). For this type of tourism, areas such as "Alaska, Kilimanjaro, Greenland, Antarctica, Antarctica, Great Barrier Reef" are evaluated, and these places are among the places to be seen for reasons such as the melting of glaciers, loss of corals, etc. (Eijgelaar et al., 2010). The concept of last-chance tourism, which is more prominent with the influence of media and tourism movements, has a strong relationship with the disappearing natural and cultural environment (Hoogendoorn, 2021).

Increased awareness of the negative environmental impacts caused by mass tourism leads to a shift in travel planning towards nature-protective tourism types (Das & Chatterjee, 2015). Experiences gained in nature-based tourism may increase knowledge and sensitivity about the environment (Eijgelaar et al., 2010). In this context, the experiences gained in last-chance tourism offer a vital opportunity to increase individual awareness, especially regarding nature conservation behavior (Paiva et al., 2023). Visitors' relationship with nature is a factor that should be considered in last-chance travel. Because it is thought that visitors who are sensitive about nature may have higher emotional reactions towards these destinations, at the same time, these visitors may be motivated by the desire to see what is happening in destinations that face the threat of extinction. Visitors' perceptions of climate change and their awareness of global social responsibility affect their decision to visit last-chance destinations. While more research is needed on the underlying factors behind these visits, there are suggestions that the primary motivation for travelers may be the need for achievement and fulfillment. At the same time, visitors' desire to support the local people living in this region can also motivate travel (Hindley & Font, 2018).

Global social responsibility is a concept that deals with various issues, especially the use of resources in many fields, such as communication, trade, tourism, etc. (Starrett, 1996). It is a factor with economic, socio-cultural, and environmental dimensions that tourism stakeholders include in their practices at personal, local, regional, or global levels (Paskova & Zelenka, 2019). In this context, the environmental impacts of activities in the tourism industry should be considered. Tourism activities can disrupt the natural ecosystem of travel destinations. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the global social responsibility approach (Pejic Bach et al., 2014). In particular, tourists' awareness of social responsibility is essential in protecting and developing destinations (Luo et al., 2017).

This study aims to reveal whether individuals' relationship with nature within the framework of last-chance tourism impacts global social responsibility awareness. The awareness that people who are related to nature and have global social responsibility who learn about the existence of this type of tourism will prevent the destruction of nature in the coming years reveals the importance of the study. In this context, firstly, a literature review was given about the variables used in the study. The method and findings of the study were explained, and conclusions and recommendations were presented.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Last Chance Tourism Concept and Visitor Profile

Last chance tourism is a niche tourism market that focuses on witnessing and experiencing a place before it disappears. This tourism market can also be called climate change, extinction, apocalypse, dying, endangered, or "see it before it disappears" tourism activity (Piggott-McKellar & McNamara, 2017). Similarly, Denley et al. (2020) refer to the desire and quest of individuals to visit landscapes and see species whose existence is threatened or endangered. Ballantyne et al. (2009) argue that it includes tourists observing, photographing, and interacting with endangered, threatened, or rare environments or individual species. Dawson et al. (2011) use different terms to describe the desire to see a natural feature before it disappears, such as apocalyptic tourism, dark tourism, climate tourism, disaster tourism, or endangered destination tourism. However, last chance tourism is the most commonly used term, and many academic studies and books present various developments on this topic. Within the scope of last-chance tourism, polar bear watching and Antarctic trips are shown as the first tourism activities (Salim & Ravanel, 2020). There are many regions in the world and Turkey where this type of tourism is traveled. Some of these are Arctic, Great Barrier Reef (Australia), Oceania (Great Ocean islands, Australia), Antarctica, Venice (Italy), Everglades (USA), Dead Sea (Israel), Madagascar, Mount Kilimanjaro (Africa), Glacier National Park (USA), Machu Picchu (Peru), İğneada Forests (Kırklareli), Kaz Mountains (Çanakkale Balıkesir), Ermenek Valley (Karaman), Çoruh Valley (Bayburt, Erzurum, Artvin), Macahel (Artvin), Hotamış Reedbed (Konya, Karaman), Kulu Lake (Ankara), Seyfe Lake (Kırşehir), Munzur Mountains (Erzurum, Tunceli), Hasankeyf (Batman), Aras Bird Sanctuary (Iğdır), Köprüçay (Isparta), Tuz Lake (Şereflikoçhisar) (Cohen, 2017; Kılıç & Yozukmaz, 2020).

Last-chance destinations are often located in climate-sensitive regions requiring long-distance travel. Generally, this tourism activity occurs when destinations face extinction due to increasing impacts on the ecosystem (Miller et al. 2020). Last-chance tourists participating in these activities are highly educated and concerned about nature and climate change. It is stated that tourists with knowledge about climate change have more developed risk perceptions (Groulx et al. 2016). Visitors participating in last-chance tourism are highly educated and concerned about nature and climate change (Kılıç & Yozukmaz, 2020). In addition, Groulx et al. (2019) argue that gender is an essential distinction among last-chance tourists. According to this argument, it is stated that there are gender differences in tourism and the environment, and women are more likely to believe that the carbon footprint will be reduced.

Tourists visiting last-chance destinations are prolonging the extinction period. However, one of the valuable purposes of this activity is to help increase the awareness and conservation actions of visitors to these locations. This can reduce the impacts that lead to the extinction of destinations (Lemelin et al. 2010). However, from another perspective, Thomas (2020) argues that last-chance tourism can destroy places people want to save, which is an ethical issue. There are different perspectives on this tourism activity, with some scholars believing that tourists can save destinations, while others argue that they destroy them. The debate on this issue is still ongoing. However, tourists are expected to be more conscious of these situations that vary from region to region because some regions are at risk even if tourists have a high level of awareness.

Concept of Relationship with Nature

Nature generally refers to many areas, from small urban parks to untouched areas with wild animals and plants (Frumkin et al., 2017). There is an essential relationship between nature and the human spirit. This relationship is of fundamental importance for human and environmental health. People's disconnection from nature can result in physical and mental health problems. These consequences, reflected in their behavior, cause irreversible damage to nature and indirectly to themselves (Pritchard et al. 2019). Similarly, White (2004) states that the loss of relationship with nature due to people not playing outdoor games during childhood plays a significant role in the child's growth and the destruction of the natural environment. Because children who grow up without being aware of nature are less likely to react to the exploitation and destruction of nature. Attachment to nature is a substantial factor in pro-environmental

attitudes and behaviors that positively relate to well-being. The level of people's relationship with nature is directly proportional to the positive values in their attitudes and behaviors (Capaldi et al. 2014). People's interest in nature is of great importance both individually and socially. Being interested in nature means protecting and caring for nature as a whole, considering the places that are not aesthetic or attractive to people. In other words, it is much more than protecting the valuable part of nature for their activities. Therefore, it is argued that the positive attitudes and behaviors of people with a high level of interest in nature can prevent the destruction of nature (Metz, 2017). Nevertheless, Löbler (2017) emphasizes that the relationship between people and nature is poorly understood in sustainable or relationship marketing. Humans often damage nature, yet it continues to provide resources. Humans usually take these resources for granted but cannot survive without using them. In other words, while humans cannot survive without nature, nature can sustain its existence by renewing itself without humans and their artificial productions. Reiser (2017), who evaluates the issue from another perspective, states that nature should not be assessed only with forests and plants. He criticizes that animals, one of the most essential parts of nature, are also protected in zoos, supposedly to save them from extinction. He argues that this is used more as a tourism activity for the entertainment and education of visitors. Animals live unhappy lives in cages and aquariums outside their natural habitats for the pleasure of human eyes. Sometimes, they even become depressed and attempt suicide. Instead of this method, it makes more sense to keep animals under protection in wildlife parks or areas where they are genuinely in touch with nature.

The Concept of Social Responsibility and Global Social Responsibility

Social responsibility, shown under social attitudes and behaviors, expresses good citizenship. While social responsibility is sometimes evaluated in terms of natural persons, it can also be considered within the legal entities created by natural persons (Starrett, 1996). Social responsibility, one of the most important ways to ensure sustainability, refers to adopting basic principles such as accountability and transparency, primarily when evaluating legal entities. Businesses that care about this are expected to be sustainable and prosperous. In 2010, the International Organization for Standardization published ISO 26000 to help assess and implement corporate social responsibility. This standard includes contributing to sustainable development by considering society's health and well-being, meeting stakeholders' expectations, and complying with laws and norms (American Society for Quality, 2021).

Global social responsibility refers to implementing positive attitudes and behaviors towards others in society, not only within traditional borders but also in global societies. In addition to specific legal rules and norms, the moral and social responsibility behaviors of individuals living in a global society are of great importance for developing society and quality of life (Starrett, 1996). Global social responsibility is to empathize with other individuals in society, ensure their welfare, and not violate their rights while advancing their goals. In particular, the fact that the work in corporate life is carried out with this basis in mind shows that the business provides the qualities that the business should fulfill on behalf of society, apart from the profit purpose (Ewest, 2015). Evaluating the issue in terms of people's problems, Nakamura and Watanabe-Muraoka (2006) state that a large part of people's problems are actually due to the changing structure of the globalized society. It is possible to say that globalization has created a single social system in the world due to interdependence on a social and individual basis. In this context, global social responsibility, a concept that links the responsibility of each individual with society, is of great importance in terms of freedom and personal development. Therefore, instilling an awareness of global social responsibility in society from childhood and broadening their perspectives allows for positive social outcomes. It is expected that students and academics within universities, especially those who have set social responsibility as a mission, will not only be made aware of this issue but also take an active role in the process. These individuals are expected to set an example for society and coordinate the activity while globally determining, planning, implementing, and creating roles for social responsibility activities (Jones et al. 2021).

METHOD

Last chance tourism, a type of tourism that people travel to see before the destination disappears, is identified with responsibility due to its structure. Tourists who act in this sense generally have a structure that performs with a certain consciousness to stop or slow the extinction of nature. There are critical emotional factors that mobilize them in this journey.

Based on the above statements, in this study, the effect of tourists' relations with nature on global social responsibility awareness within the scope of last-chance tourism is a significant question mark. In this context, the problem of the research is shaped within the framework of the following question:

- Do tourists' relations with nature within the scope of last-chance tourism impact global social responsibility awareness?

In line with this problem, the study aims to investigate the impact of tourists' relations with nature on global social responsibility within the scope of last-chance tourism. The questionnaire technique, one of the quantitative research methods, was used in the study. The participants were first shown a 7-minute video about last-chance tourism destinations in the data collection process. In the video, there are ten destinations that are in danger of extinction. These are the Great Wall of China, the Alps, the Alaskan Tundra, the Taj Mahal, the Congo Basin, the Great Barrier Reef, Venice, Madagascar, Maldives, and Dead Sea-Lut Lake (link is in the bibliography). After watching the video, the participants were asked to complete the questionnaires. In the questionnaires, Nisbet et al. (2009)'s Relationship with Nature Scale and Kılınç and Başer (2015)'s Global Social Responsibility Scale were used.

Last-chance tourism is an unknown tourism activity for many segments of society today. People are also unaware that destinations are disappearing and that humanity is responsible for this. When the literature is examined, it is seen that although there have been studies on last-chance tourism in recent years, they need to be more comprehensive. This study aims to enable people who are related to nature and have a global awareness of social responsibility to discover themselves and understand last-chance tourism with the video shown.

This issue is closely related to the whole country. However, to measure the awareness here, the participants in the sample should have a certain level of education. Therefore, all people living in the country with a Bachelor's degree and above constitute the population. Since it was impossible to reach the entire universe, it aimed to reach the number representing the universe through purposive sampling. In this context, data were collected from 305 people in the sample, and the analysis phase started. The level of education was a substantial limitation in the research because the participants are expected to have reached a certain level of competence to feel something about the video they watched and get an idea about it.

Research Model and Hypotheses

In this study section, hypotheses are put forward with their justifications, and the model is created. In this context, it is tried to answer why these hypotheses were established based on previous studies.

Groluxa et al. (2019) emphasize the importance of positioning last-chance tourism in terms of not choosing destinations that threaten the climate in the face of a tourism market where consumption is normalized in socio-economic and environmental terms. In other words, it emphasizes the importance of creating a new positioning by reaching out to responsible groups to prevent environmental disasters. In addition, Piggott-McKellar and McNamara (2017) state that tourists who seek last-chance tourism activities are more environmentally conscious and responsible. In their study, Piggott-McKellar and McNamara (2017) focused on the "experience" seeking of tourists visiting last-chance tourism destinations. They also found that tourists seeking last-chance experiences are more environmentally conscious and have higher levels of concern about the environment. In addition, Grolux et al. (2016) argue that motivation is an essential factor in last-chance tourism. Based on these statements, the following hypothesis was developed based on the model in Figure 1.

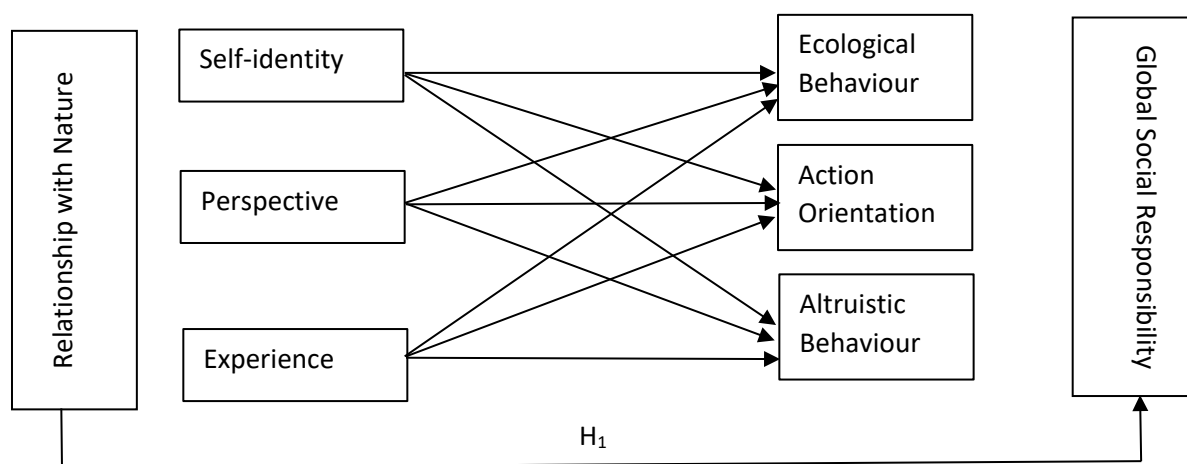


Figure 1 Research Model

H1: Relationship with nature has a statistically significant effect on global social responsibility behavior.

H1a: Self-identity, one of the sub-dimensions of the relationship with nature, has a statistically significant effect on ecological behavior, a sub-dimension of global social responsibility.

H1b: Perspective, one of the sub-dimensions of the relationship with nature, has a statistically significant effect on ecological behavior, a sub-dimension of global social responsibility.

H1c: Experience, one of the sub-dimensions of the relationship with nature, has a statistically significant effect on ecological behavior, a sub-dimension of global social responsibility.

H1d: Self-identity among the sub-dimensions of relationship with nature has a statistically significant effect on action orientation, a sub-dimension of global social responsibility.

H1e: Perspective, one of the sub-dimensions of the relationship with nature, has a statistically significant effect on action orientation, a sub-dimension of global social responsibility.

H1f: Experience, one of the sub-dimensions of relationship with nature, has a statistically significant effect on action orientation, a sub-dimension of global social responsibility.

H1g: Self-identity among the sub-dimensions of the relationship with nature has a statistically significant effect on altruistic behavior, a sub-dimension of global social responsibility.

H1h: Perspective among the sub-dimensions of relationship with nature has a statistically significant effect on altruistic behavior, a sub-dimension of global social responsibility.

H1i: Experience, one of the sub-dimensions of the relationship towards nature, has a statistically significant effect on altruistic behavior, a sub-dimension of global social responsibility.

FINDINGS

This study investigated the effect of tourists' relationship with nature on global social responsibility awareness. Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM), which does not require multivariate normal distribution assumption, was used to fit the model. The effect of 3 dimensions under the relationship of tourists with nature on four global social responsibility awareness variable sub-dimensions was examined. The data were analyzed using Smart-PLS 4 statistical software.

Model Validity

Before the analysis of the structural model created to measure the relationships between the variables in this study, the validity and reliability studies of the variables in the study were

analyzed. Within the scope of validity and reliability studies, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity were evaluated. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) coefficients were analyzed for internal consistency reliability. Factor loadings and average variance explained (AVE) values were used to determine convergent validity. Factor loadings $\geq 0,70$, Cronbach Alpha and composite reliability coefficients $\geq 0,70$, and average variance explained $\geq 0,50$ are expected to be realized. Items with factor loadings between 0,4 and 0,7 can remain in the model in line with CR and AVE values (Hair et al., 2014).

Since all of the variables in the research model had ≥ 4 items, **Confirmatory Tetrad Analysis (CTA)** was performed to determine whether the indicators of these variables were reflective or formative. After the analysis, "Cl low" and "Cl up" values were checked in the items related to the relevant variables. If there is a value of "0" between "Cl low" and "Cl up" values in at least one row, the indicators are considered to be reflective (Yılmaz et al., 2024, p. 103). As a result of the analysis, it was found that there was a value of "0" between "Cl low" and "Cl up" values in the values of all variables. Therefore, the indicators of the relevant variables are reflective and suitable for partial least squares structural equation modeling.

After the CTA analysis, reliability and validity analyses of the existing structures in the study were performed. In this context, firstly, factor loadings were checked. Ten items with factor loadings less than 0,4 (N1, N9, N14, N16, N18, G13, G15, G21, G26, and G27) were removed from the model, and the analysis was redone. In order to decide whether the items with factor loadings between 0,4 and 0,7 should remain in the model, CR and AVE values were examined. AVE values of the variables should be above 0,5. In variables with AVE values below 0,50, items with low factor loadings were evaluated, and items that did not contribute to the model (17 items in total) were removed. Table 1 shows the results of the internal consistency reliability and convergent validity of the constructs in the study.

When the results of the measurement model are analyzed, it can be said that internal consistency reliability is ensured since the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of the constructs of the items in the model are between 0,662 (=,60 is accepted for the 2-item dimension) and 0,923 and the CR coefficients are between 0,686 and 0,926. At the same time, since the factor loadings were between 0,545 and 0,853 and the AVE values were between 0,507 and 0,567, it can be stated that convergent validity was achieved.

HTMT criterion was used to determine the discriminant validity of the measurement model. HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio) expresses the ratio of the mean of the correlations of the expressions belonging to all variables in the research (the heterotrait-heteromethod correlations) to the geometric means of the correlations of the expressions belonging to the same variable (the monotrait-heteromethod correlations). The HTMT value should theoretically be below 0,90 for close concepts and below 0,85 for distant concepts (Yılmaz et al., 2024). Table 2 shows the HTMT values.

Table 1.
Measurement Model Results

Variable	Expression	Factor Loading	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
Self-identity	N4	0,627	0,662	0,686	0,508
	N5	0,789			
Perspective	N11	0,683	0,702	0,704	0,507
	N12	0,677			
	N13	0,632			
Experience	N20	0,630	0,696	0,701	0,537
	N21	0,704			
Action Orientation	G1	0,792	0,923	0,926	0,514
	G5	0,739			
	G6	0,558			
	G9	0,853			
	G10	0,640			
	G14	0,808			
	G16	0,706			
	G19	0,724			
	G24	0,545			
Ecological Behaviour	G2	0,710	0,767	0,769	0,521
	G15	0,781			
	G25	0,671			
Altruistic Behaviour	G11	0,745	0,724	0,724	0,567
	G18	0,761			

When the values in Table 2 are analyzed, the HTMT values are below the threshold value. In other words, according to the findings in the table, discriminant validity is provided.

Table 2.
Discriminant Validity Results (HTMT Criterion)

	Self-identity	Perspective	Experience	Action Orientation	Ecological Behaviour	Altruistic Behaviour
Self-identity						
Perspective	0,266					
Experience	0,587	0,522				
Action Orientation	0,634	0,182	0,667			
Ecological Behaviour	0,130	0,783	0,418	0,133		
Altruistic Behaviour	0,608	0,346	0,739	0,675	0,261	

Evaluation of the Structural Model

The PLS-SEM algorithm was used to calculate the structural model's R^2 and effect size (f^2), and Blindfolding analysis was performed to estimate the predictive power (Q^2). The R^2 , f^2 , Q^2 , and VIF values of the structural model results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3.

Structural Model Results

RELATIONSHIPS	VIF	R^2	f^2	Q^2
Experience -> Action Orientation	1,804		0,182	0,318
Perspective -> Action Orientation	1,075	0,484	0,009	
Self-identity -> Action Orientation	1,900		0,134	
Experience -> Altruistic Behaviour	1,804		0,001	0,304
Perspective -> Altruistic Behaviour	1,075	0,633	1,412	
Self-identity -> Altruistic Behaviour	1,900		0,034	
Experience -> Ecological Behaviour	1,804		0,191	
Perspective -> Ecological Behaviour	1,075	0,660	0,179	0,370
Self-identity -> Ecological Behaviour	1,900		0,301	

In the evaluation phase of the structural model, VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) values were first analyzed. As seen in Table 3, VIF values below 5 indicate no multiple internal relationship problem between variables (Yılmaz et al., 2024). When the R^2 values obtained from the model were examined, it was determined that the model explained the action orientation variable by 48%, the altruistic behavior variable by 63%, and the ecological variable by 66%. In the evaluation of the effect size coefficient, f^2 values were analyzed. An effect size coefficient (f^2) of 0,02 and above can be considered low, 0,15 and above as medium, and 0,35 and above as high (Cohen, 1988).

When Table 3 is examined, it is seen that the effect of the self-identity dimension on action orientation is high; the impact of the experience dimension on action orientation and the effects of experience, perspective, and self-identity dimensions on ecological behavior are medium; and the impact of self-identity dimension on altruistic behavior is low. It was determined that the perspective dimension did not affect action orientation, and the experience dimension did not affect altruistic behavior. When the predictive power coefficients (Q^2) calculated for the dependent variables are greater than zero, the structural model can predict the dependent variables (Hair et al., 2014). The fact that the Q^2 values in Table 3 are greater than zero indicates that the structural model can predict global social responsibility variables.

The fit criteria for evaluating the structural equation model result in SmartPLS are d_{ULS} , d_G , SRMR, and NFI values. d_{ULS} and d_G are defined as the square of the Euclidean distance and the square of the shortest distance between two points. When the difference between the correlation matrix of the model and the empirical correlation matrix is statistically insignificant ($p > 0,05$), it is stated that the model is appropriate. d_{ULS} (1,638) and d_G (0,437) values are statistically significant since they are $> 0,05$. The SRMR value is expected to be less than 0,08 for the model to have an acceptable fit. SRMR value for the model was calculated as 0,077. The chi-square value was calculated as 717,639. The NFI value is expected to take values between 0 and 1. The NFI value close to 1 indicates that the model fits well. The NFI value of the model was calculated as 0,789.

Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Bootstrap analysis was performed to test the structural relationships in the model (hypothesis test) and to evaluate the statistical significance of the indicators in the model. The structural equation model created to test the research hypotheses is shown in Figure 2.

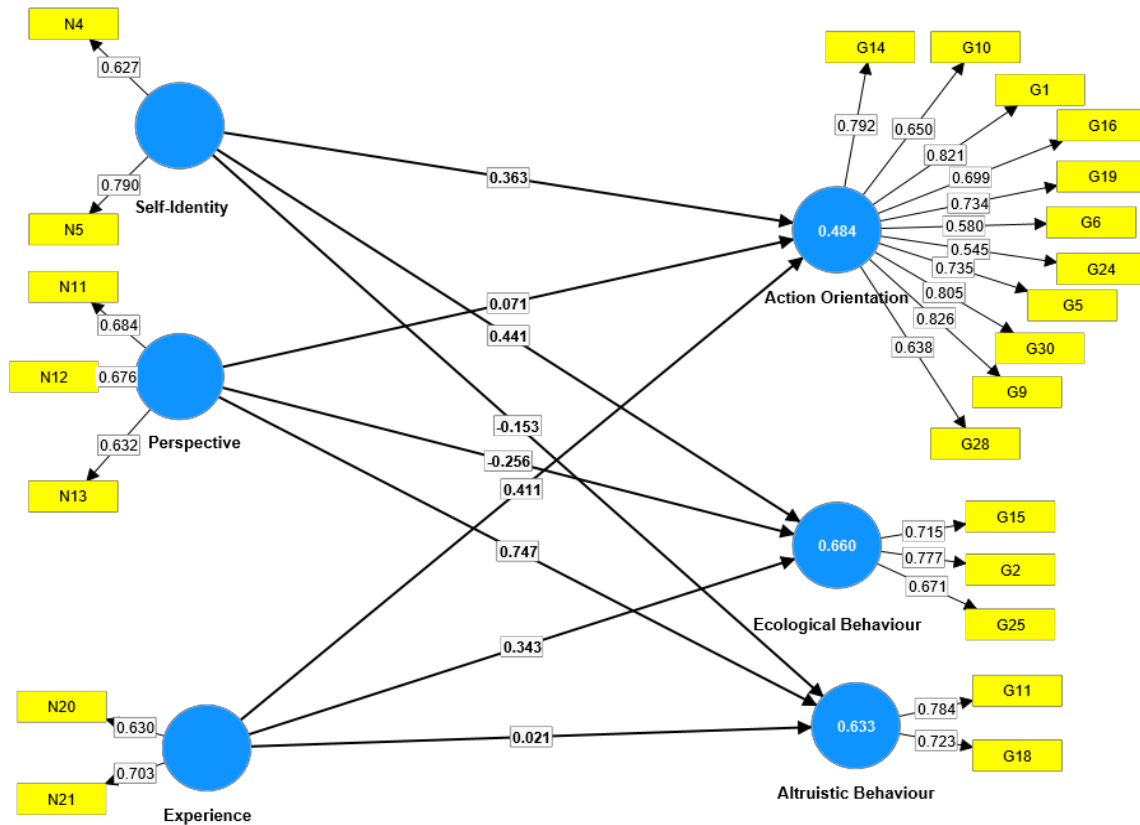


Figure 2. Detailed PLS-SEM Diagram of the Model

The path coefficients are presented in Table 4 according to the results of the bootstrap analysis.

Table 4.
Path Coefficients

RELATIONSHIPS	Standardized β	Standard Error	t value	p- value	Result
Experience -> Action Orientation	0,411	0,174	2,370	0,018*	Supported
Perspective -> Action Orientation	0,021	0,157	0,131	0,896	Unsupported
Self-identity -> Action Orientation	0,343	0,203	1,688	0,091	Unsupported
Experience -> Altruistic Behaviour	0,071	0,058	1,226	0,220	Unsupported
Perspective -> Altruistic Behaviour	0,747	0,096	7,772	0,000*	Supported
Self-identity -> Altruistic Behaviour	-0,256	0,095	2,707	0,007*	Supported
Experience -> Ecological Behaviour	0,363	0,176	2,061	0,039*	Supported
Perspective -> Ecological	-0,153	0,172	0,893	0,372	Unsupported
Self-identity -> Ecological	0,441	0,221	1,994	0,046*	Supported

*p<0,05 Significant

According to the results, the relationship with the nature-experience dimension positively and significantly affects the action orientation variable (Experience ->Action Orientation: 0,411; t=2.370; p=0,018). A one-unit increase in the experience variable increases the action orientation behavior by 0,411 units. Similarly, the relationship with the nature-perspective dimension

positively and significantly affects the altruistic behavior variable (Perspective -> Altruistic Behaviour: 0,747; $t=7.772$; $p=0,000$). An increase of one unit in the perspective variable increases the altruistic behavior variable by 0,747 units. The relationship with the nature-self-identity dimension negatively affects the altruistic behavior variable (Self-identity -> Altruistic Behaviour: -0,256; $t=2,707$; $p=0,007$). A one-unit increase in the self-identity variable decreases the altruistic behavior variable by 0,256 units. Relationship with nature- experience dimension positively and significantly affects the ecological behavior variable (Experience -> Ecological Behaviour: 0,363; $t=2,061$; $p=0,039$). A one-unit increase in the experience variable increases ecological behavior by 0,363 units. Relationship with nature-self- identity dimension affects ecological behavior variable Self-identity -> Ecological Behaviour: 0,441; $t=1,994$; $p=0,046$) positively and significantly. A one-unit increase in the self-identity variable increases the ecological behavior variable by 0,441 units. In the related hypotheses, alternative hypotheses were supported, and null hypotheses were rejected. In the other relationships in the table, alternative hypotheses were not supported.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Last-chance tourism refers to visiting destinations facing extinction. Tourists participate in this type of tourism in two ways. Those with a certain level of consciousness want to visit the destination to prolong its existence or save the region. Another group acts to see the disappearing region for the last time and unintentionally accelerates its extinction with the excessive tourism it creates. For this reason, evaluating the possibility that the planned last- chance visits may damage the weakened destination is crucial.

This study focuses on the impact of the relationship with nature on global social responsibility within the scope of last-chance tourism. In this direction, a video about endangered destinations was shown, and data were collected using a survey technique. It was deemed appropriate to sample people above a certain level of education so that they would know about the disappearing destinations in the video and respond in this context. In the study using the purposive sampling method, participants with the lowest undergraduate education level were included. Since the population's size is unknown, the judgmental sampling method, one of the non-probability sampling methods, was used in the study. The judgmental sampling method is a method in which the researcher determines the sample suitable for the research. Then, in analyzing these questionnaires, explanatory factor analysis, reliability, and regression analysis were performed to measure the effect of variables on each other.

The study shows that the sub-dimensions of the relationship with nature (self-identity, experience), which are independent variables, significantly affect ecological behavior, one of the sub-dimensions of global social responsibility. On the other hand, perspective does not have a statistically significant effect. From this point of view, people with high self-identity may be not indifferent to and support the solution of global problems. These people are aware of protecting the environment and tend to play an active role in volunteer work even if they do not have a complete solution. According to the results, people who evaluate events from their perspectives think local and general governments should find solutions to ecological situations. Although they care about the ecological situation, they believe they can do nothing about it and that this is a power in the hands of community representatives. People interested in the land, who enjoy being in the environment and having specific experiences, and who care about ecological protection can engage in volunteer activities in this direction.

Another sub-dimension of the relationship with nature (experience), an independent variable that significantly affects action orientation, perspective, and self-identity, does not have a statistically significant effect on this dimension. Individuals interested in the earth, have a specific experience in nature, or desire to have an experience will also be in an action-oriented state. The reason for the insignificant relationship in the perspective dimension can be shown that individuals who look at things from a personal perspective are less likely to act action- oriented. It is difficult for an objective way of thinking to turn into action, especially regarding social responsibility and protecting endangered nature. Therefore, a subjective perspective is not expected to lead to action. On the other hand, self-identity is subjective as it is self-formed entirely

according to one's characteristics. As stated above, it is difficult for an individual to take action with his/herself.

While perspective and self-identity significantly affect the last sub-dimension of the dependent variable, altruistic behavior, experience does not have a statistically significant effect. Based on this finding, it is seen that people who evaluate events from a particular perspective are less likely to care about other individuals or entities outside themselves or their field. They care about the welfare of their society before other beings living in the world. People with a self-identity may also focus on their field due to their more subjective view of events. However, people with experience have a more global perspective in this regard.

Based on the findings obtained, there is a significant relationship between the variables in the model in general. However, there are no statistically significant relationships in the sub-dimensions of some variables. From this point of view, the study's starting point, the hypothesis "There is a statistically significant effect of relationship with nature on global social responsibility behavior within the scope of Last Chance Tourism" was supported.

- In the design phase of the study, the question "Do tourists' relations with nature within the scope of last chance tourism affect global social responsibility awareness?" was seen as the research problem.
- The findings obtained show that "within the scope of last-chance tourism, tourists' relations with nature have an effect on global social responsibility awareness," but this effect is not supported by all sub-dimensions of the variables.

Based on the results of the study, some suggestions are presented to the sector, the public, and future studies;

- It is recommended that planning should be done before organizing last-chance tourism to regions facing extinction in the sector. As a result of this planning, a movement can be created to ensure the continued existence of that region, not just to see it as a last chance.
- Overtourism, which will be created due to tours organized to see it for the last time, will accelerate the destruction of the destination. Therefore, it is recommended that technology be utilized. In this context, augmented, virtual, and extended reality technologies can be used.
- It is recommended that the public sector take necessary security measures for destinations to be visited within the scope of last-chance tourism, limit the capacity of visitors, and monitor them.
- In future studies, it is vital to raise awareness of the sector and the public by conducting studies with different variables on the effects of these visits on the destination within the scope of last-chance tourism. In addition, it is crucial for the protection of the region that the technological devices proposed to be used in the sector are pre-tested by universities with projects.

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eISSN : 2687-3737



A new alternative in the field of tour guiding emerging after COVID-19: Online guided virtual tour¹

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to evaluate online guided virtual tours, which started to be massified for the first time with the COVID-19 pandemic, as an alternative in the context of the tour guiding profession and to address them in a holistic approach. The pandemic is known to have accelerated the pace of digitalization globally and transformed many professions. It is seen that tour guides, who are considered key stakeholders in the tourism sector, are also faced with new alternative practices in the face of this digitalization. Among these new applications, online guided virtual tours, which have become massive with the impact of global sharing platforms such as Airbnb and TripAdvisor, are considered an alternative in the tour guide profession. Considering that digital and virtual applications have become widespread in recent years and have the potential to grow gradually, the investigation of online guided virtual tours, which are predicted to create an important alternative in the field of tour guiding, is essential in terms of providing a perspective to the tour guiding profession and stakeholders. Online guided virtual tours should be used effectively in the pre-promotion of the touristic destination in terms of encouraging travel and positively affecting the tendency to visit on-site. In this conceptual study, an evaluation and some suggestions are given regarding the possible usage areas of these virtual tours in the field of tour guiding and their impact on the profession's future.

KEYWORDS

Tour Guiding, Digitalization, COVID-19, Online guided virtual tour.

¹ This study was produced from the doctoral thesis of Muhammed Kavak, supervised by Prof. Dr. Oktay Emir and Prof. Dr. Yalçın Arslantürk. This study was supported by Anadolu University Scientific Research Projects Commission under the grant no: 2205S059.

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INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation, which emerged with the spread of digitalization as a result of the progress in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) (Buhalis & O'Connor, 2005, p. 6), is gradually increasing its pace with the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. As it is known, consumers can change their existing habits while trying to adapt to this rapid development. Technological developments and tools that affect people at the center of the tourism sector also drive change in tourism (Sigala, 2018, p. 152). On the other hand, the emergence of large-scale travel restrictions in recent years due to crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change negatively affects service sector stakeholders such as tourism (Abbas et al., 2021) and forces them to change.

Tour guides are recognized as essential tourism stakeholders (Pu et al., 2023, p. 826). Tour guides are professional tourism workers who provide professional support to tourists, give informative explanations about the place visited, guide them, and stay in contact with tourists the most in tour programs. At this point, tour guiding is among the professions affected in the tourism sector in the face of travel restrictions, changing consumer behaviors, and digital transformation (Chowdhary & Prakash, 2022, p. 7). Tour guiding will inevitably be integrated into digital transformation by using ICTs to adapt to new situations, especially crisis processes such as climate change and epidemics and their aftermath (Nazlı, 2020, p. 76). In the developing digitalized world, digital interaction on virtual platforms is thought to be at the center of almost every aspect of life (Buhalis et al., 2023, p. 8).

In recent years, it has become imperative for the tour guiding profession to adapt to these technologies and undergo a transformation (Harpe & Sevenhuysen, 2020) in the face of innovations such as virtual and augmented reality technology-based platforms (such as Metaverse), online virtual tours on sharing economy platforms (such as Airbnb), humanoid robots, artificial intelligence, Big Data, Internet of Things and 5G technology. In the tourism sector, where new technologies are used and widespread, the emergence and widespread use of new applications (robot guide, hologram guide, on-site guidance with virtual and augmented reality technology supported devices, online guided virtual tours, digital voice guidance on mobile devices, organizing tours through platforms within the scope of sharing economy, etc.) have some opportunities and threats for the sustainability of this profession.

In the face of travel restrictions due to the pandemic, online guided virtual tours (Cenni & Vásquez, 2022; Dybsand, 2022), which have emerged and become widespread on global platforms such as Airbnb and other global and local platforms, have emerged as a new practice in tour guiding. In addition to online guided virtual tours that can be organized at a more local level by travel agencies or tour guides, online guided virtual tours offered by Airbnb and TripAdvisor stand out among those organized at the global level (Wong et al., 2022; Zhang & Qiu, 2022). In the post-pandemic period, it is predicted that platforms offering similar virtual tour experiences will increase in importance, peer-to-peer (P2P) online experiences will transform the tourism industry, gain more popularity even after the pandemic, and create a need to evaluate their impact on the tourism industry (Lu et al., 2022; Zhu & Cheng, 2022). At this point, it is necessary to evaluate online guided virtual tour applications, which have emerged as a new alternative in the context of the tour guiding profession.

Literature on tourism shows that holistic studies on online virtual tour guiding and its applications in the tour guiding profession are limited. Studies on online guided virtual tour applications (Mastroberardino et al., 2021; Dybsand, 2022; Uca & Karahan, 2022; Cenni & Vásquez, 2022; Zhu & Cheng, 2022; Wong et al., 2022; Yamada & Matsuda, 2023) mainly focus on the impact of these applications on the tourism sector in general and include content analysis of user comments and the tour experiences of users participating in these online guided virtual tours. On the other hand, the starting point of this study is that there is no holistic assessment of the use of this new alternative practice, especially in the context of tour guiding, its impact on the business ecosystem, and the profession's future. In this context, this conceptual study is thought to contribute to the literature.

COVID-19 AND DIGITALIZATION IN TOURISM

Digitalization has significantly changed the travel and tourism industry, transforming it into a smart industry, i.e., an innovative and technologically advanced industry fully embedded in the Industry 4.0 paradigm (Pencarelli, 2020, p. 459). Since its emergence, ICTs have been transforming the tourism industry on a global scale (Buhalis & O'Connor, 2005, p. 7). As a definition, ICT "is the collective term given to the most recent developments in the mode (electronic) and the mechanisms (computers and communications technologies as well as the software which drive them) used for the acquisition, processing, analysis, storage, retrieval, dissemination, and application of information" (Poon, 1988, p. 533). The first examples (technologies) of the development (evolution) of ICTs begin with the mass use of telephones, telex, and fax for communication. Since the early 2000s, with the widespread use of the Internet and social media and the advent of smartphones, the advanced technology stage has been reached, followed by the Metaverse technology stage, where reality technologies are used (Buhalis et al., 2023).

Tourism, one of the fields where digitalization is widely seen and shaped, is considered one of the world's largest industries (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2023, p. 53). Tourism has traditionally been a labor-intensive sector due to its service-oriented nature (Buhalis, 2000, p. 42). However, in parallel with the development of ICTs, tourism is gradually transforming into a mix of "digital" and "labor intensive" sectors. Due to the effects of technology on consumer behavior, tourists now use technology extensively in the pre-travel, during, and post-travel stages. This intensity has increased with the COVID-19 pandemic, which negatively affected the global tourism sector between 2020 and 2022 and led to travel restrictions worldwide (Gyimothy et al., 2022). The emergence of the pandemic minimized travel mobility at both international and national levels, and mobility restrictions significantly impacted the tourism sector (Viana-Lora et al., 2023, p. 21). As is well known, during this pandemic, the world faced and is still coping with the effects of an unprecedented global health, social, and economic crisis (Dybsand, 2022).

Important events in human history can push society to change. The COVID-19 pandemic (Wright, 2023, p. 116), considered in this context, has changed the behavior, demands, and even the qualifications of visitors to travel (Mirzaei et al., 2023, p. 56). At the same time, the pandemic has further accelerated the adoption of new technologies and technology-enabled services (Buhalis et al., 2023, p. 8). The pandemic has also brought digital innovations. For example, almost overnight, people have turned to platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, and Microsoft Teams for various events as a quick solution to constraints, and online events have replaced face-to-face meetings. These developments in extended reality, an umbrella term for immersive technologies that combine physical and virtual worlds, have led to the proliferation of virtual and virtual reality (VR) activities (Yung et al., 2022). Also, during the pandemic, "from live exercise workouts to yoga and meditation sessions before breakfast, to gaming at a distance, to attending virtual church services and craft lessons, to online school classes and workplace meetings, as well as convivial drinking and socializing sessions with friends of an evening, Internet-based videoconferencing finally came into its own" (Marks, 2020, p. 21). The most striking example to be given in this context is the application that made it possible to watch live broadcasts via webcam in 2020, when the pandemic emerged, and presented the parade of penguins in Australia on social media channels (Facebook, YouTube, etc.) under the name Penguin TV. According to the findings of a study conducted on the participants of these live broadcasts, it was revealed that technological applications within the scope of live Penguin TV positively affected travel motivation and actual visitation, and viewers were more likely to visit the places they viewed through their webcams (Blaer, 2023, p. 65). In summary, even watching penguins live online during the pandemic positively impacted the willingness to travel.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN TOUR GUIDING PROFESSION

Tour guides are recognized as one of the key players in tourism, which has become a worldwide industry (Ap & Wong, 2001). According to tourists, a tour guide is "a person representing the country, a wise, an example, an ambassador" (Ahipaşaoğlu, 2006, p. 150). "A guide is an interpreter, educator, ambassador of the host society, and an interaction facilitator

between the local culture, locals and tourists, either foreign or domestic” (Cetin & Yarcın, 2017, p. 346). Tour guides are also a powerful intermediary in the branding and positioning of destinations (Jonasson, 2011, p. 90). In this context, tour guides are essential in the tourism sector.

In recent years, it has been seen that the use of technology has become widespread in tour guiding, which is accepted as an increasingly important profession (Kırıcı Tekeli, 2022, p. 2856). In this context, it has become inevitable for the tour guide to have the equipment and competence to use technology while providing guidance services in line with the needs and wishes of the tourists, which are differentiating day by day (Çapar & Karamustafa, 2018, p. 205). Technological developments can sometimes negatively affect some professions. For example, it is predicted that tourists may no longer need guidance services such as finding the address of places to visit in an unfamiliar place, providing translation services, and providing transfer services. For this reason, it is emphasized that tour guiding should be innovative and transform into a service that adds value in a way that technology cannot (Weiler & Black, 2014, p. 168).

One of the most striking indicators of being caught unprepared for technological developments in the field of tour guiding is when the COVID-19 pandemic took effect. Among the adverse developments at the global level (pandemic, cost of living, climate crisis, etc.), rapid digital transformation has been experienced in many sectors, especially with the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the use of technology has become an indispensable element of daily work and life more than ever. It has been observed that tour guides, who are the promotional faces of their countries, have experienced economic, social, and psychological problems due to the COVID-19 pandemic in addition to their many chronic, legal, professional, and personal problems (Ap & Wong, 2001; Batman, 2003) (Nazlı, 2021). New COVID-19 safety measures such as wearing face masks, using hand sanitizing gels, and maintaining social distancing have reshaped tour guiding (Galí, 2022, p. 789). During the pandemic, many tour guides took advantage of their communication and interpersonal skills and decided to change the sector or even leave the profession by working in many different sectors, from real estate companies to call centers (Düzgün & Kurt, 2020; Türker & Karaca, 2020; Brito & Carvalho, 2021; Nazlı, 2021).

The tour guiding profession is affected by technological developments that have become increasingly widespread with the COVID-19 pandemic in a period called Industry 4.0, in which digitalization is intensely seen. Some technological devices and applications that have been used by tourists and tour guides in the field of tour guiding in recent years and may be used in the future can be listed as follows: Headsets, audio guide applications, QR codes, smart headset systems, tablet, mobile application, hologram, 3D animation-animation, personal digital assistant (Siri etc.), robot guide, virtual and augmented reality technology, gaming technologies in museums, virtual museums, interactive kiosk, simulation, location-based digital audio mobile guide applications, social media platforms, social media platforms, websites, blogs, podcasts, transportation, exchange, flight, translation and accommodation applications, online meeting platforms (Zoom etc.), artificial intelligence (AI) platforms (ChatGPT etc.), online guided virtual tours and Metaverse. It is thought that such an intense variety of technological applications and innovations will push the tour guiding profession to change. Therefore, it is time for tour guides to embrace technology and acquire the necessary skills to deliver superior experiences (Chowdhary & Prakash, 2022, p. 20).

ONLINE GUIDED VIRTUAL TOUR CONCEPT

Until the emergence of the pandemic in the tour guiding profession, the virtual tour service and the platforms on which these services are offered have remained relatively limited. However, with the impact of the pandemic, new and comprehensive developments are being experienced in virtual tour applications. Since 2020, during the period of travel restrictions due to the pandemic, museums around the world have developed virtual tour applications that allow virtual browsing (Aksoy & Baş, 2020; El-Said & Aziz, 2022; Lu et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2022). After virtual museums that can be experienced through virtual tours, touristic attractions (such as ruins, city centers, natural and cultural heritage sites, etc.) were opened to the public, especially in a 360° virtual tour environment, and attracted the attention of users during periods of quarantine or limited travel opportunities (Wu & Lai, 2021).

Following COVID-19, the tourism industry invested heavily in technological innovations such as virtual tours (Nautiyal & Polus, 2022). This is because the impossibility of traveling during this period stimulated the creativity of tourism professionals who experimented with new ways of maintaining relationships with tourists (Mastroberardino et al., 2021, p. 1732). One of these innovations is online guided virtual tours, which emerged widely during the pandemic (Dybsand, 2022, p. 3; Repo & Pesonen, 2022, p. 329). As a definition, an online guided virtual tour is “a digital excursion in which a tour guide accompanies the tour participants online and live through a promotional and/or educational content developed in a virtual environment.”

During the COVID-19 pandemic, lockdowns, travel bans, and social distancing rules forced most tourism stakeholders to stop offering physical tourism experiences temporarily. As a temporary solution, online guided virtual tours were offered as part of live streaming experiences using Zoom, Facebook Live, YouTube and other streaming platforms, allowing participants to participate in experiences remotely (Dybsand, 2022, p. 3). These tours have been conducted by travel agencies, by tour guides and local experts on platforms such as Airbnb (Prabowo, 2022; Repo & Pesonen, 2022; Yamada & Matsuda, 2023).

For the first time since 2020, guided virtual tours in the online environment have become significantly widespread. Examples of these tours include Airbnb (Airbnb Online Experience), TripAdvisor (Virtual Tours Around the World to Experience at Home), Amazon (Amazon Explore), and Viator (Mastroberardino et al., 2021; Zhu & Cheng, 2022; Dybsand, 2022; Uca & Karahan, 2022; Wong et al., 2022; Zhang & Qiu, 2022).

Online guided virtual tours have been widely used during the pandemic, mainly as an alternative during quarantine. However, it is also a less demanding alternative, especially for people with disabilities and the elderly (Dybsand, 2022, p. 12). On the other hand, the sociality and interactivity provided by online guided virtual tours have been shown to satisfy consumers' desire to travel during the pandemic to some extent and to encourage their desire to travel after the pandemic (Zhang & Qiu, 2022, p. 313).

Airbnb, the leading online guided virtual tour application and the largest peer-to-peer accommodation platform offers online virtual tours accompanied by a local expert or guide (Zhu & Cheng, 2022). Airbnb, which was founded in 2008 as a website and mobile app-based accommodation platform that offers the opportunity to rent places hosted by local people to others, is the largest global company in its field, with more than 150 million members (Guttentag, 2015; Gössling et al., 2021). Launched in 2020, the "Airbnb Online Experience" is seen as a new peer-to-peer online experience business model in a paid and online virtual tour environment narrated by the host (Zhu & Cheng, 2022).

An example of an online guided virtual tour of the Taj Mahal in India, which takes place on the Airbnb platform with a tour guide, can be seen in Image 1. As in this image, the tour guide who organizes the virtual tour introduces the tour as follows: “Explore the timeless beauty and historical significance of the Taj Mahal through our immersive virtual presentation.” It is thought that online guided virtual tours like this one, organized flexibly online and for a fee, independent of time and space, will continue.

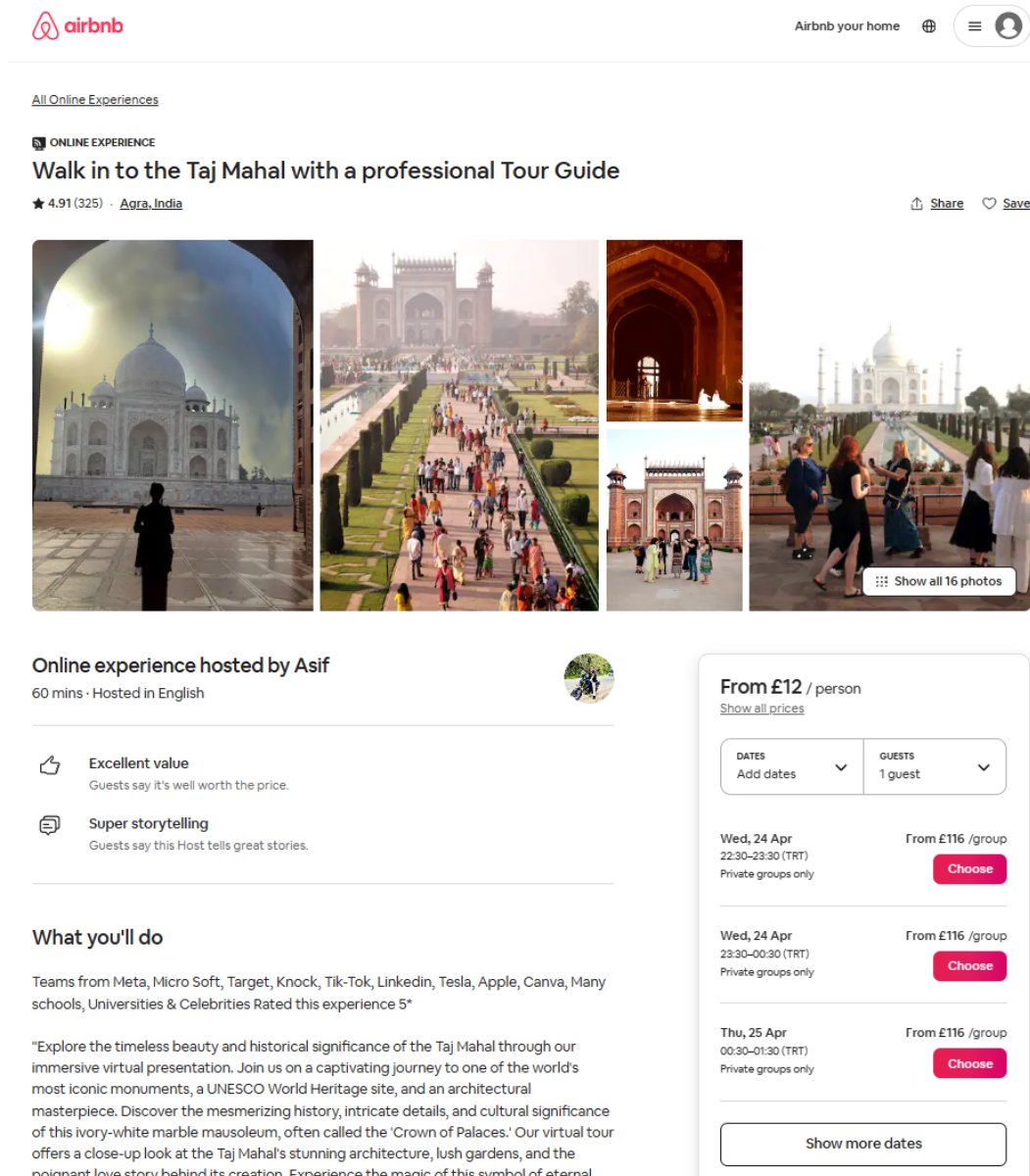


Figure 1. Online guided virtual tour of the Taj Mahal in India with a tour guide on the Airbnb platform (Airbnb, 2024).

Before the pandemic, no online guided virtual tour application was found on existing websites or mobile app-based tour platforms that deliver tours accompanied by local guides to national and international visitors. However, in response to the need for virtual tours that emerged with the pandemic, these tour platforms started to develop paid virtual tours accompanied by a guide online. Among the leading online tour platforms, ToursByLocals, Showaround, Withlocals, and PrivateGuide platforms bring together thousands of tour guides and users worldwide. Among these platforms, ToursByLocals (2024), the most extensive tour platform with 4445 guide members from 191 countries, offers 137 online guided virtual tours by 61 tour guides in 35 countries, with an average duration of 1-2 hours and an average cost of 50-100 dollars. Image 2 shows an online guided virtual tour of the Sagrada Familia in Spain on the ToursByLocals platform. This virtual tour is conducted by a licensed tour guide living in Spain. The virtual tour is organized online for a fee, with the following note in the description: “Attention!!!! In order to fully enjoy the virtual tour a good internet connection will be needed!!!!” In this context, it can be argued that internet connection speed is vital for online guided virtual tours.

The screenshot shows the website interface for 'Tours By LOCALS'. The main heading is 'The Wonder of Barcelona: Sagrada Familia - Indoor Live Virtual Tour'. It features a 5-star rating (1 review) and a description of the experience. The itinerary lists a 2-minute introduction, a 1-hour virtual presentation, and a 3D photo experience. The tour price is \$220 USD per tour for up to 10 users. The guide, Maica C., is a licensed tour guide with 61 reviews. Navigation buttons include 'MESSAGE MAICA C.', 'BOOK NOW', and 'ADD TO CART'.

Figure 2. Example of an online guided virtual tour conducted by a licensed tour guide in Spain (ToursByLocals, 2024).

Apart from mass online tour platforms, some organizations organize virtual tours individually. Finally, WeGoTrip, TourScanner, the Clio, Geotourist and GPSMYCITY applications, which can also be counted among tour platforms but do not have virtual tour programs and are considered among self-guided tour apps, are shown as examples of smart tour platforms in the field of tour guiding (Podsukhina & Pinke-Sziva, 2022, p. 4). An example of these smart audio guiding applications in Turkey that have reached a mass level is Piri Guide (2024), a mobile app-based digital tour with audio tours accompanied by local experts.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the face of the rapid development of ICTs and the digital transformation it brings with it, it has been seen that it is inevitable that the service-oriented tourism sector and the tour guiding profession, which is considered an essential stakeholder of this sector, should be integrated into digitalization, as the COVID-19 pandemic strikingly reminds. Since technological developments, which have come to the extent of changing the habits of daily life, also affect consumer behavior (Xiang et al., 2015), tour guides, who are in direct communication with consumers, in other words, tourists, need to keep up with this change. In this context, traditional guiding services will

inevitably be affected when technologies such as Metaverse, artificial intelligence, robotics, and virtual reality are becoming increasingly widespread.

In a period when the COVID-19 pandemic negatively affected human life socially, psychologically, and economically at a global level and travel restrictions were observed, online virtual platforms were considered as an alternative in the field of tourism as in every field (Gyimóthy et al., 2022). An alternative application developed during this period was online virtual tours accompanied by live tour guides. These virtual tour applications have been and continue to be organized during the pandemic, ranging from local to global, on platforms reaching millions of users such as Airbnb and TripAdvisor, as well as initiatives of travel businesses and tour guides. Considering the online guided virtual tours organized on Airbnb and ToursByLocals platforms, it is noteworthy that these tours are predominantly conducted online and live, accompanied by a licensed tour guide, and for a certain fee.

These online guided virtual tours, organized online and live accompanied by an expert tour guide, have attracted mass interest during the pandemic and have been suggested to have potential after the pandemic. In this context, online guided virtual tours are thought to be essential for the tour guiding profession as an alternative application to adapt to digital transformation and better manage such crises. On the other hand, the advantages of these online guided virtual tours accompanied by a tour guide for users can be listed as follows:

1. Instant communication with the tour guide and other participants through online guided virtual tours
2. Having reliable information from an expert
3. Providing access by offering an alternative for disadvantaged groups with travel restrictions
4. Creating an economic alternative for those with time and financial constraints
5. Creating a virtual travel opportunity with digital access
6. Contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon footprint) that affect climate change through virtual travel
7. Ensuring social accessibility in times of crisis, such as infectious diseases, extreme weather events caused by climate change, terrorism, etc., and thus being socially and psychologically supportive
8. Getting a preliminary experience through a virtual tour before purchasing a touristic product (package tour, hotel room, etc.)
9. Supporting visitors with time and budget constraints to realize an efficient site visit by contributing to the level of knowledge with the preliminary introduction provided before visiting the destination on-site
10. Contributing to the level of knowledge of individuals about destinations that may be challenging in terms of travel and transportation and increasing the desire to visit them accordingly

Considering that crises are caught unprepared with the COVID-19 pandemic and many tour guides are affected socially and psychologically, especially economically, it can be argued that there is a need to develop alternative digital solutions by adapting to digital transformation. In this context, virtual tours can become an additional income-generating activity in the profession by professionally learning the preparation process of online guided virtual tours, their presentation, and the feedback evaluation afterward. The need for virtual tours emerges even more clearly in times of travel restrictions, especially in the face of environmental crises caused by climate change and the threat of epidemics. In this context, virtual tours can be considered an alternative solution to prevent job loss in the guidance profession, meet the travel needs of tourists, and promote the destination effectively.

Online guided virtual tours should be used effectively in the pre-promotion of the touristic destination in terms of encouraging travel and positively affecting the tendency to visit on-site. On the other hand, the satisfaction levels of the participants of these tours are quite high (Repo & Pesonen, 2022; Uca & Karahan, 2022). For this reason, its pre-promotion evaluation will positively contribute to the image of the country and the region. Users who are satisfied with the destination

on a guided online virtual tour are more likely to share their positive experiences and information, which will help create a destination brand (Yamada & Matsuda, 2023).

It is thought that the realization of online guided virtual tours by tour guides will create alternative business opportunities. For this reason, tour guides should be more active on online platforms. In this context, tour guides can organize virtual tours on the website developed at the personal level, on online platforms at the local level, and on Airbnb platforms at the global peer-to-peer level. In this way, income can be generated. If tour guides focus on these platforms, virtual tours with different content can be organized, the personal network of guides can increase with these tours, and finally, after the online tour, visitors can participate in the guides' tours in the actual field. Visitors who want to visit a destination with a tour guide can access guides through platforms such as Airbnb or Withlocals, considered part of the sharing economy. On the Airbnb platform, the service of touring in the field with a real tour guide was launched in 2016 and has reached a broad audience. Similarly, online guided virtual tours on the Airbnb platform were launched in 2020 and offered users a significant alternative tour opportunity, especially during the pandemic (Cenni & Vásquez, 2022). In this context, since the coming together of tour guides and tourists can be realized through tour operators or travel agencies and sharing platforms such as Airbnb, tour guides should focus on these platforms in line with this digital transformation.

It is thought that the impact of online guided virtual tours on the tour guiding profession and the number of visits to touristic destinations will be minimal. These virtual tours are the tours that users participate in to get information before seeing a place. For this reason, visitors influenced by the narration and content of these tours will want to visit the destination on-site and be accompanied by a tour guide.

Online guided virtual tours are considered among the most straightforward and least costly applications of virtual tourism. For this reason, it is necessary to establish platforms where a tour guide will accompany online and live and where advanced technology is used. In this context, it is thought that the development of platforms where the sense of reality will be increased for the participants with animations and visuals to be developed with drone technologies, 360 degrees, 3D, and artificial intelligence, and the creation of alternative areas by guides in this direction will offer advantages. In this context, it will be adequate to carry out educational activities for the evaluation of platforms such as Metaverse, which are among the first ones that come to mind in terms of tour guides, to encourage guides, to open courses in which these technologies will be taught in the curriculum of tour guiding undergraduate and graduate programs, and to provide various seminars on this subject by the association of guide chambers and guide chambers. Since online guided virtual tours, which are considered non-immersive virtual tours, do not require high technology skills and are not very costly to implement, training to develop these skills will be a practical and efficient way to advance virtual tourism in the field of tour guiding (Yamada & Matsuda, 2023).

Online guided virtual tours offer an alternative for people with travel restrictions, such as people with disabilities, older age groups, chronic patients, or those who cannot travel due to a lack of budget. Therefore, regarding market size, these virtual tours should be evaluated in the field of tour guiding. In this respect, it is seen that online guided virtual tours have a social aspect. On the other hand, these tours can create an alternative and contribute to experienced and expert tour guides with travel restrictions. Tour guides in the advanced age group or with travel disabilities in the tour guiding profession will have cultural contributions to promoting the country and region in different languages through these virtual tours and economic contributions as an income-generating business opportunity for themselves.

This study's limitation is that it deals with the issue at a conceptual level and evaluates it only in the context of the tour guiding profession. Similar future studies can address the impact of online guided virtual tours on other stakeholders in the tourism sector (accommodation businesses, travel agencies, etc.) and tourism education.

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eISSN : 2687-3737



The 'place' and the 'otherness' through the eyes of a restaurantscape

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ABSTRACT

Within a growing relevance of food in shaping cities' profiles, this paper discusses the glocalized food landscape from the perspective of the city of Inverness, Scotland. Based on the analysis of the restaurantscape in the city center, the research discusses the (dis)connection between place and food and how this informs culinary cosmopolitanism as a driver for urban food tourism management and marketing.

KEYWORDS

Food tourism, Global culture, Local identity

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Received 27.10.2023; Received in revised form 21.04.2024; Accepted 30.05.2024

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e-ISSN: 2687 - 3737 / © 2021 The Authors. Published by Anadolu University

<https://doi.org/10.48119/toleho.1382017>

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

The study of food in urban destination management and marketing is growing (Amore & Roy, 2020; Stalmirska, 2023), and restaurants are a vital ingredient of contemporary food landscapes (DiPietro & Levitt, 2019; Sparks et al., 2003). Drawing from previous studies that have studied the characteristics of a destination based on restaurants (Gordin et al., 2016), this research aims to understand how a food experience is formed in an urban-based food landscape in a marine environment. In this sense, the results of this paper add texture to recent conversations about the cosmopolitanism of food tourism (Leer, 2016). Also, this paper analyses the relationships between food and tourism in Scotland (see Everett, 2012), which has remained an underexplored area of study in food tourism (see De Jong and Varley, 2017). How much local is the restaurantscape? How much global diversity does it convey? To what extent do we eat 'place' or 'otherness' when traveling?

The paper examines the relationship between the local context of Inverness, Scotland, and its food landscapes (Fusté-Forné, 2023; Roe et al., 2016). In particular, the paper analyses how global and local influences shape the city's food scene and adds to the understanding of the relationship between place and food (Coulson & Sonnino, 2019; Edwards et al., 2021). The focus on the restaurantscape in the city center informs about the contribution of food establishments to the overall urban experience (Čaušević & Fusté-Forné, 2022; Hernández-Rojas & Huete-Alcocer, 2021). In this sense, the novelty of the paper relies on the analysis of the (dis)connection between place and food and whether the local food scene is reflective of the regional's identity or if there are elements that create a sense of detachment, which in turn suggests the influence of culinary diversity on the city's character and as a potential attraction for food tourism. In addition, the research provides implications for food tourism management and marketing for city planners, policymakers, and businesses involved in the food and tourism system.

Restaurants are marketing ambassadors (see Min and Lee, 2014) of a city food-based landscape profile. Restaurants contribute to protecting and promoting a food identity as a source of destination marketing (Fuentes-Luque, 2017; Gordin et al., 2016). This research contributes to recent studies that have paid attention to the role of menus (see Noguer-Juncà and Fusté-Forné, 2022) and restaurant experiences (see Matson-Barkat and Robert-Demontrond, 2018) in the creation of destination storytelling. The current local-global dynamics are changing and challenging gastronomic identities (Mak et al., 2012). One of the characteristics of contemporary food practices is cosmopolitanism. In an urban context, according to German Molz (2007), cosmopolitanism "is often evidenced by the diversity of foods on offer in the city's restaurants" (p.79), which attracts a diversity of global food and audiences to a local environment. In this sense, 'food' becomes a consumable commodity that, delivered in a particular place, offers 'the world on a plate' through food experiences (Cook & Crang, 1996). This research builds on the understanding that traveling to a cosmopolitan city is in one journey a cornucopia of culinary experiences (German Molz, 2007).

As a result of the mobilities of people, cuisines have also moved, and food has been increasingly used "in favor of urban destination marketing that is socially and culturally informed: where food can be utilized in the cultural representation of place and expression of the social landscape" (Stalmirska, 2023, p.161). It is evident that every destination conveys a unique sense of place, and restaurants, both as local and tourist spaces, have a relevant role in constructing a place identity. This research analyses a local restaurantscape (a term that fuses the words restaurant and landscape) from the perspective of Inverness, the capital of the Scottish Highlands.

METHOD

Previous authors have argued that a food-based tourism offer allows cities to differentiate in a competitive environment (Henderson, 2016). This research focuses on the city of Inverness, where tourism is driven by the attraction of Loch Ness, and the relationships between food and tourism are scarcely analyzed in the context of Scotland. Inverness is located in the north area of the United Kingdom (Figure 1a), south of Beaully and Moray Firths (Figure 1b), and north of Loch Ness. In particular, the data collection takes place in the city's downtown and historical old town (Figure 1c), which concentrates on the city's restaurants. Drawing from a qualitative design, the

researcher conducted a participant observation with 14 restaurants in the area (Figure 1d). The restaurants analyzed are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1.
The Inverness downtown restaurants (own source based on Google Maps)

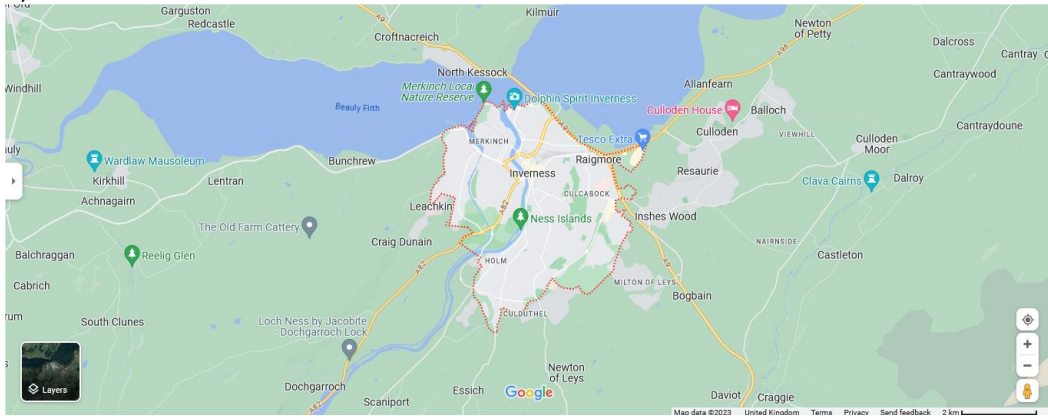
Restaurant	Description	Type
River House	Elegant, sustainable Scottish dining	Seafood restaurant
The Kitchen Brasserie	Hip, modern brasserie with castle views	Modern British restaurant
Urquhart’s Restaurant	Home-cooked Scottish and eclectic cuisine	Restaurant
Rocpool	Refined modern Scottish cuisine	Restaurant
Encore	Highland restaurant with a hearty menu	Restaurant
The Mustard Seed Restaurant	European cuisine in a former church	Modern European restaurant
The Brasserie	-	Restaurant
Comfort Foods	-	Fast food restaurant
Zizzi	Casual pizza and pasta chain	Restaurant
Bella Italia	Relaxed restaurant for Italian dining	Restaurant
Scotch and Rye	Speakeasy-inspired bar and kitchen	Bar and grill
Filling Station	Comfort food in an American-style diner	American restaurant
Girvans	Modern, eclectic eatery and patisserie	Restaurant
Fig and Thistle	Bistro plates in snug, casual quarters	Restaurant
Little Italy	-	Italian restaurant

This research represents an exploratory approach to the configuration of the restaurantscape, following previous studies that have also analyzed the look of restaurants in food tourism management and marketing (Fusté-Forné & Leer, 2023). For data collection, the researcher used Google Maps to search for ‘restaurants’ in Inverness, showing 15 restaurants in the city center. However, the search did not include other dining places like bars or pubs. While this is a limitation of the paper, it also opens new opportunities for future research, as explained below. As a result of the participant observation, 14 restaurants were selected as the study sample because one of them was closed. For data analysis, information included the analysis of product and marketing strategies, focusing on the menus, where the researcher annotated all the information in a diary, which was supplemented by visual materials. The researcher categorized the textual and visual data following a thematic analysis, which allows the identification of four categories described in the next section: food cosmopolitanism, the role of place, the authenticity of the experience, and the influences of food and non-food elements.

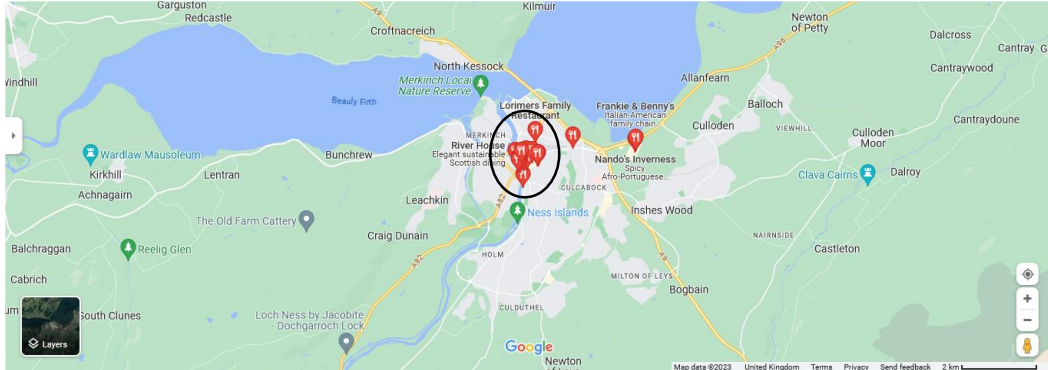
a) Inverness in the context of the United Kingdom



b) The area of Inverness



c) The city center of Inverness



d) The location of the restaurants analysed in Inverness

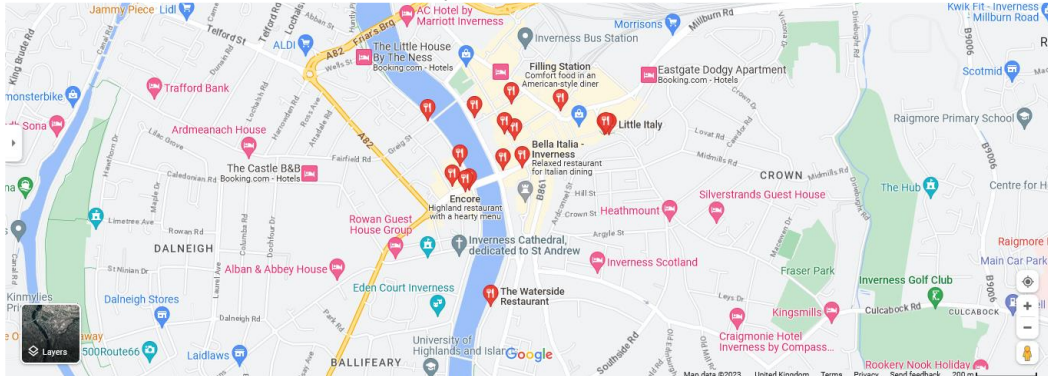


Figure 1. Location of the study site

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Navigation Between Local and Global

The description of the restaurants (Table 1) shows a mix of cuisines that provide a combination of local and global influences, with a flavored Scottish cuisine that is also complemented by American, French, and Italian-styled restaurants. The diversity of food cultures results from the globalized relations between foods and places (Fusté-Forné, 2020). As globalization moves foods from local to global, Mak et al. (2012, p.171) reported that “the common perception of globalization as a threat to local gastronomic identities is contrasted by its other facet, as an impetus that opens up new opportunities for the reinvention of local gastronomic products and identities.” In this sense, the connection to the regional identity is central to the restaurant experiences. A banner on the wall of one of the restaurants says, “The chefs at The Mustard Seed have close relationships with their suppliers, selecting a variety of produce each week to create a menu of dishes that reflect each season. They use the quality Scottish ingredients to create a modern European menu with Highland influences”. The description of the culinary practices shows the close relationships with suppliers and suggests a collaborative and connected culinary process. Also, the selection of produce reflecting each season shows adaptability and freshness, and local-sourced products anticipate a fusion of traditional and contemporary culinary styles.



Figure 2. Examples of traditional Scottish cuisine

The Place as a Source of Food Tourism

While ‘traditional food’ is often claimed by restaurants, with classics (Figure 2) such as the soup of the day with bread and fish and chips available in many of the restaurants, menus also attract a clientele that searches for comfort foods (see, for example, Jones and Long, 2017) evocative of cultures such as the Italian, with pasta and pizza and calls for cheese lovers (Figure 3). The use of local meat and seafood, also from the Orkney and Shetland islands, is another feature of the menus, which constantly show examples of local-based dishes with global flavors (baked cod, served with curried seafood risotto) and vice versa (haggis popcorn). The combination between local and global products and techniques is also nurtured by a relevant role of seasonality, as observed in a Scotch rib eye steak with stir fry of wild mushrooms, pancetta, and cepe puree with crisps golden polenta, parmesan, and truffle oil, which increases the engagement of customers with the territory and the enhancement of storytelling attached to the source of the products. Implementing strategies to foster a deeper connection between customers and the territory involves initiatives to celebrate the distinctive elements of the area manifested in local recipes. Results show that there is an emphasis on the narratives that highlight the origin of the products, focusing on the producers, the traditions, and the unique cultural and environmental aspects of food. This creates consumer awareness and a more relevant experience based on their connections with the place.

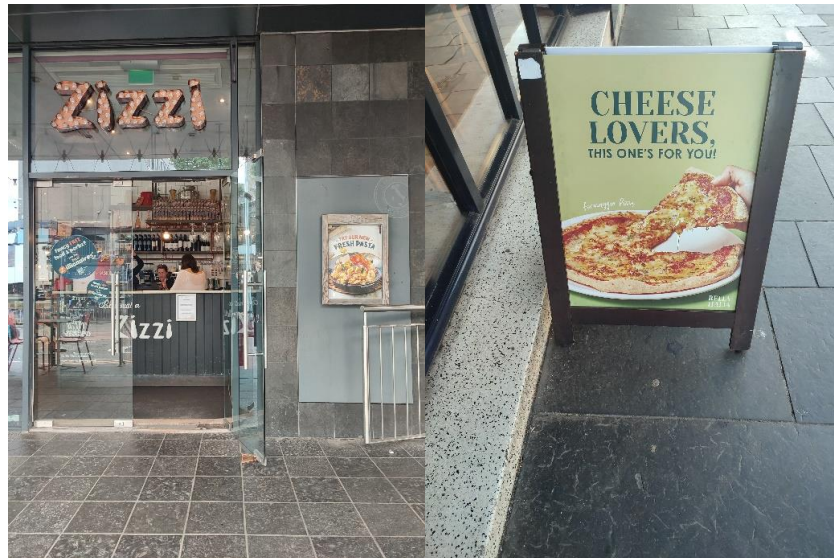


Figure 3. Examples of Italian-styled restaurants

The Scottish Authenticity

Based on previous attempts to assess authenticity (see Grayson and Martinec, 2004), this paper also shows examples of indexical authenticity (dishes that are elaborated with local ingredients) and iconic authenticity (dishes that evoke or are illustrative of Scottish style). In this sense, the restaurantscape creates a dialogue between tradition and modernity, which is not only manifested at the table but also through the buildings where restaurants are located (Figure 4). From the stone buildings that populate the center of Inverness and other Scottish cities to modern glass buildings, the local-global synergies arise not only from the food itself but also from the atmospheres surrounding the food experience (see Park and Widyanta, 2022). In the context of the relations between food and tourism, previous research shows the importance of architecture (see Albrecht et al., 2019) and interior décor (see Matson-Barket and Robert-Demontrond, 2018). The design and aesthetic of the building also evoke a cultural identity where architectural elements draw local inspiration, for example, based on the use of local materials or the incorporation of local motifs, which create an atmosphere that reflects the region's cultural heritage.



Figure 4. Examples of buildings that accommodate restaurants

The Dialogue Between Food and Non-food Elements

This paper aims to open a dialogue that discusses not only the dislocation of restaurants but also the dislocation of places, based on the configuration of their restaurantscape, and how a food experience in Inverness talks about contemporary food cosmopolitanism. This research shows that a food experience means ‘eating food’ and includes immersion in culture (recipes) and nature (landscapes). Askegaard and Kjeldgaard (2007) advocated that “localities are increasingly, perhaps reflexively, articulated constructions based on available and appropriate local cultural resources. These articulations feed into the global cultural economy as a production of cultural differences” (p.145). Results show that in a food experience, ‘place’ is not only food but also includes elements such as architecture, and ‘otherness’ is not only other cultures but also other ages, where there is also a confluence between ‘place’ and ‘otherness.’ This aligns with recent research showing that sensory and non-sensory factors contribute to food tourism experiences (Jensen & Fusté-Forné, 2023; Muskat et al., 2023).

CONCLUSION

This paper shows how the (dis)connection between place and food informs culinary cosmopolitanism as a driver for urban food tourism management and marketing. In particular, the analysis shows that the restaurantscape celebrates local but embraces global, engaging visitors with a Scottish sense of place and a diverse culinary landscape. In addition, results also offer an approach to elements such as architecture, contributing to the urban-based food landscape in a marine environment. This anticipates a dialogue and a tension between local and global, authenticity and inauthenticity, and food and non-food elements, which shape the understanding of a food experience. If food tourism refers to the notion of traveling to eat, as German Molz (2007) states, this study demonstrates that food tourism “is always about eating the differences mobilities make” (ibid, p.91)—the mobilities of food, the mobilities of cultures, and the mobilities of people. The paper shows that the mobilities also include the spaces. While this paper is limited to the restaurantscape of the city center of Inverness, Scotland, future research should also expand the sample of dining places to understand how ‘place’ and ‘otherness’ are promoted by restaurants and perceived by tourists.

The paper’s contribution relies on the glocalized food landscapes of Inverness, Scotland, and its exploration of the (dis)connection between place and food. Results show how global and local influences dialogue in shaping the food scene. This approach contributes to the literature as it provides insights into how cities in smaller or less studied regions engage with global culinary trends while maintaining local culinary identities. In addition, the analysis of the restaurantscape in the city center adds texture to the urban culinary dynamics based on food production and consumption. This also informs the (dis)connection between place and food. While the restaurantscape reflects Inverness’s identity, some elements create a sense of detachment. This aspect provides novel insights into the relationship between food and tourism in a city where the diversity of culinary influences is a source of tourism attraction.

From a theoretical perspective, the paper advances the understanding of food tourism based on the relationship between local food and tourism dynamics. Also, the focus on the (dis)connection between place and food within the urban context of Inverness represents a theoretical contribution to urban studies. Through the restaurantscape, the paper shows how cities shape and are shaped by their food landscapes, contributing to broader discussions about urban identity and culture through food. This also means that urban planning and policymaking benefit from understanding the local food scene. In addition, the paper has practical implications for food tourism management and marketing in Inverness. Based on the paper’s results, the city’s culinary diversity could serve local businesses to enhance food tourism attraction based on marketing strategies that contribute to protecting and promoting the regional identity through food.

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eISSN : 2687-3737



Political ecology of tourism: A bibliometric analysis

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ABSTRACT

The tourism sector significantly impacts global environmental change and resource management. The social and economic aspects of tourism are also worthy of examination from the political ecology perspective. In this context, there is a growing need for academic studies examining tourism's environmental, social, and economic components. This study is conducted to meet this need and provide an in-depth analysis of the works on political ecology in tourism. This research aims to assess scholarly investigations within the tourism domain employing a political ecology framework, utilizing bibliometric analysis as the methodological approach. Within this scope, publications in the literature have been quantitatively examined, and the studies' prevalence, interactions, and developmental trends have been revealed. The WoS database identified 192 studies published between 1998 and 2023 on the subject. The analysis of leading journals, authors, countries, and keywords related to the topic indicates the following: There has been a noteworthy surge in the number of scholarly inquiries about political ecology within the scientific realm associated with tourism. In addition, the leading country on the subject is the United States. Finally, conservation and ecotourism become the main focal points of studies on political ecology. In summary, it is anticipated that this study will provide a substantial contribution to the existing literature in the domain of political ecology within the context of tourism, offering guidance for researchers in the design and execution of subsequent studies.

KEYWORDS

Political ecology, Tourism, Bibliometric analysis

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Received 17.02.2024; Received in revised form 26.06.2024; Accepted 29.06.2024

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e-ISSN: 2687 - 3737 / © 2021 The Authors. Published by [Anadolu University](https://www.anadolu.edu.tr/)

<https://doi.org/10.48119/toleho.1438681>

INTRODUCTION

With the increasing complexity of global dynamics and diverse travel demands, nature and environmental issues have become a focal point of academic research. While the political ecology approach in tourism studies is relatively new, it is consistently and strongly connected to tourism and political ecology (Scruggs et al., 2023). As seen in many scientific research areas, environmental topics such as the environment, climate crisis, and sustainability also take center stage in tourism studies. In this context, the political ecology theory can be highly beneficial for examining the relationship between environmental issues and tourism. Studies conducted within the political ecology framework aim to understand tourism's ecological, social, and political interactions. As a theory, political ecology proves helpful in exploring relationships among various layers of the tourism industry, addressing sustainability challenges, and examining socio-political interactions. Additionally, political ecology provides a theoretical framework for comprehending the complex structure of the tourism industry.

Recently, bibliometric analyses, widely used in scientific research, have proven beneficial for revealing the key trends and developments in the scientific literature related to tourism and political ecology. However, upon examining national and international scientific literature, it is discerned that no academic publications containing bibliometric analyses focused on publications related to the political ecology of tourism. In light of this existing gap in the literature, the primary objective of this study is to conduct a numerical and conceptual analysis of existing academic publications on the political ecology of tourism. Considering the limited number of studies from the political ecology perspective in tourism literature, it is envisaged that this study will add meaningful insights to guiding future research for researchers. The subsequent section of the research presents a conceptual framework for the relationship between political ecology and tourism, followed by sections on the methodology, analyses, findings, and conclusions in the subsequent parts of the study.

POLITICAL ECOLOGY AND TOURISM RELATIONSHIP

Political ecology is an approach developed to examine local and international human-environment interaction in connection with Third World countries' economic development. It combines various disciplines and focuses on the relative power issues of different social actors in accessing and managing natural resources. Political ecology, however, also concentrates on the relative power issues that various social actors have in accessing and managing natural resources (Stonich, 1998). In the tourism industry, political ecology provides a critical approach to understanding the relationship between various power structures and environmental change, shedding light on tourism's challenges in human-induced environmental change (Mostafanezhad and Norum, 2019). In this context, it is possible to say that political ecology serves as a significant approach to illuminating social relationships and power dynamics existing in the tourism industry (Douglas, 2014) and socio-ecological transformations (Jönsson, 2016). In summary, political ecology, as a framework for research, provides a valuable perspective for the reassessment of the environment in tourism concerning topics such as environmental degradation and marginalization, conservation and control, environmental conflicts and exclusion, and political objects and actors (Kervankiran et al., 2022; Mostafanezhad et al., 2016).

Due to the interdisciplinary nature of tourism as a scientific research field, various tourism-related issues have been addressed through the political ecology approach in the international scientific literature. Stoddart and Graham (2017) utilized a political ecology perspective to examine discourses questioning the harmony between oil and tourism by highlighting the conflict between offshore oil exploration and tourism through a case study. Lema (2017) employed political ecology theory to explain how neoliberalism, legal regulations, and policy changes have shaped tourism practices over time and spatially. The study concluded that political instability, institutional power struggles within conflicts, and varying interests contribute to unsustainable tourism practices and trends. In this context, it can be asserted that political ecology has enhanced our comprehension of the importance of revisiting tourism policies and laws. The relationship between tourism and water is also among the issues addressed from a political ecology perspective (Carter, 2023; Cole, 2012). Cole (2012) emphasizes the relationship

between tourism and water, illustrating how social forces can lead to unfair and unsustainable water distribution. Carter (2023), on the other hand, utilizes the political ecology approach to present the unequal socio-environmental impacts resulting from power asymmetry among stakeholders. Furthermore, conflicts such as transforming coastal areas into golf courses in the context of the political nature of environmental transformation in tourism and violations of local plans are also scrutinized within the confines of the theoretical framework of political ecology (Jönsson, 2016). Marcinek and Hunt (2019) characterize tourism as a robust global connector that impacts social and environmental well-being. Using ethnographic examples, they utilize the political ecology approach to explain how global discourses on biodiversity conservation and social development are discussed and positioned at the local level to promote tourism.

When examining the national literature, it is discernible that only one study adopted the political ecology approach in scientific research related to tourism. Kervankiran and colleagues (2022) applied the political ecology approach to analyze Turkey's tourism policies and plans, evaluating the everyday implications of decisions related to tourism.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In recent years, there has been increasing scholarly attention to conducting systematic literature reviews in research areas, facilitated by the availability of online databases and the development of tools capable of practical analysis. Examining various publications on a subject plays a crucial role in revealing the fundamental thought structures within that subject. In this regard, it can be said that bibliometric analyses help depict the overall status of a subject or research area and illustrate communication among researchers. Bibliometric analysis, based on statistical techniques, provides the opportunity to conduct both primary analyses (such as research tables by years, by journals, etc.) and advanced analyses (such as co-citations, co-authorship, etc.) for documents within the field of interest (Aria et al., 2020).

The evolution of tourism as a discipline has led to increased scientific publications, publishers, and academic institutions. This growth has highlighted the need to understand, interpret, and summarize scientific knowledge in tourism. Recently, the bibliometric analysis method, used to examine trends in a specific research area, has gained significant interest in tourism science. This method analyzes trends, interactions, and developments in the scientific literature using numerical data from publications. Bibliometric analysis can afford researchers a valuable perspective for assessing the scope of research within the field of tourism and identifying significant topics (Güzeller and Çeliker, 2018). In this context, conducting a bibliometric study on the topic is considered a good start to introduce the widely adopted political ecology approach in the international literature to the national literature. The study utilizes the bibliometric analysis method to examine the development history of studies on political ecology within tourism research in terms of keywords, author networks, and country contributions. The bibliometric analysis methodology constitutes a widely used analytical tool that enables the quantitative analysis of scientific literature published in a specific discipline. It can reveal the current distribution of research in the field and identify research trends. Additionally, visual analyses can graphically present information about the literature, making it easier to summarize aspects such as the number of published works, research focuses, research methods, author distributions, etc., in a bibliometric manner (Han et al., 2021).

Bibliometric analysis has emerged as a crucial tool for measuring the scientific output of various elements in any research field, such as studies, authors, keywords, journals, institutions, and countries. It allows researchers to examine a given field's intellectual, social, and conceptual structure and understand how these components and their interactions evolve over time. (Öztürk & Gürler, 2022). Citation analysis, co-citation analysis, reference matching, co-authorship analysis, and co-word analysis are among the primary analytical techniques used in bibliometric analysis (Bağış, 2022).

Moreover, bibliometric studies can provide scientifically sound foundations to gain a general understanding of the field, identify knowledge gaps, and propose new research ideas (Donthu et al., 2021).

Data Collection Process

The Web of Science (WoS) database is extensively utilized and considered one of the foremost choices for conducting bibliometric analyses in scientific research (Han et al., 2021). Consequently, inquiries were executed within the confines of the Web of Science (WoS) database between December 30, 2023, and January 20, 2024, to access studies on “political ecology and tourism.” Figure 1 illustrates the literature search process for the included studies.

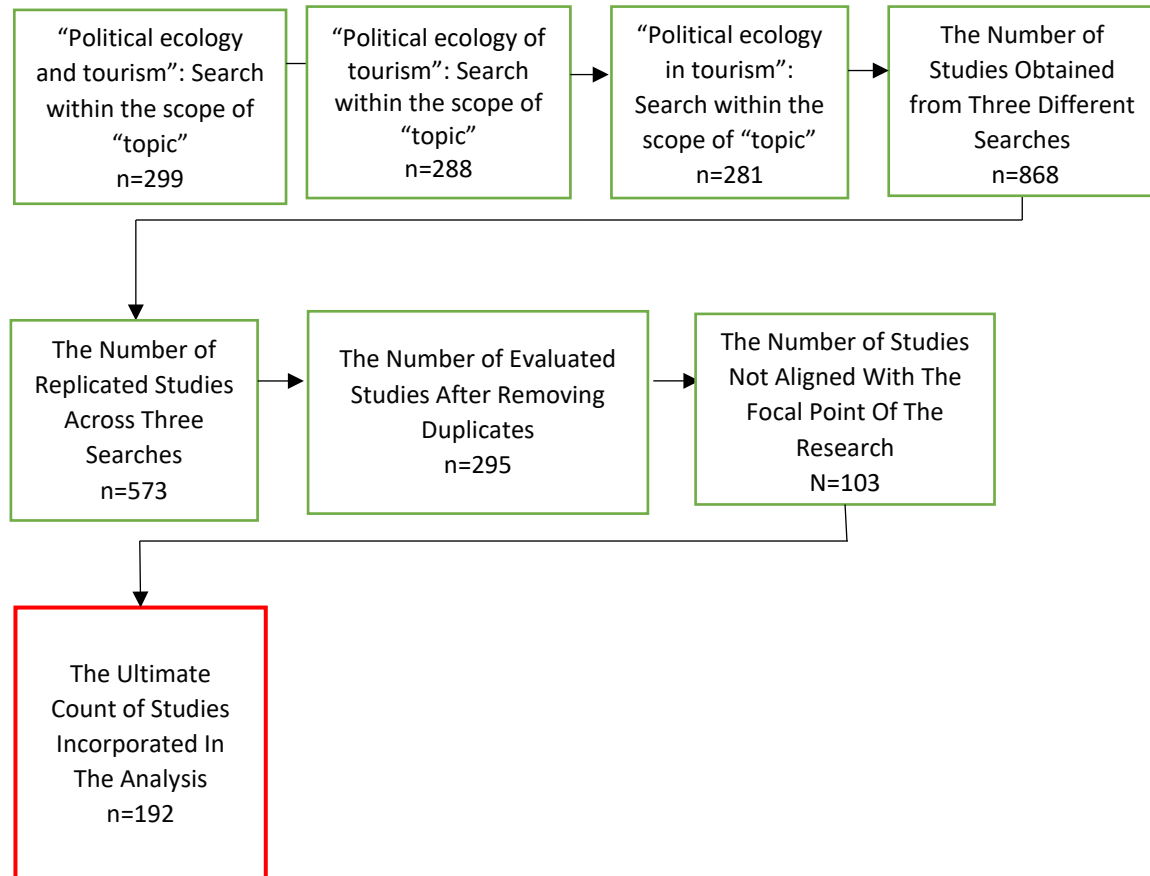


Figure 1. Literature Review Process on the Relevant Topic

During the search process, searches were conducted under the “topic” scope as “political ecology and tourism,” “political ecology in tourism,” and “political ecology of tourism.” The “topic” section search aimed to access more relevant articles. To partially prevent irrelevant results from appearing in the search and focus solely on studies related to political ecology in tourism, terms were searched as whole phrases such as “political ecology in tourism,” “political ecology of tourism,” and “political ecology and tourism.”

Out of the 868 studies obtained from three different searches, duplicates and studies unrelated to the research focus were excluded, resulting in 192 studies included in the analysis. The analyses were conducted using Microsoft Office Excel, VosViewer, and RStudio Bibliometrix programs.

FINDINGS

The distribution of the included studies in the analysis, based on publication years, resulting from searches conducted on the Web of Science database for studies on “Tourism and Political Ecology,” is presented in Figure 2.

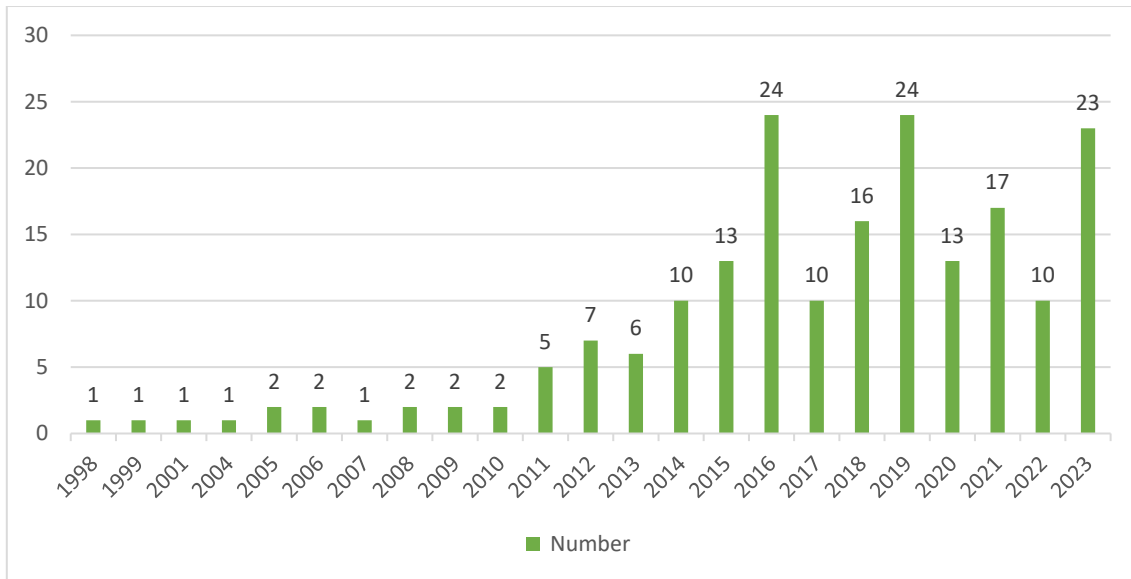


Figure 2. The Evolution of Publications on the Political Ecology of Tourism Over the Years

As illustrated in the graph depicting the distribution of studies by publication years on the topic of “tourism and political ecology,” it is discerned that scholarly research on this subject emerged in 1998. A significant surge in the number of studies is particularly notable after 2011, and post-2014, the count of articles surpasses 10. The years 2016 (24), 2019 (24), and 2023 (23) are notably the years with the highest volume of publications on the subject (Figure 2).

Table 1 provides the distribution of studies based on publication types. All publication types were included in the search process. This approach was chosen because political ecology represents a relatively new area of inquiry within the field of tourism, necessitating a thorough literature review to capture the full scope of existing research.

Among the 192 studies included in the analysis, it is observed that 81.77% are classified as articles, 5.69% as conference papers, and 4.66% as reviews.

Table 1. Distribution of Studies by Publication Type

Publication Type	n	%
Article	157	81,77
Conference paper	11	5,69
Both the article and conference paper	2	1,03
Review	9	4,66
Book Summary	5	2,59
Both the review and book chapter	1	0,51
Both the book chapter and article	5	2,59
Editorial article	2	1,03
Total	192	100

The analysis of the 192 studies was conducted to identify the academic journals where the studies were disseminated using the RStudio Bibliometrix program. The results are illustrated in Figure 3.

The Journal of Sustainable Tourism stands out as the most prolific journal, contributing 22 studies. Annals of Tourism follows it with ten studies, Tourism Geographies with eight studies, Geoforum with seven studies, and the Journal of Political Ecology with five studies.

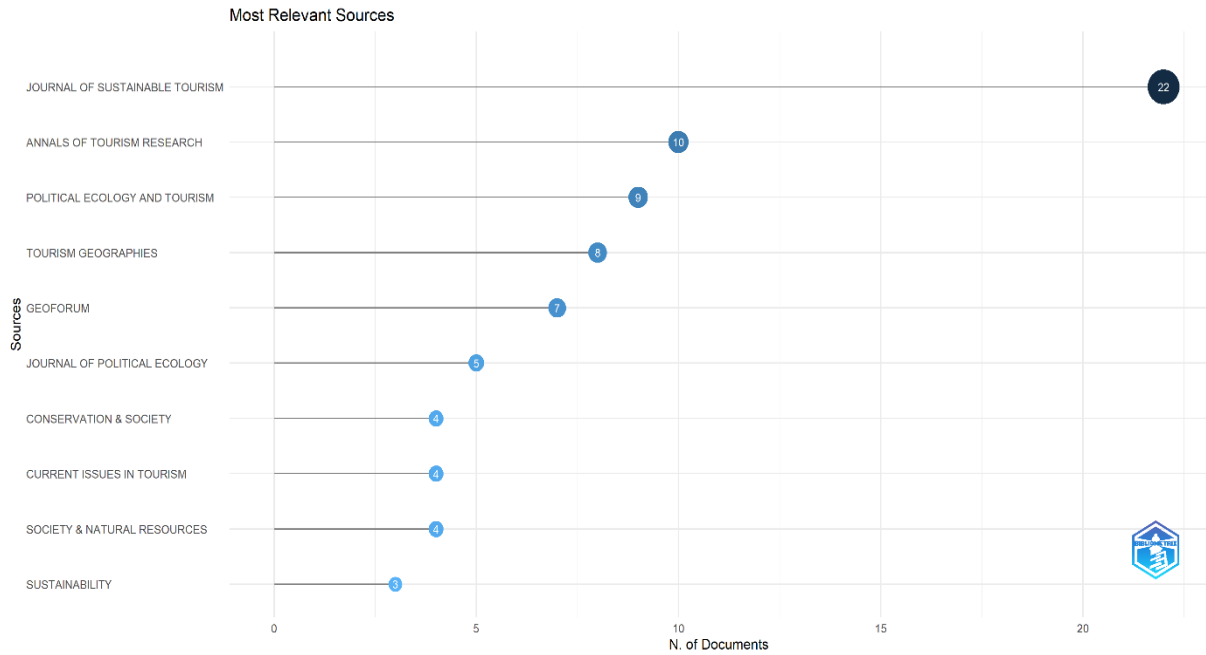


Figure 3. Distribution of publications according to academic journals

Table 2, Figure 4, and Figure 5 yield insights into the keywords employed in the investigated studies on “tourism and political ecology” and were derived from the analysis of the keywords from publications in the form of articles, conference papers, and studies that are both articles and conference papers.

Table 2.

Distribution of Keywords

English	Frequency of Repetition	%
political ecology	63	9,63
tourism	31	4,74
ecotourism	17	2,59
conservation	16	2,44
sustainability	9	1,37
sustainable tourism	9	1,37
tourism development	9	1,37
water	8	1,22
gender	7	1,07
protected areas	7	1,07
neoliberalism	6	0,91
fisheries	5	0,76
governance	5	0,76
nature	5	0,76
Others	457	69,87
Total	654	100

Examining studies within the research framework revealed the utilization of 654 keywords. Keywords with a recurrence of 5 or more are presented in Table 2. The 457 words occurring with a frequency below five in the studies have been categorized under “others” (Table 2). The visual map illustrating the conceptual coherence of the keywords, as depicted in Figure 3, was generated utilizing the VosViewer (Figure 4 (a)) and RStudio Bibliometrix (Figure 4 (b))

programs. While generating the visual map (Figure 4 (a)), 574 keywords, which demonstrated the highest connectivity, were included in the analysis.

The conceptual coherence of the studies incorporated into the analysis was mapped based on author keywords (Figure 4 (a)). The sizes of the circles in the visualization correspond to the frequency of occurrence of each keyword. Larger circles indicate higher frequencies, reflecting the prominence of the respective terms (Nunen et al., 2018). The keywords employed most frequently in the studies are found to occupy the top four positions. These terms are, in order, “political ecology” (63), “tourism” (31), “ecotourism” (17), and “conservation” (16) (Table 2). Notably, these findings align with the outcomes derived from the visual map generated by the VOSviewer program (Figure 4 (a)) and the word cloud design of keywords produced using the RStudio Bibliometrix program (Figure 5). The extensive circles within signify that the key terms are more prevalently referenced in the studies encompassed by the examination of tourism and political ecology (Figure 4 (a)). In this context, it can be affirmed that the terms “political ecology,” “tourism,” “ecotourism,” and “conservation” are utilized more frequently in studies about the subject.

In Figure 4 (b), a visual network map created by including keywords plus in the RStudio Bibliometrix program is presented. Upon closer examination of Figure 4 (b), it is discernible that two primary clusters of terms exist. In the red cluster, the term “political ecology” predominates, while in the blue cluster, the term “tourism” holds prominence.

In the visual map depicting the density of additional keywords put forth in Figure 4 (b), it is observable that the term “political ecology” is closely associated with the term “management” in the same cluster. Similarly, the term “tourism” is more interconnected with the terms “conservation” and “ecotourism” in the same cluster.

In this context, it can be posited that the subject of “political ecology of tourism” is closely connected with the themes of management, ecotourism, and conservation. The list of keywords is important for representing the subject and understanding the trends within the subject. It is widely used as a tool in bibliometric analyses to document different topics (Ellegaard and Wallin, 2015).



Figure 5. Word Cloud Design Created from Keywords

To discern the contemporary trends in the progression of political ecology in tourism, the results of the analysis conducted through author keywords in the RStudio Bibliometrix program are delineated in Figure 6. During the analysis, the criterion of a keyword having a recurrence frequency of at least 5 and a count of 10 keywords per year was applied.

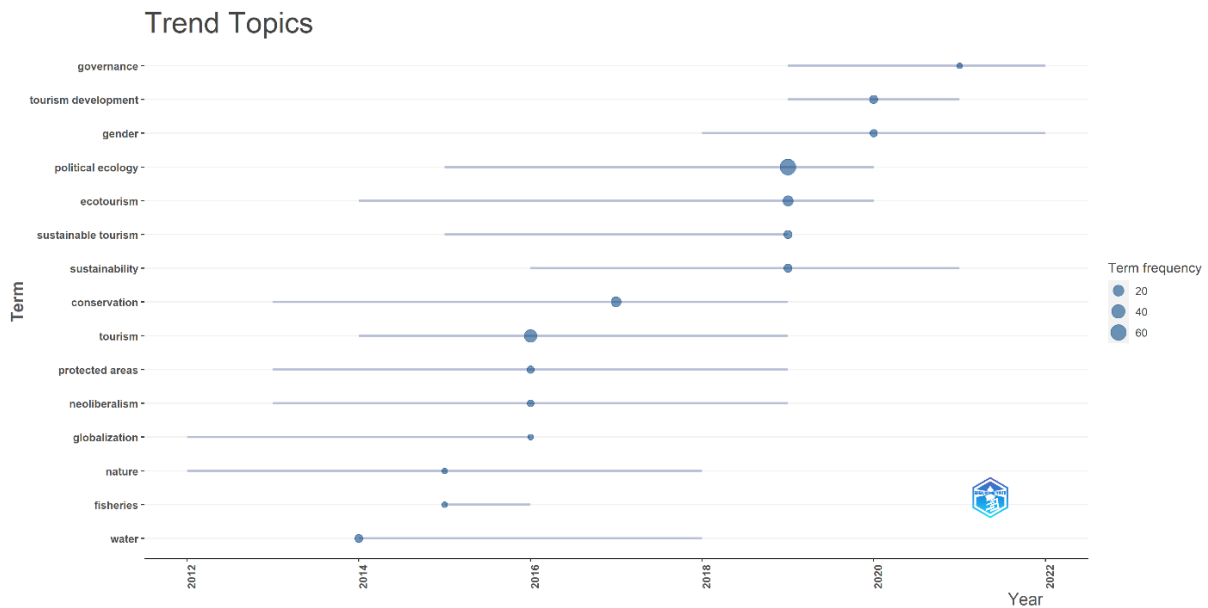


Figure 6. Evolution of Key Trends in the Subject Over the Years

Analyzing the progression of the subject based on the density levels of keywords (Figure 6), it becomes evident that in 2014, the term “water” was prominent. In 2016, the focus shifted towards terms like globalization, neoliberalism, protected areas, and tourism. The year 2017 emphasized “conservation,” while 2019 saw an emphasis on terms such as sustainability, sustainable tourism, ecotourism, and political ecology. In 2020, the discourse included gender and tourism development, and by 2021, the vocabulary expanded to include terms related to governance. The multifaceted exploration of various topics within the realm of “Political Ecology of Tourism” can be attributed to the complex nature of tourism as a research domain and the comprehensive framework provided by political ecology as a theory.

The geographical distribution of countries contributing to publications related to the topic “Tourism and Political Ecology” with two or more contributions is presented in Figure 7 in a map format.

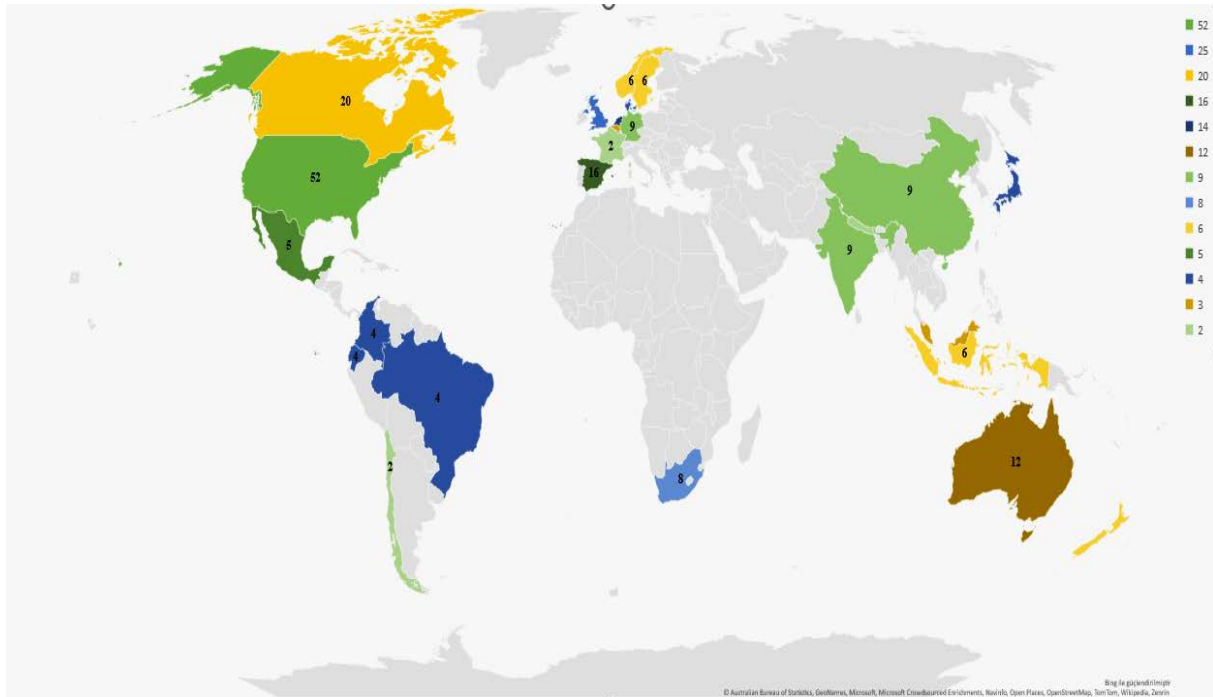


Figure 7. Distribution by Countries Associated with the Studies

The examination of the distribution of studies by countries related to the “tourism and political ecology” topic reveals that there are 29 countries and regions contributing to two or more publications (Figure 7). Among the 192 studies included in the analysis, the United States is in the first place contributing to 52 studies on the topic. Other productive countries with contributions to more than ten publications are, respectively, the United Kingdom (25), Canada (20), Spain (16), the Netherlands (14), and Australia (12). The map does not depict countries contributing to a single publication. Argentina, Austria, the Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Botswana, Cyprus, Ethiopia, Georgia, Ghana, Italy, Kenya, Lithuania, Oman, Panama, Peru, Romania, South Korea, Taiwan, and Uganda have contributed to the topic with only one study each. When examined overall, there is a geographical imbalance in the dissemination of information related to the topic. Examining the distribution of studies on “tourism and political ecology” across fields (Figure 8), it is noted that the subject has primarily been investigated within the domain of “Hospitality, Leisure, Sports, and Tourism” (82)³.

³ A single topic can receive contributions from multiple fields.

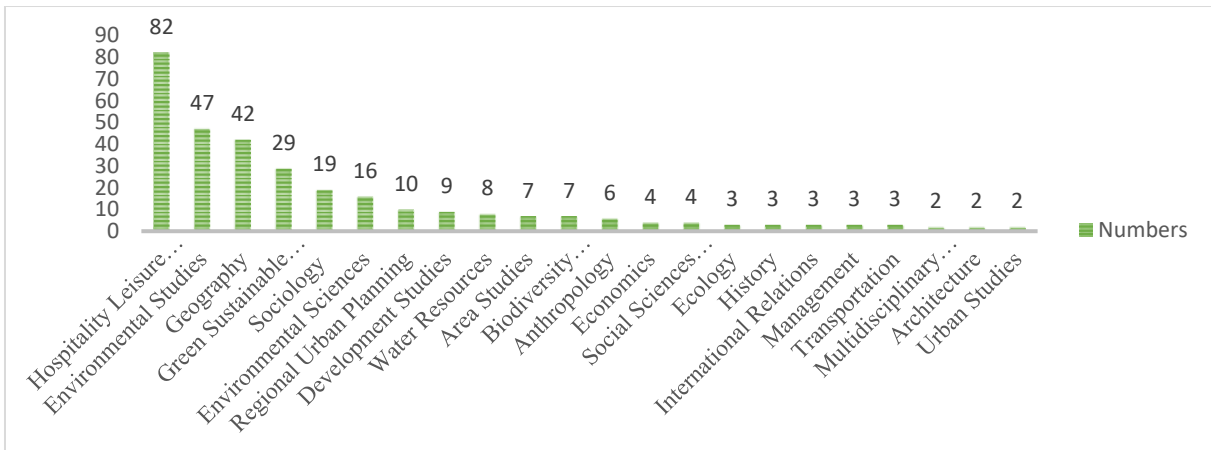


Figure 8. Distribution of Studies by Fields on the Relevant Topic

“Environmental Studies” (47) is in second place, and the “Geography” (42) field is in third place. “Green Sustainable Science Technology” (29), “Sociology” (19), “Environmental Sciences” (16), and “Regional Urban Planning” (10) are among the top seven fields contributing to more than ten studies.

The visual map of the co-authorship analysis of authors of 192 studies included in the research on the topic of “Tourism and Political Ecology” is elucidated in Figure 9.



Figure 9. The Visual Map of Authors’ Co-authorship Status

The co-authorship analysis, conducted to identify connections and collaborations among authors (Dirik et al., 2023), involved the creation of a network map with criteria set at a minimum of 1 publication and 1 citation. Upon examining Figure 9, it is evident that five interconnected clusters of authors have been formed. Cole Stroma, who is both the most prolific author and has the highest citation count (7 publications and 288 citations),

does not seem to be within the most interconnected authors, including Saarinen Jarko, who is the second most prolific author with 5 publications. Moreover, Sheller Mimi (214 citations), Carrier, J.G (204), and West, P. (204), authors holding prominent positions in citation metrics, are not incorporated into the network of scholarly connections and collaborations.

Figure 10 presents a network map designed to ascertain the citation networks of authors, applying a criterion of a minimum of 1 publication and 1 citation.

The authors with the most substantial citation counts, including Cole Stroma (288), Carrier, J.G (204), Blazquez-Salom Macia (203), and Stonich, S.C (133), are observed to form strong connections. However, it is noteworthy that Sheller Mimi (214), despite having a high citation count, does not form any network.

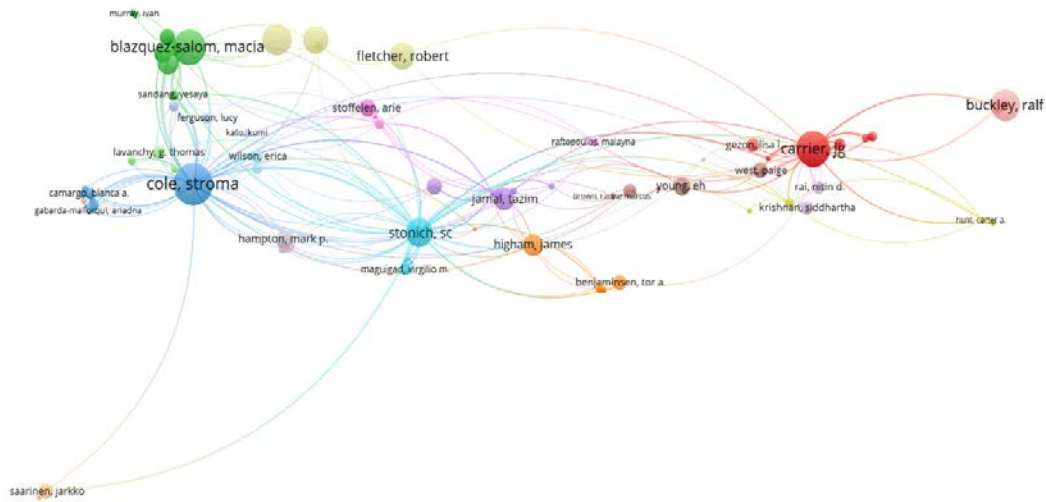


Figure 10. Visual Map of Citation of Authors

Citation of document analysis is a technique aimed at identifying research that leads to the propagation of an idea in a particular context of field or topic (Arslan, 2022). In the analysis, a minimum citation count of 5 has been set. Fifty-seven studies meeting this criterion and having strong connections among them have been incorporated into the analysis. The visual representation illustrating the outcomes of the analysis is depicted in Figure 11.

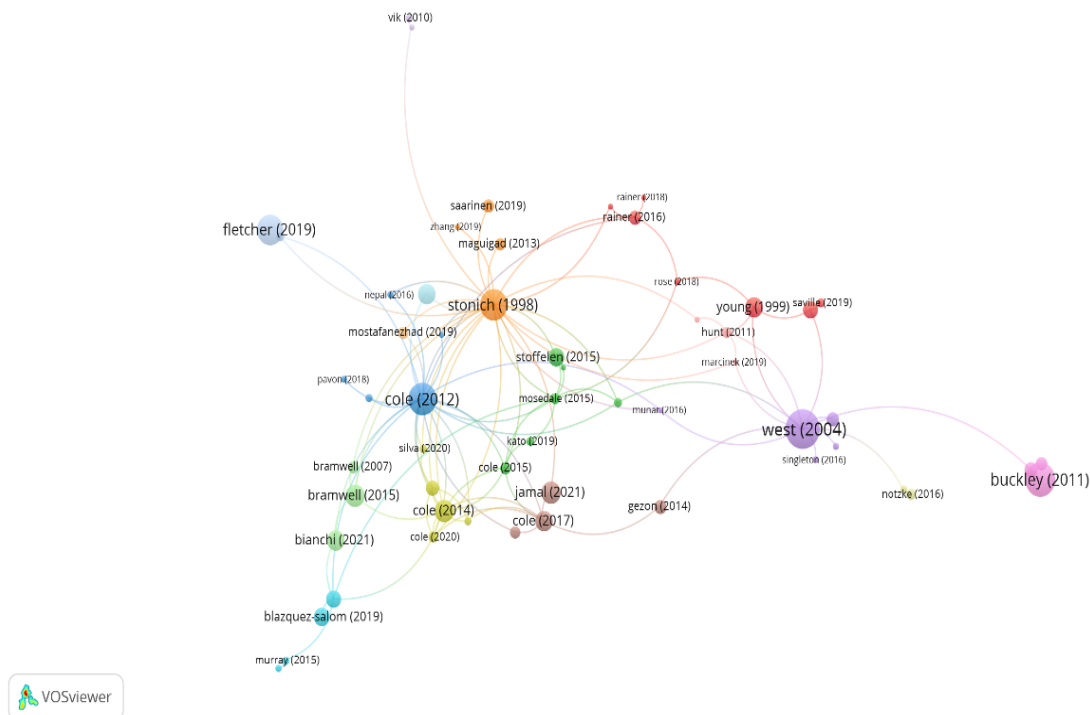


Figure 11. Visual Map of Citation of Documents

As seen in Figure 11, the studies with the strongest citation network connections are ranked with 27 connections for Stonich (1998), 23 connections for Cole (2012), and 12 connections for West (2004). Considering that Stonich’s (1998) study laid the foundation for the political ecology approach in tourism research, it is anticipated to be the most influential work contributing to academic studies conducted with a political ecology approach in tourism. The

situation where a common work is cited by two independent sources is referred to as bibliographic coupling (Dirik et al., 2023). The criterion of possessing a minimum of 1 citation was employed throughout the analysis.

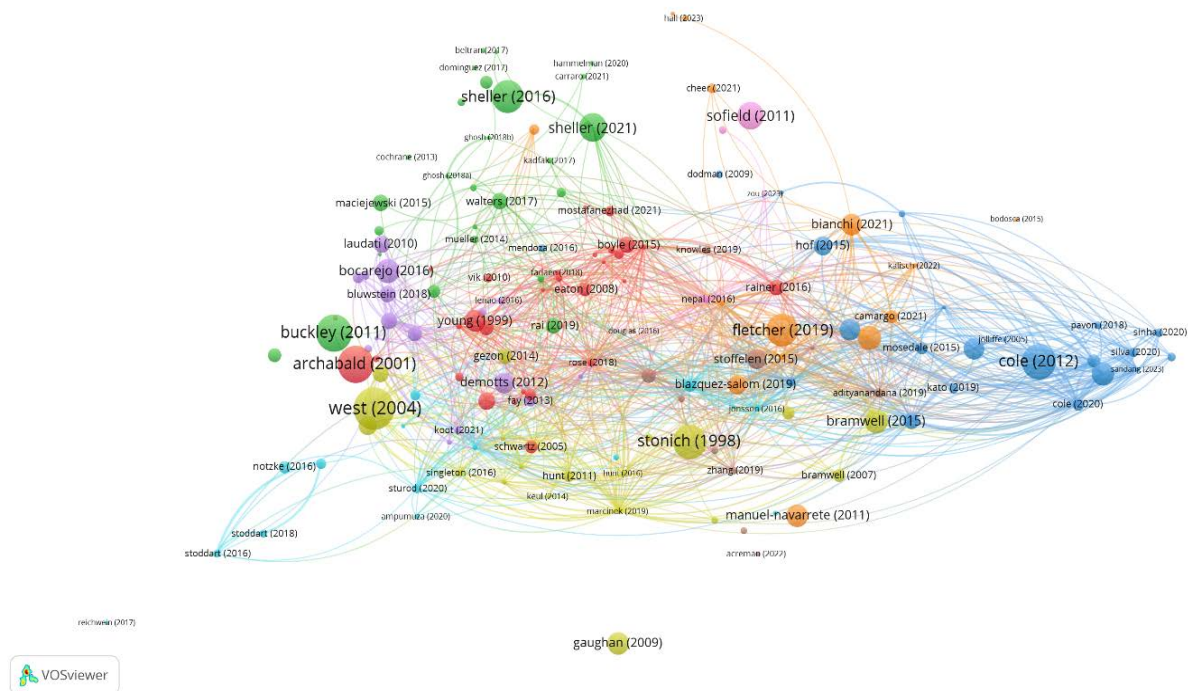


Figure 12. Visual Map of Bibliographic Coupling of Documents

When examining the bibliographic coupling graphical representation of the studies incorporated in the analysis related to the topic, in Figure 12, it is apparent that the works with the most bibliographic coupling are West and Carrier (2004), Archabald and Nau (2001), Buckley (2011), Cole (2012), Sheller (2016), Sheller (2021), Sofied and Li (2011), and Stonich (1998), respectively. The works with the highest total connection strength are Saarinen and Nepal (2016), Marcinek and Hunt (2019), Nepal et al. (2016), Mostefanezhad (2019), Munar and Jamal (2016), Cole and Mullor (2020), Rose and Carr (2018), Lavanchy (2017).

The dataset consisting of 192 studies was subjected to analysis in the RStudio Bibliometrix program to determine the most cited studies globally and locally in the field, and the findings are outlined in Figure 13.

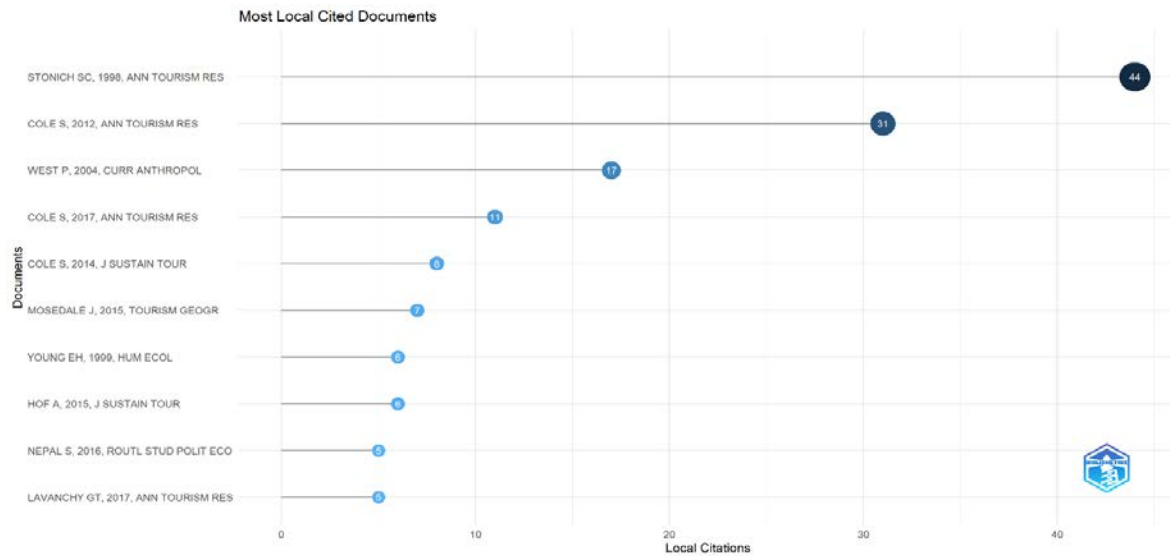
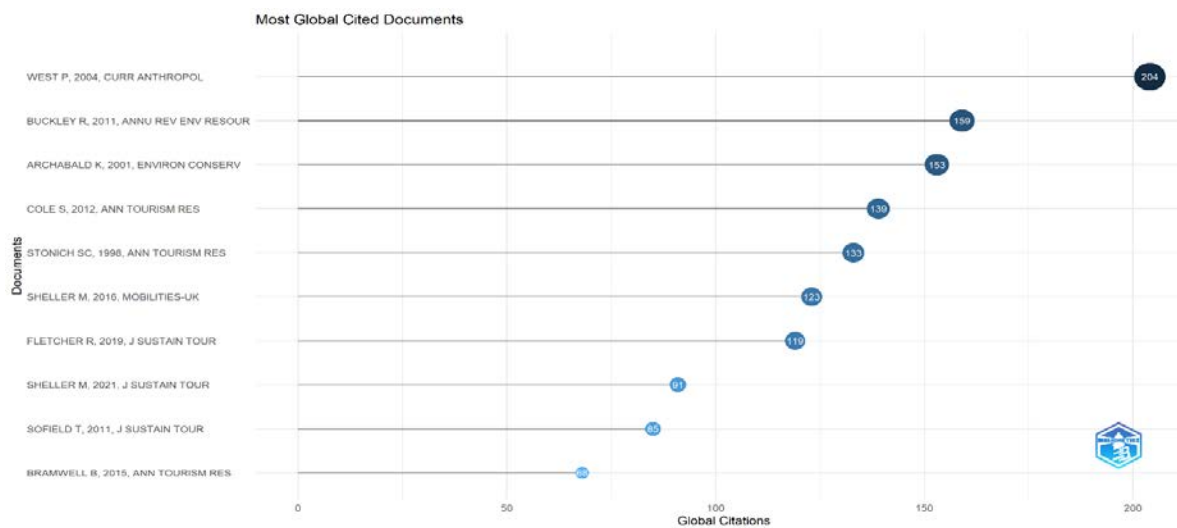
(a) Local Citation Status of Studies⁴(b) Global Cited Documents⁵

Figure 13. Citation Status of Studies

Examining the graph illustrating the local citation counts of studies (Figure 13 (a)), the study with the highest citation count is Stonich (1998) with 41 citations. Following Stonich (1998), the second most cited study is Cole (2012) with 31 citations. However, it is acknowledged that the author Cole, S. is represented in the ranking of most referenced works with three contributions. Upon reviewing the graph depicting the global citation counts of studies (Figure 13 (b)), it is evident that the study with the highest citation count is West (2004) with 204 citations.

In co-citation analysis, the relationship between two objects is based on the frequency with which these two objects are cited together (Zan, 2019), and it is used to identify the most significant sources, references, and authors in a field (Arslan, 2022).

⁴ Local Citation: refers to the number of citations a work receives from other documents within a specific search (i.e., in the example of a highly specialized set of documents under consideration) (Batsita-Caninon et al., 2023). In this context, it can be asserted that the local citation count reflects the citing situation within a specific discipline.

⁵ Global Citation: represents the total number of citations a work receives from all publications indexed in a source (such as Scopus, WOS, and Google Scholar) (Batsita-Caninon et al., 2023). In this context, it can be affirmed that the global citation count reflects the citing situation across different disciplines or within a broad research field.

The co-citation status of the cited authors of the 192 studies comprised in the analysis is presented in Figure 14.

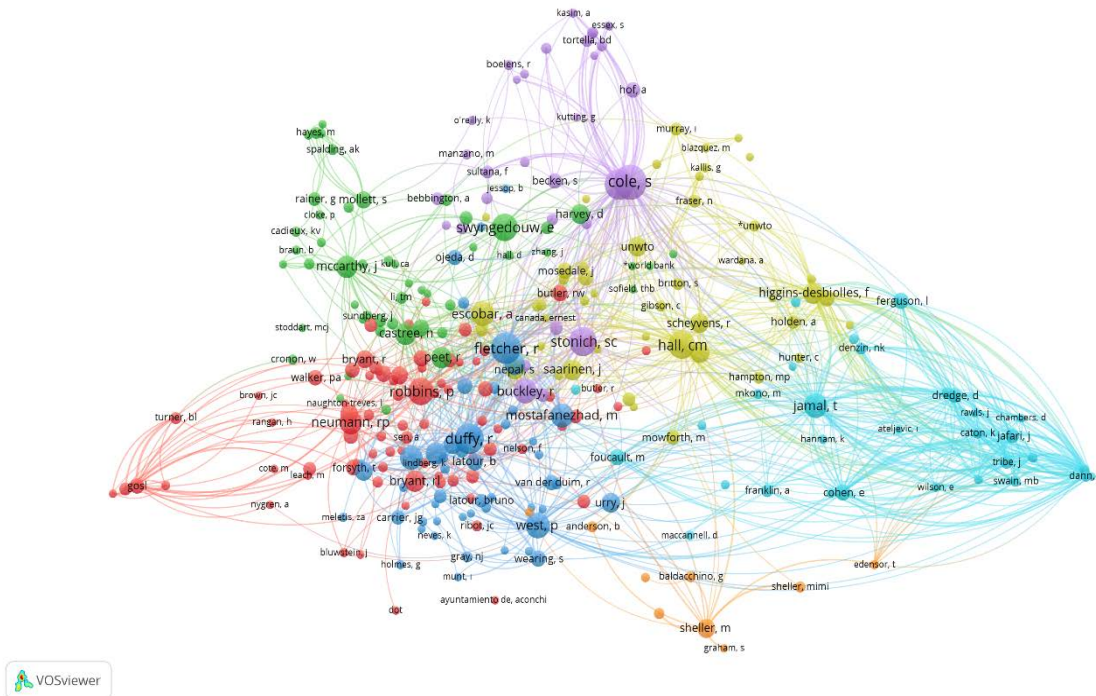


Figure 14. Visual Map of Co-citation of Cited Authors

In the co-citation analysis, the chosen unit of analysis is the “author,” and the minimum citation count criterion for the author is determined as at least 5. Meeting this criterion, 297 authors, forming 7 clusters with connections among them, have been identified. It is noted that the author with the highest co-citation frequency is Cole, S. (74). Other contributing authors include Fletcher, R. (61), Gössling, S. (56), Duffy, R. (56), and Stonich, S.C. (51).

CONCLUSION

The bibliometric analysis conducted in this research provides an evaluation of the scientific literature on political ecology in the field of tourism, revealing academic developments in this area. A total of 192 studies related to the subject were examined in terms of publication years, journals, and authors. Advanced bibliometric analyses were employed to identify the most significant works, prolific authors, and collaborations among authors. The primary limitation of the study is the limited use of field parameters to achieve a precise focus on as many of these studies as possible, due to the limited number of studies focused on political ecology in tourism. This is because the disciplines of tourism and political ecology each encompass broad areas of study. This study aims to specifically focus on political ecology studies within the field of tourism as a research area.

It was observed that the political ecology approach within tourism research emerged around 1998. The United States appeared to be the most influential country contributing to the development of the subject. Additionally, it was noted that academic studies on the topic are predominantly published in journals related to tourism. Stonich, S.C, emerged as the first author to adopt the political ecology approach in tourism research, while Cole, S. stood out as the most prolific author. In recent times, the political ecology approach in tourism has focused on issues related to development, gender, and governance. Based on the findings obtained, it is possible to assert that the relevant literature is rich and demonstrates a growth trend concerning the topic.

Based on the findings presented in Figure 2, which demonstrates the increase in the number of political ecology studies in tourism over the years, and Figure 8, which illustrates the

areas where political ecology studies in tourism are conducted, it is possible to say that there is increasing momentum and interdisciplinary collaboration in political ecology studies in tourism. Researchers predominantly focus on diverse topics such as water issues, globalization, neoliberalism, protected areas, sustainability, sustainable tourism, ecotourism, gender issues, and governance (Figure 6). The findings of this study (Figure 6) demonstrate that the literature on political ecology in the field of tourism encompasses a broad scope and various focus areas. However, as seen from the trend topics presented in Figure 6, there are still some gaps that require further research. In particular, the interactions between economic structures and environmental change, as well as the implications of these interactions for tourism practices, need more in-depth examination. Future studies should also aim to explore the impacts of political ecology on tourism from a broader perspective, delving deeper into power relations and social inequalities. Studies adopting a political ecology perspective can help in gaining a more nuanced understanding of the socio-environmental impacts of tourism, uncovering how power, politics, and economics intersect to affect both people and the environment. Such insights are crucial for developing more equitable and sustainable tourism practices, particularly for those most vulnerable to the negative impacts of tourism. The concentration of studies on a wide range of subjects indicates the broad scope of the field. The bibliometric analysis of publications on tourism and political ecology is deemed to provide a valuable contribution to assessing researchers' progress in this field and developing a more comprehensive understanding.

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eISSN : 2687-3737



Food and beverage rituals at the period of birth, marriage, and death in Shamanist Turks and its modern reflections

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ABSTRACT

It is known that the Turks have adopted many religions in history. Shamanism is also among the ancient beliefs of the Turks. Shamanism; Tengrism is also known by names such as the religion of the Sky God. This study examines the food and drink habits of Turks who believe in Shamanism during the mythological rituals they perform on the occasions of birth, marriage, and death. It also investigates how food and beverages were consumed during these occasions in Turkish mythology. The study emphasizes the reflections of the eating and drinking rituals in Turkish mythology to the present day. . In this context, a compilation article was made by using the literature review method, one of the qualitative research methods, by making use of secondary data sources. Various Turkic peoples and Turkic tribes were examined by scanning the relevant academic literature, and a conceptual framework was tried to be created. The research shows that Turks often use plant foods (barley, wheat, and oats) grown in their geographical area and horse meat in their rituals because it has an essential function in their lives. In addition, milk has an important place and is often consumed.

KEYWORDS

Shamanism, The Turks, Food and beverage, Rituals

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Received 30.05.2024; Received in revised form 30.06.2024; Accepted 01.07.2024

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e-ISSN: 2687 - 3737 / © 2021 The Authors. Published by Anadolu University

<https://doi.org/10.48119/toleho.1492741>

INTRODUCTION

It is known that the Turks have adopted many religions in history. Shamanism is also among the ancient beliefs of the Turks. Shamanism is also called Tengrism, known as the religion of the Sky God. In this study, a compilation article was made using the literature review method, one of the qualitative research methods, using secondary data sources. Various Turkic people and Turkic tribes were examined by scanning the relevant academic literature, and a conceptual framework was created.

Shamanism has been advocated as an ancient religion by writers such as Georgi, Shashkov, and Banzarov in the 18th and 19th Centuries. In the same period, some researchers who judged this issue with Christian conservatism approached with the view that Shamanism should not be considered a religion. Ibn Fadlan said that in the first half of the 10th century, some Turkic peoples, Gokturks, and some ancient Uighur peoples living in the Ural-Altai region were Shamanists. Radloff, in the second half of the 19th century, Anohin, Culloeh, and many other writers in the first half of the same century showed Shamanism as the religion of the Ural-Altai peoples only (Radloff, 2018, p. 139). Abdulkadir Inan (2020, p. 1) said, "Old Turks, without a doubt, were Shamanists." He stated that Shamanism in Turks is a mythological phenomenon. German-born Russian Turcologist Wilhelm Radloff, who considers Shamanism a major religion, has done many studies by observing and compiling the religious and historical information of the Central Asian Turkic Tribes during the years he lived among Shamanist communities due to his duty as an inspector. Radloff also has an essential place in deciphering the Orkhon Inscriptions. For this reason, Radloff's participation in some shamanic ceremonies and the knowledge and impressions he gained from the local people have an essential place in understanding shamanism (Radloff, 2018, p. 6). Bapaeva (2011, p. 9) states that the history of Shamanism in Tuva Turks dates back to B.C. It states that it is as old as the 3rd and 2nd centuries. According to Bapaeva, Shamanism in Tuva is based on the Huns, the ancestors of the Tuva people (Bapaeva, 2011, p. 9).

There are many cultures under the influence of Shamanism. Many high cultures, such as Indian, Iranian, Georgian, and Chinese cultures, have been influenced by Shamanism. Natives of North America, some peoples living in the Ural and Volga valleys in Russia, Turkmens, southwestern Kazakh tribes, Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, and Koreans were also influenced by Shamanism. It is known that all Turkic-Mongolian and Tungusic peoples once upon a time also adhered to Shamanism. Most Turks have long embraced Islam (Radloff, 2018, p. 148). Turks were influenced by religions such as Buddhism, Mazdaism, Manichaeism, and Nestorian Christianity before settling in their new homeland in Southeast Europe and Anatolia and converting to Islam (Boratav, 2012, p. 9). Some communities have kept Shamanism alive and preserved until today. Radloff states that today, Shamanism still lives among some Altaic communities (Turkish, Mongolian, Manchu, Tungusic). Altai-kijis, Teleuts, Ku-kijis (lebeds), Yish-kis (Forest Turks), Yenisei people, Tunguses, Chuvans, Koryaks, and Shors are some of these communities. Altai and Abakan Turks and Yakuts are officially Christians, but they are Shamanists (Radloff, 2018, p. 91). Today, 90% of Turks in the world are Muslims (Inan, 2020, p. 209). Islam has shown the most significant influence on the Turkish people and has successfully destroyed Shamanism compared to other religions (Radloff, 2018, p. 91). It is still possible to see the effects of Shamanism on some folk customs and beliefs in our country. Shamanism traditions in Muslim Turks have not been forgotten for centuries. The Oghuzes, who started to accept Islam at the beginning of the 10th century and became entirely Muslim in the 11th century, continued many Shamanism traditions even in the 15th century, as told in the Dede Korkut stories. Traces of ancient beliefs and rituals, such as cutting off the tail of the deceased person's horse during mourning ceremonies, walking the victim around the island, cutting a stallion, and celebrating the tree, can be found in today's Anatolian Turks, who are descendants of the Oghuzes (Inan, 2020, p. 209).

It is a subject that is emphasized in the study that the effects of Shamanism continue today. For this reason, in this study, it was desired to investigate the food and beverages used in the rituals of Shamanist Turks, their current place, and consumption patterns. The literature has been meticulously scanned in this context, and the reflections on the eating and drinking rituals in Turkish culture and Shamanism have been investigated. To continue Turkish culture, it is important to keep historical information alive and transfer it to future generations. This study

examined the eating-drinking rituals and culture in Shamanism, a belief in the past, but we observe that we carry traces of it today. It is hoped that the study will contribute to the relevant literature.

SHAMANISM AND TURKS

The first religion of the Turks is the "Turkish religion" known as "Şemeniyye" in the Eastern scientific world and "Shamanism" in the Western scientific world (Yörükan, 2020, p. 11). The historian of religion, Mircea Eliade, who was the first to deal with Shamanism as a whole, states that the term Shamanism is "an archaic and worldwide religious phenomenon." It is also a religion seen especially in Central and North Asia and regions close to the North Pole (Eliade, 2003, p. 20). According to the belief of Shamanism, the universe consists of three parts. The upper realm has seventeen layers and represents the sky, the realm of light. The lower realm is the realm of darkness, which has seven or nine layers. Between these two layers is the earth, and people live in this intermediate realm. In the religion of Shamanism, the highest of the gods is Tengere Kayra Kan, which is seen as the beginning of all beings (Radloff, 2018, p. 21-23). Kayra Kan is probably one of the names given to the Sky God. The Sky God is the greatest god of Turks (Çoruhlu, 2019, pp. 57-61) and is the "Turkish God," who created everything, the world, and people, and who gives people the state, happiness, and fortune, and is also mentioned in the Orkhon Inscriptions. Three great gods were formed from Kayra Kan. These are Bay Ülgen, Kızagan Tengere and Mergen Tengere. Apart from these gods, there are also spirits. The place where people live symbolizes a community of spirits who do good to people. These spirits are called Earth-Water spirits. Since people are most close to these spirits, they can connect without intermediaries and offer sacrifices. The god of the lower world is Erlik Kan, the terrible enemy of people (Radloff, 2018, p. 21-23).

There are different discourses on the etymological origin of the word shaman. According to Radloff, it came from a common root in Altaic languages and passed from Tungusic to the Western world of science through Russian. Instead of the Tungus word shaman, the Turks use the term "kam," and the Mongols use the term "Böge (Bö)" for male kams and "Udagan" for female kams (Radloff, 2018, p. 11; Gömeç, 1998, p. 40). The ordinary meaning of all these concepts; words such as the one who performs the ritual, the magician, the fortune teller, related to the religion of Shamanism. Kasgarlı Mahmud says that the word Kam means "seer." In Kutadgu Bilig, Yusuf Has refers to Hacıp as an "herbalist." He says that they are people who heal people (Gömeç, 1998, p. 40). According to Sadeddin Buluç, a shaman is a religious man who acts as an intermediary between spirits and people in tribes affiliated with Shamanism (Radloff, 2018, p. 107). The shaman offers sacrifices, cleanses the house of the souls of the dead, and directs the prayers of prayer and thanksgiving (Radloff, 2018 34). Yaşar Çoruhlu (2019, p. 127) states the duties of the shaman in more detail as follows;

"...to cure all kinds of diseases, to restore the protective spirit of the patient who left during the illness, to help with infertility and difficult births, do things such as delivering the sacrifices to the gods, conducting various religious ceremonies, sending spirits to the realm of the dead, arranging rites to protect people from evil spirits, telling fortunes about the future."

The shaman defends life, health, fertility, and the world of light against death, disease, misfortune, and darkness (Eliade, 2003, p. 27). After explaining shaman and Shamanism in general, it is helpful to mention the eating and drinking rituals in Shamanism and their current reflections, which form the basis of the study. We can observe these reflections in many different ways in our daily lives. Perhaps the most striking of these reflections today is the rituals of sacrifice. In the next section, sacrificial rituals are examined in detail.

SACRIFICE RITUALS IN SHAMANIST TURKS AND REFLECTIONS OF TODAY

Since, in this section, the Shamanism and post-Islamic rituals are compared in order, the flow will be this way. To understand the eating and drinking rituals in Shamanism, it is necessary to discuss the sacrificial ritual. Because the rites and ceremonies in Shamanism do not take place without victims, these victims consist of food and beverages. Shamanist Turks offered sacrifices

for many reasons, such as rain during droughts, healing of the sick in times of illness, peace for the souls of the dead, health of the mother and baby at birth, and sound marriage at weddings.

There are two types of sacrificial practices in the Turks: bloody and bloodless. The bloodless sacrifice is called "Saçılga". It is also known as "Saçu or Saçıl" in different Turkish societies. These bloodless sacrifices offer food and beverage (dessert, milk, vodka, etc.) by pouring into nature, throwing oil and wine into the fire, or in the form of gifts spilled from the bride's head. "Tayılga" is a form of sacrifice in Shamanism in the form of killing an animal by strangulation and without slaughter. "İdik" is a freed victim. It is also known as "İtik, İyik". In the İdik sacrifice, the animal is released into nature with a sign and is released. People who know that that animal is İdik can never touch that animal. Gagauzs used the term "Godness" instead of İdik. The practice called divinity is the wealthy farmer choosing the best among its animals and releasing them to the countryside. "Kurumsak" is also a kind of blood sacrifice. "Yağış" also refers to an animal to be slaughtered for divine or religious purposes (Karakurt, 2012, p. 170; İnan, 2020, p. 98; Kılıçve Albayrak, 2012, p.711).

Bloody victims were horses, deer, cattle, rams, sheep, mules, oxen, rodents, squirrels, bulls, dogs, mountain goats, and camels (Akgün, 2007, p. 141; Alsan, 2022, p. 189; Roux, 1994, p. 201, Kılıçve Albayrak, 2012, p. 710), etc. are animals. The animals that can be sacrificed in Islam are much more limited. In blood sacrifice ceremonies, the animal is chosen from the owner's herd, which must be the fattest. The victim is killed by torture, unlike in Islam. The sacrificial animal is usually a horse. The killing of a horse victim is done as follows: The horse is placed with its head to the east and tied tightly with a string. All body openings, such as ears, nose, and breech, are clogged with grass, so blood does not flow. Great care is taken that the animal's blood does not spill even a drop. The ancestor is tortured until it dies. Then, the skin is peeled so that the whole head and legs are left on the skin up to the knees. Their meat is distributed raw. Back, ribs, small bones, and breasts are cooked in water in a large cauldron without adding anything. Two chosen cooks mix the meat in the cauldron. After the meat is cooked, it is placed in a prepared place from beech sticks and cut into small pieces. The Shaman takes a wooden bowl, puts meat in it, pours soup on it, and goes to the sacrifice place, facing east, and presents it to the ancestors and guardian spirits of the house. The Shaman presents the remaining meat on the plate to the host. The host eats some and gives the rest to the Shaman (Radloff, 2018, pp. 39-48; Roux, 1999, pp. 121-122).

In Islam, the sacrifice is sacrificed on Eid al-Adha, and the blood of the victim is shed in Islamic methods. It is rewarding to distribute the meat of the sacrifice to people experiencing poverty. It can also be eaten by meat, slaughter, and family. In addition to offerings, sacrifices are also made to give thanks after seeing the help of God, apart from the feast. However, the votive sacrifice cannot be eaten by first-degree relatives and the devotee, per Islamic rules (Karakurt, 2012, p. 506). The sacrifices that were made after the deceased in the ancient Turks were made to protect from the harmful effects of the dead, to please the dead, and to leave the soul of the deceased from the house and find peace in the household, with Islam, sacrificial rituals began to be performed to do charity and feed the poor. Ceremonies with the names of eren vaccine, grave victim, and afterlife victim in Anatolia today are among the sacrificial traditions of the past that are reflected in the present. For today's version of the bloodless victim, we can give examples of mawlıds made for death, marriage, or a newborn baby, food products such as wheat and sugar thrown on the bride and groom's head, and prenatal baby parties (Sağır, 2016, p. 11). Mawlid tradition in the Islamic world. The tradition began with writing literary texts in verse and prose about Muhammad's birth, his family, prophetic qualities, miracles, morality, state and behavior, and various periods of his life and death. This tradition extends over time to the Turks. On the Night of Power in 1932, upon Atatürk's request, a Mawlid celebration was held in the Hagia Sophia Mosque, and it was delivered to the public via live radio broadcast for the first time (Akarpınar, 2006, p. 45). It is seen that in Turkish societies that accepted Islam, Shamanism rituals were restructured and practiced by the people. Mawlid ceremonies are a form of restructuring that has reached practical and aesthetic maturity (Akarpınar, 2006, p. 46). In addition, in contrast to the "Saçılga" ritual in Shamanism, in Islam today, we see the wheat and sugar scattered on the head of the bride who got married and left her father's house, the tooth wheat made for babies, the mawlid and the lokma rituals that are taught for deaths, births or newly purchased worldly goods.

These practices, which are done in different ways but for similar purposes, can be counted among Shamanism's eating and drinking rituals. In fact, in practices such as bloody or bloodless sacrifice or "Saçılga", the aim is the desire for abundance and protection from evil.

EATING AND DRINKING RITUALS RELATED TO BIRTH IN SHAMANIST TURKS AND THEIR REFLECTIONS TODAY

Birth, marriage, and death are the three transitional periods of human life. In transitional periods, people were believed to be weak and vulnerable to harmful external influences. For this reason, rituals were performed to be protected and sanctified during these transitional periods (Türker and Gündoğdu, 2016, p. 142).

When the rituals related to birth are examined, we encounter various prenatal and postnatal practices in the past and today. Prenatal practices are generally performed by people who do not have children and who seek a cure for infertility. Having a child is an essential phenomenon in Turkish society today. It is seen that the desire to have a son for the continuation of the lineage is higher in some regions of our country. Beliefs of sacrificing man, visiting shrines and graves, and praying, which have existed for a long time to have children, continue to exist together with Islam.

It has been observed that women who want to get rid of infertility in shamanism drink water from the spring there, take soil from the tomb and drink this soil with water, and even swallow an insect taken from the tomb. It is also an old Turkish belief that a woman without a child drinks water from the palm of a woman with a child and that a woman in labor pains eats the apple she has bitten. It is known that today, childless women mix various spices with honey, eat wolf meat in some regions, and even feed the placenta/wife of a woman who has just given birth to the woman without her knowledge (Kılıç, 2012, p. 18-19). Dede Korkut tells in his stories that women pour wine into dry tea when they want a son (İnan, 2020, p. 171). The Kyrgyz sacrificed and gave a feast to have children. They also visit sacred places such as trees, graves, etc., and offer sacrifices. Again, when a child is born healthy, the Kyrgyz sacrifice an animal to thank Allah if the newborn baby and mother are healthy. Names such as "tülöö (wish), aksarbaşıl, sadaga" are given to this tradition. Again, in these ceremonies, other than sacrifice, food made from dough is served (Arık, 2005, pp. 160-161). Yakuts also donate animals to God when they want children. This is primarily done when wanting a boy. Yakuts place great emphasis on the firstborn. On the day the child was born, he ate a fatty meal, sacrificed an animal, and cooked without breaking his head (İnan, 2020, p. 171). In the Yakuts, the creator gods and spirits' general name was "Aylhut." Three days after the birth, a farewell ceremony was held for the bear, and the women were laughing and smearing oil on their faces; a soup was cooked from wheat boiled in water and eaten. This soup is known as "Salamat" (Koç and Dönmez, 2020, p. 3309). "Urug Doyu" (Children's Party) was held on the day a child was born among the Tıva Turks. This custom continues today during the first month after the baby is born. The sacrifice is made at this toy, and the meat is distributed (Türker and Gündoğdu, 2016, p. 144).

A sacrifice ceremony is held on the ninth day of the new moon for mother Umay, who is believed to help women give birth, which is associated with childbirth in Turkish mythology. In addition, raki prepared from sour milk in the Altays is thought to be related to the Umay cult. The apple and the apple tree are also associated with birth. Kazakh Turks believed childless women could become pregnant after rolling under the apple tree (Kılıç and Albayrak, 2012, p. 712). In the old Turks, fire was highly sacred, and sacrifices were made because fire drove away evil spirits and cleansed everything (KTB, 2018, p. 85). Fire is both creator and destroyer. Cursing the fire, insulting, spitting, defecating, nailing, etc., were considered sins (Çoruhlu, 2019, pp. 104-106). During their birth, Yakuts worshiped by pouring oil on the fire (Akgün, 2007, pp. 144-147). On the other hand, Kyrgyz Turks hold an entertainment ceremony called "CentekToyu" at births. In these celebrations, held for the joy of the child born into the world, relatives and neighbors are invited, and family members cook and serve the best dishes. In Turkmens, forty days after the baby is born, washing with salt water is done. This process is also called "kırklama". In the Caspian Turks, women cannot eat meat until they are forty, and meat is prohibited in their houses (Yeşil, 2014, pp. 123-124). Today, the belief is that women who have just given birth should not leave the house

for 40 days, and the tradition of washing the baby with salt water when the baby is 40 days old continues.

The old Turks believed that an evil spirit haunted the puerperium. This spirit is known as “Albastı/Al karısı”. It has occurred in Turkish legends such as “Alkarısı, Albis, Almis” (İnan, 2020, p. 172). This belief has persisted until today. Red sherbets such as poppy and licorice sherbet are drunk to eliminate this evil spirit. Today, those who come to see a child are offered a treat under the name of “loğusa şerbeti” (Kılıç, 2012, p. 29).

EATING AND DRINKING RITUALS RELATED TO MARRIAGE IN SHAMANIST TURKS AND THEIR CONTEMPORARY REFLECTIONS

Shamanists and Muslim Turks have a common element regarding marriage. This element is scattering the “saçı” on the bride's head. The purpose of this saç is for the bride to be accepted by the ancestors and spirits of her new lineage in the house she comes to. While these saç were the blood, fat, and meat of the hunt among the people engaged in hunting, kumiss, milk, and animal fat among the people involved in shepherding, they were wheat, millet, and various fruits among the people engaged in farming (İnan, 2020, p. 170). Today, at weddings, items such as wheat, snacks, and sugar are scattered from the bride's head, food is given (wedding meal in Shamanism), oil is smeared on the door, etc. Traditions are an extension of the culture inherited from Shamanism (KTB, 2019, pp. 245-321). It is known that when young girls reach marriage age, they accept marriage by giving apples to their suitors (Kılıç and Albayrak, 2012, p. 713). Among the Yakuts, the groom would take a cooked horse head as a gift when visiting his fiancée (Koç and Dönmez, 2020, p. 3309). Nowadays, it is customary to bring cookies to the fiancée instead.

When getting married in Shamanist Turks, each person has to slaughter a light-coloured horse for Ülgen. Among Kyrgyz-Kazakhs and Bashkirs, the newly married bride would throw oil on the fire and pray. In the Altai, on the first night, the bride would bless the fire lit by the groom and offer him food. He would throw oil on the fire, throw a piece of meat, and pour kumiss. Dolls made of cloth, called nenes, are called “emegender” among the Teleuts, a tribe of the Altai people, and are a cultural heritage passed from mother to daughter. When the girl gets married, she goes to her husband's house with this doll, and twice a year, in spring and autumn, the ceremony of giving food to the “emegender” is held (Akgün, 2007, pp. 144-147; Koç and Dönmez, 2020, p. 3309). A wedding dinner is also held today. This dish can be made during the wedding or after the bride arrives. A wide variety of home cooking can be seen in these dishes, which vary from region to region. For example, in Elazığ, while stuffed meatballs, Harput meatballs, stuffed meat, casserole, and rice are served, boiled meat, rice, and compote are served in Tunceli and its surroundings. Tirit, roasted meat, bulgur pilaf, and stuffed cabbage are served in Konya. In Hatay, the wedding dishes include eggplant stew, firik, rice and bulgur pilafs, green beans, and soups with yogurt. In Isparta, bulgur pilaf made before the wedding, called “pılavdökme”, is taken to the cemetery and distributed to the children there. When visiting the newlyweds in Bingöl, “kapama” is made, and they are wrapped in hot lavash and given as a treat. In the Aegean region (Manisa, Izmir, Denizli, etc.), keşkek and alcoholic drinks are often served. Keşkek has become the symbol of wedding meals (Kılıç, 2012, p. 45). The ceremonial food known as “köçö” (a soup made from meat and edible flowering plants) in the Altai people and “malahın” in the Yakuts is the wedding food we know today as keşkek (Yeşil, 2014, p. 134; Koç and Dönmez, 2020, p. 3312).

EATING AND DRINKING RITUALS RELATED TO DEATH IN SHAMANIST TURKS AND THEIR CONTEMPORARY REFLECTIONS

The feature that distinguishes Shamanism from other religions is the belief that there is a close connection between the living man and the people's long-dead ancestors. The belief in the strength of this bond necessitates respecting the ancestors and offering sacrifices to them (Radloff, 2018, p. 34). In Turks, ancestor spirits seem helpful and protective (Akgün, 2007, p. 146). Even today, we can say that the distribution of food on the anniversary of death, visits to the cemetery on holidays or other days to be good for the dead, and prayers for their souls are indicators of the continuation of this cult of ancestors.

The most significant art of the shaman is the work called cleaning the homeland. This is done on the fortieth day of the deceased in the family. According to this ritual, the Shaman talks to relatives who have died and are in the nether world. The dead do not want to accept the new spirit, and the shaman seeks to deceive them, pleading with the dead. The shaman takes the bottle of raki and offers the souls of the dead from the water of life. Offering sacrifices and cleaning the house are the primary religious duties of the Shaman (Radloff, 2018, p. 83). Shamans say prayers by sprinkling water around to clean the house after the dead. It is known that this old tradition continues in some regions (Alsan, 2022, p. 192). The ancient Turks used to offer their first bite, the first milk of their mares, when they sat down to eat for their deceased ancestors. Today, Kazakhs also have a tradition of offering sacrifices for the deceased (Akgün, 2007, p. 146).

In many ancient Turkish states, the dead were buried with their horses, servants, belongings, jewels, and sometimes with their wife or wives, while they were buried in the grave. It has even been revealed in archaeological excavations that the dead were buried with food and drinks (cheese, butter, wine, kumis, meat, raki, etc.) to eat in the next world. The ancient Turks believed that the dead could come to life again. For this reason, they were buried with objects they might need to survive and live comfortably when they came to life again (Alsan, 2022, p. 189).

Post-mortem funeral ceremonies hold an essential place in Shamanist Turks. In the Orkhon Inscriptions, which have an important place in Turkish history, it is stated that people gathered for funerals, and in the works written by Kaşgarlı Mahmud and Ahmet İbn-iFadlan, a large meal was given to the participants in the funeral ceremonies (Alsan, 2022, p. 188). The Gokturks held ceremonies, also called “dead vaccine, which they called “yog” after the deceased rulers. These were held in the form of sumptuous banquets. Some of the meals cooked by the rich people by slaughtering hundreds of animals were distributed, and some of them were poured onto the graves of the dead (Şişman, 1996, p. 567). In Chinese sources and Orkhon inscriptions, it is written that during the funeral ceremonies of the Göktürks, their relatives slaughtered horses and sheep and laid their meat in front of the tent (Alsan, 2022, p. 191). Even today, this ancient culture continues. On the day of the funeral, the first three days following it, and the fortieth day of the deceased, a mass meal is given in the dead house. Some also serve meals on the seventh and fifty-second days after the burial. This dish is called “dead food”. The purpose of these collective meals is to commemorate the deceased and share their relatives' pain in life. Although this meal is performed differently in Anatolia, it is a typical ceremony at every death. In some regions, the funeral owners prepare the meals personally, while in others, the subject is prepared by neighbors and relatives and brought to the funeral home (Akdağ and Sormaz, 2019, p. 554). This “dead food” is known by the following names in different regions of Anatolia; “Kırkekmeği or Ölüekmeği” (Erzurum region and its environs), “Kazmatakırtısı” (Divriği, Mersin villages, Southern Yoruks), “Kırk yemeği” (Tunceli), “Ölününkırkı” (Divriği), “Can aşısı” (Tunceli, Şebinkarahisar, Alacahöyük), “Can helvası” (Mersin), “Hayrat ekmeği” (Gaziantep), “Kazma kürek helvası” (Urfa). Some foods are considered dead food but not given as a feast. Some of them are as follows: “Şemşek” (Kilis), “Ölü gigiği” (Sivas), “yogurt bread” (Haymana), “Ölü çöreği, Köncülü”, (Kahramanmaraş) (Örnek, 1971, pp. 88-89).

It is a common view that child deaths in Teleuts are due to measles and smallpox. To heal the child, the oldest person in the family makes a tiny raft, and a drink called araki, food made from dough, fruit, and honey, is placed on this raft. These were left in the river to be delivered to the god Talay Kaan, associated with the water element. If the child did not recover and died, the same procedure was applied, and this time, the child's belongings were also placed on the raft. In the spring, this raft was released into the river (Koç and Dönmez, 2020, p. 3307).

In Anatolia today, food is usually not cooked in the dead house for the first three days. Only after the deceased is halva roasted in the deceased's home and served to those who attend the funeral. It is believed that commemoration ceremonies are held on the three, seven, twenty, and fortieth days after the burial or death day and at the end of the year in the old Turks (Roux, 1994, p. 234). In Altays and Yakuts, the funeral meals given on the 3rd, 7th, 9th, and 40th days after the death are called “töğü” and “ahılık”. Food such as meat, butter, and lavash are served in these ceremonies. In the Shor Turks, food was scattered on the fire on the 40th day of the dead to feed

the souls of the dead by the Shaman. They believed that when the fire was extinguished, they said goodbye to the soul of the dead (Koç and Dönmez, 2020, p. 3309).

CONCLUSION

In this study, we tried to determine the food and drinks used during the birth, wedding, and death periods in various Turkish communities according to the Shamanist belief, and it was seen that there were many different traditions. From birth to death, human beings have emphasized the fact of eating and drinking, which is their most basic need, as if they organized a ceremony in their happiest and saddest times. Many of the eating and drinking traditions continued with Islam. Today, Turkish people meticulously prepare food and drink during birth, marriage, and death periods.

It is seen that some old Turkish beliefs still exist and are still alive today. We can say that this is solid proof that the Turks are a society that adheres to their traditions even after hundreds of years have passed. One of the most important ways to understand cultural values is to know the eating and drinking habits of the society. The continuation of eating and drinking habits in Turks since Shamanism reflects a deep-rooted cultural infrastructure. Although society's civilization brings some changes in lifestyles and habits, this change does not change the cultural phenomena symbolized in some beliefs and cultural values. Despite the changes and transformations that have occurred even in religious beliefs from the past to the present, there has been no change in the perspectives and meanings attributed to birth, marriage, and death, which are life's turning points. We see that the rituals of these vital cycles, which evoke feelings such as health, trust, and abundance, are repeated in different ways but are essentially similar. There are, of course, advantages and disadvantages to these unchanging facts. However, the fact that the phenomenon of eating and drinking can be continued and that the culinary culture is rooted in it makes every society culturally unique.

As stated in the study, Turk culture carries many traces of Shamanism from the past to the present. Continuing behavioral patterns today are not just about food and drink. It is known that in the evil eye belief, elements such as the blue bead and the behavior of hitting the wood by saying "God forbid" when a bad word is heard or said are connected with Shamanism. In the belief of Shamanism, while the Turks held big weddings during their birth, today this event has turned into similar entertainment under the name of 'baby shower party.' Again, if a woman is a guest in a house after giving birth, the custom of giving eggs to her continues even among the younger generation today. Other gifts, such as candy, bread, clothes, and toys, were added to the egg. It reflects the old belief that wheat, sugar, and cookies are scattered all over the bride's head during weddings, especially when leaving her father's house. Today, these hairs have meanings such as getting along with her husband sweetly in the house where the bride goes and being the blessing of her home. It is seen that the food and drinks in Shamanism are used as a treat and for beliefs. Today, we see that many shamanistic beliefs are practiced by Turks living in Anatolia, even unconsciously, apart from food and beverage elements.

The old Turkish belief, Shamanism, is a cultural heritage left to the Turkish people from their ancestors. Keeping this legacy alive should not mean spreading a religion or corrupting Islam. Bearing the traces of a past culture should be seen as the beauty of existing as a non-assimilated society.

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