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RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Blockchain Technology in Tourism: Pioneering Sustainable and Collaborative Travel Experiences

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**ABSTRACT**
This study explores the transformative potential of Blockchain technology within the tourism sector, with a primary focus on its role in promoting sustainability and enhancing stakeholder engagement. Employing a qualitative methodology, this study incorporates interviews with ten industry experts and key stakeholders in tourism. The findings underscore Blockchain's capacity to bolster sustainability efforts by fostering transparency, traceability, and accountability. This, in turn, enables effective monitoring of supply chains, validates eco-friendly certifications, and verifies adherence to sustainable practices. In addition, Blockchain empowers local communities by offering a decentralized platform for participation and decision-making. This study also identified critical challenges, including the necessity for scalable and energy-efficient Blockchain solutions, along with the imperative to address legal and regulatory impediments. The outcomes not only enrich our understanding of Blockchain's potential in the tourism sector but also provide valuable recommendations for future research and implementation. Blockchain technology is poised to revolutionize tourism, champion sustainability, and cultivate collaborative stakeholder relationships.

**Keywords:** Blockchain, Tourism, Sustainability, Travel Experiences

## Introduction

The travel and tourism industry, which contributes trillions of dollars to the global economy, is acknowledged for its significant environmental and social impact. Sustainability and ethics solutions have long been needed in this industry (Chok et al., 2007), and fortunately, Blockchain technology is now meeting these requirements. Using distributed ledger technology, Tourism Blockchain has the potential to enhance travel sustainability and transparency (Rejeb and Karim, 2019). Automated transactions using smart contracts reduce costs and eliminate intermediaries in the tourism industry.

The Tourism Blockchain provides a significant benefit by promoting sustainable travel practices. By incorporating Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) metrics into the Blockchain, travel companies can evaluate and audit their impacts on the environment and local community (Park and Li, 2021). This approach promotes sustainable practices while transparently documenting the company's endeavors to lower carbon emissions and aid local communities. Blockchain technology provides a personalized and seamless travel experience, which is a significant advantage for the tourism industry (Ferrell and Ferrell, 2021). Using blockchain-based authentication, travelers can verify their identities without using physical documents. This process improves check-in speed, reduces waiting times, and enhances the overall travel experience (Erol et al., 2022).

The implementation of tourism Blockchain technology provides travel companies with competitive advantages in the digital space. Integrating Blockchain technology into a company's website and marketing strategies has the potential to enhance customer experience, increase brand loyalty, and ultimately boost sales and conversions (Rashideh, 2020). The intersection of Blockchain technology, tourism, and sustainability is ushering in a new age of transparent, eco-conscious, and socially responsible travel. Integrating Blockchain technology into business practices enables travel companies to enhance their sustainability metrics and maintain a competitive edge in the digital space (Buhalis et al., 2022; Joy et al., 2022). As the travel industry progresses, it has become evident that Blockchain technology in tourism will significantly impact the future of travel.

However, there remains a gap in tourism Blockchain research, and much still needs to be addressed. Although research has analyzed the potential benefits and drawbacks of Blockchain in tourism, questions continue to persist regarding its application in the industry and its impact on sustainability. Tourism Blockchain can assist travel companies in minimizing their environmental

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impact and backing local communities. For instance, Blockchain technology can create smart contracts to monitor and diminish the carbon footprint. Storing and processing travel data on the Blockchain network can decrease the probability of data breaches and safeguard travelers' personal information.

This study examines the possible theoretical and practical impacts of Blockchain technology on the tourism industry. Our analysis considers how implementing Blockchain technology in the sector could potentially influence important areas such as sustainability, transparency, and customer experience. First, we present a theoretical framework detailing the potential applications of Blockchain technology in the tourism industry. This study explores enhancements to current processes in the tourism industry by integrating sustainability metrics and strengthening customer authentication. Additionally, it examines the potential benefits of Blockchain technology and its ability to provide a competitive edge for tourism. Furthermore, it assesses the effect of Blockchain technology on tourism from an applied perspective. Real-world examples and current sector developments illustrate the applications and outcomes of Blockchain technology, specifically its role in reducing environmental impact, supporting local communities, and improving customer satisfaction in the tourism sector.

This study aimed to deepen our understanding of the theoretical and practical implications of this technology. To demonstrate the benefits of this technology for industry, the aim of this study is to establish a platform for future applications. This research marks a significant milestone toward transforming the tourism industry through sustainable and technological advancements.

## Conceptual Background

### Understanding Blockchain Technology in Tourism

Blockchain technology has recently become a promising tool for innovation in various fields, including tourism. However, open questions remain regarding how effectively this technology can support tourism growth (Buhalis et al., 2022). This study provides an overview of the potential applications of Blockchain in tourism and addresses opportunities and challenges.

A Blockchain is a decentralized database that operates without a central authority or server (Filimonau and Naumova, 2020). Every transaction recorded in the chain is protected by the network through cryptographic algorithms to ensure immutability upon verification (Antoniadis et al., 2020). Therefore, the Blockchain network maintains a permanent record of all transactions. This makes Blockchain an ideal solution for industries that deal with sensitive information, assets or processes, as they require transparency, security and reliability.

Blockchain is a digital ledger that records transactions across several systems. This technology provides a transparent and secure platform for storing and verifying data, without the need for intermediaries. In the tourism industry, Blockchain technology has the potential to address crucial concerns, including trustworthiness, authenticity, and sustainability.

### Blockchain and Tourism Interface

Protecting the privacy of travelers' booking information and financial transactions is crucial for the tourism industry. Security promotes trust among travelers, aiding them in selecting more trustworthy service providers and destinations. According to research carried out by Amoako et al. (2019), implementing trust-building measures significantly influences customer acquisition and retention in travel companies.

Nakamoto (2008) distinguishes itself by facilitating the secure and transparent transfer of digital assets in financial transactions. Subsequently, this study examines the potential impact of Blockchain technology within the tourism industry, building on Nakamoto's seminal contributions. Blockchain technology can increase customer trust and security in the travel industry. A decentralized ledger provides secure and transparent data storage (Calvaresi et al., 2019; Rashidesh, 2020). Transactions are verified without the need for centralized authorities, thereby reducing the risk of data tampering or hacking.

In the tourism industry, Blockchain technology offers the possibility of establishing a secure and transparent platform for travel bookings and transactions (Güvenol and Güler, 2023). To illustrate, travel agencies can implement smart contracts that execute automatically once the trip is finished or payment is received. These contracts assure travelers that their bookings and transactions are secure (Demirel et al., 2022). Furthermore, Blockchain technology can securely store and manage travel data (Tyan et al., 2021). Travel companies can use Blockchain to build a decentralized identity system, in which each traveler has a unique digital identity associated with their travel information. This system allows travelers to securely and selectively share their data with travel providers, resulting in a more personalized and optimized travel experience (Stockburger et al., 2021).

Another benefit of using Blockchain technology in the tourism industry is its potential to increase transparency and accountability. Blockchain simplifies auditing and monitoring by recording all transactions in a distributed ledger (Erceg et al., 2020). This enables travel companies to provide customers with real-time updates on bookings and transactions, ultimately increasing their transparency and accountability. All parties can verify the validity of transactions, thereby reducing the risk of conflict and fraud (Rana et al., 2022). Additionally, Blockchain technology has the potential to help travel companies solve certain challenges related to cross-border payments. Traditional payment methods often require high fees and long processing times, which can cause delays and inconvenience to travelers and travel companies (Rashidesh, 2020).

In summary, the travel industry relies on trust and Blockchain technology can help travel companies build and maintain this trust. Developing a secure and transparent travel booking and transaction platform can improve customer relationships and increase customer loyalty. Blockchain technology can increase transparency and accountability, while reducing the risk of data breaches and fraud. Additionally, it enables faster and cheaper cross-border payments.

## Smart Contracts for Improving Travel Experiences

Owing to the superior capabilities of Blockchain technology, smart contracts have the potential to revolutionize various industries, including tourism (Karinsalo and Halunen, 2018). These contracts are automated and are stored on a Blockchain, with predetermined rules and conditions encoded. Upon meeting the required conditions, the contracts activate automatically, streamlining the process and enhancing transparency. An instance of the implementation of smart contracts in the travel industry can be observed when a travel service provider sets up a smart contract to automatically release payments after a traveler completes its trip (Bodkhe et al., 2019).

The use of smart contracts enhances customer experience by efficiently streamlining travel industry processes. One of the significant benefits of this technology is the elimination of intermediaries, such as travel agents and payment processors (Rashidesh, 2020). Smart contracts can potentially decrease costs for travel companies and minimize the chances of interruptions or lapses arising from engaging numerous stakeholders. Additionally, smart contracts can improve the travel experience by enabling swift and secure payments (Negi et al., 2021). Compared to conventional payment systems, which require intermediaries, smart contracts offer benefits such as low service charges and rapid and secure transactions. Smart contracts allow travel companies to process payments securely, transparently, and affordably (Demirel et al., 2022). For instance, a satisfied traveler who completes a trip can be automatically programmed through a smart contract to transfer the payment to the service provider.

In addition, smart contracts streamline the check-in process, providing travel convenience. For instance, a smart contract can be coded to automatically create a unique digital identity for every passenger, which can then be utilized for identity verification and travel information. Hence, all crucial details remain securely stored in the Blockchain and eliminate the need for a physical boarding pass or ticket (Nandakumar et al. 2017). Smart contracts can automatize the check-in process at hotels, car-rental agencies, and other travel providers, thus reducing waiting time and improving customers' overall travel experience (Balasubramanian et al., 2022).

In the travel industry, smart contracts enable smooth coordination between service providers. For instance, travelers can reserve flights, hotels, and car rentals through various providers. Owing to smart contracts, all critical information is securely stored on the Blockchain, enabling easy access and review by each service provider, as needed (Pranto et al., 2021). This approach can enhance operational efficiency and minimize the occurrence of errors or miscommunication among service providers.

## The Blockchain-based Sustainable Tourism

Blockchain technology is proving to be a valuable tool for promoting sustainable tourism by addressing sustainability challenges in the travel industry (Uçgun and Narcı, 2022).). Nowadays, sustainability is a significant concern for travelers and businesses that are mindful of the environmental and social impacts of travel (Pranita et al., 2023)

Blockchain offers a solution to track carbon emissions in a transparent manner. Recording transportation, accommodation, and activity data enables travelers to comprehend their carbon footprints and offset emissions through certified projects (Alnahari and Ariaratnam, 2022). Additionally, Blockchain technology can authenticate products, services, and certificates within the tourism industry. Consequently, by tracking emissions, responsible tourism can be advanced through carbon offsetting (Alnahari and Ariaratnam, 2022). The unchangeable quality of Blockchain provides a perfect platform for verifying the genuineness of merchandise and amenities. This technology reduces the occurrence of counterfeit products and deceptive promotions, empowering travelers to make knowledgeable choices while endorsing local economies, ethical business practices, and environmentally friendly undertakings (Alnahari and Ariaratnam, 2022; Esmaeilian et al., 2020).

Blockchain systems simplify tourism value chain management and revenue distribution for local communities (Negi et al., 2021). Decentralized platforms can be created to book travel services, such as accommodation or tours, prioritizing local service providers and businesses (Onafowora and Owoye, 2020). This approach promotes tourism revenue within the local economy, encourages sustainable growth, and decreases the environmental impact of tourism (Viano et al., 2022). Blockchain technology can enable communities to create and oversee sustainable tourism initiatives (Zhao, 2022). For instance, Blockchain-based donation platforms can offer funding for community-driven tourist projects, such as ecotourism and cultural heritage preservation. These funds can foster sustainable development by offering practical aid to the local communities.

### The SEO Advantage of Quality Blockchain and Sustainability Content

Search engine optimization (SEO) is crucial in digital marketing, particularly in tourism. Travel businesses that produce comprehensive, informative, and engaging content on Blockchain and sustainability can establish themselves as authoritative sources, thereby outranking competitors in search engine results (Rejeb et al., 2021; Treiblmaier  Garaus, 2023). One of the most critical SEO best practices is conducting thorough keyword research to identify the most relevant and high-traffic keywords related to Blockchain and sustainability in tourism (Chok et al., 2007). By incorporating these keywords naturally within their content, travel businesses can optimize their search engines and increase their visibility. However, overuse of keywords can result in penalties for “keyword stuffing” (Erol et al., 2022).

Once target keywords have been identified, the content should be optimized by including keywords naturally in headlines, subheadings, and body text (Buhalis et al., 2022). The content must be of high quality, informative, and engaging, as search engines favor content that provides value to users. Travel businesses should produce comprehensive and informative content on Blockchain and sustainability in tourism. Building high-quality backlinks to content can also help improve the search engine rankings. Travel businesses can request links from other websites in their niche or contribute guest posts to relevant websites (Kumar, 2023).

Promoting content on social media increases visibility and drives traffic on websites. Sharing content on social media allows travel businesses to reach wider audiences and rank higher on search engines. Travel businesses can also engage audiences and build brand communities on social media by responding to their comments (Bala & Verma, 2018).

Optimizing content for mobile devices is critical as mobile internet use increases. Using responsive design, optimizing images and videos for mobile devices, and ensuring fast mobile load times provide good user experience and improve search engine rankings. Search engines favor websites that offer a good user experience (Dresselhaus & Shrode, 2012).

In addition to SEO best practices, content must be relevant, updated, and informative. By providing valuable insights and actionable information, travel businesses can establish themselves as thought leaders and gain loyal readers and customers (Dolan et al., 2019). Producing high-quality content on Blockchain and sustainability provides significant SEO advantages for travel businesses. Following SEO, best practices allow travel businesses to optimize their content for search engines, increase online visibility, and establish themselves as thought leaders. Valuable and actionable content attracts loyal readers, thereby increasing traffic, engagement, conversions, and revenue.

## Methodology

This study uses a qualitative research approach to examine the effects of Blockchain technology on the sustainability of the tourism industry. Clear causal connections between statements were necessary throughout the text. The research methodology relies on qualitative methods, specifically interviews with industry experts and tourism stakeholders, to gather in-depth information and insights. The language is objective and value-neutral, employing technical terms consistently and avoiding biased or figurative languages. The text adheres to common academic section headings and maintains regular author and institutional formatting. The language is formal, precise, and free from grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors. This study employed a purposive sampling technique to select participants (Palinkas et al., 2015). Ten individuals with expertise in both the tourism industry and Blockchain technology were interviewed, including professionals such as travel company managers, sustainability managers, and Blockchain technology experts.

The selected participants underwent semi-structured interviews (Dearnley, 2005). As this study relied solely on qualitative methods, its findings may not be generalizable to the tourism industry. The sample size of ten participants also limited the range of perspectives represented. It is essential to recognize that this study focused exclusively on the insights and opinions of industry experts and tourism stakeholders, potentially excluding other relevant viewpoints. Despite these limitations, the qualitative approach used in this study provides valuable in-depth insights into the impact of Blockchain technology on tourism sustainability as perceived by industry experts and stakeholders (Braun and Clarke, 2019). The study’s "purposive sampling" technique (Etikan et al., 2016) determined the criteria for participant selection, which required expertise in both the tourism industry and Blockchain technology. The participants were tourism business managers and professionals with knowledge of sustainability and Blockchain technology.

The interviews provided an opportunity for participants to extensively discuss and analyze their viewpoints, personal experiences, and understandings regarding the adoption and potential of Blockchain technology for sustainable tourism. Face-to-face or video conference interviews were conducted and audio-recorded to ensure precise documentation of the information shared by the participants. The transcribed interview data were then analyzed thematically. To ensure data reliability, researchers other than primary researchers reviewed and compared recordings and transcripts to their own (Dearnley, 2005; Palinkas et al., 2015). Our thematic analysis identified recurring themes, patterns, and concepts within interview transcripts. Through data coding, categorization, and analysis, we aimed to understand participants' perspectives and experiences with Blockchain technology in relation to sustainable tourism practices. The ethical guidelines were strictly followed during the study. All participants provided informed consent, ensuring that they had full knowledge of the study's purpose and rights. To protect confidentiality and anonymity, pseudonyms were used to identify participants, and the interview data were stored securely. The ethics committee approval of this study was obtained from aydın adnan menderes university social sciences research ethics committee (Number: 07).

The interview form was created by reviewing relevant literature in terms of the validity and reliability of the questions. Descriptive analysis was used to analyze the data obtained from the participants. The findings were handled descriptively and comparatively within the framework of the qualitative research. To determine the validity and reliability of the research, the themes created were examined by two independent academics who have in-depth knowledge of the subject and were made suitable for analysis by reaching a consensus on the relevant themes. These two forms were subjected to the kappa test, which is an inter-rater reliability test. The Kappa reliability coefficient was determined between 0.40 - 0.75 and it was determined that reliability was achieved.

The limitations include the limited sample size and focus only on the views of industry experts and tourism stakeholders. The potential impact of Blockchain technology on the sustainability of the tourism industry has not yet been sufficiently explored, and a systematic documentation of industry professionals' views on this topic may be needed. The study can contribute to tourism industry stakeholders in general (e.g., travel company managers and sustainability managers) and Blockchain technology experts, as well as to the academic world and researchers interested in this topic. The rationale for conducting this research includes understanding what kind of advantages or challenges Blockchain technology can bring in terms of sustainable tourism, systematically documenting the thoughts of experts in the sector on this issue, and obtaining potential clues that can shape future tourism practices. The following are the semi-structured research questions directed at the participants:

- How do you envision Blockchain technology that enhances transparency and trust in the tourism industry?
- What specific ways do you believe Blockchain can reduce fraud and improve accountability in sustainable tourism practices?
- How do you see Blockchain enabling traceability in the tourism supply chain?
- Could you provide an example of how consumers might benefit from verified sustainability credentials made possible by Blockchain?
- Can you explain how smart contracts powered by Blockchain can automate sustainable practices in the tourism sector?
- In your opinion, how might smart contracts help enforce compliance with sustainability requirements and incentivize responsible behavior?
- How can Blockchain technology improve data management while ensuring privacy and control of sensitive information?
- What specific measures or frameworks do you think are essential for transparent data governance in Blockchain-based sustainable tourism initiatives?
- Why do you believe collaboration and partnerships are crucial for the successful implementation of Blockchain in the tourism industry?
- How can Blockchain facilitate trust and coordination among stakeholders in the pursuit of sustainable tourism practices?
- Could you elaborate on the challenges and limitations you encounter when adopting Blockchain technology for sustainable tourism?
- From your perspective, which of these challenges is the most critical and how do you propose addressing it?

These questions were designed to delve into the key themes and findings listed in Table 3. They aim to gather insights from interviewees regarding their perspectives on Blockchain's potential impact on sustainable tourism and the challenges that need to be overcome for successful integration.

## Findings

A thematic analysis was conducted on semi-structured interview transcripts regarding the application of Blockchain technology to enhance sustainability in the tourism industry. The results reveal the following significant observations:

- **Improved Transparency and Trust:** Participants noted the potential of Blockchain technology to enhance transparency and trust within the tourism industry. Blockchain achieves this by recording interactions and transactions on a decentralized and immutable ledger, providing stakeholders with a clear view of the supply chain, and promoting accountability.

- **Enhanced Traceability and Accountability:** Blockchain technology offers enhanced traceability and accountability in the tourism industry. According to the participants, it can effectively trace and confirm the origin and authenticity of various tourism products and services, such as eco-friendly certifications, fair trade practices, and sustainable sourcing. This technology enables tourists to make informed choices and supports environmentally responsible businesses.
- **Efficient and Secure Data Management:** Blockchain technology provides a decentralized platform for efficiently and securely managing data in the tourism industry. Participants observed that Blockchain could enable data sharing, preserve data integrity and confidentiality, and thus, promote information exchange among tourism organizations, government agencies, and tourists. Participants observed that Blockchain could enable data sharing, preserve data integrity and confidentiality, and thus, promote information exchange among tourism organizations, government agencies, and tourists. Consequently, this would allow more effective and personalized services.
- **Smart Contracts for Sustainable Practices:** Smart contracts recorded on the Blockchain and executed automatically can streamline and enforce sustainable practices in the tourism sector. The participants observed that smart contracts can activate rewards or penalties based on predetermined sustainability criteria. This can encourage companies to adopt eco-friendly practices and minimize their ecological footprint.
- **Challenges and Barriers:** Despite the potential advantages, participants identified numerous difficulties and obstacles to the extensive implementation of Blockchain in sustainable tourism. These include technological complexity, scalability problems, regulatory uncertainties, and the need for collaboration among diverse stakeholders. Addressing these challenges will necessitate substantial efforts from industry players, technology developers, and policymakers.

**Table 1.** Themes Identified in the Study

| Theme | Description |
|---|---|
| Transparency and Trust | Blockchain enhances transparency and trust by providing a transparent view of the supply chain and reducing fraud and corruption. |
| Traceability and Accountability | Blockchain enables better traceability and accountability by tracking and verifying the origin and authenticity of products and services. |
| Efficient and Secure Data Management | Blockchain offers a decentralized and secure platform for managing data in the tourism industry, ensuring data integrity and privacy. |
| Smart Contracts for Sustainable Practices | Smart contracts automate and enforce sustainable tourism practices, incentivizing responsible behavior based on predefined criteria. |
| Challenges and Barriers | Technological complexity, scalability issues, regulatory uncertainties, and the need for collaboration pose challenges to Blockchain adoption. |

Table 1 illustrates the potential of Blockchain technology in promoting sustainable practices within the tourism industry. Through improved transparency, traceability, and data management, Blockchain can facilitate the automation of sustainable practices via smart contracts, leading to a more responsible and eco-friendly tourism sector. However, it is crucial to address the challenges and barriers to the successful integration of Blockchain into sustainable tourism initiatives.

**Table 2.** Participant Demographics

| Participant | Gender | Age | Occupation |
|---|---|---|---|
| P1 | Male | 35 | Tourism Consultant |
| P2 | Female | 42 | Human Resource Manager |
| P3 | Male | 28 | Front Office Manager |
| P4 | Female | 56 | Hotel Manager |
| P5 | Male | 40 | Environmental NGO Representative |
| P6 | Female | 33 | Front Office Manager |
| P7 | Male | 48 | Travel Journalist |
| P8 | Female | 39 | Marketing Manager |
| P9 | Male | 43 | Marketing Manager |
| P10 | Female | 31 | Hotel Manager |

The study analyzed the data derived from Table 2, which detailed the results of 10 qualitative interviews conducted with tourism industry specialists with varying levels of participation. The participants were selected based on their areas of expertise to offer diverse viewpoints. Additionally, the sample was balanced between genders, with five males and five females. The participants ranged in age from 28 to 56 years, reflecting a diverse group of experienced professionals and young supporters of sustainable tourism. This broad range of backgrounds and areas of expertise has facilitated comprehensive discussions and enriched the coverage of the topic.

**Table 3.** Key Themes and Findings

| Theme | Key Findings |
|---|---|
| Transparency and Trust | - Participants highlighted that Blockchain technology could enhance transparency and trust in the tourism industry by providing immutable and decentralized records of transactions and interactions.<br>-Using Blockchain can improve accountability and reduce fraud, ensuring sustainable practices are accurately reported and verified. |
| Traceability and Certification | - Blockchain enables the traceability of products and services in the tourism supply chain, allowing consumers to make informed choices based on verified sustainability credentials.<br>- Participants noted that Blockchain could facilitate certification processes, making it easier for businesses to showcase their adherence to sustainable standards and for consumers to identify eco-friendly options. |
| Smart Contracts and Automation | - Smart contracts, powered by Blockchain, have the potential to automate sustainable practices in the tourism sector.<br>- Participants highlighted the ability of smart contracts to enforce compliance with sustainability requirements, streamline processes, and incentivize responsible behavior through automatic rewards and penalties. |
| Data Management and Privacy | - Blockchain technology can improve data management by securely storing and sharing information among stakeholders while maintaining privacy and control over sensitive data.<br>- Participants emphasized the importance of data protection and the need for transparent data governance frameworks in Blockchain-based sustainable tourism initiatives. |
| Collaboration and Partnerships | - Participants acknowledged that successful implementation of Blockchain technology requires collaboration and partnerships among industry stakeholders, governments, and technology providers.<br>- Blockchain can facilitate trust and coordination among different actors, encouraging collective efforts towards sustainability and fostering innovation in the tourism industry. |
| Challenges and Limitations | - The participants identified several challenges and limitations of Blockchain adoption in sustainable tourism, including technical complexities, scalability concerns, high energy consumption, regulatory frameworks, and widespread industry acceptance and standardization.<br>- Overcoming these challenges will be crucial for successfully integrating Blockchain into sustainable tourism practices. |

This study examines the potential advantages and drawbacks of integrating Blockchain technology to promote sustainable practices in the tourism sector. Participants stressed the significance of transparency and trust. They observed that Blockchain technology enhances transparency and trust by providing unalterable and decentralized records of transactions and interactions. This, in turn, boosts accountability, minimizes fraud, and guarantees the precise reporting of sustainable practices.

Traceability and certification are important topics for the tourism industry. The participants mentioned that Blockchain technology enables the tracking of products and services along the supply chain, providing consumers with the ability to make informed decisions based on verified sustainability credentials. In addition, Blockchain has the potential to simplify certification processes, enabling businesses to adhere easily to sustainable standards and consumers to identify environmentally conscious options.

The potential for smart contracts and automation to promote sustainable practices has been emphasized. Participants explore the use of smart contracts, empowered by Blockchain, to facilitate automated adherence to sustainability requirements, expedite processes, and foster accountable conduct through automated incentives and penalties.

Managing data and ensuring privacy are vital considerations. Blockchain technology improves data management by securely storing and sharing information, while preserving privacy and controlling sensitive data. Transparent data governance frameworks are essential in sustainable tourism projects based on Blockchain, as highlighted by participants.

Successful integration of Blockchain relies on collaboration and partnerships. Participants agreed that industry stakeholders, governments, and technology providers must collaborate to leverage the potential of Blockchain technology. Blockchain can foster trust and coordination among diverse actors, encourage collective sustainability efforts, and drive innovation in tourism.

Nevertheless, this study has identified various challenges and limitations. The challenges highlighted include technical complexities, scalability concerns, high-energy consumption, regulatory frameworks, and widespread industry acceptance and standardization. Overcoming these challenges is essential for the successful integration of Blockchain technology into sustainable tourism practices.


**Figure 1.** Word Cloud

**Table 4.** Frequency Analysis of Key Concepts

| Concept | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Transparency | 18 | 22.5% |
| Accountability | 15 | 18.8% |
| Stakeholder engagement | 12 | 15% |
| Collaboration | 10 | 12.5% |
| Technical complexities | 8 | 10% |
| Data privacy and security | 7 | 8.8% |
| Regulatory frameworks | 6 | 7.5% |
| Scalability and interoperability | 4 | 5% |
| Greenwashing | 3 | 3.8% |
| Credibility | 2 | 2.5% |

Frequency analysis sheds light on the recurring themes and concepts that participants deemed essential in the context of Blockchain and sustainable tourism. It becomes evident that Transparency and accountability were the most frequently mentioned concepts, with 22.5% and 18.8% of the participants highlighting them, respectively. Moreover, many participants emphasized the significance of stakeholder engagement and collaboration, indicating their recognition of the necessity for collective endeavors in advancing Blockchain adoption for sustainable tourism.

Furthermore, the analysis identified various challenges and concerns raised by the participants, including technical complexities, data privacy and security, regulatory frameworks, scalability, and interoperability. These findings underscore the multifaceted nature of implementing Blockchain technology in the tourism industry and emphasize the importance of addressing these challenges for its successful adoption. Based on the findings of this study, a roadmap for implementing Blockchain technology for sustainable tourism can be developed. This roadmap aims to provide guidance for policymakers, industry stakeholders, and researchers in harnessing Blockchain to enhance sustainability practices in the tourism sector. The roadmap encompasses the following key steps:

***Raising Awareness and Education:***

- Awareness raising campaigns and training programs should be organized to promote the potential benefits of sustainable tourism.
- It is important to organize workshops, webinars, and training sessions to increase understanding among industry professionals, policymakers, and relevant organizations.

***Ensuring Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement***

- Collaboration platforms should be created that bring together government agencies, tourism organizations, industry associations, technology providers and sustainability organizations.
- By encouraging the active participation of stakeholders, a shared vision and collective action in implementing sustainable tourism should be ensured.

***Development of regulatory frameworks***

- Collaborate with regulators and policymakers to develop clear and comprehensive regulatory frameworks that address the legal, ethical and privacy issues related to the implementation of Blockchain in the tourism sector.
- Regulatory frameworks should protect the rights and interests of stakeholders while encouraging Blockchain adoption.

***Overcoming Technical Challenges:***

- Investments should be made in research and development to overcome the technical challenges associated with Blockchain implementation, such as scalability, interoperability and energy efficiency.
- Technology providers, researchers and industry experts should collaborate to develop robust and user-friendly Blockchain solutions that fit the needs of the tourism sector.

***Increase Transparency and Accountability:***

- Blockchain technology should be promoted to increase transparency and accountability in the tourism sector.
- The use of Blockchain-based systems to monitor and verify sustainable practices, certifications, supply chain management and financial transactions should be encouraged.

***Ensuring Data Privacy and Security:***

- Mechanisms and protocols should be established to ensure data privacy and security in Blockchain systems.
- Strong security measures, encryption standards, and identity management solutions should be developed in collaboration with cybersecurity experts to protect sensitive information and reduce the risk of data breach.

**Pilot Projects and Demonstrations:**

- Trial projects and demonstrations should be conducted in specific destinations or tourism organizations to showcase the practical applications of Blockchain to promote sustainable tourism.
- Monitoring the results of these projects to gain valuable insights, identify best practices, and develop implementation strategies.

**Evaluation and Improvement:**

- The effectiveness and impact of Blockchain implementation in sustainable tourism should be continuously evaluated.
- Feedback from stakeholders should be collected, key performance indicators monitored and areas for improvement identified.
- Learned lessons should be incorporated into future roadmaps to ensure continuous progress and adaptation.

This roadmap enables stakeholders to efficiently utilize Blockchain technology for sustainable tourism practices, fostering collaboration, transparency, accountability, and resilience within the industry. It presents the necessary steps for successfully integrating Blockchain technology in an organized manner, laying the foundations for a more sustainable and responsible future in tourism.

## Conclusions and Implications

This study investigated the effects of Blockchain technology on the sustainability of the tourism industry. The findings reveal the possible advantages and difficulties of incorporating Blockchain into sustainable tourism. The analysis demonstrates that Blockchain technology can potentially automate sustainable practices through smart contracts, resulting in improved transparency, traceability, and data management.

The research findings have significant implications for the tourism sector in terms of accountability and fraud. The implementation of Blockchain technology can enhance transparency and trustworthiness. It can provide a clear view of tourism supply chain stakeholders, ensuring precise reporting of sustainable practices and reducing the occurrence of fraudulent activities. This, in turn, can bolster responsible tourism and sustainable development while cultivating trust among consumers and investors. Blockchain technology enhances traceability and accountability in the tourism sector by tracking the origins and authenticity of products and services. This technology empowers consumers to make informed decisions and supports businesses that promote sustainability measures, giving them a competitive advantage in a market where eco-friendly options are highly sought. Furthermore, Blockchain simplifies certification procedures, allowing businesses to display their sustainability credentials and enabling consumers to verify environmentally friendly transactions.

The platform also enhances data management in the tourism sector, providing a secure and efficient way to share information between stakeholders while maintaining data integrity and confidentiality. This enables tourism organizations, government agencies, and tourists to share information securely and transparently. Additionally, Blockchain technology can mitigate data management issues, safeguard sensitive data, and address mounting data breaches and privacy concerns. This research underscores the potential of smart contracts to automate and implement sustainable practices in the tourism sector. By setting predetermined sustainability criteria and automating agreements, smart contracts incentivize responsible behavior and reduce the environmental impact of tourism businesses. This promotes efficient and standardized sustainable practices, ensuring the long-term resilience of the tourism industry and sustaining positive impacts on local communities and the environment.

However, this study also identifies challenges and barriers to the widespread adoption of Blockchain in sustainable tourism. Challenges such as technological complexity, scalability issues, regulatory uncertainty, and the need for collaboration between different stakeholders need to be addressed. Overcoming these challenges will necessitate significant collaborative efforts among industry stakeholders, technology developers, and policymakers.

From the user perspective, Blockchain provides the benefit of transferring data ownership to users. This helps to eliminate negative activities, such as service providers unilaterally marketing customer data or providers gaining financial profit without the customer's knowledge (Line et al., 2020). However, Blockchain increases the coordination among stakeholders. For instance, if a tourist fails to check-in, it can prompt an update of the inventory of the car-rental company as well as hotel availability (Treiblmaier, 2020). These insights and frameworks are vital for practitioners and policymakers seeking to capitalize on the opportunities presented by Blockchain in the tourism industry.

However, a significant portion of the global population lacks the devices or infrastructure necessary to access required technologies. This disparity could hinder certain countries and small businesses from taking advantage of Blockchain-enabled technology. However, Blockchain technology presents limitations to the scalability of the system, particularly concerning the growing demand for data processing (Melkić and Čavlek, 2020). Additionally, the slow processing and high energy consumption of the Blockchain can hinder its widespread implementation (Ozdemir et al., 2020).

Moreover, the potential impact of Blockchain technology has not been investigated extensively. This study seeks to enhance the current understanding of the applicability of Blockchain systems to Smart Tourism Destinations. Blockchain technology has the potential to facilitate value creation by revolutionizing data collection, verification, ownership, and management methods (Treiblmaier et al., 2019).

### Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

The study used a limited sample size and qualitative research methods, potentially constraining the generalizability of the results. Research should extend beyond these limitations by incorporating larger sample sizes and quantitative methods for a more comprehensive understanding.

The study considered the viewpoints of various tourism industry stakeholders, including businesses and public institutions. However, it is necessary to consider the opinions of tourists and local communities to obtain a comprehensive overview of the effects of Blockchain technology on sustainable tourism. Therefore, conducting surveys or interviews with stakeholders is recommended in future research. Additionally, it should be noted that this study solely examined the potential advantages and drawbacks of Blockchain technology in sustainable tourism. Investigating the application and adoption of Blockchain technology in the tourism industry is essential. Thus, in future research, case studies or pilot projects should be examined to demonstrate how Blockchain technology is utilized in sustainable tourism practices. Consequently, providing practical insights into the real-world implementation of Blockchain, the challenges faced, and the results achieved.

This study examines the benefits of using Blockchain technology to advance sustainability in the tourism industry. However, it is essential for future research to analyze the unintended and negative effects of Blockchain in this area. Doing so will aid in identifying and addressing possible negative impacts, as well as ensuring that the integration of Blockchain aligns with broader sustainability objectives.

Finally, it is crucial for future research to consider the rapidly changing technological advancements and regulatory frameworks of Blockchain technology and its impact on sustainable tourism. Conducting longitudinal studies could provide insights into the adoption process of this technology in the tourism sector and its long-term sustainability impacts.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Do Customer Complaints Differ by Restaurant Types? Evidence from Online Reviews*

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**ABSTRACT**

This study aimed to evaluate the service failures experienced by foreign tourists according to different restaurant types. Document analysis was used as a data collection technique and content analysis was used as a data analysis method in this qualitative study. Within the scope of the study, negative customer comments with ratings (1) terrible and (2) poor made on the internet for fine-dining and casual restaurants in Antalya were evaluated. The findings show that service failures related to food, service, pricing, and employees are experienced in both restaurant types. Service failures related to physical factors are only experienced in fine-dining restaurants. Although most service failure categories are included in both restaurant types, the types of service failures in these categories differ. Differing from the current literature, this study aimed to investigate whether customer complaints differ according to restaurant type.

**Keywords:** Service failure, Restaurant type, Online reviews, TripAdvisor, Customer complaints.

## Introduction

As restaurant industry offers heterogenous and intangible service, is labor-intensive, the service is produced and consumed simultaneously, service failures are inevitable. Even though customer complaints can be seen as annoying situations by businesses, they actually provide one more chance for them to make things right. Expressing complaints directly to businesses, remaining silent, making negative WOM are some of the behaviors dissatisfied customers engage in (Heung & Lam, 2003; Lam & Tang, 2003; Ro, 2015). Spreading negative WOM can also take place in different forms such as complaining to one's social circle, or complaining in online platforms (Sparks & Browning, 2010).

Traditionally, people have been voicing their dissatisfaction directly to the frontline personnel however with the development of Web 2.0, individuals started to be able to create content, share and comment on internet (Reddick & Aikins, 2012). The internet consumers can convey their positive or negative messages anonymously which are easily accessible to many people globally. There has been an increase in the number of websites through which individuals can make reservations and some of them enable users to make comments like TripAdvisor (Sparks & Browning, 2010). The reasons for complaining online can be numerous such as seeking revenge or warning others about the problem (Sparks & Browning, 2010).

Customer comments, particularly negative ones, are of importance since they have the potential to affect other customers' purchasing decisions. With that in mind, eWOM holds even more importance for businesses given its characteristics such as visibility to everyone who has internet connection, availability on social platforms for an indefinite time period, and anonymity of the commenter (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). This makes online reviews an important topic of research. Although there are comparative studies on customer complaints that investigates the relationship between complaining behavior and some variables such as nationality (Emir, 2011; He et al., 2012; Ülker et al., 2021; Dutta et al., 2007), gender (Fan et al., 2018), age groups (Lee & Soberon-Ferrer, 1999), loyalty levels, and service stage (Namkung et al., 2011), no study could be encountered investigating whether customer complaints differ according to restaurant types. Different restaurants can create different image perceptions in

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individuals as a result of factors such as expectations, perception of quality and the amount paid. For this reason, it is thought that individuals' tendency to complain may vary according to different types of restaurants. Therefore, this study aimed to examine whether customer complaints differ in two different restaurant types, namely fine-dining and casual.

## Literature Review

Businesses are often unaware of their dissatisfied customers (Swanson & Hsu, 2009). Service failure refers to the situation that occurs when customers' expectations are not met in return for the service they purchased (Migacz et al., 2018; Kim & So, 2023). No matter how careful the service providers are, service failures are inevitable due to variability, inseparability, heterogeneity and intangibility characteristics of services (Kuo & Wu, 2012). Service failures occur when the value of the service provided does not meet the expectations of the customers and can result in negative behaviors such as negative WOM, negative emotions, and switching the business (Ha & Jang, 2009; Kim & Baker, 2019; Lu et al., 2020). For this reason, businesses that want to ensure customer satisfaction should minimize service failures.

The complaint behavior of dissatisfied customers depends on several criteria. Severity of failure, price and quality consciousness, psychological stress, openness to interpersonal influence, exit barriers, personality traits, individuals' tendency towards complaining, the gap between expectation and actual service, and attractiveness of alternatives are some criteria that customers take into account when deciding to complaint (Maute  Forrester, 1993; Jones et al., 2002; Blodgett et al., 1995).

Fan et al. (2018) concluded that female customers more tend to voice their complaints in case that the failure is self-service technology related rather than people-related and they voice their complaints in order for the service provider to fix the problem and improve the service. Tolon and Zengin (2011) concluded that Turkish customers, customers in high income groups, old customers, and customers with a better educational background are more inclined to complain. Similarly, Varela-Neira, Vázquez-Casielles and Iglesias (2010) concluded that age is an important determinant of the intensity of the negative feelings experienced after a failure. Namkung et al. (2011) found that propensity to complain differ according to stage of the service in the case of loyal customers. Jones et al. (2002) formed three clusters according to complaining propensity of the participants. Cluster I represent people who are least likely to complain, mainly elderly. Cluster II represent people who complain to anyone including the business itself or the people around them, and cluster III represents only the WOM complainers who do not show their dissatisfaction to the business, but do not have revisit intention at the same time.

Service failures are experienced in most of the service industries like accommodation, transportation, and food and beverage industry (Bitner et al., 1994; Dutta et al., 2007; Lewis & McCann, 2004; Warden et al., 2008; Zulhan et al., 2013). Tsao (2018) indicates service failures such as slow service delivery by accommodation establishments, rooms not ready for sale, and rude behavior of staff. Similarly, Vaerenbergh et al. (2019) state a swimming pool or air conditioners out of order as examples of service failures encountered in accommodation establishments. Service failures are also evident in air transportation. Migacz et al. (2018) state that delayed or canceled flights, luggage loss and reservation-related problems are the most common service failures encountered in airline companies.

In the restaurant industry, the effectiveness of service compensations (Hocutt et al., 2006), the relationship between service failures and consumer satisfaction (Fu & Mount, 2007), the relationship between service failures and consumer complaints (McQuilken & Robertson, 2011) are examined in different studies. Among the service failures frequently encountered in restaurants are incorrect check, not serving the food as requested, rude employee behavior and slow service (Ülker, 2022).

Chung and Hoffman (1998) indicated that although customers are more forgiving about product-related failures than facility-related failures, problems associated with the preparation of the food was rated as the most common one and most severe failures are expressed as seating problems and out-of-stock menu items. In a scenario-based study (Chang et al., 2012), it was concluded that product-oriented failures generally lead to harsh complaining behavior in consumers. Similarly, Bilgihan et al. (2018) revised online reviews about restaurants and concluded that "food" was the most common word that is used both in positive and negative comments. In another study examining service failures in chain restaurants (Tsai & Su, 2009), product-related failures, slow service and inappropriate employee behavior emerged as the most common failures. Silber et al. (2009) stated that the most problematic service failures are inappropriate behavior of staff, slow service, and food and beverage spillage. Karamustafa and Ülker (2020) found that cleaning-related issues matter most among other restaurant attributes for customers. Therefore, lack of cleaning in restaurants may lead to customer complaints.

Conducting cross-cultural comparative research on online customer reviews, He et al. (2012) concluded that Chinese customers make more negative comments than American customers and American customers give more recommendations to other customers than Chinese customers. Similarly, Ülker et al. (2021) investigated whether Turkish and American tourists differ in their complaining behavior and recovery expectations and concluded that while Turkish tourists take notice of production-related failures, American tourists place importance on service-related failures. Emir (2011) on the other hand concluded that while Turkish and German tourists are inclined to voice dissatisfaction, Russian and Dutch tourists mostly prefer to remain silent and switch the business. Dutta et al. (2007) found that 48% of Indian participants think that the problem they experience in a restaurant is extremely important while this ratio is 41% for Americans.

In addition, service recovery after a service failure plays an important role in creating customers' repurchase intention, customer loyalty and customer satisfaction (Yadav & Dhar, 2021). In particular, customers can possibly share the service they received and their post-purchase experiences online. Therefore, failure to compensate customers for service failures at a satisfactory level may have negative consequences for the business. It is supported by empirical findings that service compensations play an important role in customers' attitudes and behaviors towards the business (Guchait et al, 2019; Öztürk, 2022).

## Methodology

In this research, qualitative research approach was used and document analysis was preferred as data collection technique and content analysis was preferred as data analysis method. The research method consisted of three successive stages. Fine-dining restaurants refer to establishments that provide luxury services in terms of decoration, service quality, service method, and quality of food and beverages. Casual restaurants, on the other hand, are businesses that are more affordable and provide lower-quality service compared to fine-dining restaurants. Fine-dining restaurants are establishments that are in a higher segment than casual restaurants in terms of price and service quality. In the first stage, fine-dining and casual restaurants in Antalya were determined through a website (tripadvisor.com) that allows tourists and consumers to evaluate businesses. At this stage, fine-dining and casual restaurants in the province of Antalya on the relevant website were taken into account. Antalya was chosen as the research area for two reasons. First, Antalya is among the destinations in Turkey that host the largest number of tourists. Second, maybe because of its being a well-known destination for both domestic and international tourists, fine-dining and casual restaurants are high in number in Antalya. However, since there are many restaurants in these categories, expert support was received about which restaurants should be included in the research. While deciding which of the restaurants in the relevant categories should be taken into consideration, the executive chefs in the Antalya Association of Gastronomy and Educators Association (AGEB) were interviewed. With the guidance of the chefs, restaurants in two categories were determined.

In the second stage, comments (in English) of the tourists who were served in these restaurants and who rated the service they received with 1 (terrible) to 2 (poor) points were examined. These comments were subjected to document review by a researcher between 07-16 August 2023. The fact that only comments in English were reviewed is due to the desire to reach foreign visitors. Accordingly, firstly, 14 casual restaurants were determined and the total number of reviews in these restaurants was determined (661). 156 of these comments are in English and 27 of them include ratings of 1 and 2 points (Table 1). It is seen that the total number of comments in 10 fine-dining restaurants examined is 5712, the total number of comments in English is 2438, and the number of comments in English with ratings of 1 and 2 points is 201 (Table 2). In the third stage, the data were subjected to content analysis.

The basis of data analysis in qualitative research is the examination of written or oral texts in terms of content (Kozak, 2014). The purpose of content analysis, which is frequently used in qualitative studies, is to gather and interpret data that are close to each other within the framework of sub-themes and main themes (Neuman, 2012). In this sense, content analysis was used in the analysis of the documents examined in this study. Each analyzed comment was chosen as the unit of analysis.

**Table 1.** *Casual Restaurants*

| Restaurants | | Total comments | Number of comments in English | Number of comments with ratings of poor or terrible |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **C1** | Fa*** Su**** Re****** | 121 | 46 | 3 |
| **C2** | Ti********* Re****** Ko*** Mu***** | 162 | 24 | 1 |
| **C3** | Ar*** Re****** | 27 | 2 | 0 |
| **C4** | Ma*** Te**** Ca** Bi**** Re******** | 74 | 31 | 6 |
| **C5** | Pa**** Re****** | 31 | 9 | 3 |
| **C6** | Fe*** Ba******* | 11 | 2 | 1 |
| **C7** | De***** Et Re******** | 32 | 7 | 3 |
| **C8** | Te**** So*** Le******** | 97 | 2 | 0 |
| **C9** | B1* St*** & Ka*** | 33 | 6 | 1 |
| **C10** | Ve*** Ho*** | 16 | 5 | 0 |
| **C11** | Fo** Ma** Ve*** Fa***** Gu*** | 9 | 7 | 2 |
| **C12** | Co**** Jo** | 28 | 8 | 2 |
| **C13** | Mi** Uy*** Re******** | 13 | 4 | 3 |
| **C14** | Ki** Re******** | 7 | 3 | 2 |
| **Total** | | 661 | 156 | 27 |

**Table 2.** *Fine-Dining Restaurants*

| | Restaurants | Total comments | Number of comments in English | Number of comments with ratings of poor or terrible |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **F1** | Te***** St*** Ho*** Re******** | 1167 | 786 | 19 |
| **F2** | Se***** Fi** Di**** Re******** | 941 | 597 | 29 |
| **F3** | Va*** Us** Et Re******** | 227 | 52 | 2 |
| **F4** | Ar** Re******** | 645 | 279 | 37 |
| **F5** | La** Ba*** E** | 704 | 189 | 32 |
| **F6** | Fe****** Fi** Di**** Re******** | 70 | 29 | 2 |
| **F7** | 7 Me**** | 1561 | 373 | 63 |
| **F8** | Ne*** Ba*** | 201 | 61 | 7 |
| **F9** | Al* Ak*** Re******** | 17 | 8 | 0 |
| **F10** | As**** Re******** | 179 | 64 | 10 |
| **Total** | | 5712 | 2438 | 201 |

In the analysis phase, the model suggested by Strauss & Corbin (1998) as (a) coding, (b) determining the categories, (c) naming the categories and (d) determining the characteristics of the categories was followed. In this context, the code schemes of the examined documents were created by one researcher, and then these code schemes were applied to the texts by two other researchers. The reason for this is that it is recommended to have at least two different coders to ensure credibility in qualitative research (Hall & Valentin, 2005). In addition, in order to increase credibility, detailed information about the research process was given and direct quotations were given. Subsequently, these codings were compared by all researchers and in case of any differences, consensus was reached. Making these discussions at the stage of determining the categories is also important in terms of the credibility of the research (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). As a result, codes formed subcategories and subcategories formed main categories.

## Findings and Discussions

In this study, the comments made by tourists on an online evaluation site about the service failures they experience in fine-dining and casual restaurants were compiled. Accordingly, service failures experienced by tourists in casual restaurants in the province of Antalya are grouped into 4 main categories: (a) failures related to food, (b) failures related to service, (c) failures related to pricing, and (d) failures related to employees (Table 3). When food-related failures are examined, it is understood that tourists are mostly dissatisfied with the food being tasteless, frozen products being used in the food, foreign objects coming out of the food, and inconsistency between the food served and the photo on the menu. When previous studies are examined, food being tasteless (Ülker, 2022) and foreign object found in the food (Chua et al., 2010; Loo et al., 2013) are found to be food-related failures. However, the failures revealed in this study, such as using of frozen ingredients in the food ordered and inconsistency between the food served and the photo on the menu can be considered as a contribution to the relevant literature. The service-related failures that tourists encounter in casual restaurants have emerged as late service, incomplete delivery of the order, and charging money from food offered as free of charge. Late service (Kim et al., 2016) and incomplete delivery of orders (Mueller et al., 2003) are expressed as service failures in different studies. Despite this, the failure of charging money from food offered as free of charge could not be found in the literature.

Pricing-related failures, another category of service failures that occur in casual restaurants, include high-priced menu items and charging more than what is written on the menu. Namkung & Jang (2010) and Dutta et al. (2007) found that receiving incorrect checks is a service failure. Finally, one of the categories that emerge in casual restaurants is employee-related failures. The only sub-category in the main category of employee-related failures is rude employee behavior. Rude employee behavior is encountered as a service failure in many studies specific to restaurants (Hoffman et al., 1995; Yang & Mattila, 2012).

Service failures experienced by tourists in fine-dining restaurants is another issue examined in this study. The results of the content analysis show that the service failures experienced by tourists in fine-dining restaurants can be grouped under five as (a) failures related to food, (b) failures related to service, (c) failures related to employees, (d) failures related to physical, and (e) failures related to pricing (Table 4). When the food-related failures are examined, similar to casual restaurants, tasteless food and foreign object in food (like hair) have emerged as the service failures experienced in fine-dining restaurants. In addition, serving food that is not fresh, inappropriate cooking degree of food (meat), and small portion size are also failures related to the food. Foreign object in food is known as the service failure frequently encountered in restaurants (Chua et al., 2010; Loo et al., 2013) and it is mentioned that consumers may complain when they think the portion is small (Ülker, 2022).

Another category of failure that tourists complain about in fine-dining restaurants is service-related failures. In this category, service failures are observed as late service, forgetting the orders, reserved table given to another customer, and serving the wrong food. In the relevant literature, waiting for a long time for orders (Kim et al., 2016), reserved table given to another customer

(Dutta et al., 2007), and serving the wrong food (Zhu et al., 2004) are stated as frequently encountered failures. In addition, failures related to employees, physical factors and pricing were also identified as failures encountered in fine-dining restaurants.

**Table 3.** *Service Failures that Tourists Experience in Casual Restaurants*

| Main Cate. | Sub-category | Quotations |
|---|---|---|
| Failures related to food | Tasteless food | "The food is fat" (C1). "…thing is the cheapest stale bread was served" (C5). "What a scam... Simple dish like falafel or hummus was totally out of taste and i can't even say i eat falafel anything but falafel crap and scam" (C11). "Horrible places the food is not good. I ordered a hamburger, and I got one that was cooked in the microwave. the cheese has a glue taste" (C12). "…the food is bland, tasteless, and greasy. The chicken is undercooked, as the beef is overcooked. The lamb consisted of merely skin, fat, and bones" (C13). "Service quality is very bad, food are not eatable, the rice is not included in dishes" (C13). "We had a dorade, a portion of calamari and a portion of prawn, and the food was not tasty at all" (C14). |
| | Using frozen ingredients | "Most number of ordered dishes were cooked from freezer to microwave. It was a semi-finished products strait from the closest supermarket" (C1). |
| | Foreign objects (like hair) in food | "Another found a snail in her salad - the lettuce clearly hadn't been washed" (C5). |
| | Inconsistency between the food served and the photo on the menu | "Ordered food does not match the pictures in the menu. Order food does not match delivered food" (C2). |
| Failures related to service | Late service | "Terrible experience. One of our party was left waiting for his meal for 20 mins" (C4). "Also service was horrible the food came after 50 minutes (C11). "It took too long to get my pasta, 40 min at Wednesday evening, maybe waiter just forgot about us, and after I've reminded he brought my order" (C12). "Ordered at 19:20 and still here without food at 20:29…. Will update when food arrives. People that arrived half an hour later already started eating" (C13). |
| | Incomplete delivery of the order | "My family and I ordered tons of food and when we got our food we noticed that the meals were incomplete. For example there was just meat on the plate and no rise or likewise as we ordered. When we kindly asked the staff about it they said that they were out of the things that were missing in our order" (C5). |
| | Charging money from food offered as free of charge | "We were offered 1 x free Efes beer each with our main meal. When the bill came, they denied the offer and the promotions guy had vanished. Argued with me over 25 Turkish Lira for 10 mins" (C5). |
| Failures related to pricing | High-priced menu items | "Super expensive, wait staff add their own tip on at the end without giving an option and literally took my cash out of my hand even after I said no. was more than 3000 Turkish lira for 2 people, scam" (C4). "Then the bill come! It was suggested to us we should try 'a small lobster' - so we did. They charged us £85 for approximately 200 grams of lobster. That would be enough for more than a kilo in London" (C6). "1 large breakfast spread, 7teas and a milk =800TL. This is extortionate for Turkey! The receipt just read breakfast 800tl that's how you know it's a scam" (C7). "But the prices do not match the quality of the dishes. Sometimes they go too far offering a wine (an ordinary one, which costs 30 liras in the store) for 300 liras" (C7). "Brought us over a Cabernet Sauvignon around £8 if we bought at home. We ate and drank the one bottle of wine. Asked for the bill and they charged us £50 for the bottle of wine. So annoying that we got caught out with this and certainly won't be back" (C7) "The calamari portion was tiny for the price (even in London where I live, the price for calamari is cheaper and way more tasty" (C14). |
| | Charging more than what is indicated on menu | "Food is actually good but waiter allows himself to add his tip to our bill without even asking us. You can see he's playing the friendly guy just to scam people" (C4). "Unfortunately, the bill surprised us. When we would pay we see an extra costs 'service' this was 10% of our whole bill" (C9). "The owner told us if we paid by card, we have to pay extra 20 TL (perhaps bank commission) but at the end we decided to pay by cash as the card reader was off and the owner charge us the extra 20TL even with cash payment" (C14). |
| Failures related to employees | Rude employee behavior | "I went there alone, at the entrance the waiter rudely told me that we don't serve drinks, only with the meal. I ordered cease salad with a cocktail. But I got the most disgusting meal I have ever eaten, I called the waiter told him about it, and instead he responded what do you expect it is just chicken" (L4). "Horrible service the staff were rude and they lied to us about reserved tables. They did not allow us to sit but 5 minutes later they allowed others who did not have a reservation either to sit in the selfsame "reserved" table" (L4). "I asked from the rude waitress that if I can sit there? He said no, you are alone and it's for 3 person" (L4). "As a response they got rude and gave us no complete answer and basically told us that we can eat it or not but we would have to pay for it no matter what" (L5). "The worst experience ever in Turkey, very bad cuisine, rude staff not worth any penny paid" (L14). |

**Table 4.** *Service Failures that Tourists Experience in Fine-Dining Restaurants*

| Main Cate. | Sub-category | Quotations |
|---|---|---|
| Failures related to food | Tasteless food | "Pizza €18 was undercooked, and soggy toppings was disgusting. Garlic bread was undercooked and soggy" (F1).<br>"…the quality of steak was awful and small cold sides!" (F1).<br>"The adana kebabs are below what you expect (they taste better in the UK than they did in their origin country)" (F1)<br>"I got something different from others (lamb something) which was meant to come with a few chips (it had 4 chips in it) and was just really fatty pieces of meat and not very nice" (F1).<br>"Mine and the Mrs steaks were chewy and also full of fat. They were accompanied by around 8 chips each with the smallest pots of sauce and veg i have seen" (F1).<br>"…we tried to eat our very fatty cuts and the portion that was meat 50/50 was very tough and almost un-edible" (F1).<br>"Pretty nice atmosphere, but food is not super tasty" (F2).<br>"The lamb cutlet had very little flavor, the seabass cerviche was tough and its black-eyed pea accompaniment were undercooked" (F2).<br>"About the food though we couldn't go further than first sip with any of the dishes that we ordered" (F2).<br>"…food is very poor and not eatable" (F4).<br>"Their fish is very old; we ordered grilled calamari the waiter brought them fried and greasy and he didn't admit that was fried not grilled!! We ordered also fried fish; the fish are very old full of old oil" (F4).<br>"Do not order zucchini flowers, it's not what you think! Avocado shrimp it's a joke! (It has mustard)" (F5).<br>"When the food finally came out, it was drenched in sauce and had no taste" (F6).<br>"Şakşuka eggplant appetizer was mostly potatoes and large pieces of eggplant, not tasty at all" (F7).<br>"The ambiance is nice but other than that everything was really horrible from food quality to service" (F7). |
| | Food served is not fresh | "The food we ordered was rubbery and the bread was stale" (F5).<br>"We order the lamb rack and one of the racks came frozen inside not freshly cooked!" (F6).<br>"The service was very bad; every table was getting good bread but to us they served old bread" (F7).<br>"The fish, octopus and starters was not fresh at all" (F8). |
| | Inappropriate cooking time of food | "The steaks were sent back twice and still were undercooked according to the order, once we had all finished our meals, one steak finally arrived" (F1).<br>"Beef was overcooked" (F5).<br>"First time they served cold fries. We asked them to take it back. And then seems like they just heated in microwave and sent it back (P7).<br>"The rice was floating in oil and the meat itself was good quality but over cooked" (F7).<br>"Ordered two fillet steaks, mine specified "well done" when it arrived RARE, I requested it to be cooked further. My partner ate his dinner as was going cold. My steak was returned & was still way to rare for my liking (with blood) so I did not eat my dinner..." (F8).<br>"Shrimp was uncooked and gave 4 members of our group severe food poisoning & ruined our holiday" (F10). |
| | Foreign objects in the food | "We found in spinach side dish broken glasses" (F7).<br>"My wife almost cracked her teeth on a stone in the bread; an actual small pebble. French fries were soggy" (F7). |
| | Orders being cooked with wrong ingredients | "I ordered Lamb CHOPS and they served me a plate with pieces of meat swimming in a sauce made of water and oil" (F7). |
| | Inappropriate portion size | "The food was ok but the portions were WAY TOO small for the money" (F1).<br>"The grouper filet and kebabs were rubbery and tiny portions although the bream was nice (and much cheaper)" (F4). |
| **Main Cate.** | **Sub-category** | **Quotations** |
| Failures related to service | Late service | "…one guest who is coeliac has ended up glutened about 1 hour after dinner!!" (F1).<br>"…they forgot our mains and when they finally arrived" (F4).<br>"We had to ask for wine menu and wait ages to order. There seemed to be a lot of staff but service was slow and not welcoming" (F4).<br>"The waiter poured water for us and ran away... waiting... finally the waiter came and opened a bottle of wine and only then brought glasses.. and finally poured wine for us" (F5).<br>"The restaurant was empty, and we ordered 2 starters and 2 mains and it took over an hour for the food to arrive" (F6).<br>"Starting with the starters which took around 45 minutes to be served and finishing with the main dishes which took around 45 minutes to one and half hours to come this was unbearable" (F6).<br>"Wrong order delivered and such a long wait for the correct order, most of us had finished our food" (F10). |
| | Forgetting the orders | "They forgot our salad and the cacik we ordered" (F7). |
| | Reserved table being given to another customer | "We had reservation, but we were going to have 15 minutes late, I called the restaurant for noticed them we will be a little late, but no one took the call. We arrived in restaurant 16 minutes too late; they said us we had reservation at 20:00 and not 20:30 so they gave our table a 3 Russians guys" (F2).<br>"When we arrived next day for my b-day, those table, and next one was busy… So he called Özge, and her explanation was «I'm sorry, the guest from the terrace wanted to come and sit inside» - shortly speaking she even didn't check her reservation, didn't call my fiancé to be sure if we are coming or not" (F10). |
| | Serving wrong food | "Not to mention that most of the main dishes were served cold and many of the orders were wrong" (F6). |
| Failures related to physical | Insufficient lighting | "No ambience, bright lights, no music, only sound was waiters picking up plates and cutlery" (F7). |
| | Lack of bathrooms available for use | "Also toilets were blocked" (F1). |
| | Insufficient air conditioning | "You don't have the customers boil in the steaming heat, and tell them you have no fans" (F1). |

**Table 4.** (Continued)

| Main Cate. | Sub-category | Quotations |
|---|---|---|
| Failures related to employees | Communication problems related to lack of foreign language knowledge | "Came the next day and after 20 minutes of torture by personnel we left. No one spoke English or Russian so they could not answer our questions about the dishes, there were no pictures of the dishes or the prices on the menu! As tourists we don't have mobile internet and almost all restaurants have QR code menus in Turkey nowadays which is extremely inconvenient" (F3). |
| | Rude employee behavior | "Staff is rude and their only objective is to sell more at ridiculously high prices" (F1). "…the staff was rude" (F1). "You don't employ uncaring, slow, inattentive waiters" (F2). "A few servers were coming up but couldn't answer any questions, they were irritated, annoyed, the restaurant was very busy. The cherry on the top was when I finally started to order, he took my order and left to clean up the nearby table completely ignoring my boyfriend, it was comical" (F3). "Very rude staff so unprofessional in dealing with the visitors. Another waiter was already taking us to a table so rude, so unprofessional with tourists" (F4). "Rude waiters!" (F4). "Then when the bill was presented & we were charged for both dinners I was completely shocked & said so. I was objecting to paying for a meal that I did not eat due to their incompetence. I was then verbally attacked by the said waiter & told that I was rude!" (F8). |
| | Indifferent employee behavior | "Service was arrogant. Nobody asked how our food was, if we wanted any more to drink, or if we were interested in dessert or coffee. So, with empty plates, empty glasses, and not a single waiter nearby, we paid and left" (F5). "7 Mehmet Restaurant looks great but that means nothing when your servers are not attentive, you are left waiting for long periods of time, the order is incorrect, the server actually snorts it looks down on you when you make simple requests, and no one really cares" (F7). "We had to ask for the bill several times and had to wait for over 20 mins for someone to bring it over" (F7). "We wanted to order more drinks buts the waiters were only talking between them and were not looking to the tables" (F7). "There were many waiters, but they seemed absent and not paying attention to our table, haven't been asked once if we are enjoying the dinner or if there's anything else we would like" (F7). "Asked the waiter to remove a broken glass pieces from under the table TWICE, he said "of course" and never did anything, so we were sitting with broken glass around us all along" (F7). "I had to use the torch on my phone to see my food as it was so dark, and they didn't bring candles despite asking for them" (F4). |
| | Employees being insistent to customers to make comments about the restaurant | "At the end when we were done, we kept getting told to leave a review to which we informed him we will do it when we're back at the hotel. But no he didn't like that response and started saying things and LITERALLY BEGGING TO LEAVE A REVIEW. He wanted to be present while we were leaving a review. When we told him we were not going to do it at the restaurant and to stop asking as we'll do it back at the hotel, he became rude and just started making faces and sarcastic comment" (F1). "The waiter stood by our table and more or less begged us to write a good review on TripAdvisor, even trying at 1 point to tell us what to write......absolutely no chance pal" (F1). |

| Main Cate. | Sub-category | Quotations |
|---|---|---|
| Failures related to pricing | High-priced menu items | "My lads rib eye £30 asked for well-done came medium and lots of grizzle £111 pound and this place is robbing everyone" (F1). "Awful experience, just been charge over £300 for 2 t bones, 2 fillets, a kids pizza, spag bol and a few drinks" (F1). "…£180 for below average food and poor produce a complete rip off. (F1). "There was no way were going to pay £30-£40 just for one steak! We had one beer and one vodka, and this cost is £20!" (F1) "This place was so expensive, on handed the drinks menu first we decided that's all we'd be having. Our neighbors were as shocked as us. We paid 18€ for a small beer and gin tonic!!!" (F1). "Absolutely shocking. Food quality was nonexistent staff clearing table before I was finished eating. Overpriced dog meat" (F1). "All in all in wasn't worth the 150 euro for 3 meals and 4 drinks" (F1). "…€110 for a mixed grill. In Turkey?? Yeah right. 2 diet coke and a pint €13. Given the exchange rate atm they are charging over 5x what the price should be" (F1). "Their steak was a whole entire 30 euros, I stay in central London soho and don't pay that much for a NONE Michelin star restaurant" (F1). "…the end they cheat on the bill prices their prices are too high compared to their menu price" (F4). "Total scammers!!!!!! Terrible!!!!!! They ripped off 500€ but got only a table of grilled fish" (F5). "Overpriced. For this price the waiters should at least speak minimum English" (F5). "For a couple we have paid much as we were supposed to. We paid for 2-person 2.500 TRY for one fish for dinner. WARNING they are cheating" (F5). "Definitely overpriced" (F7). |
| | Charging more than what is written on menu | "…we choose 3 lobster and before I ask the price, I said how much for 3 lobsters, the waiter answered me, its 1850 liras = 185 euros, the moment of paying came, I was shocked, 6500 lyra = 650 euros, the waiters said the price before of the diner, 185 euros for 3 lobster, I understood that it was a scam" (F4). "Bad service and the food were overpriced. They charged us more than the actual price" (F5). "After we signed the bill, I found they charged me for a bottle of wine 5x more expensive than the dessert on my bill. I asked if they do this to tourists and they claimed it was a mistake. Any 5-star restaurant would apologize or comp us with something free (we already spent more than $200 on our meal). They gave us nothing" (F2). |

In this study, in addition to the service failures that tourists experience in both fine-dining restaurants and casual restaurants, it was also examined whether there were different failures occurring in these two different restaurant types. The conceptual map for this is shown in Figure 1. As can be seen in the figure, service failures expressed by tourists are numerous and diverse in fine-dining restaurants. When examined in more detail, it is seen that failures related to food, service, pricing and employees are found in both casual and fine-dining restaurants. Despite this, it is understood that failures related to physical factors are expressed only in fine-dining restaurants. Based on this, it can be interpreted that tourists who prefer fine-dining restaurants also attach more importance to physical elements such as lighting, toilets and ventilation. It is noteworthy that the tourists who prefer casual restaurants find the employees rude, but the tourists who prefer fine-dining restaurants complain about the rudeness of the employees, their lack of knowledge of a foreign language, their indifferent behavior and their insistence to customers on making comments about the restaurant. Similarly, when service-related failures are examined, it is understood that visitors who prefer fine-dining restaurants care about even rare service failures such as reserved table being given to someone else, incorrect content of the food, and serving the wrong food. Finally, the food-related failures identified in the fine-dining restaurant type, but not in the casual restaurant type, are that food is not fresh, inappropriate cooking degree, and small portion size.

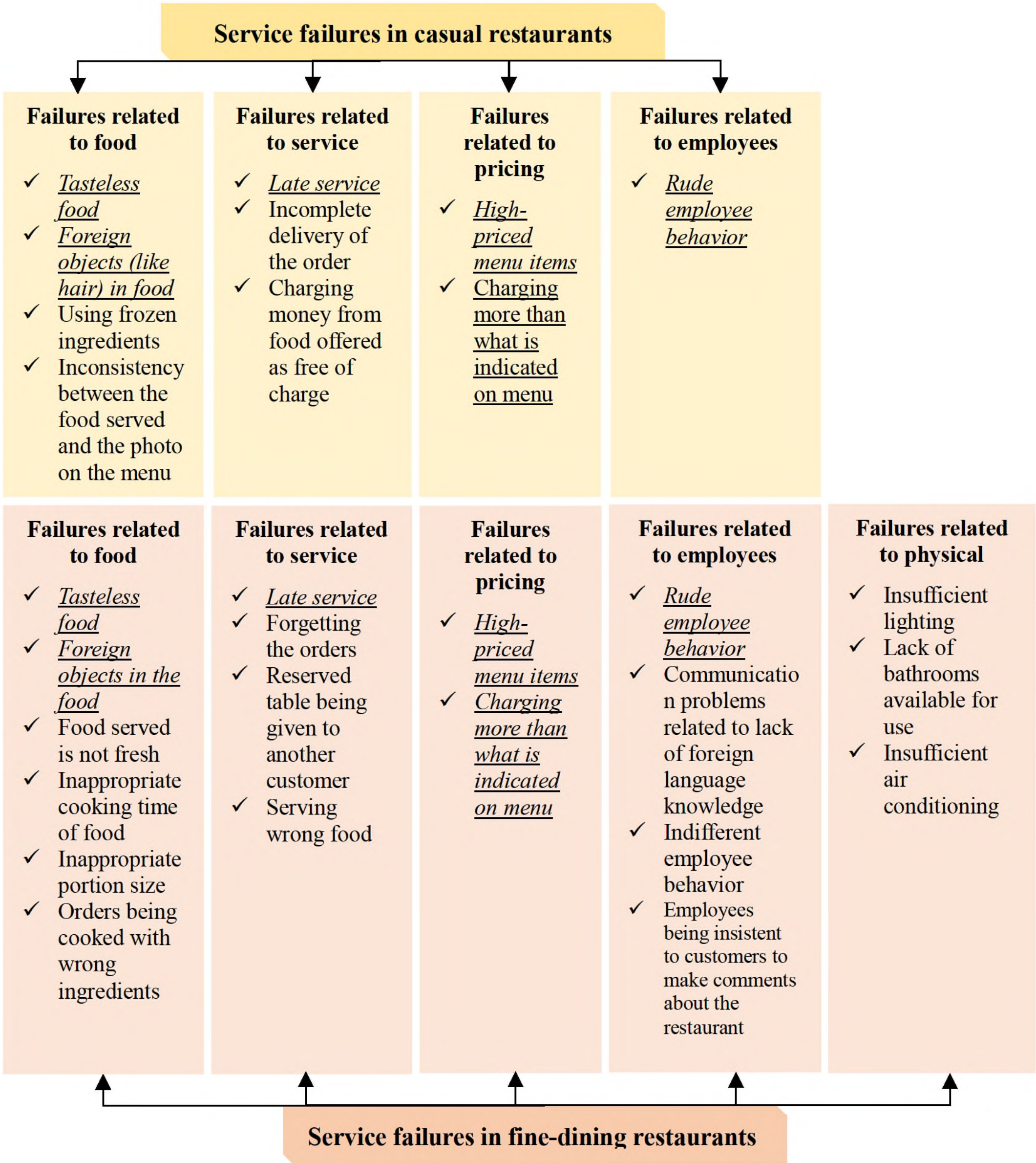


**Figure 1.** *Service failures experienced by restaurant type (conceptual model)*

Examining the similarities and differences of service failures encountered in fine dining and casual restaurants is an important contribution of this study to the relevant literature. Although the categories "failures related to food", "failures related to service", "failures related to pricing" and "failures related to employees" are similar in both types of restaurants, some of the failures in these categories differ. For example, when the food-related service failures category is examined, it is seen that fewer failures are expressed in casual restaurants and that there are failures with relatively low severity, such as the use of frozen products. However, in fine-dining restaurants, it is seen that the food-related service failures category includes more detailed and sensitive failures such as inappropriate cooking time, inappropriate portion size and inappropriate side products served with main course. Similarly, when service failures in casual restaurants are examined, it is seen that there are very basic failures such as incomplete service of the order and charging for food offered free of charge. However, service failures in fine-dining restaurants consist of more serious situations such as serving the wrong food and giving the reserved table to someone else. When it comes to failures related to employees, in addition to the rude employee behavior encountered in both types of restaurants, failures such as communication difficulties due to foreign language knowledge and inappropriate employee behavior have emerged in fine-dining restaurants. In addition to failures related to pricing, which are similar in both types of restaurants, it has been determined that failures related to physical elements only occur or are being voiced in fine-dining restaurants. When a general evaluation is made, it can be said that consumers who prefer fine-dining restaurants have higher expectations and therefore express service failures in more detail. In addition, the fact that the prices in fine-dining restaurants are considerably higher than the prices in casual restaurants may cause consumers who prefer fine-dining restaurants to want to complete the service process with fewer flaws.

## Conclusion

It is possible to present both theoretical and practical implications in this research, which examines service failures in restaurants with different service types such as fine-dining and casual. First of all, it is understood that the service failures encountered in fine-dining restaurants are much more diverse than the service failures experienced in casual restaurants. One reason may be that the expectations of tourists may be higher due to the high prices of menu items. Therefore, fine-dining restaurant owners, managers and employees in tourism destinations should know that tourist expectations are high and that even small flaws are expressed as service failures. On the other hand, in both types of restaurants, the categories of food-related, service-related, pricing-related and employee-related service failures were common. However, failures related to physical factors that occur in fine-dining restaurants have not been encountered or voiced in casual restaurants. Therefore, restaurants offering fine-dining restaurant type services can be advised to pay attention to issues such as lighting, ventilation and cleaning in addition to other services.

Although many main categories of service failures are common in both restaurant types, the failures within these categories differ. For example, service failures encountered in fine-dining restaurants, such as food cooked with wrong ingredients, serving the wrong food, and reserved table given to another customer, did not occur in casual restaurants. Similarly, it can be considered as a contribution to the relevant literature that only the rude employee behavior is stated among the failures related to the employees in casual restaurants, but in addition to this, the emergence of relatively more specific issues such as the employees' lack of knowledge of a foreign language, their indifferent behavior and their insistence to customers on making comments on the Internet.

When the literature on service failure is examined, it is understood that failures such as using frozen ingredients in food, charging money from food offered free of charge, and inconsistency of the food with the photo on the menu were not detected. In this context, it can be presented as a contribution to the relevant literature that such service failures can also occur in different types of restaurants. Although service failures in other categories differ, it is seen that service failures related to pricing are similar in both restaurant types. In other words, high-priced menu items and charging more than what is written on the menu have been identified as service failures in both fine-dining and casual restaurants.

Based on this study, in addition to the practical implications mentioned above, some theoretical implications can also be presented. First, this study provides an understanding of different service failures customers report across different types of restaurants. Secondly, previous studies that analyzed service failures through online reviews made a general assessment and did not segment the relevant market. However, different types of restaurants preferred may cause customers to evaluate the service process differently, depending on the expectations and quality perception they create. At this point, this study examined service failures in different types of restaurants, providing the opportunity to make evaluations for different market segments. Thirdly, this study contributes to the relevant literature by examining the service failure evaluations of foreign visitors in a tourist destination according to different restaurant types.

As with many studies, this study also has limitations. These limitations can also be considered as suggestions for future studies. First, in this study, restaurants in Antalya, where the sea-sand-sun tourism type is common, were examined. Future research can be carried out within the context of destinations that offer different tourism types. Second, only fine-dining and casual restaurants were evaluated in this study. In future research, service failures in ethnic, thematic, regional and international restaurant types can be examined. Third, only comments in English were considered in this study. Therefore, the findings of this study are limited to tourists who can comment in English. Further research can also evaluate the comments of tourists with different foreign languages. For example, Ülker et al. (2021), in his study, found that while American tourists pay more attention to service-oriented service failures, Turkish tourists care more about food-oriented service failures.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

# The Impact of Environmental Awareness on Green Product and Green Accommodation Purchasing Behavior: A Study on Domestic Tourists Visiting Antalya Province

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**ABSTRACT**
This study aims to determine whether environmental awareness significantly impacts green product and green accommodation purchasing behavior, and whether green product purchasing behavior significantly influences green accommodation purchasing behavior. Using quantitative research method, this study collected data from 454 people via a survey form. Domestic tourists who visit Antalya constitute the research population. The sample consists of domestic tourists who participate in the study and visit Antalya. The study employed a convenience sampling method, specifically a survey model. Result of the analysis revealed a low- to medium-level relationship between the dimensions of the research variables. Moreover, environmental awareness significantly impacts the purchasing behavior toward green products and green accommodations. Meanwhile, green product purchasing behavior significantly impacts green accommodation purchasing behavior.

**Keywords:** Environmental Awareness, Green Product, Green Product Purchasing Behavior, Green Accommodation, Green Accommodation Purchasing Behavior

## Introduction

Tourists should be aware of environmental issues to promote the use of green products focused on environmental protection. The key to raising this awareness is environmental education. According to Djordjević (2002), environmental education primarily focuses on raising environmental awareness. Environmental education is a process that addresses the need to develop attitudes, value judgments, knowledge, and skills to maintain the current position of the natural environment and monitor the results of individuals who exhibit environmentally friendly behaviors (Ivanov & Webster, 2007:383).

Environmental knowledge gained through environmental education is an important factor that can strengthen a person's tendency to be environmentally friendly and reduce environmental damage (Kumar et al., 2022). Environmental awareness is a type of initiative and activity undertaken on behalf of humanity in order to protect the environment. Therefore, environmental awareness that can be created with environmental education is vital for Turkey and other countries in constructing a sustainable society (Uzmen, 2007:13). In this case, people should regard the natural environment in which they live as a trust, not an inheritance. For this reason, every living being bears some level of environmental responsibility (Hvenegaard, 1994:30).

Combining environmental awareness with philosophical awareness is possible by defining the boundaries of nature and the human being inhabiting it. It is necessary to develop an "ecological citizenship" model that does not deplete natural resources or harm natural or sustainable life and consumption (Goralnik et al., 2012:418). Ecological citizenship can motivate sustainable consumption (Seyfang, 2006). Consumer behavior is increasingly recognized as a form of public activism and civic expression. Therefore, environmentalists are encouraged to contribute by purchasing environmentally friendly or ethical products, a practice known as sustainable consumption (Seyfang, 2005).

In a human-centered world where only human needs are at the forefront, humans have become the masters of nature. Humans, who have advanced in technology to an important level, have failed to show the necessary respect for nature and have begun to use technology to concrete and eliminate natural life (Cheng et al., 2013:99). The rapid depletion of the world's natural resources

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and the rapidly deteriorating environment are now undeniable realities (Rogayan Jr & Nebrida, 2019:106; Magdoff, 2013; Mittal & Gupta, 2006). This demonstrates that humans are creatures living in nature and must shape their lives being in harmony with nature. Nature, which is alive like humans, is part of an obligation that must coexist with humans for the world to exist (Lindberg, 1991:185). Therefore, one of the most noticeable issues in recent years has been the growing interest in environmental issues and their impact on general awareness (Rogayan Jr & Nebrida, 2019:106).

Related research has addressed a wide range of environmental issues in the hotel industry and daily environmental behavior, such as green marketing and concerns, consumer intention to participate, and willingness to pay for green consumption (Ting et al., 2019). The purpose of this study is to determine the impact of environmental awareness on green product and green accommodation purchasing behavior, as well as the impact of green product purchasing behavior on green accommodation purchasing behavior, by examining the relationship between the research variables. This will result in creating a consumer profile that demonstrates green product and green accommodation purchase behavior while being environmentally conscious. Thus, businesses/accommodation businesses are expected to contribute to developing appropriate marketing strategies by tailoring their products and services to the demands and needs of consumers and segmenting the market. This contribution will help green businesses improve their purchasing, production, and service behavior.

It is important to consider human opinions to raise environmental awareness about sustainability in nations and thus expand the use of green products. Thus, one can observe and understand the operation of sustainability from various perspectives. Understanding sustainability more deeply and taking appropriate precautions may also be possible. In this context, the study aims to reveal how tourists interpret environmental awareness and whether they can define sustainability-related values in environmental awareness and the use of green products in a destination, thereby contributing to the relevant literature. Furthermore, given the deficiencies of field and theoretical research, it is believed that research is vital in terms of adding new ones to the few studies in the literature on environmental awareness and the use of green products, as well as contributing to the functionality of ecotourism.

## Literature Review

### *Environmental Awareness*

The term "awareness" refers to the empirically acquired level of knowledge through one's perceptions (Ziadat, 2009:136). In other words, awareness includes, among other things, gathering information on current topics affecting nature locally and globally, exploring what actions could make a difference in your environment, and self-awareness of personal environmental philosophies (Schmidt, 2007:1). Environmentalism emphasizes humanity's need for ecological balance and the existence of growth constraints in human societies. It is associated with a broader ecocentric worldview that questions humanity's right to control the natural world (Sanchez & Lafuente, 2010:733). In this case, environmental awareness, which represents people's concerns and awareness of the environmental impact of their actions, is regarded as the first important step in developing environmental solutions (Ahmad et al., 2021).

Because of global warming, climate change, and various types of pollution, environmental awareness has become a topic that different segments are increasingly emphasizing. This has made people more sensitive to environmental issues (Carter et al. 2004:51). As a result of sensitivity toward environmental awareness, the concept of sustainable development has emerged, the importance of sustainability has been emphasized, and pressure has been put on growth to have the least negative impact on the environment and society (Al-Kumaim et al., 2021). In this context, we can say that environmental awareness is critical to any country's sustainable development (Ziadat, 2009; Lizuka, 2000; Atabek Yiğit & Balkan Kıyıcı, 2022).

In this regard, tourism, which has always had a complex and bilateral relationship, is also contingent upon the environment to attract tourist flow, and the environment is also dependent on tourism because it has negative impacts on the tourism ecosystem, with the risk of permanent damage. Therefore, a balance must be found between the tourism industry's economic profitability and the ecosystem's quality where tourism activities occur (Acampora et al., 2022). It is widely accepted that local citizens' environmental stewardship and pro-environmental behavior are positively related to regional prosperity (Si et al., 2022). Therefore, consistency between policies addressing economic development and the local environment is critical (Pachaur, 2008).

### *Green Products and Green Accommodation Purchasing Behavior*

Green purchasing activity is defined as complex pro-social behavior toward green products resulting from an ethical decision-making process (Han, 2020). In broader terms, green or environmentally friendly purchasing behavior refers to the habit of purchasing environmentally friendly products that do not pollute the environment or consume natural resources and can be recycled or preserved (Md Harizan & Haron, 2012:378).

Since the 1970s, industry experts and stakeholders have worked to ensure sustainable tourism, including green practice activities, in response to consumers' environmental concerns and sustainability (Patwary et al., 2022). Green practices, which include daily actions for a wide range of environmental protection, such as energy conservation, recycling, waste reduction, and green mobility behavior (Dangelico et al., 2021), aim to increase product availability, reduce resource waste, and improve environmental outcomes (Umar et al., 2022).

With the rise of green-conscious consumers, green practices have become a vital component of a business' strategic plan, potentially providing a competitive advantage (Kuar et al., 2022). In fact, as green products have grown in popularity on the market (Chen & Chang, 2012), consumers have begun to look for more environmentally friendly alternatives to traditional purchases (Akehurst et al., 2012). This is because the environment has become more important.

*Greening* has become critical to the survival and prosperity of some businesses. Thus, these companies are attempting to outperform their competitors by becoming more environmentally conscious, understanding the marketing potential of green initiatives (Namkung & Jang, 2013). Therefore, businesses have had to integrate their environmental goals with long-term strategic management due to customer demands for green products produced using environmentally friendly raw materials and green production processes (Lin, 2013). They have also adopted green practices to avoid harming the environment (Yousaf, 2021). This has prompted hoteliers to adopt green practices in their accommodation management. Another factor contributing to this situation is consumers' increasing interest in environmental issues and sustainability (Merli et al., 2019).

With the trend of sustainable development and environmental protection in the tourism industry, the concept of green accommodation is continuing to develop (Patwary et al., 2022), and the demand for green accommodation is increasing (Demir et al., 2021). As a result, many hotels have begun implementing various innovative practices to increase the "greenness" of their operations in response to customers' growing environmental concerns and alleviate their environmental pressures (Abdou et al. 2020).

The term "green accommodation," which first appeared in Germany in the 1980s, includes expressions describing green accommodation like "ecological hotel," "eco-hotel," "eco-efficient hotel," and "environmentally friendly hotel." (Ting et al., 2019). Green hotels are environmentally friendly and less environmentally friendly properties that follow a variety of environmentally friendly practices. Their managers are eager to launch programs that save money, energy, and solid waste (Abdou et al., 2020, p. 5).

Transforming a hotel into a functional green hotel by implementing environmentally friendly practices such as environmentally friendly designs, reducing emissions, providing environmentally friendly products, and conserving water and energy necessitates collaboration between hotel management and consumer (Adetola et al., 2021). Because environmental values are strongly related to social and emotional values, green accommodation customers evaluate establishments based on emotional and social values and perceived values (Salem et al., 2022). Therefore, although a consumer aware of green accommodation understands that staying in such establishments is expensive, they do not hesitate to stay overnight in such accommodation, considering the cost of all types of environmentally friendly products and services. Consumers hold this attitude because they believe that reducing pollution will help make the environment safer for future generations (Demir et al., 2021).

**Research Model and Hypotheses**

Alkaya et al. (2016) conducted a study to determine the impact of environmental sensitivity on green purchasing behavior. The study concluded that personal and ecological sensitivity, both dimensions of environmental sensitivity, impact green product purchasing behavior. Meanwhile, Onurlubaş (2019) examined the impact of consumer social impact, environmental sensitivity, and environmental awareness on consumer purchasing behavior for green products. According to this study, social influence has a moderately significant impact on green product purchasing behavior. Furthermore, the study found that environmental awareness has a weak but significant impact on green product purchasing behavior.

Aracioglu and Tatlidil (2009) first examined consumer levels of environmental awareness and the impact of environmental awareness on purchasing behavior. Consumers who participated in the study were found to be generally environmentally conscious and aware of certain environmental protection and pollution prevention measures. As consumer awareness of environmental pollution and environmental protection increases, the impact of this increase is seen in consumer purchasing behavior.

Çatıcı and Öcel (2019) sought to assess the impact of people's environmental awareness on environmental behavior within the context of green marketing activities. They observed that environmental awareness affects environmental behavior. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

*H1: Environmental awareness impacts green product purchasing behavior.*

Regarding the intention to choose a green-star hotel, Oğuz and Yılmaz (2019) found a significant relationship between environmental sensitivity, environmental attitude, and environmental behavior. Sünnetçioğlu et al. (2019) investigated whether environmentally sensitive consumer behavior affects tourist purchasing behavior. Their study concluded that the behavior of environmentally conscious consumers has an impact on the intention to choose green hotels. Furthermore, it was stated that environmentally sensitive consumer behavior can predict the intention to stay in green hotels. Therefore, the research hypothesis that will be developed in this context is:

*H2: Environmental awareness impacts green accommodation purchasing behavior.*

Berk and Celep (2020) examined how the image of a green hotel in relation to green star accommodation businesses affects consumer purchasing behavior. Their study found that green marketing activities positively impact consumer purchasing behavior. Celiloğlu (2014) examined the impact of consumer attitudes toward green hotels on their intent to stay in these hotels. The study concluded that there was a positive and significant relationship between consumers' perceptions of green hotels and their intention to stay. Thus, the third hypothesis is as follows:

*H3: Green product purchasing behavior impacts green accommodation purchasing behavior.*

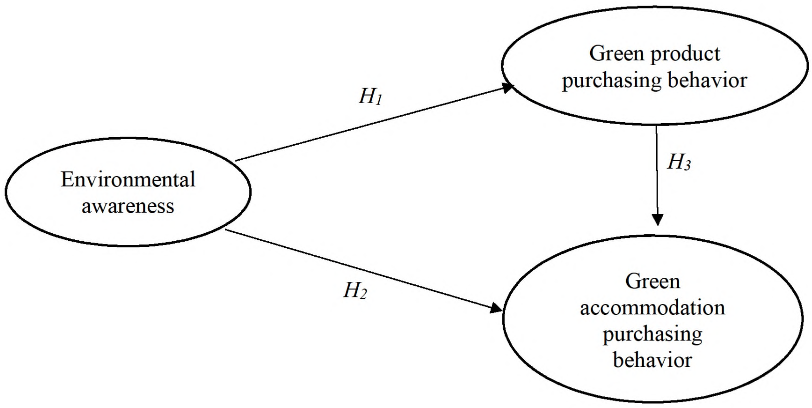


**Figure 1.** Symbolic model of the research.

## Method

The goal of this study is to determine whether environmental awareness has a significant impact on green product and green accommodation purchasing behavior, as well as whether green product purchasing behavior has a significant impact on green accommodation purchasing behavior, by establishing a link between the research variables. Approval was received from the Şırnak University Ethics Committee (No: 2021/31; dated 09/04/2021) regarding the ethical suitability of the statements of the scale used.

This study employed a quantitative research method. Furthermore, a screening model known as convenience sampling was used. The sampling method was chosen because it offers significant practical benefits in terms of cost savings and faster data collection, as well as because the entire population cannot participate in the study (Golzar et al., 2022). Domestic tourists who visit Antalya constitute the research population. The sample consists of domestic tourists who take part in the study and visit Antalya. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) estimated a sample size of 384 people at the 95% confidence level, with a sampling error of 5% when the variance is maximum. This sample size is optimal for representing the universe (Ural & Kılıç, 2006: 48). In this case, 454 questionnaires are sufficient representation. The survey collected data from 454 people who participated in the study between April 10, 2021, and June 22, 2022. The surveys were completed in person as well as via WhatsApp and Facebook.

Dikmenli and Konca (2016) developed the Environmental Awareness Scale. The green product purchasing scale is used by Çetinkaya and Özceylan (2017). Meanwhile, the green accommodation purchasing scale is based on Ceylan's (2017) master's thesis and includes 10 items from Lasso (2013), 8 items from Yıldız (2012), and 9 items from Cometa (2012). The researchers used 5-point Likert scales to determine how much participants agreed with the questions.

Descriptive statistics and reliability and validity (factor analysis) analyses were used in the investigation. Varimax Rotation was used in factor analysis. The Varimax method frequently yields good results. This is because the varimax method is eigenvalue-weighted, uses a non-orthogonal rotation to calculate scores, and prioritizes factor simplicity, making it ideal for object clustering and discrimination (Forina et al., 1989). Cronbach's Alpha, the most widely used internal reliability index (Bayram, 2009: 194), and the item-whole correlation method used ensured that the item-whole correlation for the statements was greater than .20 (Büyüköztürk, 2018:183). The construct's validity was tested using exploratory factor analysis. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) test (Çokluk et al., 2012:207) assessed sampling adequacy. Skewness and kurtosis analysis was performed to determine whether the data followed a normal distribution (Kalaycı, 2014: 6–7). The fact that the kurtosis and skewness values are between +1.5 and 1.5 indicates that the data follows a normal distribution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

The skewness and kurtosis values for the environmental awareness scale are .413 and .241, respectively. The skewness and kurtosis values for the green product purchasing scale are .114 and .100, respectively. The green accommodation purchasing scale has a skewness value of and a kurtosis value of 1.170. The fact that these values are within the range of +1.5 to 1.5 indicates that the data is normal. The Bartlett sphericity test was also used to determine whether the data showed a normal distribution (Çokluk et al., 2010:208). The results of this test are included in the factor analysis sections for each scale.

In the factor analysis of the scales, care was taken to ensure that the difference was greater than .100 in case the items overlapped (Bayram, 2009:205); additionally, care was taken to ensure that the factor loading of the items was greater than.40 (Büyüköztürk 201:134). When naming the factors, relevant literature and expressions with high weights under a factor were considered (Kalaycı, 2014:330); correlation and regression analyses were performed.

## Findings and Discussion

The research findings cover demographic and occupational characteristics, reliability and factor analysis, correlation, and regression analysis.

### *Demographic and Occupational Characteristics*

The findings for demographic characteristics are as follows. When demographic data were examined, 31.7% (n = 144) of the participants were female, whereas 68.3% (n = 310) were male. According to marital status, 53.3% (n = 242) of the participants were married, and 46.7% were single. In the type of program, 6.6% (n = 30) of the participants were in primary school, 9.5% (n = 43) in secondary school, 25.1% (n = 114) in high school, 25.8% (n = 117) in associate degree graduates, 22.2% (n = 101) in undergraduate, and 10.8% (n = 49) in postgraduate studies. According to age group, 18.5% of participants (n = 85) are between 18 and 24 years old, 27.5% (n = 125) are between 25 and 34 years old, 25.6% (n = 116) are between 35 and 44 years old, 14.1% (n = 64) are between 45 and 54 years old, 6.8% (n = 31) are between 55 and 64 years old, and 7.3% are 65 years or older.

When the participants' occupational characteristics were examined, 28.6% (n = 130) were public employees, 30.2% (n = 137) were private sector employees, 11.5% (n = 52) were employers, 7.9% (n = 36) were retired, and 21.8% (n = 99) were unemployed. Finally, according to their monthly income, 19.8% (n = 90) of the participants had no income. 10.4% (n = 47) have a monthly income less than the minimum wage, 36.8% (n = 167) have a monthly income between the minimum wage and 5000 TL, and 33% (n = 150) earn 5001 TL or more.

### *Reliability and Factor Analysis*

#### *Reliability and Factor Analysis of Environmental Awareness Scale*

Before factor analysis, the Cronbach's alpha value for the environmental awareness scale was .748. As a result, excluding some items from the analysis was deemed appropriate because their item-total correlation value was less than .20. These elements include: "Even if it is beneficial for humanity, products that harm the environment should not be produced."(.162 < .20), "Before the price of a product I will buy, I look at its features and contents." (.181 < .20), "*I don't* see it as garbage without using both sides of the paper." (.185 < .20), "Because everyone has the right to live in a healthy and balanced environment, I must use resources impactively and efficiently" (*.060 < .20*).

In factor analysis, "If I know that a company is engaged in activities that harm the environment, I will not buy *the* products of *that company.*", "As a conscious consumer, I know my rights and use them.", "I buy more products from companies that are environmentally friendly and invest.", "I bag my garbage for recycling.", "I think advertisements direct my consumption preferences." and "I take care to live in peace with the environment." were not loaded on any factor. As a result, they were not considered in the factor analysis.

In the repeated factor analysis, the KMO sample adequacy value was .703, and the Bartlett's sphericity test value was 1408.906, which was significant at the 0.0001 level. According to this finding, the sample size is adequate for factor analysis (Çokluk et al., 2012:207). The Bartlett test's significant chi-square values at the 0.0001 level show that the data follows a normal distribution (Çokluk et al., 2010:208). When Table 1 is examined, the Bartlett test results show that the data has a normal distribution, allowing multivariate statistical techniques to be used. Cronbach's alpha was determined following factor analysis, Cronbach Alpha value was calculated as .715 Factor analysis of the scale is included in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Results of the Factor Analysis for the Environmental Awareness Scale

| | Communalities | Factor load | Eigenvalue | Explained Variance | Average | Alpha |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Social Pressure** | | | **2.520** | **14.002** | **3.2992** | **.696** |
| I cut down on my expenses to buy the expensive mobile phone my friend bought. | .446 | .668 | | | | |
| When I shop, I pay attention to the image and awareness of the company, rather than to the product. | .424 | .615 | | | | |
| I do not care about the problems I may encounter with low-value products. | .456 | .599 | | | | |
| This fashion is essential to me. | .388 | .593 | | | | |
| I am influenced by others when purchasing products. | .427 | .558 | | | | |
| Although I am a conscious consumer with environmental awareness, I am easily persuaded by advertisements and promotions. | .324 | .549 | | | | |
| I follow and buy new technological products. | .374 | .511 | | | | |
| **Awareness of Recycling and Saving** | | | **2.092** | **11.620** | **3.8568** | **.640** |
| When buying a product, I prefer the recyclable one. | .588 | .737 | | | | |
| I take the necessary precautions to avoid wasting electricity and water. | .505 | .695 | | | | |
| I warn my friends not to choose products that harm the environment. | .398 | .616 | | | | |
| I try to use cloth bags instead of shopping bags when I shop. | .477 | .603 | | | | |
| **Behavioral Awareness** | | | **1.883** | **10.460** | **3.8111** | **.592** |
| I have no brand obsession with the products I use. | .587 | .757 | | | | |
| I ensure that the products I consume are organic. | .526 | .699 | | | | |
| Due to my environmental sensitivity, I buy environmentally friendly products. | .467 | .575 | | | | |
| When buying a product, I prefer products with recyclable packaging. | .372 | .493 | | | | |
| **Product Use Awareness Focused on Environmental Protection** | | | **1.814** | **10.080** | **3.5286** | **.584** |
| I do not use technological products that harm nature. | .623 | .774 | | | | |
| I know that the damage I cause to the environment will be reflected in my budget. | .497 | .702 | | | | |
| I avoid using volatile substances (perfume, deodorant, etc.) that damage the ozone layer. | .431 | .616 | | | | |

Principal Components Analysis with Varimax Rotation–Total variance explained: 46.162% KMO Sampling Adequacy: .703–Bartlett Test of Sphericity: 1408.906 s.d.: 153 p < 0.001 Overall mean: 3.5751–Cronbach's Alpha: .715

1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Undecided*, 4 = *Agree*, 5 = *Completely Agree*

Table 1 shows that the scale's factor analysis results are consistent with the stated presuppositions. Of the 28 items explaining environmental awareness, 18 items fall into four categories and account for 46.162% of the total variance.

### *Reliability and factor analysis of the Green Product Purchasing Scale*

Before factor analysis, Cronbach's Alpha value for the entire green product purchasing scale was The calculated value is .835. We found no items on the scale with an item-total correlation value of <.20.

For example, "I do not believe that people in our country make enough efforts to protect the environment.", "I attach great importance to environmental friendliness when purchasing many products such as cosmetics, household goods, food, and cleaning products.", "The behavior of consumers who purchase the products of socially responsible businesses can have a positive impact on society as to environmental awareness." were *removed* from the analysis because they did not load on any factor. Additionally, "Packaging should give confidence." and "Packaging should be easy to use." were grouped under two factors and were removed from the analysis due to a difference of <.100.

In repeated factor analysis, the KMO sample adequacy value was .757. The Bartlett sphericity test yields a value of 2476.997. The significant value at the 0.0001 level shows that the sample size is sufficient for factor analysis (Çokluk et al., 2012:207). Cronbach's alpha was .813 following factor analysis. Table 2 shows the results of the factor analysis.

**Table 2.** *Results of Factor Analysis for the Green Product Purchasing Scale*

| | Communalities | Factor load | Eigenvalue | Explained Variance | Average | Alpha |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Attitude toward solid waste** | | | **2.389** | **9.188** | **3.8837** | **.610** |
| Businesses should encourage consumers to collect solid waste. | .472 | .656 | | | | |
| Despite the warnings, we do nothing to protect the environment. | .380 | .603 | | | | |
| Turkey faces serious solid waste problems. | .393 | .538 | | | | |
| I prefer to buy recyclable products such as paper, plastic and glass. | .372 | .510 | | | | |
| The packaging should protect the product. | .417 | .493 | | | | |
| **Attitude toward packaging** | | | **2.300** | **8.847** | **4.0057** | **.690** |
| The packaging should be portable. | .594 | .741 | | | | |
| Packaging should provide ease of storage. | .531 | .670 | | | | |
| Packaging should be able to be used in different functions. | .520 | .642 | | | | |
| The packaging must be recyclable. | .613 | .571 | | | | |
| Packaging should not harm the environment. | .390 | .471 | | | | |
| **Responsibility for purchasing green products** | | | **2.079** | **7.997** | **3.6052** | **.599** |
| I do not buy products from companies that do not respect the environment. | .565 | .708 | | | | |
| I do not purchase products that I understand can harm the environment. | .554 | .655 | | | | |
| When I have a choice between two equal products, I always choose the product that will cause less harm to other people and the environment. | .596 | .550 | | | | |
| I am interested in organic, ecological, and natural products. | .512 | .498 | | | | |
| **Attitude toward the environment** | | | **1,894** | **7.285** | **3.5171** | **.640** |
| I believe that I can protect the environment by purchasing environmentally friendly products. | .616 | .727 | | | | |
| I consider myself an environmentalist. | .544 | .694 | | | | |
| When purchasing a product, I consider how it will affect my environment and other consumers. | .459 | .483 | | | | |
| When purchasing products, I always act with the awareness of purchasing products that will less pollute the environment. | .516 | .450 | | | | |
| **Purchasing behavior of products with lower energy consumption** | | | **1.751** | **6.734** | **3.8756** | **.639** |
| The household goods I bought consume less electricity than the other brands. | .677 | .794 | | | | |
| I choose light bulbs at home that consume less energy. | .623 | .724 | | | | |
| **Awareness of environmentally friendly products** | | | **1.726** | **6.638** | **3.5458** | **.558** |
| I can understand whether many products are environmentally friendly based on information on their ingredients. | .529 | .669 | | | | |
| Whenever possible, I try to buy products packaged in reusable containers. | .596 | .597 | | | | |
| I can understand whether many products are environmentally friendly or not from the signs and symbols on them. | .466 | .532 | | | | |
| **Behavior of trying to consume less electricity** | | | **1.699** | **6.534** | **3.6982** | **.586** |
| I try to use electrical appliances during hours when electricity consumption is low. | .745 | .842 | | | | |
| I make a concerted effort to reduce the amount of electricity that I use. | .659 | .737 | | | | |
| I like to use throwaway items and produce something else from them. | .501 | .537 | | | | |

Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation–Total variance explained: 53.223% KMO Sampling Adequacy: .757 – Bartlett Test of Sphericity: 2476.997 sd.: 325 p < 0.001 Overall mean: 3.7468 – Cronbach's Alpha: .813

1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Undecided*, 4 = *Agree*, 5 = *Completely Agree*

Table 2 shows the results of the factor analysis for the scale based on the stated assumptions. 26 of 31 items explaining the purchase of green products are grouped into 7 factors, accounting for 53.223% of the total variance.

***Reliability and Factor Analysis of the Green Accommodation Purchasing Scale***

Prior to factor analysis, the Cronbach's Alpha value for the entire green accommodation purchasing scale was .782. The item correlation value for "If I were to choose between agreeing or not agreeing with the hotel's towel change restrictions, I would choose not to participate." in the scale is less than .186 < .20; because of the item correlation value of the item that is "If I were to choose between energy-saving (television, air conditioner, mini refrigerator, etc.) and nonenergy-saving electronic devices and light bulbs, I would choose the non-energy-saving ones." in the scale is less than -.012 < .20." The item "If I were to choose between disposable shampoo bottles and shampoo dispenser (pressure), I would choose disposable shampoo bottles." in the scale has a correlation value of less than .137 < .20, so it was removed from the analysis.

In the factor analysis, the items that are "Accommodation in a green-star hotel improves awareness of protecting the natural environment.", "The employees of the green-star hotel I accommodated in are knowledgeable about sustainability.", "I think those who stay in green-star hotels have a positive image.", "Accommodation in a green-star hotel is more expensive than non-green-star hotels.", "If I were to choose between water-saving shower heads and those that do not save water, I would choose water-saving shower heads." and "Many people think that accommodating in a green-star hotel is more beneficial." were removed from the analysis because they did not load on any factor. Additionally, the item "Accommodation in a green-star hotel allows me to participate in environmentally friendly practices." was grouped into two factors and removed from the analysis due to a difference of less than .100.

The KMO sample adequacy value was .717 as a result of repeated factor analysis. The Bartlett sphericity test value is 1,552.472. The value is significant at the 0.0001 level (Çokluk et al., 2012:207). Following factor analysis, the Cronbach alpha value was determined to be .748. Table 3 shows the results of the factor analysis.

**Table 3.** *Results of Factor Analysis for the Green Accommodation Purchasing Scale*

| | Communalities | Factor load | Eigenvalue | Explained Variance | Average | Alpha |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Sacrifice in the use of green products** | | | **2.330** | **13.705** | **3.6747** | **.672** |
| Convenience and comfort can be sacrificed for lodging in a green-star hotel. | .513 | .713 | | | | |
| I am willing to pay more for accommodation in Green-Star hotels. | .454 | .644 | | | | |
| If I were to choose disposable shampoo bottles and dispensers (push button), I would choose disposable shampoo bottles. | .484 | .638 | | | | |
| Those who stay at Green-Star hotels are people of social status. | .397 | .525 | | | | |
| Those who stay in Green-Star hotels contribute to the environment and sustainability. | .428 | .522 | | | | |
| I think the environmental warnings and visuals in the hotel lobby and open areas are sufficient. | .351 | .521 | | | | |
| **Service quality of Green-Star Hotels** | | | **2.132** | **12.541** | **3.6608** | **.624** |
| A Green-Star hotel offers services worth the money. | .642 | .772 | | | | |
| The service quality of the Green-Star hotel I stayed in was generally good. | .525 | .690 | | | | |
| The fact that the hotel has a green-star label was important in my choice of hotel. | .438 | .525 | | | | |
| I consider myself an environmentally conscious individual. | .301 | .477 | | | | |
| **Contribution of Green-Star Hotels to the use of healthy products** | | | **1.948** | **11.461** | **3.3612** | **.670** |
| Having a room in a Green-Star hotel allows me to benefit from environmentally friendly and healthy products. | .715 | .841 | | | | |
| Green-Star hotels allow me to consume fresh/healthy food. | .612 | .701 | | | | |
| The environmental sensitivity of the employees of the Green-Star hotel that I stayed at is high. | .504 | .675 | | | | |
| **Sensitivity to the use of green products** | | | **1.894** | **11.141** | **3.6118** | **.595** |
| If I had to choose between participating or not participating in hotel recycling practices, I would choose to participate. | .669 | .793 | | | | |
| I would also recommend accommodating in a green-star hotel for the people around me. | .588 | .683 | | | | |
| If I were to choose between traditional manual and automatic key cards (automatically closes when exited) key cards for the room, I would choose the automatic key card. | .384 | .613 | | | | |
| Accommodation in a green-star hotel allows me to stay in a healthy and environmentally friendly room. | .302 | .484 | | | | |

Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation–Total variance explained: 48.849% KMO Sampling Adequacy: .717 – Bartlett Test of Sphericity: 1552.472 s.d.: 136 p < 0.001 Overall Mean: 3.6013 – Cronbach's Alpha: .748

1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Undecided*, 4 = *Agree*, 5 = *Completely Agree*

The factor analysis results for the scale in Table 3 are based on the assumptions made. Of the 27 items explaining purchasing green accommodation, 17 items fall into four categories and account for 48.849% of the total variance.

## Correlation Analysis

A correlation analysis was run to determine the relationship and direction of the research variables. Correlation is an analysis that determines the relationship between two or more variables (Sungur, 2016:115). In the analysis, the correlation coefficient ranges between -1 and +1. This value is indicated by r (Can, 2013:321).

**Table 4.** *Correlation Analysis*

| | | x̄ | σ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Environmental awareness** | Social pressure | 3.2992 | .80222 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Awareness of recycling and saving | 3.8568 | .79934 | .098* | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Behavioral awareness | 3.8111 | .77202 | .136** | .303** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Product usage awareness focused on environmental protection | 3.5286 | .89697 | .174** | .226** | .215** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Green product purchasing behavior** | Attitude toward solid waste | 3.8837 | .69882 | -.056 | .152** | .096* | .047 | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| | Attitude toward packaging | 4.0057 | .73899 | -.132** | .194** | .145** | .019 | .388** | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| | Responsibility in purchasing green products | 3.6052 | .82244 | -.044 | .246** | .196** | .216** | .240** | .264** | 1 | | | | | | | |
| | Attitude toward the environment | 3.5171 | .80740 | .055 | .279** | .331** | .314** | .306** | .270** | .426** | 1 | | | | | | |
| | Purchasing behavior of products with less energy consumption | 3.8756 | .96256 | .014 | .198** | .203** | .131** | .082 | .185** | .146** | .275** | 1 | | | | | |
| | Awareness of environmentally friendly products | 3.5448 | .86794 | .019 | .271** | .288** | .140** | .309** | .221** | .258** | .324** | .279** | 1 | | | | |
| | The behavior of trying to consume less electricity | 3.6982 | .89104 | -.008 | .263** | .203** | .109* | .151** | .130** | .188** | .231** | .273** | .234** | 1 | | | |
| **Green accommodation purchasing behavior** | Sacrifice regarding the use of green products | 3.6747 | .72918 | .218** | .161** | .244** | .134** | .168** | .177** | .192** | .225** | .174** | .179** | .189** | 1 | | |
| | Service quality of Green-Star hotels | 3.6608 | .83621 | .013 | .161** | .106* | .072 | .329** | .275** | .291** | .208** | .158** | .216** | .130** | .321** | 1 | |
| | Contribution of green-star hotels to healthy product use | 3.3612 | .95814 | -.120* | .101* | .059 | -.019 | .256** | .261** | .283** | .193** | .079 | .258** | .080 | .139** | .286** | 1 |
| | Sensitivity to the use of green products | 3.6118 | .79303 | -.070 | .217** | .040 | .109* | .353** | .293** | .257** | .340** | .220** | .253** | .148** | .210** | .278** | .225** | 1 |

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) - ** Correlation significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Environmental awareness | 3.5751 | .51368 | 1 | |
| Green product purchasing behavior | 3.7468 | .48553 | .280** | 1 |
| Green accommodation purchasing behavior | 3.6013 | .53556 | .212** | .564** |

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) - ** Correlation significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Values (r) ranging from 0 to 0.3 indicate a weak linear relationship, 0.3 to 0.7 indicate a moderate relationship, and 0.7 to 1.0 indicate a strong linear relationship (Ratner, 2009). In this case, the analysis in Table 4 shows a low- to medium-level correlation between the dimensions of the research variables. The correlation analysis of the total scales revealed that the variables had a positive linear low- and medium-level correlation.

## *Regression Analysis*

The study subjected the variables to a simple linear regression analysis based on the overall scale total. Then, multiple regression analysis was conducted regarding the dimensions of the variables (Kalaycı 2014:199). Tables 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 present the analyses.

**Table 5.** *Impact of Environmental Awareness on Green Product Purchasing Behavior*

| Dependent variable | Model (constant) and independent variable | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Beta | Std. error | Beta | | |
| Green product purchasing behavior | (Constant) | 2.800 | .154 | | 18.163 | .000 |
| | Environmental awareness | .265 | .043 | .280 | 6.207 | .000 |
| R: .280 $R^2$: .079; Adjusted $R^2$: .077; For model F: 38.533; p = .000; Durbin–Watson: 1.402 | | | | | | |

According to the analysis in Table 5, it was found that environmental awareness had a significant impact on green product purchasing behavior (F = 38.533, p = .000). The R-value of .280 indicates a weakly positive relationship between the variables. In a simple linear regression analysis, $R^2$ represents the percentage of dependent variables explained by the independent variables in the model. In this case, the independent variable (environmental awareness) can explain 7.9% of the variability in participants' purchase behavior for green products (Kalaycı, 2014:259). Thus, $H_1$ is accepted.

**Table 6.** *Impact of Environmental Awareness on Green Accommodation Purchasing Behavior*

| Dependent variable | Model (Constant) and Independent variable | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Beta | Std. error | Beta | | |
| Green accommodation purchasing behavior | (Constant) | 2.812 | .173 | | 16.246 | .000 |
| | Environmental awareness | .221 | .048 | .212 | 4.605 | .000 |

R: .212; $R^2$: .045; Adjusted $R^2$: .043; For model F: 21.204; p = .000; Durbin-Watson: 1.703

According to the analysis in Table 6, the impact of environmental awareness on green accommodation purchasing behavior is significant (F = 21.204, p = .000). According to $R^2$, it can be expressed that 4.5% of the variability in the participants' green accommodation purchasing behavior is explained by environmental awareness (Kalaycı, 2014:259). Therefore, $H_2$ is accepted.

**Table 7.** *Impact of Green Product Purchasing Behavior on Green Accommodation Purchasing Behavior*

| Dependent variable | Model (Constant) and Independent variable | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Beta | Std. error | Beta | | |
| Green accommodation purchasing behavior | (Constant) | 1.270 | .162 | | 7.847 | .000 |
| | Green product purchasing behavior | .622 | .043 | .564 | 14.523 | .000 |

R: .564; $R^2$: .318; Adjusted $R^2$: .317; For model F: 210.917; p = .000; Durbin-Watson: 1.859

Table 7 shows that the impact of green product purchasing behavior on green accommodation purchasing behavior is significant (F = 210.917, p = .000). The R2 of the dependent variable is .318, indicating that 31.8% of the variability in the participants' green accommodation purchasing behavior is explained by green product purchasing behavior (Kalaycı, 2014:259). $H_3$ is accepted in this case.

**Table 8.** *The Impact of Environmental Awareness on Green Product Purchasing Behavior (Multiple Regression Analysis)*

| Dependent variable | Model (Constant) and Independent variable | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | ANOVA | | R | $R^2$ | Adjusted $R^2$ | Tolerance | VIF |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Beta | Std. error | Beta | F | Sig. | | | | | |
| Attitude toward solid waste | Constant | 3.396 | .234 | | | | | | | | |
| | Social pressure | −.070 | .041 | −.081 | | | | | | .958 | 1.044 |
| | Awareness of recycling and saving | .120 | .043 | .137 | 3.704 | .006 | .179 | .032 | .023 | .880 | 1.137 |
| | Behavioral awareness | .056 | .045 | .062 | | | | | | .878 | 1.139 |
| | Product usage awareness focused on environmental protection | .013 | .038 | .017 | | | | | | .907 | 1.103 |
| Attitude toward packaging | Constant | 3.490 | .242 | | | | | | | | |
| | Social pressure | −.149 | .043 | −.162 | | | | | | .958 | 1.044 |
| | Awareness of recycling and saving | .165 | .045 | .178 | 8.787 | .000 | .269 | .073 | .064 | .880 | 1.137 |
| | Behavioral awareness | .112 | .046 | .117 | | | | | | .878 | 1.139 |
| | Product usage awareness focused on environmental protection | −.015 | .039 | −.019 | | | | | | .907 | 1.103 |
| Responsibility in purchasing green products | Constant | 2.218 | .264 | | | | | | | | |
| | Social pressure | −.110 | .047 | −.108 | | | | | | .958 | 1.044 |
| | Awareness of recycling and saving | .188 | .049 | .183 | 13.776 | .000 | .331 | .109 | .101 | .880 | 1.137 |
| | Behavioral awareness | .126 | .051 | .119 | | | | | | .878 | 1.139 |
| | Product usage awareness focused on environmental protection | .154 | .043 | .168 | | | | | | .907 | 1.103 |
| Attitude toward the environment | Constant | 1.326 | .247 | | | | | | | | |
| | Social pressure | −.033 | .004 | −.033 | | | | | | .958 | 1.044 |
| | Awareness of recycling and saving | .159 | .046 | .158 | 27.011 | .000 | .440 | .194 | .187 | .880 | 1.137 |
| | Behavioral awareness | .248 | .047 | .237 | | | | | | .878 | 1.139 |
| | Product usage awareness focused on environmental protection | .210 | .040 | .233 | | | | | | .907 | 1.103 |
| Purchasing behavior of products with less energy consumption | Constant | 2.373 | .316 | | | | | | | | |
| | Social pressure | −.040 | .056 | −.033 | | | | | | .958 | 1.044 |
| | Awareness of recycling and saving | .167 | .059 | .139 | 8.057 | .000 | .259 | .067 | .059 | .880 | 1.137 |
| | Behavioral awareness | .187 | .061 | .150 | | | | | | .878 | 1.139 |
| | Product usage awareness focused on environmental protection | .078 | .051 | .073 | | | | | | .907 | 1.103 |
| Awareness of environmentally friendly products | Constant | 1.728 | .276 | | | | | | | | |
| | Social pressure | −.043 | .049 | −.040 | | | | | | .958 | 1.044 |
| | Awareness of recycling and saving | .212 | .051 | .195 | 15.868 | .000 | .352 | .124 | .116 | .880 | 1.137 |
| | Behavioral awareness | .250 | .053 | .222 | | | | | | .878 | 1.139 |
| | Product usage awareness focused on environmental protection | .053 | .045 | .055 | | | | | | .907 | 1.103 |
| The behavior of trying to consume less electricity | Constant | 2.225 | .289 | | | | | | | | |
| | Social pressure | -.061 | .051 | -.055 | | | | | | .958 | 1.044 |
| | Awareness of recycling and saving | .244 | .054 | .219 | 11.065 | .000 | .300 | .090 | .082 | .880 | 1.137 |
| | Behavioral awareness | .156 | .055 | .135 | | | | | | .878 | 1.139 |
| | Product usage awareness focused on environmental protection | .039 | .047 | .040 | | | | | | .907 | 1.103 |

F statistics show that the entire model is significant. The R2 value increases proportionally to the number of independent variables in the model. As a result, the multiple regression model should consider the fact that as the number of variables in the model increases, so does the coefficient of determination. In such cases, the adjusted coefficient of determination (Adjusted $R^2 \rightarrow \Delta R^2$) should be checked (Kalaycı, 2014:259; Hoş, 2020:311; Ağır & Baykan, 2004:362).

From this perspective, when the F statistics are examined, respectively, in Table 8, the first model (F = 3.704; p = .006) is significant overall. The second model (F = 8.787; p = 0.000) is statistically significant. The third model (F = 13.776; p = .000) is statistically significant overall. The fourth model (F = 27.011; p = .000) is statistically significant overall. The fifth model (F = 8.057; p = .000) is statistically significant overall. Furthermore, the sixth model (F = 15.868; p = .000) is significant overall. Finally, the seventh model (F = 11.065; p = .000) is significant overall.

**Table 9.** *Impact of Environmental Awareness on Green Accommodation Purchasing Behavior (Multiple Regression Analysis)*

| Dependent variable | Model (Constant) and Independent variable | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | ANOVA | | R | $R^2$ | Adjusted $R^2$ | Tolerance | VIF |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Beta | Std. error | Beta | F | Sig. | | | | | |
| Sacrifice regarding the use of green products | Constant | 2.072 | .235 | | 12.815 | .000 | .320 | .102 | .094 | | |
| | Social pressure | .161 | .042 | .177 | | | | | | .958 | 1.044 |
| | Awareness of recycling and saving | .070 | .043 | .076 | | | | | | .880 | 1.137 |
| | Behavioral awareness | .176 | .045 | .187 | | | | | | .878 | 1.139 |
| | Product usage awareness focused on environmental protection | .037 | .038 | .045 | | | | | | .907 | 1.103 |
| Service quality of Green-Star hotels | Constant | 2.807 | .280 | | 3.547 | .007 | .175 | .031 | .022 | | |
| | Social pressure | −.015 | .049 | −.014 | | | | | | .958 | 1.044 |
| | Awareness of recycling and saving | .144 | .052 | .138 | | | | | | .880 | 1.137 |
| | Behavioral awareness | .065 | .054 | .060 | | | | | | .878 | 1.139 |
| | Product usage awareness focused on environmental protection | .029 | .045 | .031 | | | | | | .907 | 1.103 |
| Contribution of green-star hotels to healthy product use | Constant | 3.266 | .321 | | 3.482 | .008 | .173 | .030 | .021 | | |
| | Social pressure | −.156 | .057 | −.132 | | | | | | .958 | 1.044 |
| | Awareness of recycling and saving | .126 | .059 | .105 | | | | | | .880 | 1.137 |
| | Behavioral awareness | .065 | .062 | .052 | | | | | | .878 | 1.139 |
| | Product usage awareness focused on environmental protection | −.033 | .052 | −.031 | | | | | | .907 | 1.103 |
| Sensitivity to the use of green products | Constant | 2.970 | .261 | | 7.468 | .000 | .250 | .062 | .054 | | |
| | Social pressure | −.101 | .046 | −.102 | | | | | | .958 | 1.044 |
| | Awareness of recycling and saving | .216 | .048 | .217 | | | | | | .880 | 1.137 |
| | Behavioral awareness | −.031 | .050 | −.030 | | | | | | .878 | 1.139 |
| | Product usage awareness focused on environmental protection | .074 | .042 | .084 | | | | | | .907 | 1.103 |

When the F statistics are examined separately in the analysis in Table 9, the first model (F = 12.815; p = .000) is significant overall. The second model (F = 3.547; p = .007) is significant overall. The third model (F = 3.482; p = .008) is significant overall. Furthermore, the fourth model (F = 7.468; p = .000) is significant in all aspects.

**Table 10.** *Impact of Green Product Purchasing Behavior on Green Accommodation Purchasing Behavior (Multiple Regression Analysis)*

| Dependent Variable | Model (constant) and independent variable | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | ANOVA | | R | $R^2$ | Adjusted $R^2$ | Tolerance | VIF |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Beta | Std. error | Beta | F | Sig. | | | | | |
| Sacrifice in the use of green products | Constant | 1.936 | .262 | | 7.055 | .000 | .316 | .100 | .086 | | |
| | Attitude toward solid waste | .059 | .054 | .056 | | | | | | .765 | 1.308 |
| | Attitude toward packaging | .070 | .050 | .071 | | | | | | .795 | 1.257 |
| | Responsibility for purchasing green products | .067 | .045 | .076 | | | | | | .777 | 1.287 |
| | Attitude toward the environment | .086 | .048 | .095 | | | | | | .709 | 1.411 |
| | Purchasing behavior of products with lower energy consumption | .058 | .037 | .077 | | | | | | .836 | 1.196 |
| | Awareness of environmentally friendly products | .042 | .043 | .050 | | | | | | .787 | 1.270 |
| | Behavior of trying to consume less electricity | .084 | .039 | .102 | | | | | | .875 | 1.143 |
| Quality of Green-Star hotel service | Constant | .989 | .287 | | 14.049 | .000 | .425 | .181 | .168 | | |
| | Attitude toward solid waste | .260 | .059 | .217 | | | | | | .765 | 1.308 |
| | Attitude toward packaging | .133 | .054 | .117 | | | | | | .795 | 1.257 |
| | Responsibility for purchasing green products | .187 | .049 | .184 | | | | | | .777 | 1.287 |
| | Attitude toward the environment | −.011 | .053 | -.010 | | | | | | .709 | 1.411 |
| | Purchasing behavior of products with lower energy consumption | .065 | .041 | .075 | | | | | | .836 | 1.196 |
| | Awareness of environmentally friendly products | .052 | .047 | .054 | | | | | | .787 | 1.270 |
| | Behavior of trying to consume less electricity | .016 | .043 | .017 | | | | | | .875 | 1.143 |

**Table 10.** Continued

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Contribution of Green-Star Hotels to the Use of Healthy Products | Constant | .804 | .333 | | | | | | | | |
| | Attitude toward solid waste | .156 | .068 | .114 | | | | | | .765 | 1.308 |
| | Attitude toward packaging | .181 | .063 | .140 | | | | | | .795 | 1.257 |
| | Responsibility for purchasing green products | .215 | .058 | .185 | | | | | | .777 | 1.287 |
| | Attitude toward the environment | .003 | .061 | .002 | | | | | | .709 | 1.411 |
| | Purchasing behavior of products with lower energy consumption | −.022 | .047 | −.022 | 11.673 | .000 | .394 | .155 | .142 | .836 | 1.196 |
| | Awareness of environmentally friendly products | .171 | .054 | .155 | | | | | | .787 | 1.270 |
| | Behavior of trying to consume less electricity | −.022 | .050 | −.021 | | | | | | .875 | 1.143 |
| Sensitivity to the use of green products | Constant | .808 | .265 | | | | | | | | |
| | Attitude toward solid waste | .243 | .054 | .214 | | | | | | .765 | 1.308 |
| | Attitude toward packaging | .121 | .050 | .113 | | | | | | .795 | 1.257 |
| | Responsibility for purchasing green products | .072 | .046 | .075 | | | | | | .777 | 1.287 |
| | Attitude toward the environment | .159 | .049 | .162 | | | | | | .709 | 1.411 |
| | Purchasing behavior of products with lower energy consumption | .089 | .038 | .108 | 18.221 | .000 | .472 | .222 | .210 | .836 | 1.196 |
| | Awareness of environmentally friendly products | .054 | .043 | .059 | | | | | | .787 | 1.270 |
| | Behavior of trying to consume less electricity | .006 | .040 | .006 | | | | | | .875 | 1.143 |

When the F statistics are examined using the analysis in Table 10, the first model (F = 7.055; p = .000) is significant overall. The second model (F = 14.049; p = 0.000) is statistically significant. The third model (F = 11.673; p = .000) is significant as a whole. Furthermore, the fourth model (F = 18.221; p = .000) is significant overall.

When the F statistics are examined using the analysis in Table 10, the first model (F = 7.055; p = .000) is significant overall. The second model (F = 14.049; p = 0.000) is statistically significant. The third model (F = 11.673; p = .000) is significant as a whole. Furthermore, the fourth model (F = 18.221; p = .000) is significant overall.

Tables 8, 9, and 10 show that the tolerance values exceed 0.10. Furthermore, a VIF value of <10 indicates no multicollinearity, tolerance, and VIF values support that the dimensions of purchasing behavior of green products have an impact on the dimensions of purchasing behavior of green accommodations.

## Discussion and Conclusions

Due to the investigation's analysis, it was found that the dimensions of the research variables had a low- to medium-level relationship. Furthermore, it has been determined that environmental awareness significantly impacts purchasing green products and accommodation. Finally, it has been observed that green product purchasing behavior significantly impacts green accommodation purchasing behavior.

The research findings are consistent with the study by Alkaya et al. (2016), which sought to determine the impact of environmental sensitivity on green purchasing behavior. According to their study, ecological sensitivity and personal sensitivity are two dimensions of environmental sensitivity that impact green product purchasing behavior. Onurlubaş (2019) examined the impact of consumer social impact, environmental sensitivity, and environmental awareness on consumer purchasing behavior for green products. He found that social impact had a moderately significant impact on green product purchasing behavior, while environmental sensitivity and awareness had a minor impact. It is clear that the research results are consistent with the conclusion that it has a significant impact.

Furthermore, Nakitoğlu and Tatlıdil (2009) examine consumer environmental awareness levels and the impact of environmental awareness on purchasing behavior. They found that as consumer awareness of environmental pollution and protection grows, so does its impact on consumer purchasing behavior, which is consistent with the research results. Çatı and Öcel (2019) sought to assess the impact of people's environmental awareness on environmental behavior within the context of green marketing activities. The study results are consistent with the level of environmental awareness, which affects environmental behavior.

Oğuz and Yılmaz (2019) investigated the impact of environmental sensitivity, attitude, and behavior on selecting a green-star hotel. They found a strong link between environmental sensitivity, attitude, behavior, and intention to stay at a green-star hotel. This finding is consistent with the research results. Sünnetçioğlu et al. (2019) also wanted to know if environmentally conscious consumer behavior affects tourist purchasing behavior. They found that environmentally friendly consumer behavior impacts the intention to choose green hotels, which is consistent with the research findings. Furthermore, the statement that environmentally sensitive consumer behavior can be used to predict the intention to stay at a green hotel suggests that the results are comparable.

Berk and Celep (2020) examine how a green hotel image of hotels with green stars affects consumer purchasing behavior. They found that green marketing activities positively impact consumer purchasing behavior, which is consistent with the research results. Celiloğlu (2014) also examined the impact of consumer attitudes toward green hotels on their intention to stay in these hotels. They found a positive significant relationship between consumer perceptions of green hotels and their intention to stay, which is consistent with the research result.

According to the study's regression analysis, environmental awareness significantly impacts green product and accommodation purchasing behavior. The same analysis revealed that green purchasing behavior significantly impacts green accommodation. Li et al. (2020) examined the impact of environmental awareness on green purchasing intention and its ultimate impact on brand evangelism when studies were aligned with the research results. According to the study, altruism and environmental awareness partially mediate the indirect relationship between environmental awareness and green purchasing intention.

Demir et al. (2021) examined the impact of consumer environmental awareness on their intention to visit green accommodation establishments in Northern Cyprus and the mediating role of consumer values. The research shows that environmental concerns directly and positively affect guests' intentions to visit green accommodation establishments. Furthermore, functional and emotional values were found to mediate the relationship between environmental concerns and guests' knowledge of their intentions to visit green accommodation establishments. Finally, the study suggests that the research will help managers understand the importance of raising green awareness among consumers and marketing it to customers.

Ahmed et al. (2021) investigated the effects of green trust, environmental quality awareness, green self-efficacy, and environmental attitude on green purchasing behavior and the mediating impact of environmental attitude. They found a positive impact of green trust, self-efficacy, and environmental attitude on green purchasing behavior. Furthermore, environmental attitudes were found to mediate the relationship between environmental quality awareness and green purchasing behavior and the relationship between green self-efficacy and green purchasing behavior. As a result, the findings of this study are similar to those of previous studies in the relevant literature.

In terms of academic contributions, this study found that the research variables are interconnected. Although some studies in the literature discuss research variables individually and in pairs, few local and international studies discuss these three variables together. To close this gap, researchers must examine the relationship between research variables and larger sample groups in ecotourism destinations with diverse cultural characteristics. Furthermore, because the data derived are limited to domestic tourists visiting Antalya, it is suggested that future research be conducted on local and foreign tourists visiting various destinations. This allows for comparing the research results to similar research results in the literature, resulting in a theoretical contribution to the literature. Furthermore, the study's variables are limited to the reliability and validity of the measurement tools used.

To carry out ecotourism activities in the region and ensure their sustainability, organizations involved in tourism in general, and ecotourism in particular, should conduct information and awareness campaigns. For example, environmental awareness should be raised among both local and foreign tourists and locals, and then encouraged to buy green products and stay in green accommodations. Ensuring and supporting the sustainability of ecotourism activities requires protecting the environment and other natural and cultural resources, as well as raising environmental awareness. To gain support for ecotourism activities from domestic tourists, as well as foreign tourists and locals, training programs on the benefits of ecotourism based on environmental protection should be organized in various languages. Furthermore, relevant organizations should organize environmental awareness-raising activities and organizations that bring people together to create environmental awareness and demonstrate that awareness through behavior.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Roles of Heritage Resources in Tourism Development: Expose on Patronage and Management Practices in Nike Art Gallery, Osogbo, Osun State, Nigeria

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**ABSTRACT**
Nike Art Gallery is a legacy handcraft that comprises numerous displays of art and culture developed with the intention of establishing and nurturing an atmosphere conducive to the growth of art in Africa. Despite its presence for approximately 30 years, a paucity in empirical research has occurred on its activities. To address this concern, this study evaluates the patronage patterns and management strategies implemented by Nike Art Gallery in other to know the contribution of the gallery to tourism development. A semi-structured interview was conducted with the two directors of the Gallery with secondary data on influx and revenue. The result revealed that the Gallery receives many visitors for educational, recreational, and other purposes. Students on group excursions paid nominal fees ranging from N300 to N500 per group with average weekly and monthly earnings for the Gallery reaching N10250 and N30000, respectively. The administration of the Gallery is focused on tourism promotion, sales and marketing, and staff training. Nike Art Gallery was found to be a significant heritage treasure that promotes people empowerment and growth but with little tourism impact. Thus, efforts should be exerted to improve its tourism value and, consequently, its socioeconomic contribution to the community.

**Keywords:** Culture, Gallery, Art Gallery, Museum, Tourism Promotion, Tourism Value, Tourism Impact, Nike Art Gallery.

## Introduction

Nigeria is home to a plethora of heritage woven via natural and/or human processes. Heritages denote the distinctive traditions and practices of a country or destination that uniquely differentiates it from another. According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2003), they are the present materialization of human times of yore, which are an embodiment of past elements and are crucial components of cultural practices and traditions in a spiritual and emotional manner. Frequently, heritage resources are considered from a cultural or manmade dimension; however, it also has natural embodiments (Gunlu et al., 2013). The nature of heritage resources embodies tangible and intangible products (Tadasse, 2022). Intangible products pertain to immaterial cultural and natural attributes and norms present within a society, such as ways of life, social values, and music, while tangible products reflect actual and physical expressions such as archaeological sites, landmarks and monuments, temples, palaces, landscapes, and various traditional buildings. One of the latter is Nike Art Gallery; it is a craftsmanship that consists of various displays of art and culture founded with the objectives of creating and sustaining a conducive environment for the development of art in Africa. Heritage resources, whether tangible or intangible, are a cornerstone for tourism development and promotion given that they hold inherent value and beauty that promote patronage (Tadasse, 2022). This study aims is to evaluate the management principles of this heritage gallery and promote tangible cultural heritage as a form of tourism at destinations. In turn, doing so will improve the management principles of Nike Art Gallery.

The literature has extensively reported that heritage resources are catalysts of viable impacts on the economic, environmental,

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and social aspects of a destination, which develops and promotes tourism. Although heritage resources function as a commodity employed for the fulfillment of the needs and desires of visitors; it also brings beneficial impact to the host community in terms of employment and revenue generation, enhancement of local economy, positive image and branding, and the facilitation of infrastructural development, among others (Keitumetse, 2014; Andrew-Essien 2018; Tadasse, 2022). According to Raivo (2002), resources are agents of the promotion and development of tourism, which uses the past in shaping present realities. The relationship between heritage resources and tourism is complementary (Ezenagu and Iwuagwu, 2016), in which heritage resources are crucial in the promotion of tourism, while tourism preserves and showcases heritage resources to the world. The concept of heritage tourism was also developed in this context. The capacity of heritage tourism to generate positive impacts on the host community is dependent on the patronage that it attracts and the requisite destination management practices that are deployed.

Tadasse (2022) argued that heritage resources should not only be conserved but also preserved due to their inherent nature as evidence of the past. The reason is that heritage resources are symbols of identity and an instrument of economic transformation of a given area. In this manner, this notion is connected to management practices. Moreover, the larger the patronage that the destination attracts, the more the need to pay adequate attention to managerial dimensions given their fragile and unique nature (Taiwo et al., 2018). Although Nike Art Gallery has been in existence over the years, a dearth of empirical investigation on its activities occurs. Therefore, this study appraised the patronage pattern and management practices employed in Nike Art Gallery.

## Literature review

The key inspiring resource brought about by heritage is the revisitation of historical legacies and monuments, the present way of life, and the development of cultural inheritance. Heritage preservation is an essential component of heritage management. Heritage recreation and conservation can work together to enhance visitor experience. Several heritage sites use adaptive reuse to preserve the structure, create new value, and meet the dual goals of tourism and heritage preservation, which encompass urban and rural heritages. Heritage has become an essential tourism component in various countries, which provides a channel for attracting tourists, obtaining economic benefits, and safeguarding heritage monuments. A stream of research supports the idea that heritage sites hold the potential to become popular cultural destinations for tourists. Tourism helps to redefine heritage. However, heritage management upholds a broad purpose of focusing on architectural preservation. Based on the definition of heritage tourism, successful heritage sites require well-designed heritage qualities and the simultaneous engagement and involvement of tourists. Given that heritage resources comprise fragile and unique natural and manmade resources, the degree to which various community stakeholders regard them largely influences the longevity of their preservation.

Alignment with and connection to one’s community are likely to result in determined and improved attitudes toward the preservation and conservation of historic resources for reasons such as individual norms tied to the values and beliefs of individuals and their community (Ko and Stewart, 2002). Moving forward, according to Bonomi Bezzo and Jeannet (2023), the level of fulfillment enjoyed by tourists in a destination holds the potential to be an essential factor of personal and group norms formed by an entire community to safeguard cultural heritage assets. In turn, this aspect is most likely an essential key for determining the degree of effort that each person and community will collectively put forth toward the conservation of heritage resources within the community. Previous research revealed that conservation behavior is motivated by a sense of responsibility (Stern, 2000). As posited by the place identity paradigm, the identification of residents with a place and the values and beliefs of a community can increase the feeling of belonging to a place, which can help individuals define themselves within a social context. This in-depth link and affiliation with a location and neighborhood may drive members of the public to take an active role in ensuring the survival of cultural heritage treasures to generate pride for the community. As a result, inhabitants with higher norm rankings may be more ready to engage in heritage obligation behavior than those with lower ones.

## Culture and Heritage

The terms *cultural tourism, heritage tourism,* and *arts tourism* are frequently nearly interchangeably used partially due to challenges in defining the term *culture*, as noted by Williams (1983). Furthermore, as ideas of culture increase because the concept that Urry (1990) refers to as the *culturization of society* and the *culturization of tourist practices*, definitional issues are becoming increasingly prevalent.

Culture, values, norms, religion, and tradition can be maintained by introducing, utilizing, preserving, and improving the quality of tourist objects, especially tangible ones and attractions Wisnumurti & Rideng, 2017). Globalization has caused a reduction in national cultural values through a decrease in the perspective of cultural strategy. With local culture, the mythical dominance of global culture can be counterfeited (Fakih, 2003).

## Museum and Heritage

The museum should be integrated into a comprehensive master plan that incorporates the implementation of new economic initiatives while respecting the historical significance of a neighborhood to promote the heritage conservation of society. When communities create historical interpretation programs using historic buildings, they need to identify many key concerns. Museum administration must prioritize a consistent emphasis and celebration of varied populations within a community. Moreover, no biased interpretation should exist in favor of or against any group in the community.

The museum is designed to foster social economic growth in the community. The community benefits by teaching local inhabitants of their past, which promotes a space for social gatherings and attracts outside capital through tourism. Community museums can offer creative programs and exhibitions that significantly contribute to community culture (Kagan and Ron, 2002).

A museum can be dynamic; the facility can include interactive areas for children in the community such as art studios, nature trails, laboratories, and planetariums. Museums may provide rental programs for schoolteachers to borrow items, such as fossils or antiquities, for educational purposes. Discounts may be available for class visits, and guided tours may be provided to visiting school groups. A museum should offer a dedicated classroom for youngsters. Educational institutions are beneficial for communities in that they support the development of youngsters into well-rounded and knowledgeable people. Visiting exploratorium-type museums can also enhance the understanding of pupils of the physical world better than they would only from textbooks.

A museum is a non-profit organization that acquires, preserves, researches, communicates, and displays the tangible and intangible legacies of humanity and its environment for educational, research, and entertainment reasons. It is open to the public and aids in the growth of society (Babic, 2016). Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge (2000) argue that heritage can be viewed as a duality, which serves as an economic and a cultural asset. The authors suggest that legacy is considered a commodity that is marketed in several divided markets.

The authors argue that heritage is essentially a process of commodification, which involves the transformation of resources into products for consumption (Graham et al., 2000, p. 22). Heritage is frequently considered in terms of cultural and sociopolitical as well as economic aspects. Heritage is perceived as the possession of specific market-related values in both instances (Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge 2000, pp. 17–22; Ashworth et al. 2007, pp. 36–45).

Many studies well documented the most common uses of heritage for economic gain (Graham et al. 2000; Howard 2003; Rypkema 2005; Timothy and Boyd 2006; Ashworth et al. 2007; Salazar 2010; Ashworth 2014). The identified elements are mainly linked to the formulation of developmental strategies, such as regeneration plans in rural or urban areas and promotional strategies in the tourism sector, in which heritage is typically the key aspect. According to various researchers, heritage significantly influences global tourism (Timothy and Boyd 2006; Long and Labadi 2010; Salazar 2010; Ashworth 2014).

### *Heritage Management in Urban Areas*

Urban heritage areas are widely considered complex systems with various stakeholders, many of whom hold competing perspectives and interests. Furthermore, as Jamieson et al. (2018) explain, several cities have large informal sectors and various uncontrolled features, which are frequently the result of a sequence of individual activities and cannot be effectively managed by urban management plans and programs. Heritage dangers abound as do the complexities of heritage conservation. Urban heritage sites are faced with many threats; as a result, tangible and intangible cultural elements are disappearing at alarming rates. Thus, a major concern has emerged with the loss of intangible heritage, which is a crucial element of heritage sites.

Apart from the effect of prominent owners of property in urban areas, other factors that contribute to the extinction of legacy include the lack of legal and regulatory processes and a dearth in the understanding of cultural principles among teams for urban heritage management. Furthermore, although faced with such difficulties, urban heritage managers are occasionally uninformed of best techniques for protecting history such as the cautious adaptive reuse of heritage properties (instead of destroying them and erecting new buildings; ICOMOS, 1994).

The topic of heritage tourism is complex and demands attention. Heritage tourism destinations attract various participants that each possess a unique set of interests. Nationalistic stories have been historically utilized to foster patriotism in the populace (Shackel, 2011), but the nature of heritage tourism has rendered the story(s) considerably complex. Heritage tourism focuses on visitor motivation and perception instead of site characteristics. A subset of tourism known as heritage tourism involves travel for primarily historical purposes (Hausmann and Weuster, 2018.)

The impacts of heritage tourism include alterations that occur over time in a certain state as a result of external stimuli (environmental, economic, or social; Hall, 2009). Art exhibitions are viewed as a framework that encourages communication among network users and enables the social production of significance through trust, education, and adaptation (Edvardsson et al., 2011, drawing on Ballantyne and Varey, 2006).

**Importance of the Osun Osogbo festival on the Nike Art Gallery**

Although little or no actual empirical evidence exists on the impact of the Osun Osogbo festival on the Nike Art Gallery; the ripple effect of locational advantages is undoubtedly evident to other destinations in the state (Tabitha and Ngozi, 2016; Mejabi, 2021). The Osun Osogbo festival has contributed to the enhancement of the destination image and increased awareness of the Nike Art Gallery. This aspect can also be connected to the fact that the founder of the Gallery was one of the adopted children of Susan Wenger, the monarch who assiduously worked in restoring the cultural heritage that is now celebrated as the Osun Osogbo Festival every year. The provision of avenue for revenue generation underlies this historical connection. Tijani and Ogundele (2012) reported that tourists patronize the display stand of the Gallery and other outlets to admire and purchase the handcrafts during the festival. However, the critical issues reported, which were unrelated to the Gallery, are perceived low quality of product by tourists, poor design, and high price, which translated to low patronage. Thus, this study infers that although the festival enhances the awareness of visitors of the Gallery, its capacity to enhance product patronage is limited.

**Methodology**

***Research Design***

This study employed a survey research design, which is defined as “the gathering of information from a sample of people through their responses to questions” (Check and Schutt, 2012). This type of research enables the use of various methods for recruiting participants, collecting data, and employing various instrumentation techniques. The survey research can use the quantitative (e.g., numerically rated questionnaires) or qualitative (e.g., open-ended questions) method or both (Crowe et al., 2011). In this case, the study used the qualitative method.

***Description of the Study Area***

Nike Davies Okundaye, a fashion designer and artist, founded the Nike Art Gallery in Osogbo in 1983 with the objectives of creating and sustaining a conducive environment for the development of art in Africa. The Gallery came after the first of its kind was established in Lagos in 2009. The center admits and trains many Nigerians in various forms of art for free. It is well-known for its textile artworks in indigo, adire, and batik. Although the founder does not originate from Osogbo, she values the influence of the community, especially that of Susan Wenger, which has greatly contributed to the success of her craftsmanship (Osogbo.com, 2017).

***Population of the Study***

Given the qualitative design of the study, the population included the two directors of Nike Art Gallery, Osogbo.

***Sample and Sampling Technique***

The study used total sampling due to the small sample. This method is a type of purposive sampling in which an entire population is examined for a specific set of characteristics (Leard, 2022). The study selected both directors to represent the study sample.

***Data Collection***

Information was gathered from primary and secondary sources. Oral interviews were conducted for primary data collection. The researchers formulated an interview guide that contains subject-related questions. Secondary data on tourist influx and revenue were collected from the records of the Gallery. The ethics committee approval of this study was obtained from Osun Stae University (Date:02.11.2023). Written informed consent was obtained from all participants before the study.

### *Method of Data Analysis*

The study performed thematic analysis on the qualitative data, which were transcribed into Microsoft Word format from the audio recordings and were analyzed and segmented into themes, which were used and organized to identify the participants according to their perspectives. Pictures were arranged according to the context in which they were understood. According to Dawadi (2020), it entails identifying, analyzing, and reporting on recurring patterns or themes from the qualitative data. The themes are considered to capture the various typologies of responses. Moreover, thematic analysis is widely recognized as the most popular tool for qualitative data analysis. This aspect is useful, because it ensures that not only a descriptive analysis of the accounts of the participants is recorded but also one that has been subjected to critical thinking and inductive reasoning (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The study employed simple descriptive statistics to analyze the quantitative secondary data.

## Results and Discussion

### *Demographics and Understanding of Tourism*

Both interviewees were men with extensive experience in gallery management (15 and 27 years) and were labeled as interviewees/respondents A and B, respectively. Two themes emerged from their understanding of tourism: tourism as a *tour* and as an *economic contribution*. Examples of typical responses include “Tourism is derived from the word tour, it can mean vacation and exploration” and “Tourism boosts a location’s economic prosperity.”

### *Influx of Tourists in Nike Art Gallery*

Nike Art Gallery was founded as an *empowerment center* and serves as a tourism center. Notably, the cultural enlightenment of the people is the major priority of its activities: “We enlighten people culturally.” (Interviewee A) The gallery “not only deals with adire, but also with anything related to art.” According to the participants, tourists visited the gallery “almost every week” and “at least twice a week.” “I can’t count them, they’re quite many” (Interviewee B). In terms of the reasons for visits, the study identified various reasons, including educational and recreational purposes. Furthermore, the influx of tourists from within and outside the country was reported to be consistent: “The visit is constant in and outside the country.” (Interviewee A and B) White tourists from the Osun Osogbo Festival and international students from Ghana were among those who recently visited the Gallery. Other tourism activities of destinations, such as the Osun Osogbo Festival, can be considered to boost this influx. According to the current findings, Nike Art Gallery is, first and foremost, an empowerment center; thus, its activities are guided by this concept instead of tourism. Conversely, it serves as a tourism hub and attracts visitors from far and wide to its cultural attractions. Notably, the cultural enlightenment of people was the major priority in the activities. The Gallery is also said to have several attractions worth visiting, which ranges from adire to art works. Tourists with a mix of domestic and international visitors visit the Gallery on a weekly basis based primarily on influx. This aspect essentially demonstrates that the destination receives many tourists. Agbabiaka et al. (2019) also observed a similar result. In terms of motivation to visit, the study pinpointed to various reasons, including educational and recreational purposes. Education remains the primary reason for visiting museums and galleries. People want to learn about their histories, cultural norms, and values, including those of other people. Apart from education, the leisure motive came into play, as tourists also seek education in an entertaining context. An intriguing factor that emerged was the manner in which tourism activities in other destinations, such as the Osun Osogbo Festival, can boost the influx. It has been said that when there more than one destinations in a city or town which are within the tourism context, people tend to tour all or more than one destination to obtain a full picture of the area. According to secondary data, the number of weekly visitors ranged from 5 to 20, while the number of monthly visitors ranged from 15 to 50 with at least two tourists per day. This statistic is equal to 2 tourists per day, 13 tourists per week, and 33 tourists per month on average.

### *Revenue Generation in Nike Art Gallery*

The findings revealed that tourists were free to visit the Gallery, because its main objective was to empower people. The interviewees unequivocally stated that “entry is free” and “We are not collecting a dime, it is free, totally free.” Moreover, they cited that the Gallery did not incur many expenses, because workshops are freely leased for the use of the establishment, and employees work for free: “it is not entirely an establishment to generate money . . . it is an empowerment center . . . not to generate any personal income.” Based on secondary evidence, the weekly income ranged from N500 to N20,000, while the monthly income ranged from N20,000 to N40,000. This represents means of weekly and monthly incomes of N10250 and N30000, respectively.

The charges for group visitation are as follows:

- Tertiary students: N500
- Secondary school students: N400
- Primary school students: N300

The revenue generation of Nike Art Gallery appear less buoyant. The primary factor, as revealed by the results, is the fact that entry is typically free, which is related to the fact that its main objective was to empower people. Furthermore, the respondents pointed out that the gallery did not normally incur many expenses, because the workshop was freely leased out for the use of the establishment, and employees worked for free. However, artifacts are being sold. Furthermore, they receive funding from the German government.

**Management of Nike Art Gallery**

The management of the gallery focuses on daily operations.

***Promotion of tourism***

Tourism promotion at the Nike Art Gallery is centered on adire and arts and crafts: "Adire itself is unique, it is one of the most popular cultural attires" (Respondent A). The Gallery promotes tourism through adire due to its popularity, especially among celebrities in recent times, who were seen putting them on, which promotes it. The results also demonstrated that "even international artists wear it." The Gallery essentially promotes tourism by utilizing adire, the apparent breadth of the Gallery, notably due to its popularity particularly among celebrities in recent times, who were seen wearing and, thus, promoting it. The activities of Osogbo Center have a distinct front, which is the typical Yoruba attire worn by people in southwest Nigeria, particularly in the Ogun and Osun States. This aspect is consistent with Osogbo (2017).

**Plate 1.** Adire attire spread to dry after processing.

Source: Field survey, 2023

### *Mode of Sales and Marketing*

The Gallery has adopted technology with social media platforms for marketing artworks. In addition, adire is displayed at cultural events, markets, and art exhibition programs.

> Recently, we trade on the Internet, you don't have to go to the market to sell these days . . . you have customers on Instagram, there are also a lot of market shops online . . . . Whenever there is exhibition, art exhibition, any cultural exhibition, you go there to market. (Respondent B)

The effectiveness of the marketing and promotion of a destination directly influences the number of tourists who visit it (Boniface et al., 2016). Promotion is widely recognized as an important strategy for increasing awareness of a location and highlighting its allure to attract more visitors and increase tourism revenues (Song et al., 2010).


**Plate 2.** Artworks displayed at Nike Art Gallery.

Source: Field survey, 2023

### *Training of Staff*

Interviewee B said that the training of staff at the Gallery was easy, which is a stepwise process. It begins with visual learning followed by paperwork in which the major types of works are simplified. During this process, workers learn to convert their mistakes into a design, because every mistake in art is a design. Basically, the respondents described training as involving visual and practical training in developing the expertise of the people.

**Plate 3.** Staff of Nike Art Gallery at work.

Source: Field work, 2023

## Conclusion and Recommendation

Nike Art Gallery is an important heritage resource that fosters empowerment and growth; however, it exerts minimal touristic influence. Patronage and revenue generation are considerably low. The management of Nike Art Gallery is focused on daily operations and is heavily reliant on the staff and trainees to function. The management of the Gallery emphasizes three key areas, namely, tourism promotion, sales and marketing, and staff training. First, with regard to tourism promotion, the Gallery promotes tourism using adire mainly due to its popularity. Its marketing of offerings mainly occurs on social media platforms, during cultural events, and at adire markets in different states. Staff training involves visual and practical training in developing the expertise of the people. Safety and security, especially in cases in which the staff is working with chemicals, include personal protective equipment. The study recommends that the Gallery should introduce the payment of entrance fees to leverage the high tourist influx. Although its concern on first remaining an empowerment and enlightenment center is understandable, leveraging the revenue that may be accrued for its further expansion and the empowerment of the people, cannot be overemphasized. Such revenue can serve in the maintenance of facilities, the creation of facilities for visitors, and remuneration for the staff.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Exploring Recreational Activities on Ghanaian Beaches: A Socio-demographic Analysis

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**ABSTRACT**

Beach resources, facilities, and environmental conditions play critical roles in shaping recreational activities and opportunities for beachgoers. Thus, this study explores the dimensions of recreational activities undertaken at tourist beaches in Ghana, while also examining the disparities in activities among beach users. Employing a quantitative approach, data were collected from 315 beach users between November 2020 and February 2021 at tourist beaches in the Accra Metropolis. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to discern the dimensions of beach recreational activities engaged by the users. Three primary dimensions emerged: water-dependent, sand-dependent, and beach facility-based activities. The findings revealed that beach facility-based activities (M = 2.81), such as photography and enjoying snacks with a scenic beach backdrop, were the most preferred and pursued by users. Conversely, water-dependent activities (M = 3.76), such as swimming, freediving, and sand-dependent activities (M = 3.68), such as beach relaxation and sand bathing, were less preferred and pursued due to prevailing beach conditions. Furthermore, the analysis examined variations in recreational activities across visitors' demographic profiles using statistical methods such as t-tests and analysis of variance. The findings revealed that gender, nationality, age, marital status, education, and purpose of visit significantly influence tourists' recreational pursuits. Coastal and tourism managers should prioritize initiatives aimed at enhancing water and sand quality, including regular monitoring, pollution control, and sustainable waste management practices. Additionally, tailored interventions should be designed based on the preferences and sensitivities of different demographic groups to ensure a more inclusive and gratifying beach experience for all visitors.

**Keywords:** Beach conditions, Recreational activities, Coastal tourism, Socio-demographic characteristics, Ghana

## Introduction

Globally, beaches stand as natural iconic destinations, attracting millions of tourists, offering numerous desirable sought-after recreational activities and opportunities, and making significant contributions to local economies. These sought-after recreational activities, ranging from boating to sunbathing thrives in beach environments with specific desirable conditions (Tudor & Williams, 2008). The quality of coastal sceneries, including factors such as water and sand cleanliness, and the absence of litter, exerts a positive influence on tourist activities, shaping the nature, extent, and duration of beach engagement among tourists (Pascoe, 2019; Wyles et al., 2014). Consequently, the environmental quality of beaches can either enhance or detract from recreational activities. This nuanced impact of beach quality, contingent upon factors like water and sand cleanliness and the absence of litter, significantly shapes tourist activities (Ghermandi et al., 2015). Globally, coastal tourism stands as the fastest-growing segment of the tourism industry, with beaches ranking among the most frequent tourist destinations. This trend is projected to persist, even in emerging destinations (Jackie-Ong & Smith, 2014). Importantly, nearly all beachgoers engage in passive and active activities, with the beach conditions and quality profoundly influencing these engagements. Furthermore, on average, each tourist spends approximately 10% of their discretionary income on recreational activities (Qiang et al., 2019), particularly in coastal locales where the majority (75%–80%) of recreational travelers converge (Daher, 2018). Moreover, recreational activities at beaches usually involve direct interaction with beach water and sand components. Therefore, the quality of the beach environment, which encompasses factors such as air and water quality, noise levels, aesthetic appeal, safety, and security, plays a pivotal role in shaping overall beach preferences, activities, and user experiences. As such, beach environmental quality (conditions) drives individual-specific activities and determines the recreational opportunities available to beach users. Consequently, it has emerged as a critical area of recent tourism research (Qiang et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2018) and appears to represent an underexplored research area in Ghana, despite beaches constituting the country's third most vital tourism resource (Akyeampong, 2006).

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West Africa has a rich coastal heritage, particularly evident in Ghana's four coastal regions: Volta, Greater-Accra, Central, and Western regions. Consequently, Ghana is poised to offer beach tourists and visitors coastal resources including water, beaches, visual beauty, abundant marine, and terrestrial wildlife, and a diverse range of cultural and historical sites along the coast for leisure and tourism. Coastal areas of Ghana witness high levels of tourism and recreational activities (Tsagbey et al., 2009). However, less attention has been given to exploring the recreational activities type, form, and nature, most pursued by tourists at Ghanaian beaches. Furthermore, little is known about the condition and quality of beach resources that facilitate such activities, and how beach conditions or tourism resources influence recreational activities among users, with potential implications for the development and sustainability of coastal tourism in these regions. Therefore, this study addresses this gap by exploring the dimensions of recreational activities pursued by visitors, such as aesthetic viewing, swimming, beach sports, and sunbathing, at tourist beaches in Ghana. Additionally, it examines variations in beach recreational activity pursuits across the socio-demographic profiles of beach users. With increasing reports of deteriorating environmental conditions at many of Ghana's tourist beaches (Mensah, 2021; Eshun et al., 2019), this study identifies the specificity and dimensionality of beach activities that are most and/or least accessible and pursued at the beaches based on the overall prevailing environmental conditions or quality. By exploring, identifying, and offering practical implications for coastal and tourism managers and management, this study provides valuable insights for recreational enhancement, fostering sustainable coastal development, and informing policymaking in the region. Importantly, the limited scope of recreational studies on West African beaches underscores the urgency and significance of this research endeavor in enhancing our understanding of beach tourism dynamics and environmental management in the region.

## Literature Review

### *Beach Environmental Conditions*

Environmental conditions on beaches consist of natural and human components. Natural elements include air, sand and water purity, biodiversity, aesthetic attributes, as well as consideration for health and safety. Beyond these natural elements, human-induced factors such as pollution and land use significantly impact ecosystem health (Boyle, 2018; Thomsen et al., 2017). Key indicators such as air, sand and water quality, noise levels, and aesthetic appeal are essential for understanding the ecological integrity of natural settings and their suitability for recreational activities. Within the context of beach recreational pursuits, environmental conditions entail factors like air, sand and water cleanliness, absence of pollutants, and preservation of the coastal landscape. Understanding the diverse dimensions of environmental conditions as enablers for beach recreational activity pursuits is essential (Vosoughi et al., 2021; Saeedi et al., 2019). Research on beach conditions has primarily focused on assessing the well-being of beachgoers, emphasizing aspects such as aesthetic appeal, hygiene, and cleanliness. Additionally, evaluating the physical safety of beach users, particularly concerning health risks associated with water and sand contact, has been a key consideration. Environmental factors are crucial in determining visitor satisfaction and health during recreational activities. Poor air quality, characterized by pollutants such as particulate matter and ozone, can adversely affect visitor health and comfort. Conversely, clean and safe sand and water enhances the appeal of the beach, while managing noise pollution is essential for preserving natural tranquility (Chen et al., 2018). Managing noise pollution is essential for maintaining an optimal recreational environment. Existing literature emphasizes the significance of beach environmental qualities, highlighting the important role of beach facilities (Peña-Alonso, 2018). These facilities are crucial in shaping visitors' experiences and perceptions of coastal areas. Factors such as cleanliness, accessibility, and available amenities significantly influence user satisfaction and the likelihood of engaging in recreational activities (García-Morales, 2018). Thus, comprehending and upholding high standards for beach facilities are crucial for promoting tourism, ensuring visitor safety, and conserving coastal environments for future generations. Aesthetic appeal represents another vital aspect of environmental conditions contributing to the perceived quality of recreational spaces (Morales, 2018; Morgan, 1999). Moreover, safety and security are crucial for facilitating activities, fostering positive visitor perceptions, and encouraging return visits. Positive environmental attributes, such as clean air, pristine water, and visually pleasing landscapes, consistently correlate with heightened visitor satisfaction (Magura et al., 2010). Integrated assessments of environmental quality are positively associated with the enjoyment and perceived quality of recreational spaces (Williams & Micallef, 2009).

### *Components of Beach Recreational Activity Performance*

The enjoyment and feasibility of beach activities, such as sunbathing, beach sports, and sandcastle construction, are significantly influenced by beach scenery, sand quality, and waterfront stability. Accessibility stands out as another crucial factor, involving considerations such as parking spots, pathways, and facility accessibility (Ghermandi et al., 2015). Water quality and the presence of lifeguards are crucial determinants of beach safety. Clean and safe water facilitates swimming and water sports, while the presence of lifeguards enhances overall confidence and safety (Daher, 2018). Social variables, such as visitor behavior and crowd density, also impact the quality of beach recreational activities. Natural attractions and clean, sanded beaches provide a conducive environment for various recreational activities such as creating elaborate sandcastles, engaging in beach volleyball or soccer, creating sand art, taking photos, participating in sandcastle-building competitions, enjoying barefoot beach walks, seaside picnics, sandboarding or sledding, hosting beach bonfires, and relaxing on sandy shores (Koens et al., 2018). The physical infrastructure of the beach, comprising well-maintained boardwalks, restrooms, picnic places, and parking facilities, enhances the convenience and comfort of beachgoers. Activities such as yoga classes, jet skiing, paddleboarding, dining in restaurants or cafés, organized beach games, and facility-based activities are further enriched by the presence of well-maintained beach facilities. Social factors, such as crowd size and safety precautions, also considerably influence beach recreational activities. User satisfaction may be compromised by crowded beaches, which highlights the importance of implementing effective management strategies to maintain a visitor's balance. A sense of safety during beach activities, including personal security and the implementation of environmental conservation measures, is crucial (Wilson & Verlis, 2017; Manning, 2011). Recreational beach activities are intricately linked to a combination of physical, environmental, and social factors. Understanding and integrating these components are essential for the comprehensive assessment and optimization of beach recreational activity performance.

***Beach Environment and Recreational Activity Performance***

The quality of beach environments and facilities plays a critical role in determining recreational performance. This intricate relationship underscores the interconnectedness of beach facilities, environmental conditions, and recreational pursuits. Environmental indicators are crucial for assessing the suitability of beach environments for recreational activity. The environmental conditions of beach resources and facilities significantly contribute to the overall recreational experience of beachgoers. Pristine water, along with clean and aesthetically pleasing surroundings, enhances the appeal of beaches and promotes various activities such as swimming, sunbathing, and beach sports (Papadopoulou & Mimikou, 2019; Chen et al., 2018). Research indicates that visitors are more inclined to engage in and derive satisfaction from recreational activities when they are conducted in beach environments characterized by high environmental quality indicators (Saeedi et al., 2019). Conversely, poor beach conditions can impede recreational activities. Contaminated water, visible pollution, and compromised air quality pose health risks and deter visitors from participating in activities, ultimately diminishing the overall recreational experience (Pascoe, 2019). Regarding air quality, studies emphasize the importance of clean air in promoting a healthy and enjoyable recreational experience. Poor air quality can adversely affect visitors' comfort during beach activities and undermine their satisfaction level (Saeedi et al., 2019). Water quality represents another essential indicator, especially for coastal areas. Pristine water is indispensable for activities such as swimming and water sports, influencing visitor preferences and overall satisfaction levels at beaches (Chen et al., 2018). Consequently, monitoring and maintaining water quality emerge as paramount tasks for sustaining the recreational value of coastal environments.

Aesthetic degradation, characterized by littered shorelines and deteriorating natural features, can negatively impact visual appeal, consequently affecting visitor satisfaction and participation in beach activities. Cleanliness, visual attractiveness, and the absence of pollution are key factors influencing the perception of environmental quality along beaches (Magura et al., 2010). A well-maintained and aesthetically pleasing environment significantly enhances the overall recreational experience. However, the relationship between environmental quality and recreational activity performance is complex and subject to moderation by various factors. Effective waste disposal, pollution control measures, and habitat preservation strategies are vital management interventions that can mitigate the negative impacts of poor environmental quality (Ditton et al., 2017). Moreover, visitor education and awareness programs can influence behavior, fostering a sense of responsibility and stewardship among beachgoers. Social and economic factors also come into play, with overcrowding posing a significant strain on the environment and diminishing the quality of recreational experiences (Manning, 2011). Therefore, maintaining a balance in visitation rates through effective management practices is essential for sustaining environmental quality and positive aspects of recreational activities at beaches. The interplay of these factors highlights the complex dynamics that influence beach recreational activity, emphasizing the importance of comprehensive and sustainable management strategies for tourism and recreation within the coastal environment. Noise levels contribute to the recreational ambiance, with excessive noise from human activities disrupting the tranquility of beach settings and compromising the visitor experience (Vosoughi et al., 2021). Hence, managing noise pollution is crucial for preserving the natural soundscape and enhancing the overall quality of recreational activities.

Research on beach facilities and their impact on recreational activities has revealed a range of factors influencing the quality of beach experience. Peña-Alonso (2018) identified accessibility, environmental and water quality, comfort, scenic quality, human activity, and infrastructure as the key indicators of recreational quality. García-Morales (2018) emphasized the importance of user perceptions in assessing beach quality, stressing the need for tailored management programs. Morgan (1999) underscored the significance of landscape, bathing safety, and environmental quality, albeit placing lower priority on beach facilities. Morales (2018) further emphasized the need for an integrated approach, combining assessments of recreational quality and carrying capacity to guide beach management efforts.

Safety and security indicators are paramount for ensuring a positive recreational performance and experience. Manning (2011) highlighted the importance of a secure environment in fostering positive visitor perceptions and encouraging repeat beach use and visits. A clean and safe environment significantly contributes to the overall quality and enjoyment of recreational activities on beaches. In many coastal West African countries, including Ghana, where tourist activity is increasing, beaches are swiftly becoming integral parts of local economies targeting the "3S" market. Consequently, the sense of user safety following beach water, sand, and facility usage is largely driven by user perception, with emphasis placed on aesthetic values such as hygiene and cleanliness. However, social and economic components also play an important role when considering the value of beaches (Micallef & Williams, 2002; Morgan, 1999). This is because the level of physical security for beach users can be determined by assessing the risk of sand and water conditions to human health.

### *Recreation Opportunity Spectrum*

The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) stands as a conceptual framework crucial for understanding the intricate relationship between beach environmental quality and recreational activity performance. It classifies outdoor recreational settings based on variables such as remoteness, facility development, and environmental quality, thereby offering a nuanced approach to assessing diverse opportunities and constraints within natural environments (Stankey, 2020; Manning, 1985). This framework empowers nature-based tourism managers to align resource characteristics with the appropriate types and levels of recreational activities, often guiding management decisions based on user feedback. In the context of beach environments, the ROS framework holds particular relevance, facilitating systematic categorization of beaches according to their environmental attributes. Factors like remoteness, facility development, and environmental conditions play crucial roles in determining the types of recreational activities feasible at a given beach (Koens et al., 2018; Manning, 2011). Applying the ROS framework to beaches allows researchers to classify and understand varying degrees of environmental conditions and their impacts on recreational opportunities. Such categorization offers insights into how different levels of environmental conditions influence the recreational preferences and behaviors of beachgoers, illuminating which recreational activities are more likely to thrive in specific beach settings. Thus, the ROS framework serves as a valuable tool for investigating the nuanced connection between beach facilities, environmental conditions, and recreational activities. Considering factors such as accessibility, facilities, and desired user experience, it aids in ensuring sustainable outdoor recreation practices and management strategies.

### *Leisure Constraint Theory*

The "leisure constraints model" introduced by Crawford and Godbey (1987) offers a structured framework for understanding the factors that may hinder individuals' engagement in recreational activities. These constraints include intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural. Intrapersonal constraints pertain to personal factors such as motivations, preferences, and physical abilities, whereas interpersonal constraints arise from interactions with others such as family, friends, or social groups. Structural constraints involve external factors such as the nature and quality of the physical environment, as well as the availability, safety, and cleanliness of facilities. Together, these constraints highlight the myriad influences individuals face when making leisure choices and participating in recreational activities. In the context of beach recreational activities, personal preferences, social interactions, and the physical environment can significantly impact leisure performance. Substandard beach environments or facilities, marked by unclean areas, changes in water and sand quality, the presence of plastics and litter, and unpleasant odors, can significantly diminish tourists' leisure experiences (Jackson, 1994). Environmental degradation further reduces beaches' aesthetic appeal, contributing to negative leisure performance. Hazards posed by litter, plastics, dead mammals, and human waste/feces also limit tourists' sense of safety, thereby dampening their willingness to engage in beach activities (Driver et al., 1991). Addressing these structural constraints is crucial for fostering positive beach recreational experiences and sustaining tourism.

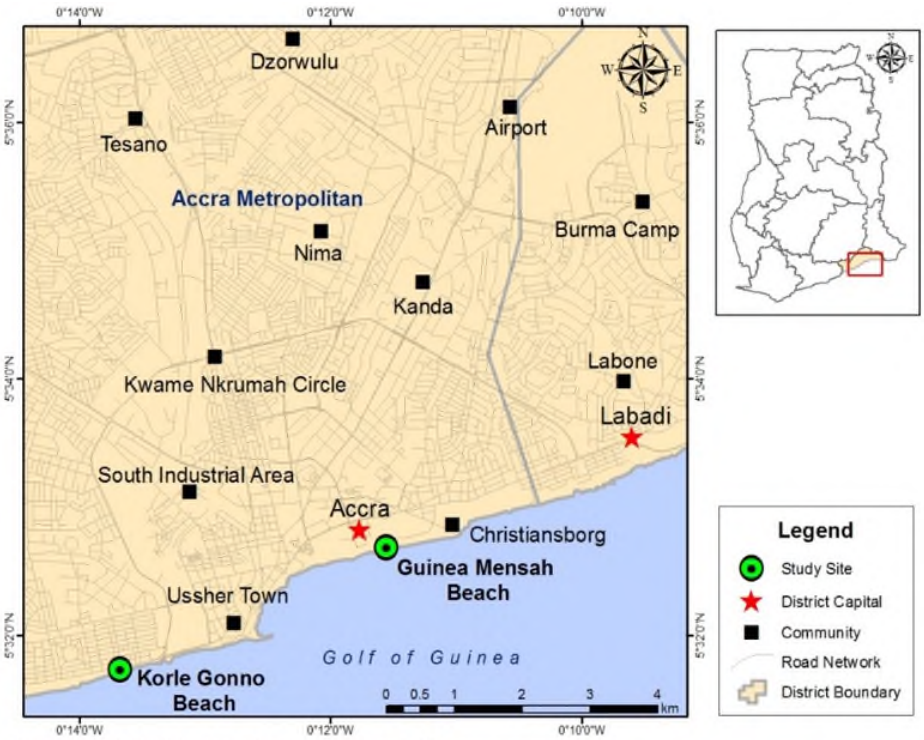
In the domain of leisure and recreational marketing, the overall condition and quality of a beach are measured based on visitors' perceptions of how the environment influences their leisure activities. Positive indicators of a high-quality beach environment include increased enjoyment, participation, and overall positive experiences (Driver et al., 1991). Conversely, unfavorable feedback often signals subpar beaches characterized by unsanitary conditions. Analyzing tourists' feedback regarding the beach environment's suitability for engaging in recreational activities yields valuable insights into the average quality and cleanliness of Ghanaian beach environments for recreation and tourism. This data can inform strategies for enhancement and sustainable tourism management, thereby optimizing the leisure experiences of beachgoers.

### *Socio-demographic Determinants of Beach Recreational Activity Performance*

The engagement of travelers in beach enjoyment activities is profoundly influenced by their socio-demographic characteristics. Age, gender, income, and cultural background serve as crucial factors shaping individuals' environmental perceptions, preferences, and level of activity participation in natural settings (Lucrezi & van der Walt, 2015). While elderly individuals may prefer calmer pursuits such as sunbathing or beach walks, younger demographics often gravitate toward more energetic activities like water sports and beach games (Lucrezi et al., 2016; Wyles et al., 2014). Gender differences can also play a role in determining activity preferences and environmental considerations (Wyles et al., 2016). Moreover, income levels may impact access to specific recreational facilities and services, thereby influencing participation rates. Cultural/geographical backgrounds further contribute to the diversity of preferences and participation rate in beach leisure activities, as tourists from different cultural origins may find varying activities pleasurable or culturally relevant (Pascoe, 2019). This research highlights the need to understand how socio-demographic characteristics such as age, gender, income, and cultural background influence travelers' engagement in beach enjoyment activities. A notable lack of comprehensive understanding exists regarding how these factors shape individuals' recreational choices and their levels of participation in natural environments, particularly at beach destinations (Manning, 2014; Wyles et al., 2014; Morgan, 1999). Users in the natural environment are inherently responsive to their immediate environment, which significantly influences their recreational activities and preferences, especially at beaches where such activities involve direct and active interaction with beach sand, water, facilities, and the overall environment (Daher, 2018; Jackie-Ong & Smith, 2014; Jackson, 1994). Addressing these complexities is crucial for tailoring beach tourism experiences and ensuring inclusivity across various travelers' demographics. However, beach conditions provide an underlying basis for user desires, choices, and participation.

### *Study Setting*

This research holds particular significance due to the dearth of studies examining the influence of environmental quality on the specific dimensions of recreational beach activities at tourist beaches in Ghana and West Africa. The study was conducted at two main tourist beaches (Figure 1), Guinea Mensah Beach and Korle Gonno Beach, located in the Accra Metropolitan Area of Ghana. Guinea Mensah Beach, primarily designated for tourism, boasts a predominantly sandy terrain with a rock cliff behind the shoreline. At a short distance from Accra, the capital city, and spanning approximately 220m, the beach lies within Ghana's primary tourist region. The coordinates for the beach are approximately N 05°32.594'W 000°11.823', N 05°32.599'W 000°11.825', N 05°32.609'W 000°11.771', and N 05°32.615'W 000°11.773'. Characterized by a low-to-moderate slope, this beach attracts tourists from diverse socioeconomic and demographic backgrounds. Conversely, Korle Gonno Beach, located 2 km west of Accra, is situated in the densely populated Korle Gonno neighborhood, with coordinates of approximately N 05°31.733'W 000°13.537', N 05°31.738'W 000°13.538', N 05°31.744'W 000°13.480', and N 05°31.752'W 000°13.481'. This 200-m-long beach features a combination of rocky and sandy surfaces and is frequented by domestic and occasional foreign tourists on weekends and holidays. Along most shorelines, facilities enhancing ocean views and leisure activities are strategically positioned, catering to tourists.




Source: GIS Unit, University of Cape Coast 2021.

**Figure 1.** Map of the study sites.

## Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research method to systematically investigate recreational beach activities and evaluate the association between socio-demographic variables and activity pursuits. Quantitative methods offer statistical rigor in analyzing relationships among variables, as highlighted by Creswell (2014). This approach facilitates the quantitative depiction of the prevalence and trends of the phenomenon by sampling the population. It is acknowledged for its effectiveness in examining social phenomena, as noted by Creswell (2016) and Saunders et al. (2012). Through surveys and statistical analyses, this study aimed to quantify the prevalence of various beach activities and statistically assess how factors such as age, gender, income, and cultural background influence activity preferences. This quantitative approach provides valuable insights into the dynamics of beach recreation and its interactions with socio-demographic characteristics.

### *Research Instruments and Measurements*

A two-part survey questionnaire was specifically developed for this study. The first part consisted of eight items focusing on beach visitor characteristics, including gender, age, marital status, education, nationality, continent of origin, travel party, and purpose of the visit. The second part of the questionnaire comprised 23 items addressing beach recreational activities pursued in coastal Ghana, measured on a five-point Likert scale. The instrument was developed based on the relevant literature, particularly studies by Pascoe (2019), Qiang et al. (2019), Papadopoulou and Mimikou (2019), Daher (2018), Wyles et al. (2014) Tudor and Williams (2008), and Morgan (1999). To ensure the appropriateness of the measurement instrument, it was particularly developed for this study. To ensure measurement appropriateness, a pilot study involving 22 participants who visited La Pleasure Beach in Ghana in February 2020 was conducted. Following the pretest and consultation with two experts (one professor and one professional), minor adjustments were made to the questionnaire. The final survey comprised 31 items, and the scale interpretation for the items assessing beach recreational activities is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** *Measurement Scale*

| **Survey Responses** | **(Interpretation)** | **Five-point Scale** | **Three-point Scale** |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Based on the overall resource, facilities, and environmental conditions here at this beach, I participated or prefer to participate in this beach activity:* | | | |
| Strongly Agree | Highly performed activity | 1.0–1.49 | 1.0–1.49 |
| Agree | Performed activity | 1.50–2.49 | |
| Indifferent | Moderately performed activity | 2.50–3.49 | 1.50–2.49 |
| Disagree | Underperformed activity | 3.50–4.49 | 2.50–3.00 |
| Strongly Disagree | Highly underperformed activity | 4.50–5.00 | |

Source: Author

### *Sampling and Data Collection*

Due to the challenges associated with mobility and the scarcity of data on beach visitors and tourists in Ghana, convenience sampling was utilized to gather data for this study. This approach has been commonly employed by researchers facing similar logistical challenges when studying dynamic and migratory populations (Su et al., 2021; Khairi & Darmawan, 2021). Self-administered questionnaires were distributed by the researcher directly on both beaches. The questionnaires were exclusively offered to visitors who had spent at least an hour on the beach and were actively engaging in beach activities or utilizing beach facilities. This selection process was conducted randomly at various convenience intervals between November 16, 2020, and February 3, 2021. In total, 317 surveys were carefully distributed across the two beaches over three months. Following the exclusion of two incomplete questionnaires from the analysis, 315 completed responses were used in this study. For a quantitative study like this, a minimum of 100 respondents is generally considered sufficient and appropriate for statistical estimation (Hair et al., 2013; Brida & Scuderi, 2013). Therefore, the sample size of 315 respondents was deemed adequate for this study, ensuring robust statistical analysis and reliable findings.

### *Data Analysis and Results*

This study utilized SPSS version 25.0 for data analysis. Initially, descriptive statistics were employed to outline the socio-demographic profiles of beach visitors. Subsequently, a factor analysis employing principal components with varimax rotation was conducted to ascertain the factorial dimensions of recreational activities pursued by the visitors. An assessment of data normality was performed, followed by a mean analysis of individual and dimensional aspects of beach recreational activities. Finally, t-tests and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were employed to examine differences in recreational activities across various socio-demographic profiles.

### *Socio-demographic Profiles*

This study presents a comprehensive overview of participants' characteristics, including travel-related and demographic information. The gender distribution learned slightly toward women, comprising 57.4% of participants, while men accounted for 42.6%. Age distribution was diverse, with 39.4% of the sample falling between 25 and 34 years old (Table 2). The majority of respondents held a first degree, with 16.2% having graduated from high school and 14.6% possessing postgraduate qualifications.

In terms of nationality, 71.1% of the participants were domestic tourists, while 28.9% were foreign visitors. A considerable proportion of the participants were single (75.8%), with married individuals representing 14.6% (Table 2). Most participants hailed from Africa, while Asia, North America, and Europe accounted for 4.4%, 7.6%, and 14.6%, respectively. Solo travelers were prevalent, constituting 72.3%, while 27.7% traveled in groups. Leisure and recreation emerged as the primary reasons for beach visits (65.4%), with 15.8% spending time alone or seeking solitude and 18.8% engaging in social interactions. The results offer comprehensive insights into the travel-related and demographic characteristics of the participants, indicating a diverse and well-informed population with varied travel objectives typically associated with beach destinations (Pascoe, 2019; Lucrezi et al., 2016; Lucrezi & van der Walt, 2015).

**Table 2.** Socio-demographic Profiles

| Characteristics | N | Per cent |
|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | | |
| Male | 134 | 42.6 |
| Female | 181 | 57.4 |
| **Age** | | |
| <25 | 113 | 35.8 |
| 25–34 | 124 | 39.4 |
| 35+ | 78 | 24.8 |
| **Educational level** | | |
| High school | 51 | 16.2 |
| First degree | 218 | 69.2 |
| Postgraduate | 46 | 14.6 |
| **Tourist type (Nationality)** | | |
| Domestic | 224 | 71.1 |
| International | 91 | 28.9 |
| **Marital status** | | |
| Single | 239 | 75.8 |
| Married | 46 | 14.6 |
| Ever-married | 30 | 9.6 |
| **Continent of origin** | | |
| Africa | 231 | 73.4 |
| Europe | 46 | 14.6 |
| North America | 24 | 7.6 |
| Asia | 14 | 4.4 |
| **Travel party** | | |
| Individual visitors | 228 | 72.3 |
| Group visitors | 83 | 27.7 |
| **Purpose of travel** | | |
| Escape/Spend time alone | 50 | 15.8 |
| Leisure /Recreation | 206 | 65.4 |
| Meeting others | 59 | 18.8 |

Source: Author

### *Factor Analysis of Beach Recreational Activities*

To conduct the Factorial Analysis, the scale underwent reliability testing, resulting in a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.831 for recreational activities, surpassing the 0.70 internal consistency threshold (Pallant, 2007). Factors with eigenvalues (eigenvalue ≥ 1) and variables with loading factors of 0.50 or higher were considered. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure was 0.894, exceeding the 0.6 threshold set by Kaiser (1974), with Barlett's test of sphericity yielding 3,242.814 at p = 0.000. The principal component analysis identified three factors, collectively explaining 65% of the variance in recreational activities pursued by beach patrons (Table 3).

The first factor, labeled water-dependent activities, possessed an eigenvalue of 9.09 and explained 34.21% of the variance. It includes various water-related activities such as beach swimming/bathing, freediving or breath-hold diving, surfing, fun-running barefooted on the seashore, in-water tug-of-peace, and hiking barefooted on the beaches. A Cronbach's alpha of .894 indicated high internal consistency among the variables. The second factor, termed sand-dependent activities, had an eigenvalue of 6.26, explaining 17.32% of the variance. This factor comprised activities such as sitting (relaxing) on the beachfront, sunbathing on the beach, sand bathing at the beach, dancing/playing on the beach, beach soccer activities, sandcastle building, beach volleyball, beachcombing, sitting by beach bonfires, and beach frisbee/beach throws. A Cronbach's alpha of .789 suggests good internal consistency. The third category, identified as facility-based activities, possessed an eigenvalue of 3.31, explaining a variance of 13.44%. It includes activities such as beach admiration (aesthetics), beach photography, enjoying/snacking from a beach view, beach barbecue/picnicking, beach yoga, reading/browsing, and beach partying. A Cronbach's alpha of .812 indicated high internal consistency (Table 3).

The reliability of the identified constructs was confirmed by the factor analysis, which revealed three primary factors underlying beach recreational activities, each accompanied by a range of associated activities and varying levels of explained variance. These data and findings offer valuable insights for beach management and researchers, enabling them to identify and understand the underlying framework of beach activities pursued and preferred by beach users in coastal Ghana, particularly in Accra.

**Table 3.** Factorial dimensions of beach recreational activities

| Recreational Activities | Factor Loading | Eigenvalue | Variance Explained (%) | Cronbach Alpha |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Water-dependent Activities**–*Factor 1* | | 9.09 | 34.21 | .894 |
| Beach swimming/bathing | .921 | | | |
| freediving or breath-hold diving | .845 | | | |
| Surfing | .711 | | | |
| Fun-jogging barefooted on the seashore | .893 | | | |
| In-water tug-of-peace | .852 | | | |
| oceanfront hiking | .831 | | | |
| **Sand-dependent Activities**–*Factor 2* | | 6.26 | 17.32 | .789 |
| Sitting (relaxing) on the beachfront | .931 | | | |
| Sunbathing on the beach | .741 | | | |
| Sand bathing at the beach | .731 | | | |
| Dancing /playing on the beach | .811 | | | |
| beach soccer activities | .709 | | | |
| Sandcastle Building | .825 | | | |
| Beach Volleyball | .723 | | | |
| Beachcombing | .911 | | | |
| Sitting by Beach Bonfires | .505 | | | |
| Beach Frisbee/Beach throws | .892 | | | |
| **Facility-based activities**–*Factor 3* | | 3.31 | 13.44 | .812 |
| Beach admiration (aesthetics) | .892 | | | |
| Beach photography | .891 | | | |
| Enjoying/snacking with a beach view | .652 | | | |
| Beach Barbecue/Picnicking | .731 | | | |
| Beach Yoga | .619 | | | |
| Reading/browsing | .504 | | | |
| Beach Partying | .894 | | | |
| **Total variance explained** | | | 64.97 | (.831) |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity = 3,242.814; p-value = 0.000 | | | | |
| Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sphericity = 0.894 | | | | |

Source: Author

### Descriptive Values of Scales for Beach Recreational Activities

The outcomes concerning the beach recreational activities pursued an overall mean score of 3.76, indicating a reluctance or inability among visitors to engage in water-based recreational activities due to beach conditions. Specifically, users reported difficulties participating in beach swimming/bathing (mean = 4.39), free or breath-hold diving (mean = 3.96), in-water tug-of-peace (mean = 3.72), fun-jogging barefooted on the seashore (mean = 3.68), and oceanfront hiking (mean = 3.63) (Table 3). These findings imply that the perceived beach water and environment may have hampered users' involvement and enjoyment of water-based activities on beaches.

**Table 4.** Descriptive values of scales for beach recreational activities

| Beach Recreational Activities | Mean | Std. D | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Water-dependent activities** | | | | |
| Beach swimming/bathing | 4.39 | .91 | | |
| freediving or breath-hold diving | 3.96 | 1.06 | | |
| Surfing | 3.16 | 1.26 | | |
| Fun-jogging barefooted on the seashore | 3.68 | 1.21 | −0.731 | −0.481 |
| Water-in-Tug-of-peace | 3.72 | 0.81 | | |
| oceanfront hiking | 3.63 | 1.12 | | |
| ***Overall Score*** | ***3.76*** | | ***p = 0.0629*** | |
| **Sand-dependent activities** | | | | |
| Sitting (relaxing) on the beachfront | 4.11 | 1.24 | | |
| Sunbathing on the beach | 3.11 | 1.29 | | |
| Sand bathing at the beach | 4.03 | .98 | | |
| Dancing /playing on the beach | 3.11 | 1.22 | | |
| beach soccer activities | 3.58 | 1.09 | −0.645 | 1.598 |
| Sandcastle Building | 3.98 | 1.01 | | |
| Beach Volleyball | 3.55 | 1.04 | | |
| Beachcombing | 3.67 | 0.98 | | |
| Sitting by Beach Bonfires | 3.56 | 0.99 | | |
| Beach Frisbee/Beach throws | 2.14 | 1.23 | | |
| ***Overall Score*** | ***3.68*** | | ***p = 0.0593*** | |
| **Facility-based activities** | | | | |
| Beach admiration (aesthetics) | 3.74 | 1.24 | | |
| Beach photography | 2.40 | 1.37 | | |
| Enjoying/snacking with a beach view | 2.12 | 1.31 | | |
| Beach Barbecue/Picnicking | 2.41 | 1.16 | | |
| Beach Yoga | 3.89 | 0.96 | −0.422 | 1.884 |
| Reading/browsing | 2.65 | 1.12 | | |
| Beach Partying | 2.43 | 1.23 | | |
| | | | ***p = 0.0723*** | |
| ***Overall Scale*** | ***2.81*** | | **−0.599** | **1.033** |

Source: Author

Similarly, the average score (mean = 3.68) for sand-dependent activities indicated an overall subpar performance of recreational activities within this dimension, attributed to the general state of beach conditions. Notably, activities such as sitting (mean = 4.11), sand bathing (mean = 4.03), building sandcastles (mean = 3.98), beachcombing (mean = 3.67), beach soccer (mean = 3.58), sitting by beach bonfires (mean = 3.56), beach volleyball (mean = 3.55), and sunbathing (mean = 3.11) were among the least preferred or participated in. This poses critical concerns because these activities are fundamental and highly sought after by coastal travelers (Daher, 2018). Conversely, beach frisbee/throw activities were the sole activities that participants engaged in or expressed a willingness to partake in within this sand-dependent subdimension. However, the mean score (2.81) for facility-based activities indicated a generally positive performance or willingness to engage in recreational activities associated with beach facilities. In particular, activities such as enjoying/snacking with a beach view (mean = 2.12), beach photography (mean = 2.40), barbecue/picnicking (mean = 2.41), beach partying (mean = 2.43), and reading/browsing (mean = 2.65) were well-received. This indicates that beaches provide safe, clean, and basic amenities that facilitate tourists' engagement in these activities without environmental concerns. However, activities such as beach yoga (mean = 3.89) and beach admiration (mean = 3.74), which are closely tied to beach sand and water cleanliness/conditions, had minimal participation or willingness to participate, underscoring the need to address beach conditions and aesthetic qualities.

Additionally, the normality of the data was assessed for further analysis. This revealed skewness and kurtosis values (z-values) within the -2 to +2 range (Table 4) at $p > 0.05$ (Shapiro-Wilk test), indicative of a normal distribution of the dataset. Based on the subdimension means, it can be inferred that the most influential factors driving individual choices and participation in recreational activities on beaches involve activities personally suited to individuals made largely available by the quality of facilities, and environmental conditions at the beaches.

### *Differences in Recreational Activities Across Visitors' Profiles*

This study also investigated differences in beach recreational activities pursued or preferred across user profiles. To achieve this objective, the original five-point Likert scale was transformed into a three-point Likert scale to facilitate the analysis and interpretation of the results. Employing an independent t-test and one-way ANOVA, the analysis revealed significant associations between user profiles and their preferences and pursuits of recreational activities, particularly regarding gender, nationality, age, marital status, education, and purpose of travel. The findings indicated significant gender disparities in the inclination toward water-dependent recreational activities ($p = 0.012 < 0.050$). Male visitors exhibited a moderate inclination (mean = 2.42) toward such activities, whereas females displaced reluctance (mean = 2.85) (Table 5). Additionally, local/domestic visitors displayed a moderate inclination toward water- (mean = 2.42, $p = 0.046$) and sand-dependent activities (mean = 2.57, $p = 0.038$), whereas international visitors expressed disinclination toward these activities. Conversely, international visitors displayed a strong inclination toward facility-based activities (mean = 1.51, $p = 0.010$), while domestic visitors demonstrated a moderate inclination (mean = 2.09). These findings suggest that contingent upon the facilities and beach conditions, international visitors are disinclined toward water- and sand-dependent activities but favor engagement in facility-related beach recreational activities compared with domestic visitors.

**Table 5.** Differences in recreational activities across visitors' profiles

| **Characteristics** | | **Water-dependent Activities** | | **Sand-dependent Activities** | | **Facility-related Activities** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | Mean | *p-value* | Mean | *p-value* | *Mean* | *p-value* |
| **Sex** | | | | | | | |
| Male | 134 | 2.42 | 0.012* | 2.45 | 0.778 | 1.14 | 0.021* |
| Female | 181 | 2.85 | | 2.66 | | 1.48 | |
| | | t = −4.60 | | t = −0.288 | | t = −1.14 | |
| **Visitor-type (Nationality)** | | | | | | | |
| Domestic | 224 | 2.42 | 0.046* | 2.57 | 0.038* | 2.09 | 0.010* |
| International | 91 | 2.68 | | 2.71 | | 1.51 | |
| | | t = −4.85 | | t = 2.18 | | t = 3.11 | |
| **Travel party** | | | | | | | |
| Individual | 228 | 2.32 | 0.270 | 2.40 | 0.440 | 1.89 | 0.121 |
| In a Group | 87 | 2.44 | | 2.45 | | 1.78 | |
| | | t = 1.12 | | t = 0.780 | | t = 2.16 | |
| **Age** | | | | | | | |
| 18–25 | 113 | 2.78 | 0.004* | 2.56 | 0.097 | 1.51 | 0.071 |
| 26–34 | 124 | 2.69 | | 2.57 | | 1.71 | |
| 35+ | 78 | 2.55 | | 2.66 | | 2.12 | |
| | | F = 17.53 | | F = 0.087 | | F = 1.23 | |
| **Marital status** | | | | | | | |
| Single | 239 | 2.10 | 0.210 | 2.44 | 0.025* | 2.12 | 0.061 |
| Married | 46 | 2.09 | | 2.73 | | 2.31 | |
| Ever-married | 30 | 2.55 | | 2.32 | | 2.21 | |
| | | F = 4.73 | | F = 3.72 | | F = 1.33 | |
| **Education** | | | | | | | |
| High school | 51 | 2.51 | 0.000* | 2.46 | 0.712 | 2.12 | 0.033* |
| Tertiary | 218 | 2.69 | | 2.71 | | 2.64 | |
| postgraduate | 46 | 2.81 | | 2.64 | | 2.67 | |
| | | F = 8.12 | | F = 3.10 | | F = 12.10 | |
| **Travel purpose** | | | | | | | |
| Escape | 50 | 2.63 | 0.017* | 2.14 | 0.020* | 1.41 | 0.021* |
| Leisure/Recreation | 206 | 2.84 | | 2.81 | | 1.51 | |
| Meeting others | 59 | 2.65 | | 2.61 | | 2.23 | |
| | | F = 10.06 | | F = 13.97 | | F = 77.61 | |
| **Continent** | | | | | | | |
| Africa | 231 | 2.44 | 0.067 | 2.85 | 0.073 | 2.10 | 0.241 |
| Europe | 46 | 276 | | 2.77 | | 2.41 | |
| North America | 24 | 2.72 | | 2.66 | | 2.31 | |
| Asia | 14 | 2.19 | | 2.54 | | 1.41 | |
| | | F = 3.41 | | F = 6.35 | | F = 2.11 | |

Source: Author; Significant level at * p < 0.05

The ANOVA test revealed a notable difference (p = 0.004) in the pursuit of water-dependent recreational activities across visitors' age groups. Specifically, visitors aged 18–25 displayed a higher level of reluctance to participate (mean = 2.78) compared with those aged 26–34 (mean = 2.69) and 35+ years (mean = 2.55). These findings imply potential age-related variations in preference or sensitivity to environmental conditions during beach activities. Younger individuals may perceive water quality negatively, indicating a divergence in preferences based on age. Targeted interventions are necessary to address these age-specific differences and enhance beachgoer satisfaction. Furthermore, considering marital status, significant differences in the mean scores for sand-dependent activities were observed between the groups (p = 0.025). Married individuals exhibited a higher reluctance to participate (mean = 2.73) compared with single individuals (mean = 2.44) or others (mean = 2.32), suggesting varying levels of willingness based on marital status. Additionally, significant differences were found across visitors' educational levels regarding participation in water-dependent (postgraduate = 2.78, tertiary = 2.69; p = 0.000) and facility-based activities (postgraduate = 2.67, tertiary = 2.64; p = 0.033). Highly educated individuals may demonstrate greater environmental consciousness and higher expectations of nature-based destinations, leading to reluctance to participate in activities directly dependent on beach conditions and facilities.

Furthermore, visitors' travel purposes significantly influenced participation in water-dependent activities (p = 0.017), sand-dependent activities (p = 0.020), and facility-based activities (p = 0.021). The findings revealed that individuals primarily visiting the beach for recreational purposes demonstrated a lower inclination to engage in water-dependent activities compared with those visiting for other purposes, with mean scores of 2.65 for those meeting others and 2.63 for those visiting escapism purposes. Regarding sand-dependent activities, while recreational visitors were more reluctant to participate (mean = 2.81), those seeking escapism expressed a greater willingness to engage (mean = 2.14). Conversely, individuals visiting for recreational purposes (mean = 1.51) and escapism (mean = 1.41) exhibited a higher propensity or willingness to participate in facility-based activities, whereas those visiting to meet others displayed only a moderate willingness (Table 5).

## Discussion

Factorial analysis revealed three-dimensional factors of beach recreational activities pursued by coastal Ghanaian visitors. The results delineate the primary factors of water-dependent activities, emphasizing the importance of clean and clear beach water in beach users' experiences. These factors include activities such as swimming, surfing, and in-water tug-of-peace, all facilitated by pristine water conditions (Daher, 2018). This component, representing the highest proportion of explained variation (34.21%), emphasizes the paramount importance of water-related elements and qualities in influencing individuals' engagement in water-dependent recreational activities and their pleasure at beaches. The second factor is sand-dependent activities (with variance explained = 17.32%), which further illuminates how sand quality can shape recreational activities such as tanning, beach sports, beachfront lounging, and sand castle building. This highlights the significant contribution of sand quality factors to the overall recreational experience and satisfaction of beach users (Ghermandi et al., 2015). The third component, which focuses on beach facility-based activities, highlights the value of well-maintained infrastructure and facilities in enhancing leisure activities. These include taking pictures (beach photography) at the beach and eating/snacking meals while viewing the ocean. With an explained variance of 13.44%, this factor signified the substantial importance of quality beach facilities and the overall environment in enhancing the performance and enjoyment of beach recreational activities.

A meticulous examination of the empirical findings, dimension by dimension, sheds light on the degree of recreational activity pursuits,collectively and individually, contingent upon beach conditions, offering nuanced insights into various leisure pursuits. The results revealed that individuals exhibited minimal participation or willingness to engage in sand- and water-dependent activities at the beach due to prevailing beach conditions. This emphasizes the significant role of environmental conditions as facilitators of beach recreational performance and overall experience (Chen et al., 2018; Saeedi et al., 2019). Most pursued beach activities, such as swimming/bathing, diving, sand bathing, sunbathing, and beach sports, inherently rely on direct interaction with the beach environment. Consequently, the most critical factors that could prevent willing, eager, and recreation-seeking beach users in coastal regions are instances where users perceive the present coastal environmental conditions as unfavorable or uninviting. Implicitly, beach visitors' reluctance to engage in water- and sand-dependent activities largely stems from unfavorable beach conditions in coastal Ghana. This finding aligns with existing research indicating that clean and pristine water quality is fundamental for activities such as swimming, bathing, and various water sports, significantly influencing visitor preferences and overall satisfaction at beaches (Chen et al., 2018). The notably high mean score for beach swimming/bathing (4.39) underscores the severity of visitors' reluctance to engage in such activities, emphasizing the urgent need for attention to address and improve the water quality of tourist beaches. Even surfers exhibited reluctance to engage in their desired activities (mean = 3.16). These findings resonate with the literature highlighting the importance of clean and aesthetically pleasing surroundings in promoting beach sports and recreational activities (Saeedi et al., 2019). The lack of willingness to partake in sand-dependent activities, such as sitting on the beachfront and sand bathing, further underscores the broader issue of unfavorable environmental conditions at Ghanaian beaches that can deter recreational activities (Mensah, 2021; Eshun et al., 2019). Conversely, facility-based activities exhibited moderate to positive levels of overall acceptance and willingness from respondents, with certain activities being actively pursued, such as beach photography and enjoying/snacking with a beach view, picnicking, and reading. This observation aligns with existing research emphasizing the positive contribution of well-maintained and aesthetically pleasing facilities to visitors' overall recreational experiences (Magura et al., 2010). However, the reluctance to engage in beach yoga and beach admiration further suggests that the condition and aesthetics of the physical environment of the beach in the Accra Metropolis require management attention.

The factors examined–water, sand, and facility-based activities, offer a structured understanding of the primary beach and diverse leisure activities pursued in coastal Ghana. The significant proportion of explained variances supports the reliability of the outlined constructs and indicates that these factors reflect the essential elements of beach users' recreational preferences in Ghanaian and sub-Saharan African regions. This classification aligns with research that acknowledges the geographical and spatial uniqueness of beach recreational activities pursued by tourists in specific locations. Consequently, there is a pressing need for comprehensive management plans that consider the various factors affecting recreational activities in different regions (Saeedi et al., 2019; Koens et al., 2018).

This study also revealed significant gender disparities in water-dependent activities, with females exhibiting reluctance to engage in these activities. This phenomenon may stem from women's heightened sensitivity to destination environmental conditions and their preference for less intrusive beach activities, such as facility-based recreation (Lucrezi  van der Walt, 2015). International visitors reported reluctance to engage in water- and sand-dependent activities, whereas domestic visitors demonstrated some degree of willingness, possibly due to differences in environmental orientation between international tourists and locals (Wyles et al., 2014). Age-related distinctions were also identified, with younger beach users expressing a greater lack of desire to engage in water-dependent activities, likely because they are adventurous and inclined to engage in beach activities, but are reluctant to do so under unfavorable beach conditions (Lucrezi et al., 2016). Marital status and education level similarly influenced sand-dependent activities, suggesting that families and more educated visitors may exhibit greater ecologically sensitive and health consciousness, leading them to avoid participating in water- and sand-dependent activities under perceived unfavorable beach conditions. Water- and sand-dependent activities were considered less appealing to participants visiting for leisure/recreation purposes, whereas facility-based activities were highly considered by this group (Lucrezi & van der Walt, 2015). These findings underscore the need to consider diverse visitor profiles when managing beach environments to ensure visitor satisfaction and environmental conservation.

Overall, the findings revealed the primary dimensions of beach recreational activities that are most pursued in coastal Ghana include water-dependent, sand-dependent, and beach facility-based activities. However, reluctance to engage in activities that most drive them to the beach underscores the importance of the ROS framework in aligning environmental/beach resources with appropriate types and levels of recreational activities. This entails considering factors such as accessibility, facilities, environmental quality, and desired user experience (Stankey, 2020; Manning, 2011; Manning, 1985). Implicitly, when mismatches occur, constraints emerge, which impacts recreational outcomes. This study elucidated instances where visitors, despite traveling to the beaches, were reluctant to pursue their desired beach recreational activities due to the beach conditions. The reluctance to engage in water- and sand-dependent activities sheds light on the constraints individual beach users face when engaging in recreational activities (Crawford & Godbey, 1987). These findings align with leisure constraint theory, which recognizes various constraints, particularly intrapersonal and structural constraints that limit recreational activity pursuits among beach users. Structural constraints related to beach conditions and cleanliness, such as plastics, litter, and unpleasant odor, can limit the leisure performance of beachgoers. This mirrors the ROS framework's approach to evaluating diverse opportunities and constraints in natural environments (Drivers et al., 1991). Furthermore, factors such as gender, age, marital status, preferences, and education contribute to differences in the impact of environmental quality on beach activities among users, underscoring the importance of intrapersonal constraints in determining the type and extent of recreational pursuits in natural environments like beaches (Crawford & Godbey, 1987). This highlights the need to consider diverse tourist profiles in the development and maintenance of recreational environments.

## Conclusion and Implications

This study explores recreational activities available to beachgoers in Ghana, focusing on the influence of beach conditions. The findings reveal that three main recreational activities, water-dependent, sand-dependent, and facility-based, are pursued at beach destinations based on the resources, facilities, and prevailing beach conditions. Among these, facility-based activities such as enjoying/snacking with a beach view, photography, and picnicking emerged as the most desired and moderately pursued. In contrast, water- and sand-dependent activities, including swimming/bathing and freediving or breath-hold diving, beachfront relaxation, sunbathing, and sandcastle building, are less pursued due to suboptimal beach conditions. However, these activities are the primary reasons for tourists visiting beaches (Wyles et al., 2014). The empirical results highlight the importance of beach conditions, encompassing water quality, cleanliness, aesthetics, and facilities quality, in shaping tourists' perceptions and preferences regarding beach recreation. The leisure constraints model provides a theoretical basis for comprehending the factors that might impede individuals' engagement in recreational pursuits, including beach activities. These factors may encompass poor beach conditions, safety concerns, and other environmental factors. Safety perceptions are intimately linked to aesthetic values and cleanliness, both of which are crucial factors in attracting tourists and supporting local economies. Therefore, the empirical findings offer a structured framework for recreational activities that are predominantly pursued or overlooked based on prevailing beach conditions. These identified factors can serve as a valuable foundation for beach management to develop targeted interventions for sustainable management. By prioritizing interventions based on the specific needs of each factor, tailored strategies can be implemented to enhance beach conditions and optimize visitor experiences in Ghana and its subregions.

### *Theoretical Implications*

This study used the ROS framework to elucidate the recreational activities pursued by beach users based on beach conditions. Thus, it provides insights into the types of recreational activities that thrive in specific beach settings, offering a nuanced understanding of the opportunities and constraints within natural environments. Additionally, this study integrates the leisure constraint theory, identifying intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural constraints that may influence individuals' participation in recreational beach activities. This study sheds light on how personal preferences, beach conditions, and facilities shape recreational activity choices and pursuits. The findings reveal the dimensions and extent to which beach recreational activities, such as water, sand, and facility-based activities, are performed based on beach conditions. This structured understanding serves as a foundation for future research on coastal tourism and recreation, encouraging further exploration of the intricate relationship between environmental factors and leisure pursuits. Moreover, this study explored demographic differences in the impact of environmental quality on beach activities, highlighting factors such as gender, age, nationality, marital status, and education level as influential determinants. This examination of diverse tourist profiles offers theoretical insights into the intersectionality of perceptions regarding beach recreational activity preferences, underscoring the importance of tailored management strategies based on beach visitor characteristics.

This study fills a notable gap in the literature, particularly concerning West African beaches. Despite the rapid growth of coasted tourism globally, there has been a lack of focus on the recreational activities pursued by tourists on Ghanaian beaches, which have been plagued by poor beach conditions. This study pioneers the exploration of this critical aspect, providing valuable insights into the state of recreational activities pursued in coastal Ghana and offering pathways to enhance such activities for sustainable tourism development in the subregion. The scarcity of research on recreational studies on West African beaches underscores the urgency and significance of this research endeavor to improve our understanding of beach tourism dynamics and environmental management. By identifying the specificity and dimensionality of beach activities pursued in coastal Ghana, this research not only addresses the existing literature gap but also lays the groundwork for future studies in similar contexts. The utilization of applied theoretical frameworks such as the ROS framework and leisure constraint theory further contributes to theoretical advancements in the field. These findings provide a foundation for the development of informed policies and management strategies aimed at enhancing beach recreation, promoting sustainable coastal development, and addressing environmental challenges faced by Ghanaian beaches. Consequently, this study serves as a foundation for bridging this gap in the literature and advancing our understanding of the interplay between beach conditions and the recreational activities pursued in the West African context. It offers a roadmap for future endeavors aimed at fostering sustainable tourism development and conservation along the coastline of West Africa.

### *Practical Implications*

This study evaluated recreational activities pursued at beaches in Accra, Ghana, identifying three main factors, water-dependent activities, sand-dependent activities, and beach facility-based activities, and provided a structured understanding of beach activities in coastal Ghana. However, it also sheds light on the challenges faced by beach users in pursuing desired recreational activities, particularly those dependent on water and sand. This limitation predominantly stems from the absence of necessary and desired beach conditions that would facilitate the pursuit of such recreational activities. The findings of this study offer valuable insights into enhancing recreation and informing policymaking. They underscore the urgent need to address and improve water quality at Ghanaian tourist beaches, given the apparent reluctance of beach users to engage in water- and sand-based activities such as swimming, bathing, sand bathing, and sunbathing, despite these being the primary reasons for visiting beaches. As most beachgoers expect to engage in some form of water and sand activity, their inability to do so can leave a negative impression on visitors, emphasizing the need for immediate attention and intervention.

Furthermore, this study highlights the importance of considering diverse visitor profiles in beach management strategies. The notable differences observed in recreational activities based on gender, nationality, age, marital status, and educational level highlight the need for tailored approaches. Coastal tourism managers should devise targeted initiatives that take into account the preferences and sensitivities of different demographic groups to ensure a more inclusive and satisfactory beach experience for all visitors. This research represents a critical step toward fostering responsible tourism practices in the region and safeguarding its coastal heritage for future generations. It highlights the importance of sustainable management strategies that address specific concerns regarding water quality, sand cleanliness, and facility maintenance. By implementing such strategies, stakeholders can contribute to the preservation of Ghana's coastal resources while simultaneously promoting tourism development and economic growth in the region.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Perceptions of Residents Living in Sultanahmet Towards Tourism

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**ABSTRACT**
This study identified the perceptions and attitudes of residents living in the Sultanahmet area of Istanbul regarding tourism. The perceptions and attitudes of the residents towards tourism were analysed within the framework of the Social Exchange Theory. The study interviewed 18 individuals, including residents and business owners from the Sultanahmet area. A qualitative approach was adopted for the study, and the data have been analysed using content analysis. The participants' perceptions of tourism were categorised under three main headings: economic, sociocultural, and environmental. While the participants emphasised the financial contributions of tourism, they also focused on the negative environmental impacts of tourism. Sultanahmet's residents mainly perceived the socio-cultural effects of tourism positively. The results of this study are expected to shed light on tourism planning and the development of appropriate strategies for the region, which could benefit relevant authorities.

**Keywords:** Social Exchange Theory, Hippies, Residents' tourism perceptions, Sultanahmet, Türkiye

## Introduction

Tourism events constitute a complex phenomenon where economic, sociocultural, and environmental impacts converge. These effects resulting from tourism activities directly influence tourists and employees in the tourism sector and residents living in the destination, that is, all tourism stakeholders. Enhancing the positive perceptions of these effects and mitigating their negative perceptions is crucial for the well-being, happiness, and future of tourism in the region for the local community. In the tourism context, the local community refers to residents of a particular destination or region where tourism activities occur. Studies emphasise the importance of local community involvement in tourism development to achieve sustainable outcomes. Research shows that local people's perceptions and attitudes towards tourism can significantly influence the success of tourism initiatives and regional tourism development.

Tourism, as a global phenomenon that impacts society and the environment, requires support from all stakeholders in a specific destination to ensure sustainable development. As proposed by the Social Exchange Theory, stakeholders must perceive that positive impacts outweigh the adverse effects within the context of tourism. This perception is crucial for stakeholders' endorsement of tourism.

This study aims to examine the transformation of sultanahmet, Istanbul, into a major tourism centre through the lens of social exchange theory, focusing on hippies who arrived from Europe in the 1970s. Sultanahmet became a destination for the hippie youth en route to Kathmandu from Europe, leading to significant sociocultural and economic changes. Sultanahmet's socio-cultural and economic changes should be considered distinct from the hippie movement, as it can be regarded as the first considerable tourism movement to Türkiye after the Republic era. Sultanahmet, having become a magnet for hippies because of its mosques, baths, underground cisterns, and remnants from the Byzantine era, has become an important tourist attraction. This study examines the changes brought about by the hippies in Sultanahmet after the Republic era and how it has gradually evolved into one of the most significant tourist attractions in Istanbul. The region's sociocultural, economic, and environmental transformations will be examined through oral history.

The results of this exploratory study, approached from a qualitative perspective, will serve as a guiding tool for tourism policymakers, considering the support of the residents of the Sultanahmet area towards tourism and their expectations from tourism. Following the study's objective, the theoretical framework of the research, the Social Exchange Theory, was explained,

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and previous studies in the tourism field under the scope of this theory were discussed. In the methodology section, emphasis was placed on the research questions, and the adopted approach and methodology for the study were explained. Based on the interviews, content analysis was performed in the finding section. The findings are interpreted in the conclusion section, and recommendations are provided for future research.

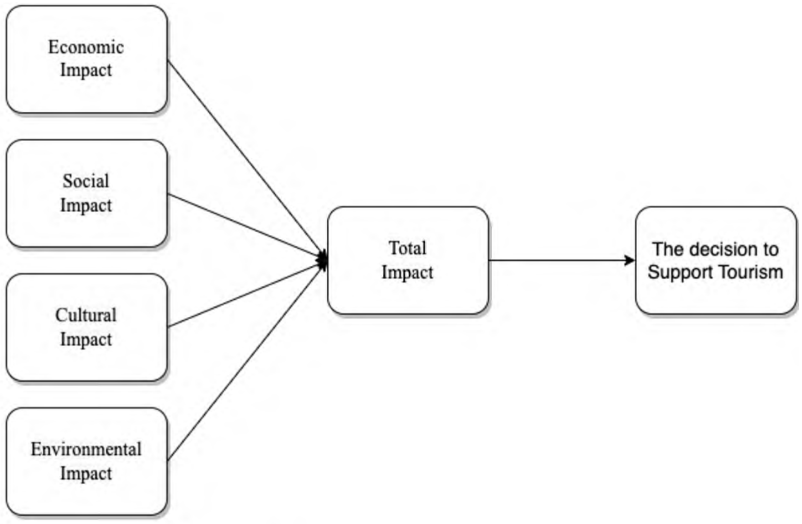
## Social Exchange Theory

The theoretical foundation of this study is based on social exchange theory, which views social relationships between individuals as a process of resource exchange. This theory is rooted in social behaviour theories, which that individuals engage in social relationships with the expectation that they will be rewarded (Lambe et al., 2001). Several sociologists (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1960, 1964; Emerson, 1962) and researchers in social psychology (Thibaut & Kelley, 1963) have made significant contributions to the development of social exchange theory (Bolat et al., 2009). Sociologist Homans (1958) was the first to view social behaviour as an exchange relationship. Thibaut and Kelley (1963), similar to Homans (1958), approached social relationships as exchange relationships, stating that parties collaborate to achieve desired outcomes. Blau (1964) was the first to use the term "Social Exchange Theory" to describe social relationships as an exchange process. Emerson's (1962) approach to the theory focuses on power and commitment in exchange relationships. According to the researcher, power imbalances among individuals can destabilise social relationships. The sustainability of social exchange relationships between individuals depends on mutual commitment (Lambe et al., 2001; Bolat et al., 2009).

The Social Exchange Theory (SMT) can be examined under three assumptions (Özkalp, 2005, p. 35). The first assumption of SMT is that individual behaviours are shaped within a rational framework. According to this assumption, individuals choose the most suitable and rewarding option among various alternatives to avoid losses or select alternatives that cause the least possible harm. The second assumption is the principle of diminishing marginal utility. According to this assumption, individuals can become saturated with the rewards they receive. If an individual obtains something vital to them, their value may diminish, at least in the short term. The third assumption is that in a social exchange situation, individuals expect a balance between giving to the other party and receiving from the other party.

Based on these assumptions, the benefits and costs of social relationships between individuals must be considered to understand social exchange theory. According to this assumption, to evaluate the outcome of a relationship, one must examine the ratio of rewards to costs in that relationship. This can be expressed in a simple mathematical equation: rewards costs = outcome (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). This simple equation also applies to residents living in tourism regions. The benefits that tourism brings to the local community are expected to outweigh the costs that tourism incurs for the local community.

When reviewing the literature, it is evident that the support given by the local community to tourism is commonly approached within the framework of the Social Exchange Theory (Andereck et al., 2005, p. 1061; Látková & Vogt, 2011, p. 52; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2012, p. 998; Erdoğan 2013, pp. 36-37). According to this theory, local communities' perceptions of tourism and their support for tourism development depend on the outputs or benefits they receive from tourism (Yoon et al., 2001, p. 364; Ward & Berno, 2011, p. 1557). According to the theory, if the rewards/benefits obtained by the local community within the context of the tourism industry exceed the costs they incur, they are more likely to support tourism (Ward & Berno, 2011, p. 1557; Tam et al., 2013, p. 387; Erdoğan 2013, pp. 36-37). In this context, the four factors shown in Figure 1 may positively or negatively impact the decision to support tourism.




Source: Yoon, Gürsoy, and Chen 2001, 364

**Figure 1.** Effects of Tourism and Support for Tourism

## Literature Review

The examination of the tourism literature reveals that the Social Exchange Theory is utilised as a beneficial theory in the development of tourism plans and in uncovering the perceptions, attitudes, and reactions of the local community towards tourism (Perdue et al., 1987; Ap, 1992; Jurowski et al., 1997; Yoon et al., 2001; Teye et al., 2002). Studies on tourism movements and social exchange theory indicate that researchers began exploring this relationship around 1980. Mainly, prominent tourism journals such as Annals of Tourism Research, Journal of Tourism Research, and, to a lesser extent, Tourism Management have published numerous studies that examine the relationship between tourism and the Social Exchange Theory.

One of the earliest studies that examined perceptions of local community and social exchange was conducted by Perdue, Long, and Allen (1987) in Colorado. In this study, the researchers attempted to explain the local community's perceptions and attitudes towards tourism, using the Social Exchange Theory, among those who participated in recreational activities (such as camping and fishing) and those who did not. The findings revealed no significant difference in the perceptions of the local community regarding tourism between those who participated in recreational activities and those who did not. The researchers explained this by that during peak seasons, local communities might avoid visiting areas frequented by tourists or participate less in such activities. Additionally, the study emphasised that the overall satisfaction of both groups with the developmental impact of tourism on recreational activities might have contributed to the need for more differentiation in their perceptions of tourism.

Looking at tourism and social exchange theory from a different perspective, Jurors, Ursal, and Williams (1997) investigated the factors that lead to positive local community support for tourism. This study identified economic gains, use of tourism resources, ecocentric attitudes, and community belongingness as exchange factors influencing local communities' support for tourism.

eye, Sönmez, and Sırakaya (2002) conducted a study in the Elmina region of Ghana, where they examined the local community's perceptions towards tourism, taking into account the assumptions of social exchange theory. In this study, the researchers found that the local community was satisfied with the benefits of tourism to the region in exchange for the resources offered to tour operators and tourists. Because of this mutual relationship, it was revealed that the local community turned a blind eye to the traffic congestion, pollution, and disruptions in local services caused by tourism.

Unlike previous studies, Soon, Gürsoy, and Chen (2001) adopted social exchange theory through structural equation modelling. The study was conducted in the Norfolk region, and the researchers explained their choice of this region based on the presence of tourist attractions, such as historical and cultural sites, themed parks, and beaches. The results supported the Social Exchange Theory. The model of the study was based on the assumption that economic, sociocultural, and environmental impacts influence the total perception of the local community, which, in turn, affects their decision to support tourism. Among the variables, economic impacts were found to have the most significant proportional effect on total perception, followed by sociocultural impacts. The local community's perception of environmental impacts was negative. Because of the effects, total perception had a 57% share in the decision to support tourism, according to the research findings. The study indicated that even though the local community might have to bear certain costs regarding tourism, they would enter into a mutual exchange relationship considering the benefits they would obtain from tourism in return for these costs.

In their study conducted in the Arizona region, McGehee and Andereck (2004) obtained results that supported Social Exchange Theory. However, they also found different outcomes from the assumptions advocated by this theory. The study revealed a positive relationship between economic factors and Social Exchange Theory, while a negative relationship was found between environmental and sociocultural factors. The researchers attempted to explain this situation for two reasons. First, they that the lack of trust in the local community regarding planning authorities could result from this situation. Second, the researchers mentioned that regional rather than individual interests might drive local communities' tourism development. This could explain their study's negative associations between sociocultural and environmental factors and the Social Exchange Theory.

Wang and Pfister (2008) examined a rural area's early stages of tourism development using social exchange theory. They emphasised that local communities in this area obtained various social benefits from the development brought about by tourism, even if they could not directly derive economic benefits from tourism. Because of this positive perception, the researchers pointed out that the local community was willing to support further tourism development. On the other hand, Six, Lee, and Leung (2013) investigated the perceptions of Hong Kong locals towards Chinese tourists, whom they called the "Chinese tourist wave," under three main categories: economic, sociocultural, and environmental impacts. In this study, Hong Kong residents positively perceived the economic impacts and negatively perceived the socio-cultural and environmental impacts.

Özel and Kozak (2017) analysed the perceptions of local communities in the Cappadocia region using social exchange theory and evaluated their economic, sociocultural, and environmental perceptions. The research findings indicate that despite the negative effects of tourism, the positive benefits outweighed the adverse effects for the local community in the cost–benefit analysis. As a result, it was concluded that the local community strongly supported the tourism industry, which is an essential finding of this study. Another significant result of the research was the identification of the local community's negative perceptions towards tourism. This identification provided valuable insights for local authorities and policymakers regarding specific negative perceptions, offering meaningful opportunities for implementing new regulations to eliminate these negative perceptions. Research has underscored the importance of applying social exchange theory to deepen our understanding of how residents feel about tourism, especially in relation to sustainable practises and the incorporation of frameworks for sustainable tourism development (Olya, 2020). Additionally, it has been pointed out that it is crucial to consider residents' viewpoints on the effects of tourism and their satisfaction levels, exposing a complicated relationship between tourism growth, satisfaction, and tourism support (Akay, 2022). These studies highlight the changing nature of tourism development and the pivotal role residents' attitudes and perceptions play in the broader scope of social change theory.

Generally, these studies have common characteristics when the literature is evaluated. One such point is that the local community perceives tourism as positive in economic terms but negative in environmental and sociocultural aspects. Another point is that in the studies conducted, the local community's benefits from tourism exceeded the costs of tourism. Therefore, the literature indicates that local communities generally support tourism development.

An analysis of studies combining Social Exchange Theory and tourism in the literature reveals that quantitative research methods are more prevalent than qualitative research methods. Quantitative research provides significant information about the level of support the local community provides for tourism and offers valuable insights into general opinion. However, more than quantitative research is required to comprehensively understand the local community's perspectives towards tourism and its interaction with the surrounding environment. This study employed qualitative research to examine texts from the Türkiye Tourism History Project. The socio-cultural, economic, and environmental changes in Sultanahmet, which are significant in Turkish tourism, were examined. Deep interviews were conducted with business owners and individuals who witnessed Sultanahmet's development in the 1970s and currently reside in the area. By determining local communities' and business owners' perceptions of tourism, this study aims to shed light on the conditions under which local communities support tourism development and to contribute significant insights to practitioners and the existing literature.

## Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative approach to reveal the local community's perspectives on tourism in Sultanahmet. The data were collected using the interview method. This research aims not to test hypotheses or make generalisations but to examine the region's socio-cultural, economic, and environmental changes in conjunction with tourism.

To access the thoughts and perceptions of multiple individuals within the same social group and obtain clues about the cultural patterns of their thoughts and behaviours (Glesne 2013, p. 10), an interpretative perspective was adopted in this study. Qualitative research obtains verbal fragments of information by an inductive approach (Kozak, 2014, p. 87). The critical aspect is identifying research questions based on conceptual and theoretical frameworks. The research questions developed for this study are as follows.

- How did the first tourism movement start in the Sultanahmet region?
- What are the local community's perspectives on tourism in Sultanahmet, specifically economic, sociocultural, and environmental aspects?
- What are the opinions of the local community in Sultanahmet regarding tourism's positive and negative impacts?
- Under what conditions do local communities support tourism and its development in Sultanahmet?

The perceptions of the local community living in the Sultanahmet region towards tourism should not be examined independently of the region's culture, history, and characteristics. In other words, the perspectives of the local community regarding tourism should be considered in the context of the region's culture and historical features. Individual perceptions and thoughts are shaped by society and culture (Gough & McFadden, 2001). Therefore, providing information about the Sultanahmet region, including its cultural background and historical significance, is appropriate for this study.

**Study Area: Sultanahmet University**

Sultanahmet is one of the oldest settlements in Istanbul, dating back 1500 years. It is located in the Eminönü district of Istanbul. With its rich historical and cultural heritage, Sultanahmet is one of the most essential centres in Istanbul and Türkiye. It can be considered one of the most popular tourist destinations in Istanbul, along with Hagia Sophia Square. Sultanahmet Square is the largest square in the Sultanahmet district. The square was used as a hippodrome during the Byzantine and Roman periods. During the Ottoman period, it was known as "At Meydanı" (Horse Square), where ceremonies and horse races were held (Yıldırım, 2004, p. 73).

Sultanahmet Square was developed around the Sultanahmet Mosque. The square consists of four different areas that are close to each other. The first area was created in 1939 by arranging the surroundings of Hagia Sophia. The pool between Sultanahmet Mosque and Hagia Sophia dates back to that era. Another area that forms part of Sultanahmet Square is the old hippodrome area where the German Fountain and obelisks are located. In 1898, Emperor II reigned. Wilhelm built the fountain in memory of his visit to the region. The Emperor also landscaped the surroundings of the hippodrome and the obelisks. Horse chestnut trees (Aesculus hippocastanum) that are still seen in At Meydanı today date back to that time. The third area that makes up the square is smaller than the others and is close to the Sultanahmet Mosque. This area is landscaped with trees for tourists. The fourth floor is located between the Courthouse and Firuz Ağa Mosque. In this area, there are remnants of a palace dating back to the Byzantine period (Tekeli, 1996; Gültekin, 1996; Bağbaşı, 2010).

Sultanahmet Square is home to many historical structures from both the Byzantine and Ottoman periods. Some historical structures from the Byzantine era include the Hippodrome, the Obelisk of Theodosius, the Serpentine Column, the Walled Obelisk, the Obelisk of Theodosius I, the Hagia Sophia, and the Basilica Cistern. From the Ottoman period, there are several mosques, baths, and mansions in Sultanahmet, such as the Ibrahim Pasha Palace, Sultanahmet Mosque, Firuz Ağa Mosque, İshak Pasha Bath, Haseki Bath, and Talat Pasha Mansion. The Sultanahmet area, which contains deep traces of Istanbul's historical development, is of significant importance to tourism due to its architectural and monumental structures. Sultanahmet is a place where religious, cultural, and historical landmarks are gathered, and its proximity to accommodation and commercial centres allows it to host domestic and international tourists from all walks of life. This vibrant region experiences intense tourism activity, making it crucial to understand residents' perceptions of tourism and identify the factors influencing their support. This understanding is essential for ensuring the sustainability of tourism in the region.

**Sample**

The data for this study were collected within the scope of the "Türkiye Tourism History" project. The project started in 2012, and the first part was completed in 2015, with 10 volumes. The second part of the oral history study was continued with focus group interviews as of 2018.

The Türkiye Tourism History project represents the most comprehensive oral history study in Türkiye's tourism sector. A total of 522 individuals were interviewed across Türkiye. While identifying interviewees, three workshops were held in Eskişehir, Istanbul, and Antalya. Participants in these workshops included former tourism ministers, undersecretaries, bureaucrats, investors in tourism, hotel managers, tour guides, journalists, and academics. After these workshops, the individuals who were the source of the interviews were identified. In other words, using a snowball sampling method based on workshop participants, other individuals were reached. For the Sultanahmet region, 16 interviews were conducted. Ten interviews occurred in August 2014, and an additional six individuals participated in a focus group discussion in October 2019. The transcription of these interviews was completed in 2022. The residents of the Sultanahmet region are listed in Table 1. The Sultanahmet region is an utterly touristic destination. Therefore, people in this region are very interested in tourism. For this reason, the people defined as local in the research are tourism-related people, such as hotel or travel agency owners, food and beverage operators, tourism journalists, and publishers.

**Table 1.** Participant Profile

| Participant Code | Demographic Features |
|---|---|
| P1 | Male, 70, Hotel owner and operator |
| P2 | Male, 81, Travel agency owner |
| P3 | Male, 74, Food and beverage operator |
| P4 | Male, 56, Travel agency operator |
| P5 | Male, 72, Hotel owner and operator |
| P6 | Male, 63, Tourism journalist |
| P7 | Male, 65, Tourism publisher |
| P8 | Male, 70, Tourism journalist |
| P9 | Male, 50, Hotel operator |
| P10 | Male, 58, Tourism publisher |
| P11 | Female, 41, Tourism researcher |
| P12 | Male, 73, Tourism consultant |
| P13 | Male, 70, Tourism researcher |
| P14 | Male, 70, Travel agency operator |
| P15 | Male, 73, Notary |
| P16 | Male, 69, Journalist |

### Data collection

The questions directed to the participants were prepared in an open-ended format. These questions were designed to determine residents' positive and negative perceptions of tourism in Sultanahmet. Before describing the questions, a literature review was conducted, and previous studies on the attitudes and perceptions of the local population towards tourism were examined. A questionnaire was created based on existing literature (Haley et al., 2005; Lankford & Howard, 1994; Long & Kayat, 2011). Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 10 participants in August 2014, each lasting approximately 25 to 60 minutes.

In October 2019, a focus group study was conducted with six participants who had witnessed the beginning of tourism in Sultanahmet, had lived in the area for many years, and had worked in the tourism industry. During the interviews, the researcher did not direct the participants but allowed them to express their thoughts freely. However, the researcher attempted to keep the discussions on track by using open-ended questions prepared within the scope of the study. One of the authors conducted the interviews in moderation, and the interviews were recorded on camera with the participants' consent. These interviews, which involved six individuals, lasted for 120 min. The recorded interviews were transcribed after obtaining permission from the participants. The data used in this study was obtained before 2019, when ethics committee approval was not mandatory. However, documents were received from the interviewees proving that they participated voluntarily.

### Validity and Reliability

The most important criteria for evaluating qualitative research are the credibility and trustworthiness of the data collected, analysed, and reported (McMillan, 2000). Guba and Lincoln (1989) described validity and reliability as distinct concepts in qualitative research. These are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Guba, 1981, pp. 83-88). In this study, several strategies were adopted to meet these four criteria. To enhance the study's credibility, the research method was first chosen based on the research objectives and questions, and all stages of the study were planned coherently using qualitative research methods. A thorough literature review and fieldwork were conducted to diversify the data sources. Data were collected from 16 participants to ensure data diversity. Before conducting the interviews, participants were provided detailed information about the topic and their voluntary participation was emphasised. For transferability, the researchers included sufficient information that would allow another similar study to be conducted (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Purposeful sampling methods were used to ensure transferability, and the study thoroughly described the data obtained (Guba, 1981, p. 86). The snowball sampling method, a purposeful sampling method, was used in this study to achieve transferability.

In qualitative research, another criterion for establishing the validity and reliability of a model is data consistency. In this study, several methods were followed to ensure consistency.

The research questions and design were planned in harmony with each other. An exploratory research approach was adopted, and an interviewing technique was employed. The interviews were recorded with the participants' consent. After the data were transcribed, blind coding was performed by two researchers who were unaware of each other's coding. Once consensus had been reached between the researchers regarding the coding, the data interpretation phase was initiated.

The confirmability criterion that researchers should be unbiased (Erlanson et al., 1993). To reduce researcher bias, the data were coded by two researchers. The two researchers achieved 90% agreement in coding. The study's limitations were mentioned, and the research process, design, and data analysis were described in detail to provide an audit trail.

### Data analysis

The data analysis phase applied content analysis to the interview data. The recorded interviews were transcribed and recorded. The interview texts were carefully read, and a code list (open coding) was created. After completing the coding process for all texts, the relationships and patterns between the codes were identified and grouped under main and sub-categories (axial coding) (Patton, 2018). The categories and sub-categories formed from the data analysis were named according to the study objectives and theoretical framework.

### Findings

Different researchers coded the transcribed data, and as a result, the main themes were identified in line with those found in the literature (Yoon et al., 2001; McGehee & Andereck, 2004). These main themes were identified as economic, social, and environmental, and the axial coding phase was initiated. Based on these main themes and subthemes, the perceptions of residents in the Sultanahmet region towards tourism were presented.

### Economic impacts

According to the findings from the interviews conducted in the study, all participants stated that tourism significantly contributes to Sultanahmet's economy and its surrounding areas. Based on the interviews, the factors influencing Sultanahmet's economy were presented under two main categories: Contributions of the Hippies to Sultanahmet and Contributions of Tourism to Sultanahmet. The positive and negative effects of tourism in Sultanahmet are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Perceptions of the economic effects of tourism in Sultanahmet

| | |
|---|---|
| Economic Impacts | |
| Contributions of Hippies to Sultanahmet | |
| Benefits | First mass tourist group to visit Sultanahmet |
| | Opening of new hostels due to the need for accommodation in Sultanahmet |
| | Bringing foreign currency to the region |
| | Positive contributions to Türkiye's image when they return to their own countries |
| Costs | No specific opinion was provided. |
| Contributions of Tourism to Sultanahmet | |
| Benefits | Environmental arrangements made in the region |
| | Significant financial contributions to the region and Istanbul |
| | Job creation |
| | Opening of accommodation facilities |
| | Opening of small bus companies during the Hippie era |
| | Opening of travel agencies |
| | Opening of souvenir shops dependent on handcrafts |
| | Revival of the carpet industry |
| | Development of guiding services |
| | Opening of food and beverage establishments |
| Costs | Departure of old and local tradespeople from the region |
| | Commercialization of the region only from an economic perspective |
| | Opening of too many hotels |
| | Customer loss due to lack of importance given to customer satisfaction by tradespeople |

### *Contributions of the Hippies to Sultanahmet*

According to the participants, the hippie movement played a pioneering role in mass tourism activities in Sultanahmet. While tourists and researchers had visited Sultanahmet before the hippies, these visits were more individual and did not reach large numbers. "Tourism in Sultanahmet started with hippies in the 1970s. At the end of the hippie movement, they returned to their countries and spoke positively about Türkiye. As a result, in the following years, many European and American tourists came to Türkiye" (P3). As the number of hippies visiting Sultanahmet increased in the 1970s, there was a need for inexpensive accommodation in the area. When hippies began to come to Sultanahmet, only the Yücelt Hostel was operating, but later, other hostels, such as the Sultan, Orial, and Sultan 2 Hostels, were opened. During that period, Sultanahmet transformed into a region known for its hostels.

### *Tourism Contributions to Sultanahmet*

After the 1970s, Sultanahmet became a centre with tourist concentration because of its historical and cultural attractions. The hippie movement intensified in Sultanahmet in the 1970s produced a new business sector, namely bus transportation. Kathmandu became a leading destination for hippies coming from America or Europe. This led to the initiation of bus services from Sultanahmet to Kathmandu via Iran, and the first bus transportation activities were initiated in Sultanahmet. During the same period, the number of hostels increased, and food and beverage establishments opened. This was because Sultanahmet served as hippies' departure, arrival, and meeting points. Hippies travelling from different regions to Kathmandu often met in Sultanahmet and continued their journeys together. In short, the significance of this region lies in being a meeting point for various travellers, also known as a "meeting point." Sultanahmet has retained its importance for tourists visiting Istanbul.

As we move from the 1970s to the 2000s, the tourism movement towards Sultanahmet has remained unchanged. "In the 2010s, an average of 2.5-3 million people visited the area during the day (the number decreases to 25-30 thousand in the evenings)" (P7). Consequently, the increasing number of tourists visiting the area has led to a proportional increase in regional spending. Hostels in the area gradually gave way to hotels, and numerous accommodation facilities were opened. This enabled economic vitality in Sultanahmet due to the tourism movement. Subsequently, many travel agencies, souvenir shops, and food and beverage establishments were opened in the area, leading to increased labour demand and new employment opportunities.

Tourism has provided significant economic gains for Sultanahmet. However, economic gains in the area have occasionally declined due to changes in tourist profiles, international political crises, terrorism, and earthquakes. The participants evaluating the tourist profiles in Sultanahmet emphasised that the profile of tourists significantly impacts the region's economic gains. For example, they mentioned that Middle Eastern tourists tend to negotiate even during meal orders (P4), Middle Eastern tourists usually prefer areas close to shopping centres but away from minarets (P16), and European tourists often consume alcoholic beverages with their meals, thus affecting revenues (P1). As a result, the participants stated that their tourist profile in Sultanahmet mainly consisted of European and Far Eastern tourists.

With tourists' increasing interest in Sultanahmet, travel agencies have been established in the area, leading to the employment of numerous guides working for these agencies. Additionally, in 2011, Sultanahmet Square and its surroundings were closed to vehicle traffic. Walking routes, paths, and directional signs were implemented in the area to create an identity.

While the intensification of tourism in Sultanahmet has had positive effects, it has also brought about several negative impacts. One of the most significant adverse effects is the displacement of local and long-established merchants from Sultanahmet. Participant P5 stated, "Until the early 2000s, many people engaged in accommodation businesses in the area knew each other. However, after the 2000s, people we had never seen before, who were not from the region, and even those we had never heard of, opened hotels in Sultanahmet. This situation has negatively affected the region." This transformation of businesses in Sultanahmet has led to new local merchants trying to financially exploit tourists with the perception that "they are coming once, so what harm is there in selling products at exorbitant prices." This, in turn, has negatively affected the image of the region and even Istanbul as a whole. "The area started to be perceived solely as a centre focused on economic gain, disregarding all its historical and cultural features" (P14).

### Sociocultural impacts

One of the most significant socio-cultural outcomes of tourism for the residents of Sultanahmet is that it has fundamentally changed the region's way of life, altering the local people's perspectives on social life and their attitudes towards visiting tourists. In the 1970s, the middle-aged and older generations hesitated to connect with the Hippies; however, they adapted to the tourism movement in subsequent years. Meanwhile, the younger generation in the area developed close relationships with visiting tourists, aiming to learn foreign languages and make new friendships. Table 3 presents the perceived socio-cultural changes, benefits, and costs of tourism in Sultanahmet.

**Table 3.** Perceptions of the Socio-Cultural Effects of Tourism in Sultanahmet

| Socio-Cultural Effects | |
|---|---|
| Benefits | The region's people have a positive attitude towards tourism and tourists. |
| | The local people have started to learn foreign languages. |
| | The cultural exchange started with the tourists coming to the region. |
| | Cultural and historical elements in Sultanahmet have started to be preserved. |
| | Hippies instilled freedom in the youth of the time. |
| | Hippies taught the local people tolerance and a new philosophy of life. |
| | Turkish culture has become known to tourists. |
| | Friendlier and closer relationships have been established with tourists. |
| Costs | The cultural values of the region have been commercialized. |
| | There have been short-term bans on alcohol. |
| | Syrian immigrants have concentrated in Sultanahmet due to the tourist crowds in the region. |

Hippies have had various effects on Sultanahmet's residents. Some of these effects include instilling a sense of freedom, tolerance, and a new philosophy of life among local youth. P5, currently engaged in business activities in the area, expressed this impact by saying, "At first, we were trying to make friends to learn English. However, as we became friends, we also embraced their philosophies. There was no violence, fights, or bad words. Perhaps the most significant change has been seen in our family lives. The youth began to accept the idea of independence of their families."

The importance of these effects lies in the fact that some young individuals from that era later played significant roles in the tourism movement in Sultanahmet, either as employees or employers.

Tourism in Sultanahmet has mutually changed residents and tourists visiting the area. The preconceptions and biases of the locals towards the tourists, and vice versa have been positively shattered. One participant mentioned that when tourists arrived in the region, their clothing style, manner of speaking, and social behaviours started appealing to them, as they seemed different (P2). Another participant emphasised the mutual change, stating, "When they come to Istanbul, to sultanahmet, you realise they have a very different perception of us (Turkish people). They imagine us as sword-carrying, fez-wearing, and turbaned men. However, when they come and get to know us, their perceptions completely change" (P8).

Despite its positive aspects, the tourism movement in Sultanahmet has also brought adverse sociocultural effects to the region. While historical structures and cultural values have been preserved and restored, the primary aim for their preservation has been to ensure the region's economic continuity. As a result, these values have been commercialised and monetised from a socio-cultural perspective. Although the exteriors of buildings reflect historical and cultural values, their interiors often show signs of modernisation. For example, although the exteriors may have a wooden appearance, the interiors may be concrete (P9), indicating the commercialisation of the region's architecture and characteristics. Another negative aspect is the occasional ban on alcohol sales. These alcohol restrictions, especially for European and American visitors, create a negative impression of the area.

"Once upon a time, for example, the authorities here banned the sale of alcohol, and I discussed it with them. It is impossible for business owners not to sell wine because they have to close down their shop if they do not. Just like how Zemzem water is sacred, their wine is also sacred. When someone sits down, they drink their wine, eat their meal, and come here to enjoy the flavours of this place after all. We should not interfere with that, and management should pay attention to this" (P15).

## Environmental impacts

The unique view of the historical peninsula and the presence of landmarks such as the Hagia Sophia Museum, Topkapı Palace, Blue Mosque, and Basilica Cistern make Sultanahmet one of the most important attractions in Istanbul. As a result, while historical and cultural elements of the region are being preserved, they are also being inadvertently degraded. Table 4 presents residents' perceptions of the positive and negative environmental impacts of tourism in Sultanahmet.

**Table 4.** Perceptions of the residents regarding the environmental impacts of tourism in Sultanahmet

| Environmental Effects | |
|---|---|
| Benefits | Transformation projects have been carried out and the preservation of the region's mansions has been ensured. |
| | The environmental arrangement of Gülhane Park has been made. |
| | Old structures have started to be preserved by converting them into hotels. |
| | Public transportation and tour buses have been facilitated to reach the region. |
| Costs | The environmental texture has been disrupted in the historic peninsula. |
| | Historic buildings have been damaged and additional floors have been added. |
| | Restoration works are constantly ongoing in the region. |
| | In afforestation works, trees unsuitable for the region were selected. |
| | Numerous public buildings have been constructed in the region. |

The residents prioritise restoring the area through its historical fabric and properly controlling these renovations. The loss of historical identity and the fabric of the region creates concern among residents. Despite the initiation of transformation projects and the protection of some buildings in the area, many buildings have been altered beyond recognition. Some buildings in the area have been converted into accommodation units to maintain their sustainability and continuity.

*"Without obtaining permission from the Monument Council, one should not do anything here. Unfortunately, significant mistakes have been made in the past, and this place's fabric is changing daily. Those involved in this area's hotel and tourism business must unite and protect its historical fabric. If they do not protect it, the sustainable future of Sultanahmet will be in jeopardy. Today, I am sorry, but I am complaining."* (P8)

The lack of preservation of buildings in the area and uncontrolled renovations have drawn the attention of residents. The replacement of wooden buildings with concrete structures in the area was described by participant R16 as follows: "...now they are building concrete structures there, for the past two years, they have been telling people how they should do it, pointing at the walls, and now they are building concrete structures on historical sites." (P16). This situation has been considered another negative aspect of the local community. Another negative aspect mentioned by the participants was the incorrect choice of tree species during the area's reforestation in the past. The participants stated that the trees in the area had grown too tall and obstructed the view of the historical buildings in the area. "The way Sultanahmet Square is planted with trees is completely wrong; there should never be such large trees. No large trees should be around any monument worldwide because they will obstruct visitors' view." (P6). Another issue is that some historical buildings in Sultanahmet are used by public administration, which prevents them from being opened for tourism. The usability of buildings in the area plays a crucial role in establishing the touristic identity of the region. For Sultanahmet to become a fully-fledged tourist centre in historical and cultural aspects, the surrounding environment needs to be carefully opened up to tourism.

## Conclusion and Discussion

After analysing the interviews conducted within the scope of the research, three main dimensions of impact emerged: economic, sociocultural, and environmental effects. Tourism in Sultanahmet has affected residents in different periods. Especially during the hippie movement of the 1970s, economic and sociocultural impacts were positively welcomed in supporting the tourism movement. In comparison, in the 2000s, environmental factors led residents to embrace tourism more.

Studies conducted by Soon, Gürsoy, and Chen (2001) and Six, Lee, and Leung (2013) found that the economic impact of tourism is an essential factor in supporting local communities' tourism. Moreover, these studies did not indicate that socio-cultural effect impact supporting tourism by local communities. However, in this study, it can be argued that the socio-cultural change created by tourism makes a significant contribution to supporting tourism. Based on the interviews, it is evident that the local community in Sultanahmet is interested in learning foreign languages, meeting different cultures, and accurately conveying Turkish culture to tourists. Therefore, the socio-cultural changes brought about by tourism enhance residents' positive perceptions of the tourism movement.

However, after the 2000s, when the tourism movement in Sultanahmet began to be expressed in terms of millions of tourists, residents' focus shifted towards the environmental benefits of supporting tourism. This is one of the significant findings of the research. The fact that some interviewees were owners of hotels and businesses operating in Sultanahmet did not push the adverse environmental effects of tourism into the background. On the contrary, these participants have emphasised the environmental impacts of tourism rather than its economic effects. Their primary concerns are the unauthorised constructions that damage historical structures and incorrect restoration practises.

Overall, the study highlights the complex and evolving relationship between tourism and the local community in Sultanahmet. While economic and sociocultural effects were initially more prominent in supporting tourism, the growing tourism movement has drawn attention to the importance of preserving the historical and cultural integrity of an area. This study sheds light on the multidimensional impacts of tourism on local communities. It emphasises the need for balanced and sustainable tourism development in historical and cultural destinations like sultanahmet.

In this context, it can be emphasised that the interviewees expressed both positive and negative views regarding economic, sociocultural, and environmental impacts. Positive views mainly focused on economic and sociocultural effects, while negative views focused more on environmental effects. After the intensification of the tourism movement in the 2000s, participants' perceptions shifted towards environmental concerns, surpassing economic gains in importance. Participants were aware that economic sustainability is closely related to the preservation and continuity of historic structures. Residents of Sultanahmet are aware of the adverse environmental effects of tourism and support tourism when these effects are minimised.

This result is different from some existing studies in the literature. Previous research (Martin et al., 1998; Teye et al., 2002) has often emphasised tourism's economic gains while overlooking negative sociocultural and environmental impacts. However, the negative environmental impacts of tourism emerged as a significant concern for the residents in this study. In other words, the economic benefits derived from tourism in Sultanahmet come after environmental concerns in terms of importance. This finding that, as in other research, economic gains alone may not be sufficient to garner support for tourism. The local community's emphasis on environmental concerns sets this study apart. This study contributes to understanding tourism's impacts on the local community in historical and cultural destinations like Sultanahmet.

Wang and Pfister (2008) stated that although local people do not directly benefit economically from tourism, they derive social benefits from tourism developments and are willing to support the further development of tourism due to this positive perception. In this study, participants who were aware of the negative impacts of tourism remained neutral regarding whether or not to support tourism. The overlapping aspect of both studies is that in both cases, local people were aware of tourism's social and economic benefits. However, there are areas where studies have diverged. Wang and Pfister (2008) reported that local people were willing to support further tourism development, but the respondents in this study remained neutral in their support. This may be due to concerns that tourism may bring economic benefits in the short term. However, in the long term, the historical and cultural fabric of the region will degrade, and economic gains will be unsustainable. When this study is compared with another study in the literature, there are overlapping aspects between the conclusions of Six, Lee, and Leung (2013) and this study. In both studies, although respondents were aware of the negative impacts of tourism, they tended to support tourism due to its economic benefits.

In addition, in a study by Özel and Kozak (2017) conducted in the Cappadocia region, residents generally perceived the socio-cultural effects of tourism as unfavourable, while in this study, residents of Sultanahmet perceived the socio-cultural effects of tourism as positive. The positive socio-cultural effects of tourism play an important role in supporting tourism for Sultanahmet's residents.

During the interviews conducted in this study, the participants tended to remain neutral regarding supporting or not supporting tourism, even though they were more aware of the adverse effects of tourism. This is because tourism brings economic benefits in the short term. However, in the long term, they fear that the historical and cultural structures of the region will be compromised and economic gains will not be sustained.

### Practical recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, public administrations and policymakers should consider the residents' perceptions towards tourism. When creating new regulations, the positive and negative perceptions of the residents towards the tourism movement should be considered. The participants' sensitivity towards environmental regulations should be noticed, and careful attention should be given to environmental arrangements and restorations. If the environmental impacts of tourism are correctly interpreted by public administrations and policymakers, the support of local people in tourism will increase. Residents welcome tourism's economic and sociocultural effects positively, but they are susceptible to its environmental effects. Therefore, the proper restoration of historical regional structures, including external facades and internal designs, should be ensured.

Additionally, the landscaping should be carefully planned, considering the locations of historical buildings. Furthermore, it is essential to involve local communities in decision-making processes related to tourism development and to provide them with opportunities to voice their opinions and concerns. Engaging in dialog with the residents and incorporating their perspectives can lead to more sustainable and mutually beneficial tourism development in Sultanahmet. Finally, continuous monitoring and evaluation of the impact of tourism on the region should be conducted to identify potential adverse effects and implement necessary corrective measures. This can help balance economic gains and preserve the region's historical and cultural assets.

### Recommendations for researchers

In future studies, it would be beneficial to include government officials and tourists in the research sample to diversify the perspectives. This helps obtain a wider range of insights. Moreover, quantitative research designs could be employed in the region for different studies to make the results more generalisable. Additionally, research in this area can focus on various dimensions, such as marketing, management, and recreation.

### Limitations

A qualitative approach was adopted in this research, meaning the findings cannot be generalised to a larger population. Therefore, the study's results represent the opinions and thoughts of the 16 participants in the research sample. Additionally, because the content analysis method was used in the analysis phase, the coding and categorisation may have been influenced by the researchers' biases (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). Therefore, the results are based on the evaluation of data obtained from the interviews. Furthermore, the research sample does not include perspectives from government officials or tourists visiting the region, which is another limitation of this study.

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REVIEW ARTICLE

# Organisations Surrounded by Silence: Evaluation of Tourism and Hospitality Literature within Employee Silence, Quiet Quitting, and Quiet Firing

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**ABSTRACT**
Three distinct workplace phenomena—employee silence, quiet quitting, and quiet firing—have received intense attention recently. While acknowledging their differences, a key similarity among them is the lubricant of silence in the workplace. Silence is a widely recognised phenomenon in the tourism and hospitality industries. This study aimed to evaluate employee silence, quiet quitting, and quiet firing. Accordingly, a systematic literature review was conducted. According to the findings obtained, the number of studies on employee silence increased in 2022 and 2023, within the period when quiet quitting and quiet firing were introduced. However, the number of studies on quiet quitting and quiet firing was limited. Employee silence studies were heavily constructed on a specific theoretical background, especially conservation of resources and social exchange theories, while quiet quitting and quiet firing were highly descriptive and urged for future studies. Most employee silence studies adopted quantitative research methods, whereas studies on quiet quitting and quiet firing were conducted in a qualitative manner, trying to describe the phenomena to form a basis for future studies.

**Keywords:** Employee Silence, Quiet Quitting, Quiet Firing, Silence at Work, Tourism, Hospitality

## Introduction

*"The deepest fears and the most intense emotions are wordless. In short, silence is the language of the strongest passions, such as love, anger, surprise and fear"* (Bruneau 1973: 34).

It is time to talk about silence at work. A number of silent actions are taking place in workplaces (Robinson, 2022), which will ultimately alter the organisational climate eventually. Derived from voice in the organisational paradigm (Hirschman, 1970), silence has taken the spotlight in times of great resignation. Employee silence is defined as the act of withholding valuable information, such as suggestions for improvement, inquiries, and concerns, especially in challenging work situations (Duan et al., 2018). According to Zhang et al. (2018), over sixty percent of employees have chosen to keep quiet about information that they knew would raise management's concerns at some point in their careers, which could be one of the reasons why the phenomenon has grown into a major concern for the tourism and hospitality industries.

The literature makes it abundantly evident that employee silence is a behavioural act with negative motives; it is not a sign of an absence of voice but rather of a conscious choice that could harm the workplace (Bani-Melhem et al., 2021). Furthermore, it is a significant workplace phenomenon that can cause substantial financial losses for organisations. Accordingly, it has emerged as a significant research topic in the organisation behaviour literature, and studies have generally begun to concentrate on when and how employees prefer to speak up and when they prefer to keep quiet (Donaghey et al., 2011). The majority of the studies have focused on identifying the organisational factors that lead to employee silence (Milliken et al., 2003; Aboramadan et.al., 2021; Dehkharghani et al., 2023), but a number have found that proactive personality traits and power distance are also related to employee silence (Lam and Xu, 2019). When organisational factors were examined, it was discovered that leadership styles, particularly narcissistic (Aboramadan et.al., 2021; Mousa et al., 2021), abusive (Xu et al., 2015; Lam & Xu, 2019; Sarfraz et al., 2021), and authoritarian (Duan et al., 2018), were related to employee silence. Employee silence is believed to be influenced by perceived managerial justice (Duan et al., 2010) and perceived organisational support (Tsai et al., 2015; Aldabbas et al., 2023).

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According to a number of studies, employees' tendencies to speak up or remain silent may be influenced by their attitudes towards their work environment or work-related conditions, such as the degree to which they feel empowered (Ju et al., 2019).

While the literature on employee silence is growing deeper, the pandemic has led to the emergence of new concepts related to workplace silence. Furthermore, the majority of core values and paradigms that once shaped the world have undergone substantial shifts, leading academicians to struggle to understand the intricate nature of the modern world since 2020 (Formica & Sfodera, 2022). The academic community is now trying to define new workplace phenomena as quiet quitting and quiet firing. In the great resignation era, which is the determiner of economic depression throughout the world, quiet quitting and quiet firing have gained popularity. Defined as an employee's refusal to go further than the call for assignment, quiet quitting is deliberate action. Employees do not make extra effort to be more productive and effective, which will cause a future crisis in the tourism and hospitality industries. Furthermore, quiet firing is a well-known phenomenon that has been defined and titled in a contemporary manner (Anand et al., 2023). Quiet firing can be described as management creating an unpleasant work atmosphere that forces employees to leave their jobs voluntarily (Ruvio & Morgeson, 2022).

Employee silence, quiet quitting, and quiet firing are concepts revolving around the "silence" in the workplace. Although each idea alludes to different unfavourable work environments, silence acts as a lubricant. Hamouche et al. (2023) mention that these concepts are interrelated and that the psychological aspect of quiet quitting can be best explained by examining employee silence. According to Yıkılmaz (2022), quiet quitting is a silent act that does not involve informing supervisors. Similarly, employee silence is an action that involves deliberately withholding opinions and concerns from supervisors and does not involve providing information. The current position of silence literature concerning employee silence, quiet quitting, and quiet firing may provide a more comprehensive approach than individual considerations of each phenomenon. Accordingly, the purpose of this study is to systematically collect existing research on employee silence, quiet quitting, and quiet firing to conduct a comprehensive review. Systematic literature reviews summarise and analyse previous research to provide comprehensive information about the field. Moreover, it provides up-to-date information to researchers and contributes to shaping future directions (Nightingale, 2009).

These studies are regarded as original research because they use strict methodological procedures (Rother, 2007). To the best of our knowledge, no previous study has attempted to conduct similar research. This study aims to fill this gap in the research literature in line with the research questions developed in the study.

1. Is there a recent increase in the number of papers on employee silence, quiet quitting, and quiet firing?
2. What theoretical backgrounds have been most adopted in the studies?
3. What methodologies have been most adopted in the studies?
4. What variables were most examined in the studies?
5. What are the bibliometric data of the studies?

## Literature Review

### *Employee Silence*

Employees, who are considered the most significant contributors to organisational success, contribute to organisational success by hastening organisational change through creative and innovative workplace performances (Beheshtifar et al., 2012). Increasing organisational productivity and success in a competitive market necessitates employees' willingness to openly express their opinions, ideas, and suggestions about work (Chamberlin et al., 2017). With the increase in job diversity in the modern business environment, communication and interaction are expected to increase. Employees must be actively involved in the process of solving business problems and developing work processes (Deniz et al., 2013). However, recent studies indicate that employees prefer to remain silent when expressing their ideas and opinions for various reasons (Hao et al., 2022; Morrison, 2023). This is regarded as an indication that "employee silence," which may have extremely dangerous consequences for businesses, has begun to emerge in the processes within the organisation.

The conceptual research conducted by Morrison and Milliken (2000) posits that employee silence, which was positioned as a separate structure for the first time in the organisational behaviour literature, is an extension of the concept of organisational silence. Employee silence, which theoretically emerged from Hirschman's (1970) earlier studies, was overlooked for a long time because it was dealt with by being overlapped with employee loyalty in early studies where the concept was not structurally positioned separately, and it signalled inaction and acceptance of the ongoing situation (Pinder & Harlos, 2001). Employee silence is defined as the refusal to express one's honest behavioural, cognitive, or emotional evaluations of one's organisational conditions to those perceived to have the power to bring about change or relief (Pinder & Harlos, 2001). Employee silence, in other words, is the deliberate suppression of ideas and opinions about organisational issues (Morrison, 2014). The definitions make it clear that employee silence is a specific type of individual behaviour. The notion that occasionally a group of workers will congregate and engage in employee silence behaviour at the organisational level is one that can be categorised as an organisational behaviour type (Whiteside & Barclay, 2013). However, Choi and Hyun (2022) noted that the terms “organisational silence” and “employee silence” were used interchangeably in earlier studies and that this approach led to the dissection of the concept of “employee silence” being disregarded.

Employee silence is a conscious behaviour derived from underlying motives. Employees’ preference to remain silent may be due to a wide variety of reasons (Güçer et al., 2018). Furthermore, it is believed that the complexity of humans makes it difficult to explain even situations that can be declared and observed; therefore, explaining silence necessitates a more complex process (Eroğlu et al., 2011). When the existing literature is assessed, Morrison and Milliken’s (2000) first study focused on the organisational factors that trigger employee silence. Employee silence is an example of a deliberate act. However, determining the intrinsic motivation underlying employee preference to remain silent is extremely difficult. Because it is difficult to distinguish silence, it is necessary to evaluate this behaviour on the basis of dimensions (Choi & Hyun, 2022). Employee silence, according to Pinder and Harlos (2001), is related to organisational situations and events, as well as how employees accept organisational events and situations in the context of injustice. They classified employee silence as “quiescence silence” or “acquiescence silence” in this context. Quiescence is a type of silence that occurs when employees are worried about the consequences of expressing personal opinions and prefer to remain silent. Acquiescence silence means that the employee recognises that even if he or she expresses his or her views openly, nothing will change and thus prefers to remain silent.

### *Quiet Quitting*

Quiet quitting was coined by economist Mark Boldger at an economic forum in 2009 (Buscaglia, 2022). This phenomenon has been known for a long time, but it was not until the outbreak of the pandemic that it received specific research attention. The term initially appeared on social media platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic and quickly gained popularity (Richardson, 2023). Quiet quitting is related to an employee’s restricted dedication to complete assigned tasks and renounce any additional responsibilities that are not part of the job description. In other words, it is used to describe employees’ lack of commitment to their jobs. According to Zenger and Folkman (2022), it is characterised by an employee’s lack of desire to go beyond the call of duty. Quiet quitting and resignation are not the same. There is an obvious distinction between them. Quiet quitting is a deliberate action in which employees reduce their work performance and productivity (Hamouche et al., 2023). Employees who exhibit reduced productivity and disengagement at work are commonly referred to as “quiet quitters” (Bérubé et al., 2022). Quiet quitters continue to perform their main duties but are less likely to indulge in what is known as citizenship behaviours. They may decrease their attendance at team meetings, discussions, and social gatherings. The philosophy guiding them is to do what the contract requires, nothing more. This can result in severe negative outcomes, such as a decrease in creativity and a lack of sharing ideas in teamwork (Xueyun et al., 2023). Their work contributions are reduced, and they may not volunteer for tasks or projects. They remain with the organisation, yet their productivity has declined. Quiet quitters often retreat emotionally and mentally from their work or social situations without expressing their concerns or discontentment. Quiet quitters frequently avoid conflicts or confrontations with co-workers or superiors. They frequently internalised their issues and distanced themselves from the situation rather than confronting issues head-on. It is comparable to the idea of employee silence in this regard.

Studies in the literature have asserted that quiet quitting is the result of a business’ failure to forge meaningful relationships with those who work for it (Çimen &Yılmaz, 2023; Güler, 2023; Mahand & Caldwell, 2023). The toxic culture in today’s business world manipulates relationships between employees and supervisors. According to Sull et al. (2022), toxic culture exhibits five features. These comprise a lack of courtesy and consideration (disrespectful), unequal treatment and nepotism (non-inclusive), unethical behaviour (unethical), backstabbing behaviour (cutthroat), and bullying and harassment (abusive) (cited in Ellera et al., 2023). The number of supervisors and managers who lack compassion and sympathy for others has increased at an alarming rate. In toxic workplaces, it has become common practise to disregard the suffering of employees and treat them as assets rather than as appreciated partners (Worline et al., 2017).

### *Quiet Firing*

Quiet firing has recently become a research topic. It is an organisational phenomenon that has already been known with different labels, such as “constructive discharge” or “constructive termination” (Anand et al., 2023). Quiet firing is an employer-driven behaviour, whereas employee silence and quiet quitting are both employee-driven concepts. Quiet firing is not the same as quiet quitting. These terms are used in different scenarios. Both allude to circumstances in which workers disengage or quit without creating significant noise or drawing attention to themselves. Moreover, employees are managers of the process of quiet quitting, whereas managers are in charge of quiet firing. Quiet quitting and quiet firing have been on the agenda since the outbreak of COVID-19. It is not surprising that both concepts, with a negative orientation, emerged during the great resignation era. According to Klotz (2022), the pandemic could lead to ideal conditions for employees to resign. To address the negative consequences of resigning/quiet quitting, organisations have started using quiet firing, which makes it popular today.

Quiet firing is a difficult process that eventually drives employees to quit their jobs. An employer creates arduous and disagreeable working conditions that impel employees to resign from their jobs. In the most severe situations, quiet firing occurs when employers permit employees to have damaging or miserable experience at work to get rid of them. This tactic constitutes a form of psychological manipulation (Wigert, 2022). Quiet firing is not a new concept; rather, quiet firing is a new term for long-known managerial practises used to avoid the economic, psychological, and legal costs of firing employees (Ruvio & Morgeson, 2022). Some of these practises may be inadvertent, but common techniques involve disregarding employees or restricting their access to management processes and opportunities for career advancement (Wigert, 2022). According to Martinuzzi (2022), quiet firing is a passive aggressive approach, and there are main indicators of this. One of these indicators is managers' deliberate termination of communications. Furthermore, the organisation stifles career advancement. Another indicator of quiet firing is exclusion from social events.

### *Silence in Tourism and Hospitality*

The tourism and hospitality industries are fragile and are easily affected by the crisis, and they face critical problems that have yet to be resolved. COVID-19 has triggered a major crisis in the tourism and hospitality industries. Enterprise shutdowns and lockdowns have a significant negative impact on the economy and financial markets. These problems have been mitigated in part by government emergency assistance and other forms of economic intervention and support, such as stimulus payments (Formica & Sfodera, 2022). Nonetheless, the industry was forced to confront its shortcomings in crisis management. This has also increased research on crisis management. However, starting with the great resignation era, new forms of silence, such as quiet quitting and firing, emerged, revealing the current position of the industry.

Tourism, particularly hospitality, is in desperate need of employees who can meet customer needs while going above and beyond them (Liu-Lastres et al., 2023). Creativity, innovation, and problem-solving abilities carry significant importance in service settings. Employees, on the other hand, require encouragement and motivation to voice their opinions and contribute to organisational improvement (Jolly & Lee, 2021). Thus, personnel empowerment and talent management are particularly significant in organisations that provide services, including tourism and hospitality. Nevertheless, silence is gaining popularity. Furthermore, new phenomena such as quiet quitting and quiet firing are welcomed by tourism and hospitality. This can be mainly due to job insecurity. In general, job security and stability cannot be overstated as the driving factors that influence one's career choice in developing countries. In general, job security and stability can only be provided by government employment in such countries. There are obstacles for individuals who are willing to work in the private sector, especially in hospitality and tourism. Striving for employment can hinder employees' ability to concentrate on the development of the workplace. In developing countries, reciprocity norms are mainly turned into giving to survive (Mousa & Arslan, 2023). Employees who do not feel safe at work are less likely to express themselves freely, which can lead to deep silence in enterprises, stifling organisational development.

There are organisational factors as well. According to Aboramadan et al. (2021), an increase in the aversion to toxic leadership styles is one of the reasons for silence in the workplace. Hight et al. (2019) also mention toxic leaders as having negative leadership, more authoritarian management, ineffective and poor management skills, and weakness in decision-making. Toxic leadership has negative consequences for both employees and the organisation (Smith & Fredricks-Lowman, 2019). In their study entitled "Hell is empty and all the devils are here," Koo et al. (2022) argued that toxic leaders emotionally harm their employees. However, an urgent need is employee empowerment and talent management.

## Methodology

In this study, a systematic literature review was conducted. The PRISMA process for systematic review (Liberati et al., 2009) was followed. Web of Science (WOS) was selected for data collection because it is the first wide-scope international database, which serves as a significant source for its extensive coverage of the most influential journals and research articles (Pranckutė, 2021). In line with the research questions developed, in the search step, keywords "organizational silence, organisational silence, employee silence" were inserted into the search category in WOS. With the addition of a row, the studies were restricted to "tourism" or "hospitality". Twenty six studies were included in total. The studies were filtered for eligibility, and six were determined to be out of scope. Studies screened by title, abstract, and full text 20 studies were selected for further analysis. Then, the same procedure for "quiet quitting" and "quiet firing" was repeated. Because the concepts of "quiet quitting" and "quiet firing" are relatively new, no interchangeable terms were added to the search button. Only 9 studies were identified (18.04.2024). Four of 9 articles were deemed out of scope and were removed from further analysis. The studies were classified using parameters such as publication year, methodology, theoretical background, and the most investigated variables in the selected studies. Figure 1 provides the visualised process of PRISMA applied in this study.

**First Step**: Search
N= 26 (employee silence)
N= 9 (quiet quitting & quiet firing)

**Second Step:** Screening and Eligibility
Titles and abstracts of each studies were screened.
6 out of 26 employee silence studies were excluded from further anaysis since they were out of scope.
4 out of 9 quiet quitting anf quiet firing studies were also excluded for further analysis since they were found out of scope.

**Third Step:** Evaluation
The full text were roughly read, no studies were selected for exclusion.

**Final Step**: Inclusion
N was determined as 20 for employee silence and 5 for quiet quitting and quiet firing.

Source: Adapted from Liberati et al. (2009)

**Figure 1. PRISMA Systematic Review Process**

## Findings

The obtained data were categorised according to their core topic—employee silence, quiet quitting, or quiet firing. The analysis results are presented separately for each category.

### *Findings on Employee Silence*

According to the results, the initial publication in the WOS database dates back to 2008. Before 2019, only few studies were conducted. However, in 2023, the number of publications reached a peak of 7, indicating a recent increase in research interest. Table 1 provides information on the publication years of studies on employee silence.

Taking the theoretical background of the research into account, most studies were conducted centred on the conservation of resources theory. Furthermore, it can be stated that different theoretical frameworks, such as social exchange, social identity, appraisal theories of emotions, spillover, and social cognitive theories, were used. It can be concluded that existing models and theories provide a good understanding of employee silence, providing a basis for further investigation. Table 2 provides the full record of the theories that were mostly used in the selected studies.

Considering the research methodologies of employee silence studies, most of these studies used quantitative research methods. Only one of the 20 studies was conducted using qualitative research methods. The mixed method was not preferred in the selected studies. Employee silence existed as a research theme for a while. However, it was also noted in the study that some researchers regard it as a non-behavioural, passive state. As a result, it is recommended that more qualitative research be conducted to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon. Many selected studies investigated different variables that could be classified

**Table 1.** Publication Years

| Publication Years | Number of studies |
|---|---|
| 2024 | 1 |
| 2023 | 7 |
| 2022 | 3 |
| 2021 | 3 |
| 2020 | 3 |
| 2019 | 1 |
| 2014 | 1 |
| 2008 | 1 |

**Table 2.** Mostly Used Theories

| **Theories** | **Number of studies** |
|---|---|
| Conservation of Resources Theory | 6 |
| Social Exchange Theory and the Reciprocity Norm | 4 |
| Social Identity | 1 |
| Theory X | 1 |
| Theory Z | 1 |
| Spillover | 1 |
| Service Dominant Logic | 1 |
| Transactional Stress and Coping Theory | 1 |
| Transformational Leadership Theory | 1 |
| Leader-Member Exchange | 1 |
| Social Cognitive Theories: | 1 |
| Appraisal Theories of Emotions | 1 |

as antecedents or outcomes of employee silence. Most studies integrated different variables to obtain a deeper understanding. Employee silence (N=12), leadership (N=3), workplace incivility (N=3), defensive silence (N=3), abusive supervision (N=2), workplace ostracism (N=2), power-distance (N=2), and acquiescent silence (N=2) were the most commonly selected variables investigated in employee silence studies. Using a free application of a word cloud generator (WordArt.com), the list of variables was inserted into the programme and a word cloud of employee silence was obtained and presented in Figure 2.


**Figure 2. Visual cloud of variables examined in the employee silence studies.**

**Table 3.** Bibliometric Data on Employee Silence Studies

| Year | Title | Countries | NA | IF | QR | Citation (WOS) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2024 | Effects of job stress factors on mental health and service sabotage: Focusing on flight attendants in foreign airlines | South Korea | 3 | 6 | Q1-SSCI | - |
| 2023 | The effect of favouritism on employee competencies in the hotel industry: mediating role of employee silence | Türkiye | 2 | 0.6 | Q4-ESCI | - |
| 2023 | Investigating employee silence in service organizations: a moderation analysis | Pakistan | 6 | 4 | Q2-SSCI | - |
| 2023 | The relationship between organizational culture, organizational silence and job performance in hotels: the case of Kusadasi | Türkiye | 4 | 3.9 | Q2-ESCI | 7 |
| 2023 | Workplace incivility to predict employee silence: Mediating and moderating roles of job embeddedness and power distance | Indonesia | 4 | 3 | Q3-ESCI | 1 |
| 2023 | Linking perceived overqualification to work withdrawal, employee silence, and pro-job unethical behavior in a Chinese context: the mediating roles of shame and anger | China | 4 | 5.5 | Q1-SSCI | 2 |
| 2023 | Does remaining silent help in coping with workplace incivility among hotel employees? Role of personality | India | 3 | 8.3 | Q1-SSCI | 9 |
| 2023 | Social capital-can it weaken the influence of abusive supervision on employee behavior? | China | 3 | 3.9 | Q2-SSCI | 2 |
| 2022 | Development of employee silence scale in travel agencies | South Korea | 2 | 8.2 | Q1-SSCI | 2 |
| 2022 | Effect of perceived job risk on organizational conflict in tourism organizations: Examining the roles of employee responsible behavior and employee silence | China | 3 | 8.3 | Q1-SSCI | 2 |
| 2022 | Leadership styles and their effect on employees: a comparative study of two Mediterranean tourism destinations | Türkiye & Italy | 2 | 2.2 | Q3-ESCI | 3 |
| 2021 | Narcissistic leadership and behavioral cynicism in the hotel industry: the role of employee silence and negative workplace gossiping | Italy | 4 | 11.1 | Q1-SSCI | 48 |
| 2021 | International differences in employee silence motives: Scale validation, prevalence, and relationships with culture characteristics across 33 countries | International | 46 | 6.8 | Q2-SSCI | 27 |
| 2021 | Bullying in Korean hotel restaurant kitchens: why is everybody always picking on me? | South Korea | 4 | 3.4 | Q2-SSCI | 6 |
| 2020 | Customer value co-creation and employee silence: Emotional intelligence as explanatory mechanism | Ghana | 5 | 11.7 | Q1-SSCI | 13 |
| 2020 | Abusive supervision and frontline employees' attitudinal outcomes The multilevel effects of customer orientation | UAE | 3 | 11.1 | Q1-SSCI | 39 |
| 2020 | Impact of workplace ostracism on knowledge hoarding: Mediating role of defensive silence and moderating role of experiential avoidance | Pakistan | 3 | 3.4 | Q2-ESCI | 8 |
| 2019 | How family support influences work cynicism and employee silence: The moderating role of gender | China | 4 | 3.5 | Q3-SSCI | 18 |
| 2014 | Voicing their complaints? The silence of students working in retail and hospitality and sexual harassment from customers | Australia | 2 | 1.4 | Q2-ESCI | 13 |
| 2008 | Organizational silence: A survey on employees working in a chain hotel | Türkiye | 2 | 1.3 | Q3-ESCI | 9 |

NA: Number of authors; QR: Q Rankings; IF Impact Factor

According to Table 3, Türkiye (N=4) and China (N=4) were the countries where employee silence studies were mostly conducted. They were followed by South Korea (N=3), Pakistan (N=2), and Italy (N=2). The number of authors ranged between 2 and 46. The journal impact factors ranged from 0.6 to 11.7. Looking at the Q ranking of the journals that published employee silence studies, the majority (N=8) were published in Q1, followed by Q2 (N=7).

***Quiet Quitting and Quiet Firing***

According to the results obtained, five studies investigated quiet quitting and firing. Regarding relatively new concepts, these studies were recently published. In 2022, one study was included in the WOS. In 2023, the number increased to three. In 2024, only one study was carried out, as listed in Table 4.

Considering the theoretical background of the studies, two studies were conducted within theoretical support, which is given below. Human need theory (N=1), neutralization theory (N=1), affective events theory (N=1), and resilience theory (N=1). One study used only human need theory as its theoretical foundation, whereas the other used a variety of theories, including neutralization, affective events, and resilience theories, to comprehensively frame quiet quitting and gain a better understanding of the phenomenon. This can be interpreted as an extra research effort in terms of establishing a concrete theoretical foundation for identifying the underlying mechanism of this phenomenon.

The majority of the studies used qualitative research methods (N=3), with two out five studies being quantitative. This could be explained by the studies being in an evolutionary stage. Because the core topics were quite novel, studies focused primarily on explaining the phenomena using qualitative research methods. More research is clearly needed to gain a better understanding of quiet quitting and firing.

Considering the variables investigated in the studies, only quiet quitting was used as 4; the frequency of the other variables was 1. Accordingly, a word cloud was generated (WordArt.com) with the variables examined in the quiet quitting and quiet firing studies. The generated word cloud is shown in Figure 3.


**Figure 3. Visual cloud of variables examined in quiet quitting and quiet firing studies.**

**Table 4.** Bibliometric Data on Employee Silence Studies

| Year | Title | Countries | NA | IF | QR | Citation (WOS) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2024 | Rationalizing quiet quitting? Deciphering the internal mechanism of front-line hospitality employees' workplace deviance | USA | 2 | 11.7 | Q1-SSCI | - |
| 2023 | Quiet quitting: relationship with other concepts and implications for tourism and hospitality | UAE Greece | 3 | 11.1 | Q1-SSCI | 16 |
| 2023 | Combating quiet quitting: implications for future research and practices for talent management | Türkiye | 3 | 11.1 | Q1-SSCI | - |
| 2023 | The quiet quitting scale: Development and initial validation | Greece | 8 | 3.3 | Q3-ESCI | 4 |
| 2022 | The Great Resignation and Quiet Quitting paradigm shifts: An overview of current situation and future research directions | Italy | 2 | 12.5 | Q1-SSCI | 40 |

NA: Number of authors, QR: Q Rankings; IF Impact Factor

As shown in Table 4, quiet quitting and firing are current research topics in the tourism and hospitality literature. Two of the studies were carried out in Greece. The United States, Türkiye, the United Arab Emirates, and Italy all contributed to the literature with one study each. The impact factor of the journals ranged between 3.3 and 11.7. Four studies appeared in Q1 journals.

## Discussion and Conclusion

The objective of this research is to evaluate employee silence, quiet quitting, and quiet firing in tourism and hospitality literature. As a result, a systematic literature review was conducted. According to the findings, employee silence has been on the agenda for quite some time. However, the number of studies showed that it did not receive adequate research attention until recently. Employee silence is a well-known phenomenon; however, it has been overshadowed by employee voice literature (Jha et al., 2019; Lam & Xu, 2019). Silence has been evaluated in the literature as a passive behaviour (Dyne et al., 2003; Chou & Chang, 2020); thus, the concept may be unintentionally ignored by academic circles. It can also be a result of the dominance of voice behaviour which contributes to positive organisational outcomes rather than surpassing negative ones by identifying the antecedents of silence behaviour. Considering the quiet quitting and firing literature, it is important to make a clear evaluation of the current literature. Existing studies on quiet quitting and firing have mainly focused on deeply understanding these phenomena. However, it is anticipated that this will be a trending topic that will garner significant research attention in the near future.

Employee silence studies were conducted within a theoretical framework. The studies were mainly based on the conservation of resources theory. According to the conservation of resources, individuals construct, defend, and nurture their resources to guard themselves and their social networks. To prevent resource loss and acquire new resources, appropriate behaviours are essential (Hobfoll, 2011). When considering the fundamental ideas of conservation of resources, this theory can be deemed suitable for exploring new ground regarding employee silence. Furthermore, social exchange theory has been widely applied in the context of employee silence. Building research on theoretical framework aids in the discovery of buried constructs, which is beneficial for both theories and concepts. Considering the quiet quitting and quiet firing literature, the studies are evolving, necessitating additional research on these concepts. Recent studies have concentrated on describing these phenomena and attempting to lay the theoretical groundwork for future research. To reveal the antecedents and organisational outcomes of quiet quitting and firing, more research with a concrete theoretical background is required, with an emphasis on applying existing theories or grounded theory applications.

Studies on employee silence have widely used quantitative research methods. Few studies have been conducted using qualitative methodology. In tourism and hospitality literature, quantitative research methods dominate qualitative and mixed methods. This can be directly linked to the current position of the inquiry (Pelit & Katircioglu, 2022). The desire to obtain more general models and findings can also affect the use of quantitative methods over other methods. Qualitative research methods can be used to learn more about silence. Digging deeper into passive behaviour such as silence, can provide more understanding. As a result, more qualitative research is required. Furthermore, quiet quitting and firing were constructed using qualitative research methods. Because it is necessary to reveal the hidden constructs in the concepts, more research is required.

Employee silence was thoroughly investigated in theoretically formed models that included other workplace variables. Negative workplace variables were chosen to investigate employee silence. Examples include leadership, workplace incivility, abusive supervision, workplace ostracism, and power distance. When supervision and leadership studies are combined, it is possible to conclude that research focuses primarily on the impact of leadership or management on employee silence. This is consistent with the argument that employee silence can be triggered by management. Moreover, leadership style can be an important driver of increasing silence behaviour in organisations (Duan et al., 2018; Lam & Xu, 2019; Aboramadan et al., 2021). Based on the bibliometric data, it is possible to conclude that Türkiye and China are the most productive countries. The studies were mostly conducted by two or three authors. Furthermore, employee silence studies were mainly published in Q1 or Q2 journals, indicating that they have received attention from the highest-ranking journals. Considering the results on quiet quitting and firing, it can be stated that these studies piqued the interest of top-tier journals because they were mainly published in Q1 rankings. This could also be supported by the citation numbers of the studies.

## Theoretical Contributions

This study makes some theoretical contributions that need to be discussed. First, this study collects studies on silence in the hospitality and tourism research fields by using various silence-oriented variables, such as employee silence, quiet quitting, and quiet firing, to reveal the inquiry's current position. As a result, it will be easier to determine current trends and early research topics to be addressed in the future. Second, the findings indicate that conservation of resources and social exchange theories were the most commonly used to frame employee silence. However, it is worth noting that these theories are frequently used to explain the relationship between employees and co-workers, and between employees and supervisors. Figuring out the antecedents of such behaviours may necessitate exploiting different models and theories, which is also underlined in this study. Third, it was highlighted in the study that employee silence studies focused on its relationship with other organisational variables such as workplace incivility, workplace ostracism, and power distance, which may be inferred as an active state that emerges in challenging workplace situations. Finally, research on quiet quitting and quiet firing in tourism and hospitality literature is in its early stages. However, it is anticipated that these phenomena will receive significant research attention in the near future. Silence may require much time to raise attention because it can easily be confused with a non-deliberate passive state rather than a behaviour.

### Practical Contributions

Silence behaviours such as employee silence, quiet quitting, and quiet firing can be categorised as important managerial problems. It can be said that silence does not constitute approval of management and its practises. The examined studies indicate that challenging work situations lead to increased silent actions in tourism enterprises. Some studies have highlighted that leadership styles play a critical role (Al-Hawari et al., 2020; Aboramadan et al., 2021; Cheng et al., 2023) in employee silence. Accordingly, it can be stated that it is important to understand the harmful effects of negative leadership styles, such as abusive or narcissistic on employees. This could lead to changes in ineffective management practises (Cheng et al., 2023). Adopting supportive leadership styles may benefit organisations. Furthermore, being aware of these actions in the organisations would make it easier to implement preventive measures. In today's work environment, which requires creativity and innovation, tourism and hospitality enterprises must empower their employees by encouraging them to freely express their opinions. This may also prevent actions like quiet quitting. Working in a more open and supportive environment may lead to a more trusting relationship.

### Limitations and Research Agenda

This study has some limitations that need to be addressed. First, WOS was the only selected database to obtain data. Only articles and early-access articles were chosen for further analysis. In the future, studies can use other databases to access more data. Second, only studies on employee silence, quiet quitting, and quiet firing were considered in line with the research topic. Future studies can adopt a more holistic approach and acquire a deeper understanding of silence literature by incorporating other silent actions, such as silent resistance or collaboration among employees. Third, the collected data were reviewed systematically using certain parameters. Studies were analysed according to the mostly used methodologies, theoretical backgrounds, and variables examined. In the future, researchers could add other criteria, such as study sample, research design, study aims, and findings.

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*Journal of Tourismology* (JoT) publishes two issues per year; one in December and the other in June. *JoT* is an open access journal without any submission or processing charges or fees that aims to be a comprehensive and innovative publication for scholars to present views and ideas at international level on key issues that shape tourism knowledge and industry from past to present.

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