



Araştırma Makalesi • Research Article

The Relationship Between Ecotourism Awareness and Ecotourism Perception

Ecoturizm Farkındalığı ve Ecoturizm Algısı Arasındaki İlişki

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Abstract: Ethics committee approval was obtained for the research from the Ethics Committee of Şırnak University on 09.04.2021 (No:2021/32). The main purpose of the research is to examine the relationship between people's ecotourism awareness and their ecotourism perception, who living in Şırnak province. In this context, data were collected by questionnaire between April 10 and May 30, 2021 using the quantitative research method. Data were collected through WhatsApp, Facebook, e-mail, and face-to-face interviews. The population of the research consists of local people and people residing in Şırnak province for at least 5 years over the age of 18. The sample of the research is people living in Şırnak province (421 participants) who participated in the research representing the universe. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that there is a high-level positive linear relationship between awareness regarding meaning of ecotourism with ecotourism perception. In addition, it was determined that there is a low level of the positive linear relationship between awareness regarding meaning of ecotourism with awareness regarding applicable ecotourism activities, and between awareness regarding applicable ecotourism activities with ecotourism perception. Also, it was determined that the results of the regression analysis also supported these results.

Keywords: Ecotourism, Ecotourism awareness, Ecotourism perception, Şırnak, Turkey.

Öz: Araştırma için etik kurul onayı Şırnak Üniversitesi Etik Kurulu'ndan 09.04.2021 (No:2021/32) tarihinde alınmıştır. Araştırmanın temel amacı, Şırnak ilinde yaşayan halkın ekoturizm farkındalığı ve ekoturizm algısı arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektir. Bu kapsamda nicel araştırma yöntemi kullanılarak 10 Nisan-30 Mayıs 2021 tarihleri arasında anket ile veriler toplanmıştır. Veriler WhatsApp, Facebook, e-posta ve yüz yüze görüşmeler yoluyla toplanmıştır. Araştırmanın evrenini 18 yaş üstü yerel halk ile Şırnak ilinde en az 5 yıl ikamet eden kişiler oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmanın örneklemini evreni temsil eden araştırmaya katılan Şırnak ilinde yaşayan (421 katılımcı) kişilerdir. Analizler sonucunda, ekoturizmin anlamına ilişkin farkındalık ile ekoturizm algısı arasında yüksek düzeyde pozitif doğrusal bir ilişki olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca, ekoturizmin anlamına ilişkin farkındalık ile uygulanabilir ekoturizm faaliyetlerine ilişkin farkındalık arasında ve uygulanabilir ekoturizm faaliyetlerine yönelik farkındalık ile ekoturizm algısı arasında düşük düzeyde pozitif doğrusal bir ilişki olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Regresyon analizi sonuçlarının da bu sonuçları desteklediği belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Ekoturizm, Ekoturizm farkındalığı, Ekoturizm algısı, Şırnak, Türkiye.

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Introduction

In recent years, there have been significant changes at individuals' demands in tourism (Emekli, 2005: 101). People move away from traditional tourism, which is called 3S tourism (Çelik et al., 2013: 23) and experience different types of tourism (Kızılırmak & Kurtuldu, 2005:103; Kiper, 2006: 1; Zeyrek, 2008: 453). Today, it is observed that the Covid-19 pandemic, which the whole world is struggling with, also causes changes at individuals' demands in the tourism. Perhaps the most striking of these changes is that people turn to nature. Many cities, that want to get a share from the tourism industry, are trying to evaluate their nature-based tourism potential. It can be said that one of these cities is Şırnak (Ertaş, 2019).

When the literature on the residents' tourism perception is examined, it is striking that the studies are especially related to the general tourism perception. However, new destinations are emerging in the tourism industry, which is developing day by day. Each destination comes to the fore with different tourism types. One of these types is ecotourism. It would not be the right approach to expect that the residents' tourism perception in destinations where sea-sand-sun (3S) tourism is dominant and the residents' tourism perception in destinations where ecotourism is dominant. Because both tourism types can have different effects on both the destination and the residents. Or, the order of priority of the tourism effects may change. For example, while residents may perceive tourism more in terms of economic aspects in destinations where 3S tourism is dominant, residents may perceive tourism more with its environmental effects in destinations where ecotourism is dominant. At this point, the residents' perspective on the environment and their perception of environmental protection are also important. Ecotourism can develop successfully to the extent that it receives the residents' support. Learning the residents' perception is important in terms of taking precautions against possible problems that may be experienced by the residents in the future and pointing out to what extent it can support the development of ecotourism. For this reason, it is thought that the residents' tourism perception should be evaluated according to the tourism types. On the other hand, the individuals' perceptions can be shaped according to their awareness. Therefore, it is thought that it is important to consider the individuals' ecotourism awareness while addressing the ecotourism perception. In this way, better comments can be made. It is noteworthy that the literature on the perception of tourism in general and the ecotourism perception in particular is insufficient in terms of simultaneously addressing the ecotourism perception and the ecotourism awareness potential. For these reasons, the main purpose of the research is to examine the relationship between ecotourism awareness and ecotourism perception. The research is important in terms of contributing to tourism literature and ecotourism planning with the suggestions presented in the context of its results.

Theoretical framework

Ecotourism

It is seen that ecotourism is considered together with tourism types such as soft tourism, nature-based tourism, special interest tourism, responsible tourism, green tourism, conscious tourism, rural tourism, alternative tourism (Erdoğan & Erdoğan, 2005). Hetzer (1965) was the first to use the term ecotourism (Fennell, 1998:233). According to Hetzer, ecotourism is basically based on archaeological and natural resources such as birds and other wildlife, landscapes, caves, reefs, fossil sites, wetlands, archaeological sites, and areas with rare endangered species (Björk, 2000:190). On Hetzer's definition, the most accepted definition of ecotourism was made by Ceballos-Lascurain. In this definition, ecotourism is defined as *"a travel to partially unspoiled or uncontaminated natural areas for certain purposes such as examining nature, wildlife and natural vegetation, admiring nature, enjoying its appearance, as well as cultural expressions that exist in the past and present in a place"* (Nee & Beckmann, 2011;115). It is possible to increase the definitions for the conceptual framework of ecotourism. However, when the above-mentioned definitions are examined carefully, it is understood that ecotourism is an important part of sustainability.

The sustainable development of ecotourism requires a long-term approach that requires the local people's support and benefits at all stages of development (Assante et al., 2010: 4). As a matter of fact, the local people's awareness and perception is important in the successful development of tourism (Gursoy et al., 2002: 80). The local people's tourism perception also determines their behavior towards tourists (Andriotis & Vaughan, 2003: 173). Researchers such as Eren and Aypek (2012), Duran and Özkul (2012) argue that the local people's tourism perception is an important factor in terms of visitor satisfaction and therefore it is vital for the success of the tourism industry. For these reasons, the local people's tourism perception is also important (Teye et al., 2002; Andriotis and Vaughan, 2003; Alaeddinoğlu, 2008; Avcıkurt, 2009). When this perception is evaluated within the scope of special interest tourism such as ecotourism, it is even more important. Because the main goal in ecotourism is to live without disturbing and polluting the environment by minimally affecting the environment (Kızılaslan & Özyurt, 2012). The concept of ecotourism is based on activities that will not have any negative impact on the environment (Akpınar & Bulut, 2010). When the definitions of ecotourism are examined, it is noteworthy that the common point in the definitions is a strong environmental protection.

It is thought that people's perceptions may be related to their awareness levels. As people become aware of something, their perceptions can also be shaped (Çetin & Gürgil, 2014: 258). According to the social psychology literature, awareness makes it easier to reach attitudes. In other words, when the individual has a certain awareness, his attitude / perception becomes clearer (Kağıtçıbaşı & Cemalcılar, 2017: 139). Considering this issue in terms of ecotourism perception, it is necessary to learn the individuals' awareness about the ecotourism potential. Therefore, it can be said that individuals' ecotourism awareness in the city they live in is as important as their ecotourism perception.

Related studies and research hypothesis

Ecotourism is to ensure the longevity of tourism activities and the balanced development of sustainable tourism. At the same time, it strengthens the understanding of social, traditional culture and natural environment in natural areas. Therefore, tourism and ecology scientists have suggested in their research that the conditions that facilitate ecotourism stem from the natural environment. The function of ecotourism is to contribute to sustainable local development and protect the environment in order to achieve common benefits for all stakeholders such as regional ecological managers, local tourism operators, community residents and tourists. In this situation, ecotourism is often seen as an option to increase the economic well-being of the local population and promote environmental protection. However, local and rural communities often lack the opportunity to better discuss and understand these issues and access information (Bini et al., 2000:6). Additionally, those living in ecotourism areas may not fully understand the economic, social and environmental impacts that may arise. However, in order to increase the positive impact of ecotourism, it is necessary to involve the inhabitants of the region in the development and planning of ecotourism projects in the early stages. In order to be fully involved in the planning process, they need to be aware of the effects of ecotourism and support ecotourism development. In addition, local people need to have a basic awareness of the potential benefits of tourism (Walker, 1996:944). At this point, ecotourism awareness can be seen as a key point. Ecotourism awareness consists of useful and relevant information about tourism and conservation that contributes to increasing the capacity of communities to understand and evaluate the potentials of sustainable tourism (Bini et al., 2000:6).

Local community support is essential for sustainable ecotourism programs and management of protected areas. Holmes (2013) stated that there is a direct threat to protected areas when local people do not cooperate with protected area authorities or participate in conservation initiatives such as ecotourism. For this reason, it is another important issue to reveal the residents' ecotourism perception in the context of the effective use of the residents' support for the protection of biodiversity and the management of ecotourism in terms of designing appropriate strategies (Abeli, 2017: 163). Rono et al. (2016) evaluated the local people's attitudes and perceptions towards ecotourism in their research. As

a result of their research, it has been seen that local communities have a positive view of ecotourism activities in the region and have a positive perception towards ecotourism development. In addition, Rono et al. (2016) stated that the success of ecotourism depends on the community members' education and awareness levels.

In this context, it is seen that the people' ecotourism awareness and ecotourism perception, who living in the region, are important in making decisions and establishing consensus, from the development and implementation of projects in ecotourism management, to the marketing of the region in terms of ecotourism and the development of sustainable strategies to gain competitive advantage. Accordingly, the following hypotheses (H₁, H₂, H₃) have been developed.

"H₁: There is a positive significant relationship between the awareness regarding the meaning of ecotourism and the awareness regarding the applicable acotourism activities"

"H₂: There is a positive significant relationship between the awareness regarding the meaning of ecotourism and the ecotourism perception"

"H₃: There is a positive significant relationship between the awareness regarding the applicable acotourism activities and ecotourism perception"

Data Collection

The main purpose of the research is to examine the relationship between people's ecotourism awareness and their ecotourism perception, who live in Şırnak province. In this context, using the quantitative research method, data were collected with a questionnaire between April 10 and May 30, 2021. Data were collected through whatsapp, facebook, email, and face-to-face interviews. In the research, which is a scanning model, convenience sampling method was used. Data were analyzed using a statistical package program.

Ethics committee approval was obtained for the research from the Ethics Committee of Sirnak University on 09.04.2021 (No:2021/32)

Measures, Population, And Sample

Questionnaire, one of the quantitative data collection tools, was used as a data collection tool in the research. The questionnaire consists of three main parts. In the first part, there are questions about the participants' demographic characteristics, in the second part there are the ecotourism awareness scales (the awareness scale regarding meaning of ecotourism and the awareness scale regarding applicable ecotourism activities), and in the third part there is the ecotourism perception scale.

Two scales were used to measure the participants' ecotourism awareness: the awareness scale regarding meaning of ecotourism (14 items) and the awareness scale regarding applicable ecotourism activities (21 items). These scales were created by Kavak (2015) as multivariate-answer questions, using the studies of Bayat (2010), Nayir (2009) and Polat (2006). Within the scope of this research, these questions were used by adapting the Likert Scale. The ecotourism perception scale (16 items – Likert scale) used in the research was developed by Kavak (2015).

The population of the research consists of the local people and people residing in Şırnak province for at least 5 years over the age of 18. The research sample is people living in Şırnak province (421 participants) who participated in the research representing the universe. Kline (1994) stated that the sample size should be 10 times the number of items in the scale. Bryman and Cramer (2001) also stated that the sample size should be 5 or 10 times the number of items in the scale (Çokluk et al., 2012: 206). On the other hand, Krejcie and Morgan (1970) calculated the sample size as 384 people at the 95% confidence level, with a sampling error of 5%, when the variance is maximum, and Gay (1996) and Sekaran (2003) stated that this sample size is ideal for representing the universe (Ural & Kılıç, 2006: 48). In this context, 421 questionnaires collected from the participants for the research are sufficient to represent the universe.

Data Analysis

Factor analysis, correlation and regression analysis were performed on the data obtained in accordance with the purpose of the research. Before determining the relationship between ecotourism awareness and ecotourism perception, reliability analysis was performed. Cronbach's Alpha value was calculated for the reliability of the scales and the item-whole correlation method was used. It was paid an attention not to include items with an item-total correlation of less than 0.20 (Büyüköztürk, 2018: 183).

Explanatory factor analysis was performed. It was controlled sample adequacy using Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test before explanatory factor analysis (Alpar, 2017:267) and the compliance of the data with the multivariate normal distribution using Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Çokluk et al., 2010:208). In the factor analysis, it was paid an attention to ensure that the factor loads of the items were ,40 and above (Büyüköztürk, 2018: 134) and that the difference was ,100 and above when there was an overlapping items (Bayram, 2009: 205). In naming the factors, it was also paid an attention the relevant literature and variables with large weights under a single factor (Kalaycı, 2014: 330).

After determining that the above-mentioned prerequisites were provided for the research, correlation analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between ecotourism awareness and ecotourism perception variables. It is defined a correlation coefficient below ,30 as a low relation and a correlation coefficient between ,30 and ,70 as a mideum relation and a correlation coefficient above ,70 as a high relation (Büyüköztürk, 2018:31-32). In addition, simple linear regression analysis was performed to find connections by explaining the relationship between dependent and independent variables with mathematical models (Alpar, 2017: 395).

Findings

The distribution of the participants' demographic characteristics is given in Table 1. The participants' demographic characteristics consist of gender, marital status, age, income status education status, and peffession status.

Table 1. Findings on the participants' demographic characteristics

	Freq.	Percent (%)		Freq.	Percent (%)
Gender			Marital Status		
Female	213	50,6	Married	164	39,0
Male	208	49,4	Unmarried	257	61,0
Total	421	100	Total	421	100
Education Status			Income Status		
Primary and secondary school	41	9,7	0 - below minimum wage	152	36,1
High school	82	19,5	Between minimum wage and 3500 TL	39	9,3
Two year degree	78	18,5	Between 3501 TL and 4500 TL	62	14,7
Undergraduate	153	36,3	Between 4501 TL and 5000 TL	38	9,0
Graduate	67	15,9	5001 TL and above	130	30,9
Total	421	100	Total	421	100
Age			Profession Status		
Between the ages of 18 and 24	132	31,4	Not working	171	40,6
Between the ages of 25 and 34	147	34,9	Private sector employee	63	15,0
Between the ages of 35 and 44	79	18,8	Public sector employee	147	34,9
45 ages and over	63	15,0	Employer and retired	40	9,5
Total	421	100	Total	421	100

Findings on reliability and factor analyzes

Cronbach's Alpha value was calculated as ,899 for the awareness scale regarding meaning of ecotourism. In the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test, it was determined KMO sampling adequacy value as ,904. This value shows that the sample size is significantly sufficient for factor analysis (Çokluk et al., 2012:207). Bartlett's sphericity test value of the awareness scale regarding meaning of ecotourism is 4358,494; This value is significant at the 0,0001 level. The significance of chi-square values of Bartlett's test of sphericity at 0,0001 indicates that the data came from multivariate normal distribution. In this case, multivariate statistical techniques can be applied to the data (Çokluk et al., 2010: 208). The factor analysis results of the awareness scale regarding meaning of ecotourism are in Table 2.

Table 2. Factor analysis results of the awareness scale regarding meaning of ecotourism

	Communalities	Factor load	Eigenvalues	Total variance explained	Mean	Chronbach Alpha
Positivity towards the meaning of ecotourism			6,760	48,286	4,2454	,947
Ecotourism is a tourism type that describes nature	,817	,900				
Ecotourism is a tourism type that includes activities related to nature	,800	,891				
Ecotourism is a tourism type that includes nature-related to tours	,773	,874				
Ecotourism is a tourism type that describes nature practically	,705	,837				
Ecotourism is environmentally friendly tourism type	,704	,837				
Ecotourism is t a tourism type that provides to get to know different cultures.	,665	,801				
Ecotourism is a tourism type that protects the environment	,653	,800				
Ecotourism is a tourism type that contributes to the well-being of residents	,620	,776				
Ecotourism is a tourism type that provides to get to know different traditions	,610	,770				
Ecotourism is a tourism type where sportive activities are carried out.	,547	,660				
Negativity towards the meaning of ecotourism			2,556	18,255	3,1977	,777
Ecotourism is a type of tourism that offers uncomfortable opportunities.	,750	,866				
Ecotourism is an expensive tourism type	,628	,791				
Ecotourism is a type of tourism that offers fashionable travel	,589	,727				
Ecotourism is a type of tourism that offers simple and plain opportunities	,465	,672				

Varimax Rotation Principal Component Analysis - Explained total variance: 66,541% KMO Sampling Adequacy: ,904 - Bartlett's Sphericity Test: 4358,494 p.d .: 91 p <0,001 Overall Average: 3,9460- Cronbach's Alpha: ,899

Response categories: 1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) No idea, (4) Agree, (5) Strongly agree

It can be said that the results of the factor analysis in Table 2 are in accordance with the pre-acceptance stated. 14 items explaining the awareness regarding the meaning of ecotourism come together with 2 factors. In addition, it has been found that it contributes 66,541% to the total variance.

Cronbach's Alpha value was calculated as ,979 for the awareness scale regarding applicable ecotourism activities. In the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test, determining the sample adequacy value as ,964 shows that the sample size is significantly sufficient for factor analysis. The Bartlett sphericity test

value of the awareness scale regarding applicable ecotourism activities is 10957,293 and this value is significant at the level of 0,0001, indicating that the data show multivariate normal distribution, so multivariate statistical techniques can be applied to the data (Çokluk et al., 2010: 208). The factor analysis results of the awareness scale regarding applicable ecotourism activities are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Factor analysis results of the awareness scale regarding applicable ecotourism activities

	Communalities	Factor loadings	Eigenvalues	Total variance explained	Mean	Cronbach's Alpha
Applicable ecotourism activities			14,877	70,844	3,9088	,979
Ecotourism activities for historical sites	,836	,914				
Ecotourism activities for traditions & customs	,820	,905				
Ecotourism activities for festivals	,807	,898				
Ecotourism activities for cultural walks	,799	,894				
Ecotourism activities for nature exploration	,785	,886				
Ecotourism activities for botanical tourism	,781	,884				
Ecotourism activities for nature photography	,765	,875				
Ecotourism activities for wildlife watching	,750	,866				
Ecotourism activities for trekking	,748	,865				
Ecotourism activities to monitor geomorphological formations	,741	,861				
Ecotourism activities for equestrian trekking	,735	,857				
Ecotourism activities for agriculture & farm tourism	,718	,847				
Ecotourism activities for camping / caravan tourism	,704	,839				
Ecotourism activities for religion tourism	,662	,814				
Ecotourism activities for spa / hot spring tourism	,659	,812				
Ecotourism activities to monitor extraordinary events	,645	,803				
Ecotourism activities for mountain / rock climbing	,628	,793				
Ecotourism activities for bicycle tourism	,615	,784				
Ecotourism activities for climate comfort tourism (Climatism)	,592	,769				
Ecotourism activities for road tourism	,577	,760				
Ecotourism activities for balloon tourism	,509	,714				

Principal Component Analysis (Only one component was extracted. the solution cannot be rotated) - Explained total variance: 70,844% KMO Sampling Adequacy: ,964 - Bartlett's Sphericity Test: 10957,293 p.d .: 210 p <0,001 Overall Average:3,9088- Cronbach's Alpha: ,979

Response categories: 1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) No idea, (4) Agree, (5) Strongly agree

When Table 3 is examined, the results of the factor analysis of the awareness scale regarding applicable ecotourism activities are in accordance with the stated pre-acceptance. 21 items explaining the awareness regarding applicable ecotourism activities are gathered under one factor, and it contributes 70,844% to the total variance.

Cronbach's Alpha value was calculated as ,953 for the ecotourism perception scale. In the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test, determining the sample adequacy value as ,939 shows that the sample size is significantly sufficient for factor analysis. The Bartlett sphericity test value of the ecotourism

perception scale is 4785,443 and this value is significant at the level of 0,0001, indicating that the data show multivariate normal distribution, so multivariate statistical techniques can be applied to the data (Çokluk et al., 2010: 208). The factor analysis results of the ecotourism perception scale are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Factor analyze results regarding the ecotourism perception scale

	Communalities	Factor load	Eigen values	Variance explained	Mean	Chronbach Alpha
Socio-cultural contribution of ecotourism			4,716	31,441	4,3352	,930
Ecotourism offers a vacation alone with nature	,750	,776				
Ecotourism provides the development of other commercial and industrial activities in the region	,668	,740				
Ecotourism provides Şırnak to open up to the outside	,715	,730				
Ecotourism provides relief from stress	,639	,671				
Ecotourism brings people closer together	,678	,666				
Ecotourism provides people to take pride in their national and cultural values.	,702	,641				
Ecotourism acts as a bridge in the recognition of different cultures.	,657	,634				
Ecotourism contributes to the promotion of the region.	,743	,632				
Ecotourism accelerates the urbanization of rural areas.	,468	,539				
Economic contribution of ecotourism			3,172	21,150	4,4101	,873
Ecotourism creates new job opportunities for residents in Şırnak	,814	,820				
The development of ecotourism in Şırnak improves the economic situation of the region	,796	,818				
Thanks to ecotourism, it increases the residents' purchasing power in Şırnak	,749	,741				
Environmental contribution of ecotourism			2,847	18,982	4,1140	,862
Ecotourism supports the protection of nature	,821	,836				
Ecotourism provides the public to keep the environment even cleaner	,805	,814				
Ecotourism helps to preserve the historical and cultural texture	,729	,674				
Varimax Rotation Principal Component Analyze - Explained total variance: 71,573 %. KMO Sampling Adequacy: ,939 - Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: 4785,443 s.d .: 105 p <0,001; Overall Average: 4,3059 - Cronbach's Alpha: ,949						
Response categories: 1) Strongly negative, (2) Negative, (3) No idea, (4) Positive, (5) Strongly positive						

The item "*ecotourism advances the people's life quality*" was loaded under two factors and it was deemed appropriate to exclude it from the analysis since this difference (,569 - ,565) was not greater than ,100 (Bayram, 2009: 205). Thus, the Cronbach's Alpha value of the ecotourism perception scale was calculated as ,949.

It can be said that the results of the factor analysis of the ecotourism perception scale in Table 4 are in accordance with the pre-acceptance stated. 15 items of 16 items explaining the ecotourism perception come together with 3 factors. In addition, it was determined that the explained total variance is 71,573%.

Findings on correlation and regression analysis

The results of the correlation analysis performed to determine the level and direction of the relationship between the two variables (Ural & Kılıç, 2006:247) and the results of the regression analysis to explain the mathematical model of the relationship between the independent variables assumed to have an effect on the dependent variable are respectively given in Table 5 and Table 6.

Table 5. Correlation analysis

	Mean	Std. deviation	1	2	3	4	5	6
Positivity towards meaning of ecotourism	4,2454	,72841	1					
Negativity towards meaning of ecotourism	3,1977	,89056	,265**	1				
Applicable ecotourism activities	3,9088	1,11534	,258**	,034	1			
Socio-cultural contribution of ecotourism	4,3352	,72656	,792**	,243**	,243**	1		
Economic contribution of ecotourism	4,4101	,86107	,716**	,160**	,267**	,748**	1	
Environmental contribution of ecotourism	4,1140	,96866	,790**	,225**	,147**	,744**	,598**	1
** . Correlation is significant at the 0,01 level (2-tailed).								
The awareness regarding meaning of ecotourism	3,9460	,63689	1					
The awareness regarding applicable acotourism activities	3,9088	1,11534	,224**	1				
The ecotourism perception	4,3059	,73147	,791**	,246**	1			
** . Correlation is significant at the 0,01 level (2-tailed).								

When the relationship between the dimensions is examined in Table 5, there are low levels of positive linear relationships between positivity towards meaning of ecotourism with negativity towards meaning of ecotourism ($r = ,265^{**}$, $p = ,000 < 0,01$). It is seen that there are low levels of positive linear relationship between positivity towards meaning of ecotourism with applicable ecotourism activities ($r = ,258^{**}$, $p = ,000 < 0,01$). In addition, it is observed that there is a high-level of positive linear relationship between positivity towards meaning of ecotourism with socio-cultural contribution of ecotourism ($r = ,792^{**}$, $p = ,000 < 0,01$), with economic contribution of ecotourism ($r = ,716^{**}$, $p = ,000 < 0,01$), with environmental contribution of ecotourism ($r = ,790^{**}$, $p = ,000 < 0,01$),

There are low levels of positive linear relationships between negativity towards meaning of ecotourism with socio-cultural contribution of ecotourism ($r = ,243^{**}$, $p = ,000 < 0,01$), with economic contribution of ecotourism ($r = ,160^{**}$, $p = ,001 < 0,01$), with environmental contribution of ecotourism ($r = ,225^{**}$, $p = ,000 < 0,01$). However, it was not found a significant relationship between negativity towards meaning of ecotourism with applicable ecotourism activities ($r = ,034$, $p = ,485 > 0,01$).

There are low levels of positive linear relationships between applicable ecotourism activities with socio-cultural contribution of ecotourism ($r = ,243^{**}$, $p = ,000 < 0,01$), with economic contribution of ecotourism ($r = ,267^{**}$, $p = ,000 < 0,01$), with environmental contribution of ecotourism ($r = ,147^{**}$, $p = ,003 < 0,01$).

There are high levels of positive linear relationships between socio-cultural contribution of ecotourism with economic contribution of ecotourism ($r = ,748^{**}$, $p = ,000 < 0,01$), with environmental contribution of ecotourism ($r = ,744^{**}$, $p = ,000 < 0,01$). In addition, it is observed that there is a midium-level of positive linear relationship between economic contribution of ecotourism with environmental contribution of ecotourism ($r = ,598^{**}$, $p = ,000 < 0,01$).

According to the correlation analysis of the sum of scales, it was determined that there is a low-level of positive linear relationship between the awareness regarding meaning of ecotourism with the awareness regarding applicable acotourism activities ($r = ,224^{**}$, $p = ,000 < 0,01$). There is a high-level of positive linear relationship between the awareness regarding meaning of ecotourism with the ecotourism perception ($r = ,791^{**}$, $p = ,000 < 0,01$). Also there is a low level of positive linear relationship between the awareness regarding applicable ecotourism activities with ecotourism perception ($r = ,246^{**}$, $p = ,000 < 0,01$). In this case, according to the results of the correlation analysis, H_1 , H_2 , H_3 are accepted.

Table 6. Multiple regression analysis

The dependent variable	Model (Constant) and Independent Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	ANOVA		R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Tolerance	V.I.F.
		Beta	Std. Error				F	Sig.					
		Beta	Std. Error	Beta									
Socio-cultural contribution of ecotourism	(Constant)	,930	,136		6,827	,000							
	1. Positivity towards meaning of ecotourism	,780	,031	,782	25,267	,000	352,431	,000	,792	,628	,626	,930	1,076
	2. Negativity towards meaning of ecotourism	,029	,025	,036	1,160	,247						,930	1,076
Economic contribution of ecotourism	(Constant)	,873	,185		4,731	,000							
	1. Positivity towards meaning of ecotourism	,856	,042	,724	20,473	,000	220,610	,000	,717	,514	,511	,930	1,076
	2. Negativity towards meaning of ecotourism	-,036	,034	-,032	-,898	,369						,930	1,076
Environmental contribution of ecotourism	(Constant)	-,379	,182		-2,079	,038							
	1. Positivity towards meaning of ecotourism	1,044	,041	,785	25,259	,000	347,227	,000	,790	,624	,622	,930	1,076
	2. Negativity towards meaning of ecotourism	,018	,034	,017	,546	,585						,930	1,076
Applicable ecotourism activities	(Constant)	2,316	,331		7,000	,000							
	1. Positivity towards meaning of ecotourism	,410	,075	,268	5,465	,000	15,195	,000	,260	,068	,063	,930	1,076
	2. Negativity towards meaning of ecotourism	-,046	,061	-,037	-,752	,453						,930	1,076
Applicable ecotourism activities	(Constant)	2,124	,322		6,599	,000							
	1.Socio-cultural contribution of ecotourism	,249	,131	,162	1,904	,058						,304	3,287
	2.Economic contribution of ecotourism	,262	,092	,202	2,841	,005	11,969	,000	,282	,079	,073	,437	2,287
	3. Environmental contribution of ecotourism	-,109	,081	-,095	-1,340	,181						,443	2,259

Table 6 shows the parameter values obtained from the predicted result of the model and their t values. T statistic is used to test whether the variables are significant separately. The F statistic is used to test the significance of the model as a whole (Kalaycı, 2014). As a result of the multiple regression analysis, it was found that the positivity towards meaning of ecotourism according to the t-statistic was statistically significant on the socio-cultural contribution of ecotourism (p=.000), the economic contribution of ecotourism (p=.000) and the environmental contribution of ecotourism (p=.000). According to the F statistic (F=352,431, p=.000), the model was found to be significant as a whole. As the number of independent variables in the model increases, the R² value increases. Therefore, it is preferred to make comments by looking at the Adjusted R² value in multiple regression analysis (Kalaycı, 2014; Hoş, 2020: 311; Kanıt and Baykan, 2004: 362). From this point of view, it can be said

that 62.6% of the variability in the perceptions of the socio-cultural contribution of ecotourism, 51.1% of the variability in the perceptions of the economic contribution of ecotourism and 62.2% of the variability in the environmental contribution of ecotourism are explained by the positivity towards meaning of ecotourism. However, according to the t-statistic, the effect of negativity towards meaning of ecotourism on the socio-cultural contribution of ecotourism ($p=.247$), the economic contribution of ecotourism ($p=.369$) and the environmental contribution of ecotourism ($p=.585$) was not found to be statistically significant.

As a result of the multiple regression analysis performed in the same table, according to the t-statistic, it was found that the effect of positivity towards meaning of ecotourism on applicable ecotourism activities ($p=.000$) was statistically significant. According to the F statistic ($F=15.195$, $p=.000$), the model was found to be significant as a whole. Therefore, it can be said that 6.3% of the variability in the participants' perceptions regarding the applicable ecotourism activities is explained by the positivity towards meaning of ecotourism. However, according to the t-statistic, it was found that the effect of negativity towards meaning of ecotourism on the applicable ecotourism activities ($p=.453$) was not statistically significant. In addition, the effect of economic contribution of ecotourism ($p=.005$) on applicable ecotourism activities was found to be statistically significant ($F=11.969$, $p=.000$). In this case, it can be said that 7.3% of the variability in the participants' perceptions regarding applicable ecotourism activities is explained by the economic contribution of ecotourism. On the other hand, according to the t statistic, it was found that the socio-cultural contribution of ecotourism ($p=.058$) and the environmental contribution of ecotourism ($p=.181$) on the applicable ecotourism activities were not statistically significant. In Table 6, tolerance values of $>.10$ and VIF values of <10 indicate that there is no multicollinearity.

Conclusions

As a result of the research, it was determined that there is a high level of positive ($r=.791^{**}$, $p=.000 <0.01$) significant relationship between awareness regarding meaning of ecotourism and ecotourism perception. As a result of the factor analysis of the ecotourism perception scale, it was seen that ecotourism creates a three-dimensional structure: socio-cultural contribution, economic contribution and environmental contribution. When the averages of the dimensions are analyzed (average of the socio-cultural contribution dimension of ecotourism=4.3352, average of the economic contribution dimension of ecotourism=4.4101 and the average of the environmental contribution dimension of ecotourism=4.1140), it is seen that the people living in Şırnak perceive the positive effects of ecotourism at a high level. Therefore, this situation shows that the people living in Şırnak believe that ecotourism has a positive and constructive effect on the socio-cultural, economic and environmental contribution. In Kavak's (2015) research, the fact that local people perceive the positive effects of ecotourism at a high level according to the total average score obtained from the scale and reveal a 3-dimensional structure consisting of 16 variables explaining the positive effects of ecotourism is in line with the results of this research.

In addition, it has been determined that there is a low level of positive ($r=.246^{**}$, $p=.000 <0.01$) significant relationship between awareness regarding applicable ecotourism activities and ecotourism perception. A one-dimensional structure has emerged in the awareness scale regarding applicable ecotourism activities. When the average score of the applicable ecotourism activities dimension is examined (mean=3.9088), it can be said that the people's awareness regarding applicable ecotourism activities is at a high level. This reveals the awareness of Şırnak in terms of ecotourism potential and that it is a center of attraction in terms of ecotourism. This is an important point in realizing ecotourism activities in Şırnak and ensuring the sustainability of these activities.

Another result of the study was that there was a low level of positive ($r=.224^{**}$, $p = .000 <0.01$) significant relationship between the dimensions of awareness regarding meaning of ecotourism and the dimension of awareness regarding applicable ecotourism activities. As a result of the factor analysis of the awareness scale regarding the meaning of ecotourism, a two-dimensional structure emerged as

positivity towards the meaning of ecotourism and negativity towards the meaning of ecotourism. When the average scores related to these dimensions were examined, it was seen that the people's positive perceptions regarding the meaning of ecotourism (mean=4.2454) were higher than their negative perceptions (mean=3.1977). In this case, it can be said that the people living in Şırnak have awareness regarding meaning of ecotourism and it is more positive. This shows that the definitions given on the scale regarding meaning of ecotourism are related to the essence of the concept of ecotourism.

In general, residents of Şırnak have a high level of awareness regarding meaning of ecotourism and applicable ecotourism activities. In terms of theoretical contributions, this research carried out that these awarenesses strongly affect residents' positive ecotourism perceptions. Therefore, the residents' awareness level also ensures that their perceptions about the socio-cultural, economic and environmental contributions of ecotourism are positive. The residents' awareness that applicable ecotourism activities can be carried out in Şırnak also shows that different types of ecotourism activities can be carried out in this province.

The data obtained in the study are limited to the local people living in Şırnak province and people who have resided for at least 5 years. In this context, it may be recommended to conduct research on people living in different regions and cities in future studies. In this way, the comparison of the results obtained from the studies with the similar research results in the literature will be able to make a theoretical contribution to the relevant literature. In addition, research variables are limited by the dimensions of reliability and validity of the applied measurement tools.

Recommendations

Organizations related to tourism in general and ecotourism in particular should carry out activities on public information and awareness in order to ensure the applicability and sustainability of ecotourism in the region and to carry out planned ecotourism activities. Because, with the realization of planned ecotourism activities, it may be possible to protect biological diversity and other natural and cultural resources. In addition, positive socio-cultural, economic and environmental impacts on local people can only be achieved through planned ecotourism activities.

It is also important to support ecotourism activities in order not to destroy the cultural heritage settlements with original texture, which have existed for centuries, in rural settlements and to ensure the sustainability. In order to provide this support from the local people, training seminars and courses on the benefits of ecotourism, which is based on nature or environmental protection, should be given by the relevant organizations, and they should be provided with the opportunity to participate in free ecotourism activities (trips, etc.). Thus, it can be ensured that local people have more control over ecotourism by creating ecotourism awareness.

In order to eliminate the economic, socio-cultural and environmental imbalances between regions, especially in rural settlements, ecotourism activities should be determined, ecotourism activities should be diversified, and promotion and information regarding the ecotourism potential of the region should be made by relevant organizations at national and international level. In addition, the people living in the destination should be included in the planning of activities related to ecotourism, in making and implementing important ecotourism-related decisions that will contribute to the development of the region.

Studies in which research variables have been studied separately before have been encountered in the literature, but no domestic and foreign research has been found in which they have been studied together. In order to fill this gap, researchers are recommended to investigate the relationship between research variables in different cultures and with larger sample groups in larger ecotourism destinations. Thus, comparing the findings obtained in the studies with the previous findings will contribute to making healthier comparisons.

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