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## Effects of Exceeding Social Carrying Capacity on Residents' Support for Tourism: The Mediating Role of Community Participation and Quality of Life\*

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### Abstract

This study examines the effects of over tourism by investigating how exceeding social carrying capacity (SCC) in destinations influences support for tourism. Furthermore, this study examines the mediating role of the quality of life (QL) and community participation in this effect. First, a measurement scale for excessing SCC construct is developed. Afterwards, proposed relationships are tested utilizing a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach using data collected from local residents living in a destination. Findings suggest that exceeding perceived SCC reduces support for tourism. Furthermore, QoL and community participation mediate the impact of SCC on residents' support. This study makes a unique contribution to the literature by revealing the negative impact of exceeding SCC on support for tourism and the mediating roles played by the quality of life (QoL) and community participation in this relationship.

**Keywords:** Social Carrying Capacity, Quality Life, Community Participation, Support Development Tourism.

### Sosyal Taşıma Kapasitesinin Aşılmasının Yerleşiklerin Turizme Desteği Üzerindeki Etkileri: Toplum Katılımı ve Yaşam Kalitesinin Aracı Rolü

### Öz

Bu araştırma, destinasyonlarda sosyal taşıma kapasitesinin aşılmasının turizme verilen desteği nasıl etkilediğini araştırarak aşırı turizmin etkilerini incelemektedir. Ayrıca mevcut etkide yaşam kalitesi ve toplumsal katılımın aracılık rolü de ele alınmıştır. İlk olarak sosyal taşıma kapasitesinin aşımı için bir ölçek tasarlanmıştır. Daha sonra önerilen ilişkiler bağlamında destinasyonda yaşayan yerel halktan toplanan veriler yapısal eşitlik modellemesi kullanılarak test edilmiştir. Araştırma sonuçları algılanan sosyal taşıma kapasitesinin aşılmasının turizme olan desteği azalttığını göstermektedir. Ek olarak yaşam kalitesi ve toplumsal katılım, sosyal taşıma kapasitesinin yerel halkın turizme desteğine aracılık etmektedir. Bu araştırma, sosyal taşıma kapasitesinin aşılmasının turizme verilen destek üzerindeki olumsuz etkisini ve bu ilişkide yaşam kalitesi ve toplum katılımının oynadığı aracı rolleri ortaya koyarak literatürü özgün bir katkı sağlamıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sosyal Taşıma Kapasitesi, Kaliteli Yaşam, Toplumsal Katılım, Destek Geliştirme Turizm.

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## INTRODUCTION

When developing tourism in a certain destination, the attitudes of local people towards tourism are vitally important (Easterling, 2004). A high level of QL and satisfaction of local people contribute to the sustainability of tourism (Ndivo & Cantoni, 2016). For this reason, supporting of local people for the tourism development positively affects the development of tourism in that destination because the attitudes and perception of local people in a tourism destination are one of the major factors affecting the development and sustainability of tourism in that touristic region (Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Sinclair, 2017). In recent years, the antecedent and results of SDT are among the issues that have increased their importance in the relevant literature (Moghavvemi et al., 2017; Sinclair, 2017; Kang & Lee, 2018). Antecedent of SDT include support of local people (Hanafiah, et al., 2013), CP (Lee, 2013), socio-cultural, economic and environmental effects (Stylidis et al., 2014), the perspective and personality of local people to visitors (Moghavvemi et al., 2017). However, it is suggested that the negative effect of local people on tourism will negatively change the support for tourism (Kang & Lee 2018). Despite these research efforts, there are still research gaps in the literature.

The most striking of these gaps is the fact that there has not been any research investigating SCC as an antecedent and how local people's SDT will affect the development of tourism in a certain destination. This is an indication that there are missing aspects of the subject in the literature. In this context, the factors which affect the support of local people in developing tourism were investigated to contribute to the relevant literature. SCC, QL and CP were evaluated among these factors.

Starting from this point, two research questions were addressed in the research. The first is to demonstrate how SCC overrun in developing destinations affects local people's support for tourism. The second is whether QL and CP can play a mediating role in this effect.

When the relevant literature is reviewed, research on SCC is found. Kılıç & Seçilmiş (2018) found that the SCC had not been overrun and that local people in the area had a positive perception towards tourism. In contrast, Gonson (2018), however, has treated SCC as the level of tolerance of tourists towards other tourists. However, the support of the SCC overrun in the tourism development has not been treated as a antecedent affecting QL and CP. Besides, Simon, Narangajavana, & Palacios, (2004) proposed that different dimensions of carrying capacity be measured in connection with different disciplines. Starting from this, it is thought that this research will significantly contribute to the relevant literature.

The concept of CP plays a key role in this research, which examines the support of local people living in destinations to tourism. The role of CP in the sustainable development of tourism has been examined for years in academic research. (Prentice, 1993; Brohman, 1996; Archabald & Naughton-Treves, 2001; Wang et al., 2010) because CP has a key role in tourism planning (Simmons, 1994; Wang et al., 2010; Lin & Simmons, 2017). In this context, the SCC overrun will reduce the levels of CP of local people in tourism. The levels of SDT will also change as the levels of CP of local people change. Treating CP as an intermediary variable in this relationship will give the relevant literature a different perspective.

When tourism develops, especially in developing countries, the accumulation of people in one region can damage the environment and the host community due to insufficient infrastructure systems. Thus, the QL of the local people decreases and their attitudes towards tourism also change negatively (Kim, 2002, p. 5-6). This has been evident recently, especially in some destinations such as Barcelona, Venice and Santorini. For this reason, it is possible to suggest that the QL of people is among the pioneering determinants in their SDT. In this respect, the use of the concept of QL among the leading variables of the research increases the authenticity and value of this research. In the planning and application of research, the relationships between the variables need to be explained within the scope of relevant theories.

The main reason for this is that theories reveal relationships between variables (Kerlinger, 1973, p. 9). According to Pollard & Mitchell, (1972), the role of SET in SDT explains the judgment of considering the costs and rewards in the exchange between two parties. Among the theories examining the perspective of the local people towards tourism, when the relevant literature is examined, SET is found to best reflect the purposes of this research (Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012; Prayag et al., 2013; Nunkoo, 2016; Kang & Lee, 2018; Shakeela & Weaver, 2018) and Butler's destination life cycle theory (Cole, 2012; Tang, Zhong & Ng, 2017) and Doxey Irridex Model (Dietrich & Garcia-Buades, 2009; Kovacs & Launch, 2017; Ma, Dai & Fan, 2020). The theoretical background of the research was established within the scope of these theories.

Considering the fact that exceeding SCC limits can have significant impacts on locals QoL and their participation in tourism, it is critical to investigate whether perception of QoL and community participation will magnify or mitigate the negative effects of exceeding SCC limits due to over-tourism on residents support for tourism. Thus, this study aims

to examine how exceeding social carrying capacity (SCC) can affect support for tourism and investigates the mediating role of the quality of life (QL) and community participation in this effect. Findings of this study will contribute to the literature by demonstrating how exceeding SCC affects support for tourism and whether QoL perceptions and community participation can mediate the relationship between SCC and support for tourism.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

### Social Carrying Capacity

SET is defined as the tolerance degree of the hosting people in a destination being overrun due to the presence and behaviour of tourists in that tourism destination (O'Reilly, 1986, p. 256). SCC includes overcrowding, noise and cultural corruption. These elements are widely recognized in the relevant literature as indicators of SCC overrun (O'Reilly, 1986; Saveriades, 2000; Tran et al., 2007; Cuervorst, 2010; Jurado, Damian & Fernandez-Morales, 2013; Chen & Teng, 2016; Coccossis & Mexa 2017; Muler, Coromina & Gali 2018).

Mathieson and Wall (1982) define carrying capacity as a decrease in the level of acceptance of the local people for tourists in their region. SCC is defined as the highest number of tourists the local community can bear, which will not give any harm to the benefits of the host community. (Turan et al., 2007, p.81). Fennell, (2002, p. 48) defines SCC as the level at which local people feel disturbed by the presence of tourists. Considering all these, it is possible to claim that SCC is an important factor in tourism development. When tourism develops in a region, the noise and crowds in that destination make the life of the hosting people uncomfortable, and thus the perceptions of the host people change negatively. At this point, the SCC is overrun. Besides, as a result of interaction with different cultures, the host people begin to lose their cultural values. This reveals the impact of SCC on the development of tourism.

### Quality of Life

QL is a concept associated with total well-being closely related to an individual's both psychological and physical elements. QL factors are both affected by the consequences of problems in an individual's life and also affect their problems. (Lamb, 1996, p. 363). Besides, QL is defined as a feeling of life satisfaction, depending on all the factors faced by individuals. From a broader perspective, it is also defined that individuals are not threatened by other people in carrying out their vital activities and that all of their basic needs are met

(Meeberg, 1993, p. 37). At this point, the fact that the negative effects of tourism threaten the QL of the hosting people coincides with the QL investigated within the scope of this research. The elements emerging with the tourism development in any region directly affect the QL of the hosting people in that region (Kim, Tame & Sirgy, 2013; Stylidis et al., 2014). Such impact varies from community to community. Therefore, depending on the positive and negative impacts resulting from the tourism development in a destination, the extent to which the QL of the local community is affected is vitally important to consider (Nkemngu, 2015, p.1).

The main reason for the importance given to tourism development in destinations is to maximise the regional benefits and decrease the negative effects of it. If tourism creates positive effects in that region, the QL of the people will increase and their tourism support will also increase accordingly. However, negative effects will turn the local people's view regarding tourism into negative. Local's support is crucial for the continued tourism development in the region. With this context, the impact of tourism on the QL of the local people should be considered (Türker, Selçuk & Özyıldırım, 2016, p. 2). The QL of the local people should be considered in all activities for the tourism development in the region.

### Community Participation

CP, as the power of community, is defined as a way used to allow relevant stakeholders to share resources and decision making on development initiatives affecting stakeholders (WB, 1994). This means that the community has a say in all kinds of goals, plans and management factors (Arnstein, 1969, p. 216-217). One of the groups that feel the effects of tourism the most is the local people in destinations. Therefore, the wishes and expectations of local people should be the priority in tourism planning (Timothy, 1999) because the community is already a part of tourism movements as a consequence of the nature of tourism, and hosting people are directly or indirectly involved in tourism movements (Mowforth & Munt, 2009; Murphy, 1985). For this reason, the participation of the community is necessary for tourism development. CP is considered a touchstone in developing sustainable tourism (Lin and Simmons, 2017, p. 315). At the same time, tourism is among the factors increasing community participation in protecting the local natural and cultural heritage. As tourism preserves the values of the region, local people will both participate in the development of tourism as a community and support the development of tourism (Rahmawati et al., 2014, p. 142).

Tourism planners should use the concept of CP more effectively and efficiently when planning tourism.

Two main reasons could be claimed for this. The first is that the effects of tourism are heavily experienced on local people living in the destination. The second reason is the need for local people to create a welcoming environment for incoming tourists (Simmons, 1994, p. 1). The development and sustainability of tourism in the destination may be at risk if the local community is not willing to welcome tourists. Although CP is such an important and necessary concept in the planning of tourism, it does not receive sufficient attention from tourism planners. In general, the phenomenon of CP remains a theoretical concept rather than a practical one (Tosun, 2002). For these reasons, CP has been treated as variable and various recommendations have been made for better destination management.

### Support for the Tourism Development

In the destinations where tourism is developing, three parties are actively involved in planning the areas that will be used for tourism. These parties are the local people of the region, entrepreneurs and local governments. The development of tourism in the destination not only affects tourists and workers in tourism but also affects the people of the region. However, the local people are not actively involved in tourism planning and tourism creation (Bolzoni, 2013, p. 20). When considering the cultural and social interaction of tourism, it is important to get public support.

The achievement of any project aiming at developing tourism is closely related to the cooperation and willingness of hosting people. Getting the support of the local community is one of the issues to focus on for businesses and politicians (Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012). Implementation of tourism plans is very difficult without the support of local people. As suggested by Hanafiah, et al., (2013, p. 799), receiving the local people's support for sustainable tourism development is an important element for the achievement of tourism. The local people's support is seen as the first step in successful tourism development and its implementation. In other words, the direct participation of local people in social activities will encourage them for further support for tourism and social development.

Local people are keener on tourists when they develop positive attitudes towards tourism and as a result, they support the tourism development. This support is further expanded by increasing individuals' income and increasing their living standards. The continued social benefit will enable the local people to continue their SDT (Siu, Lee & Leung, 2013; Sharma & Gursoy, 2015). As a result, the continued existence of tourism in a destination depends on the support of local people (Sinclair 2017, p. 11). This shows

that while people develop positive attitudes towards tourism as a result of positive impacts of tourism, people in the region will develop negative attitudes regarding tourism development as a consequence of negative effects of tourism (Lindberg & Johnson, 1997; McGehee & Andereck, 2004).

### Hypothesis Development and Research Model

#### Social carrying capacity (SCC), support for the development of tourism (SDT) and community participation (CP)

SET is a highly popular subject in the field of sociology and social psychology. It is also one of the earliest theories that best emphasizes social behaviour in the process of change (Homans, 1958). Furthermore, SET provides an interaction analysis focusing on the exchange and two-way distribution of costs and rewards among different actors (Pollard and Mitchell, 1972). SET was defined by Ap (1992) as a social theory developed to understand resource exchange between individuals and groups in the interactions. The first use of SET in the field of tourism is based on the research of Perdue, Long & Allen (1990, p. 587).

When we consider from a tourism perspective, SET predicts that individuals will change their attitudes regarding tourism and their SDT level by looking at what benefits tourism provides for the community. For change to occur in a community, the tourism sector must show its effects in the region. Tourism needs developing, promoting and addressed by the people of the local region. Some tourism destinations benefit from tourism while others are affected negatively. At this point, the assumption of SET emerges; the people of a touristic region assess tourism according to the relationship between the cost and the benefits they receive. If individuals are positively affected by tourism, their attitudes towards tourism will be positive in a directly proportionate way. However, if individuals are negatively affected by Tourism, their attitude to tourism will be equally negative (Lindberg & Johnson, 1997; McGehee & Andereck, 2004). In this respect, overrunning the limits of SCC affects both the local people's support for developing tourism and the levels of their CP in a negative way.

Besides, according to the relevant literature, carrying capacity, in general, is defined as the level of tolerance of tourists to other tourists or the number of tourists the region could physically carry (Lobo 2015; Pamungkas et al., 2016; Zhang et al., 2017). Very little research on SCC has been found in the literature (Çalık, 2014; Kılıç & Seçilmiş 2018). Such research concluded that, when SCC was not overrun, the attitudes towards tourism were positively affected. Besides, it has been

reported in the literature that the local people of the region are positively affected by tourism when positive attitudes regarding tourism are developed; and they are negatively affected when they develop negative attitudes towards tourism (Hanafiah, et al., 2013; Moghavvemi et al., 2017; Sinclair, 2017; Kang and Lee, 2018). It was concluded after all of these that the SCC overrun could negatively affect the support and CP in developing tourism. In this respect, the hypotheses below have been tested.

**H1:** Overrunning SCC has a negative impact on the SDT.

**H2:** Overrunning SCC has a negative effect on CP.

### SCC and QL

The life cycle model, which assesses the number of tourists visiting a destination and the infrastructure of the area, was developed by Butler (1980). This model has the following stages, which are exploration, involvement, development, stagnation, consolidation and decline or rejuvenation (Agarwal, 1997). Butler (1980) put forward the destination life curve model that provides a theoretical background for tourism research. When the relevant literature (Cole, 2012; Tang, Zhong & Ng, 2017; Southern & Somuncu, 2018) was examined, it is seen that this theory has been used to study the changes in local people, tourists and destinations. In line with this information, the researchers hypothesized that SCC overrun would shorten the destination life cycle, and this would negatively affect the local people's views regarding tourism and QL.

Related literature (Kaplanidou et al., 2013; Guo et al., 2014; Mathew & Sreejesh, 2017) concluded that QL is positively affected by the perceived positive effects of tourism by hosting people, and the negative effects of tourism negatively affect the QL of local people. Besides, it is possible to say that SCC is among the antecedents of QL. In line with this, it has been concluded that SCC overrun will negatively affect the QL of the local people in a destination. In this respect, the following hypothesis was developed to be tested.

**H3:** Overrunning SCC has a negative impact on QL.

### Community's participation (CP) and support for the tourism development (SDT)

CP is defined as a community's having a say in the management and planning as a whole (Arnstein, 1969). When the role of hosting people in tourism development is considered, it is possible to say that CP is among the antecedents of the SDT. Simmons (1994)

revealed that CP is among the premises in the planning of tourism. Wang et al., (2010) emphasized that public opinion is an important factor in the tourism development in a destination. Lee (2013) concluded that CP is one of the main factors in local peoples' SDT. Based on the findings of the research (Niekerk, 2014; Lin & Simmons, 2017), it was concluded that CP is among the main factors in the support of local people for tourism.

Under the light of this information and the relevant literature (Simmons, 1994; Tosun, 2006; Wang et al., 2010, Lee, 2013; Niekerk, 2014; Prabhakaran et al., 2014; Lin & Simmons, 2017; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017; Özdamar & Çakıcı, 2021). it was concluded that CP positively influenced SDT. In this respect, the following hypothesis was developed to be tested.

**H4:** CP has a positive impact on SDT.

### QL and support for the tourism development

Milman and Pizam (1987) concluded that tourism development improves QL. Andereck & Nyaupane (2011) found that the personal benefit perceived by the local people affects the economic aspect of the QL. Aref (2011) concluded that tourism affects the QL positively; Renda, Mendes and Valle (2011) concluded that the effects of tourism can also affect the QL negatively. Woo et al., (2015) concluded that the perceived QL of the public is among the important antecedents in supporting the development of tourism. Liang and Hui (2016) claimed that public support for tourism is closely related to the quality of life standards.

The hosting people's social benefits from tourism will increase their tourism support (Teye, Sirakaya and Sönmez, 2002, p. 679). Accordingly, it is possible to suggest that local people will increase their SDT depending on the increase in QL. Within the SET framework and relevant literature (Milman & Pizam, 1987; Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011; Aref, 2011; Renda, Mendes and Valle, 2011; Nkemngu, 2015; Woo et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2017; Kılıç & Şenel, 2021). it can be said that QL positively affects SDT. In this respect, the following hypothesis was developed to be tested.

**H5:** QL has a positive impact on SDT.

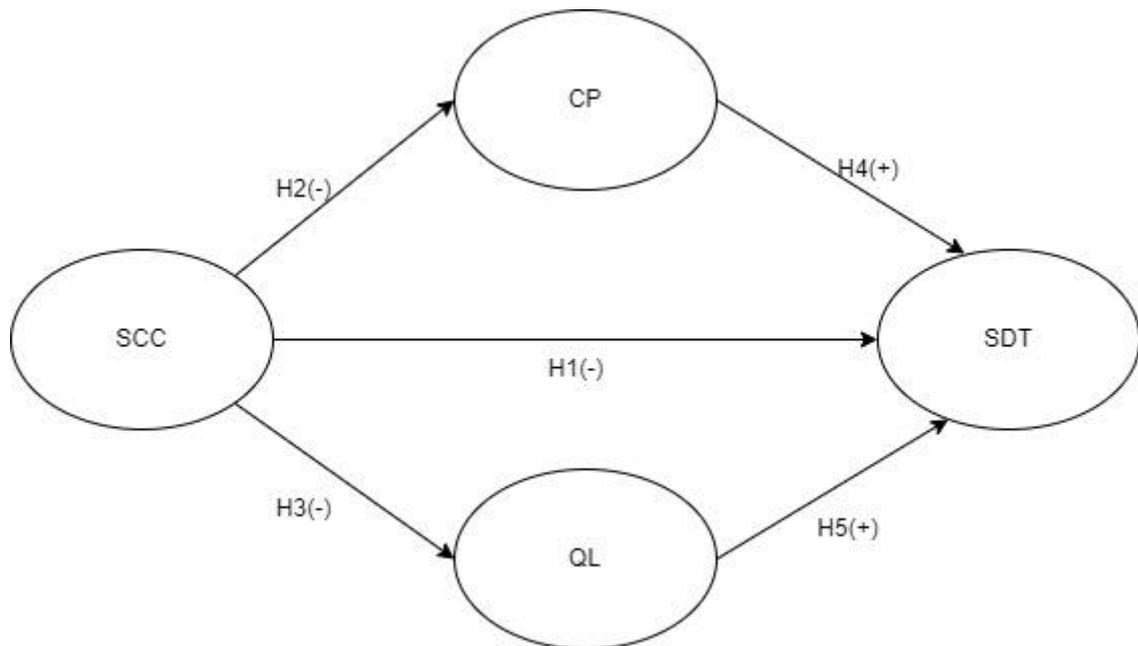
### QL and CP, the mediating role of the support of SCC in the tourism development

One of the models evaluating the effects of tourism development on the local people is the Irridex Model developed by Doxey (1975), which states that the local people in any tourist destination and the sustainable development of tourism are closely related. This model shows that the increase in the number of tourists coming

to the destination changes the perceptions of local people towards tourism in a negative way. Besides, the psychological and socio-cultural effects of tourism are evaluated in the model. The basis of the Doxey Irridex Model is that local people living in the destination are socially affected by the consequences of tourism. This model also explains the behavioural changes resulting from these effects. The model describes in detail the stages of stress caused by the interaction of the local people with the tourists. The model consists of four different stages of stress: happiness, indifference, resentment, and hatred (Mathieson & Wall, 1982).

The literature shows that Doxey's (1975) Irridex Model provides a theoretical background for many studies (Vargas-Sanchez, Porrás-Bueno & De Los Ángeles, 2011; Zaidan & Kovacs, 2017; Ma, Dai & Fan, 2020). The increase in tourism in the region has a negative effect by limiting the possibilities of the people over time. In this research, this negative effect is explained with the term of overrunning

development of tourism develop positive attitudes and behaviour towards tourism. Therefore, local people support tourism development. However, if hosting people experience problems due to the social change resulting from tourism, they are against the development of tourism in their region (Kang & Lee, 2018, p. 311). The SET is a generally accepted theory that attempts to explain the actions taken by the hosting people against the development of tourism. Besides, SET gives a different perspective on the literature by revealing empirical and psychological outcomes (Prayag et al., 2013). When the studies on the local people's support for the tourism development were examined, it was observed that CP was among the antecedents of SDT (Lee, 2013). Ensuring CP in the tourism development process will also support the elimination of perceived negativity about tourism in that destination. Cheng et al., (2019) revealed that the CP in the development of tourism mediates environmentally responsible behaviours.



**Figure 1:** Modelling of the Theoretical Construct of the Research

SCC. As a result, overrunning SCC limits the QL of the hosting people and reduces the levels of participation in tourism. Thus, the levels of SDT also fall indirectly.

Environmental and sociocultural factors that local people perceive as a consequence of the tourism development in a destination are among the basic elements affecting people's SDT (Milman & Pizam, 1987; Yoon, Gursoy & Chen, 2001; Ko & Stewart 2002; Jurowski & Gursoy, 2004). According to the SET, the local people who are positively affected by the

The environmental, socio-cultural and economic impacts of tourism have significant impacts on the well-being and QL of the local people living in the tourist area. According to the SET, the local people who are positively affected by the development of tourism develop positive attitudes and behaviour towards tourism. Therefore, the people of the region support the development of tourism. However, because of the social change resulting from tourism, people stand against the development of tourism if they face problems due to the newly emerging tourism-caused changes (Kang & Lee, 2018: 311). Woo et al., (2015) has proved that

QL is also among the pioneers in SDT. Chang, Hung & Huang, (2019) found that QL mediates the effect of negative and positive outcomes of tourism on tourism development. Accordingly, within the scope of Doxey's (1975) Irridex Model and SET, CP and QL have been thought to play a mediating role in the perceptions regarding the SCC overrun. Therefore, the following hypothesis was developed to be tested

**H6:** QL and CP mediate the support of SCC in the development of tourism.

## METHOD

### Measuring Instruments

A 5-point Likert type scale was used in the research. Linguistic validity research was conducted on the scale which was developed from international literature to gather data (Brislin, 1976). Considering the feedbacks, minor revisions were made on the items of the scales without changing their basic meaning. In the research, the 5-item scale of Diener et al., (1985) was used to measure QL. In measuring CP, the 4-item scale of Rasoolimanesh et al., (2017) was used. SDT was measured with the use of a 4-item scale by Boley & Strzelecka (2016)

No scale in the literature fully assesses SCC. However, there is research on the indicators of SCC overrun (O'reilly, 1986; Saveriades, 2000; Tran et al., 2007; Cuervorst, 2010; Jurado, Damian & Fernandez-Morales, 2013; Chen & Teng, 2016; Coccossis & Mexa 2017; Muler, Coromina & Gali 2018). These studies have suggested that the elements of crowding, noise and cultural corruption are indicators of SCC. In this study, these indicators were used to measure SCC. The scale created based on the indicators was discussed by conducting a focus group survey. Interviews were conducted with the local people (N= 50) to determine whether the agreed-upon statements fit the Turkish context and to eliminate the ambiguities in their meaning. Furthermore, the results of the analysis confirmed the first level general structure consisting of four statements. ( $\chi^2 = 5.036$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p < .01$   $\chi^2 / DF = 2.518$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.060$ ,  $CFI = 0.99$ ,  $NFI = 0.99$ ).

### Research Sample

Cappadocia with fairy chimneys, ancient cities, churches and monasteries, underground cities, caravanserais, structures and rock carvings in welcoming valleys with approximately 3 million foreign and domestic tourists in 2018, is an important tourism centre (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2019). Besides, the fact that the first monks settled in Cappadocia and lived in these regions to spread and

protect Christianity makes the region important for the history of Christianity. Göreme National Park, one of the major attractions in Cappadocia, has been on the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage list since 1985. In the light of this information, the universe of the research is composed of all the local people living in Ürgüp, Goreme, Avanos, Uçhisar and Derinkuyu regions which are the most visited destinations in the Cappadocia region. Stratified sampling from probability-based sampling techniques was preferred as a sampling method. The number of universes living in all of the most visited regions in Cappadocia is 94,499 people. 21,996 % of the universe reside in Derinkuyu region, 3,841 % reside in Uchisar region, 34,517 % reside in Avanos region, 2,236 % reside in Göreme region and 37,410 % reside in Ürgüp region. As a result, it was approved that 88 surveys for Derinkuyu region ( $0.21996 \times 400 = 87,984$ ); 15 surveys for Uçhisar region ( $0.3841 \times 400 = 15,365$ ); 138 surveys for Avanos region ( $0.34517 \times 400 = 138,06$ ); 9 surveys for Göreme region ( $0.2236 \times 400 = 8,944$ ); 150 surveys for Ürgüp region ( $0.35352 \times 400 = 149,639$ ) should be administered. However, since it was considered that it was difficult to reach the exact number, 500 surveys were distributed proportionately to the regions. The questionnaires were administered between February 2018 and April 2018 through face-to-face interviews. As a result, 77 questionnaires were found to be not worth analyzing and were removed from the sample and the analysis was continued with 423 questionnaires.

Descriptive statistics revealed that 55,6% of the respondents were male (44,4% female), 28,6% were 18–25 years of age, 22,2% were aged 36–45 years, 26,5% were 26–35 years, 22,2% were 46–55 years and 7,1% 56+ years. Moreover, 89,6% of the respondents income were 1000-5000, 10,4% were 5000+. Ethics Committee Approval; The data collection process in this study was carried out between February 2018 and April 2018, and the Council of Higher Education Committee criteria were announced on January 1, 2020.

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### Data Analysis

The Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) was used to test the measured and the structural model. The approach which is based on two stages and developed by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) was followed to test the developed model. According to this approach, the structural model will reach a testable level when the measurement model has achieved acceptable fit indices. In this respect, first the measurement model

and then the structural model was tested. The principles put forward by Baron & Kenny (1986) for mediating testing were followed. The  $\chi^2$  difference test was applied to determine the partial and full mediating effect (James, Mulaik & Brett, 2006, Karatepe, 2013). Skewness (-1.658 and 1,360) and Flatness (- 1,080 and 2,010) were found to show normal distribution (Kline, 2011).

## RESULTS

### Descriptive Statistics

**Table 1.** Mean, Correlations and Standard Deviation

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	1	2	3	4
1. SCC	2.61	1.32	1			
2. CP	3.89	1.00	-0.25**	1		
3. QL	3.69	1.01	-0.08**	0.31**	1	
4. SDT	4.34	0.81	-0.30**	0.49**	0.28**	1

Not: \* $p < 0.01$ .

The mean, standard deviation, and correlation values are shown in Table 1. SDT has the highest average ( $x = 4.34$ ). This is followed by CP ( $x = 3.89$ ), life satisfaction ( $x = 3.69$ ) and SCC ( $x = 2.61$ ) respectively. In terms of correlations, SCC has a negative and significant relationship with CP ( $r = -0.25$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). SCC has a negative and significant relationship with QL ( $r = -0.08$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). SCC has a negative and significant relationship with SDT ( $r = -0.30$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). There is a significant and also positive relationship between CP and QL ( $r = 0.31$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). There is a positive and significant relationship between CP and SDT ( $r = 0.49$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). A significant and positive relationship was found between QL and SDT ( $r = 0.28$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

### Results of Measurements

Research variables are included as the first level in the measurement model due to their one-dimensional nature. Based on the results, the measurement model has acceptable indices ( $\chi^2 = 199.555$ ,  $DF = 98$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\chi^2 / DF = 2,036$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.050$ ,  $CFI = 0.961$ ,  $NFI = 0.927$ ). While CFI and NFI values which are greater than or equal to 0.90 are considered to have acceptable compliance (Byrne, 2016), RMSEA value less than 0.060 has good harmony (Hu & Bentler, 1999). As an item on the QL scale remained below 0.50, it was excluded from the measurement model. The remaining items are significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). As shown in Table 2, compound reliability values range between 0.798 and 0.840. According to this finding, structure reliability was accomplished (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). The mean-variance values described are in the range 0.509 - 0.568.

Accordingly, convergent validity was confirmed (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The alpha coefficients are in the range between 0.789 and 0.830. This result points to the intrinsic consistency of structures (Nunnally, 1978).

### Hypothesis Test

Table presents all direct relationships between research variables are significant. For this reason, the conditions put forward by Baron and Kenny (1986) were found to meet mediation analysis. According to SEM results, the research model has acceptable fit

indices ( $\chi^2 = 229.807$ ,  $DF = 99$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\chi^2 / DF = 2.321$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.056$ ,  $CFI = 0.950$ ,  $NFI = 0.916$ ). According to the results of the hypothesis test, SCC has a negative and significant effect on SDT ( $\beta = -0.24$ ;  $t = -4.222$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). SCC has a negative and significant effect on CP ( $\beta = -0.32$ ;  $t = -4.977$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). SCC has a negative and significant effect on QL ( $\beta = -0.12$ ;  $t = -1.973$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). CP has a positive and meaningful impact on SDT ( $\beta = 0.43$ ;  $t = 6.890$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). QL has a positive and meaningful impact on SDT ( $\beta = 0.20$ ;  $t = 3.750$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). Based on these findings, H1, H2, H3, H4, H5 were accepted.

The bootstrap technique was employed to determine the significance of indirect effects (Zhao, Lynch and Chen, 2010). This method is seen as a better and more valid method for assessing indirect effects than the Sobel test. Indirect impact of SCC on SDT through CP and QL is  $-0.162$  ( $p < 0.01$ ). In a 95% confidence interval and 5,000 sub-samples, the lower and upper limit values of the indirect effect are  $-0.238$  and  $-0.098$ . The mediating effect is therefore significant. Accordingly, H6 was supported. According to the research findings, the rate at which SDT is explained by its antecedents is ( $R^2$ ) = 0.369.

**Table 2.** Measurement Model

Variables	$\lambda$	<i>t value</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>A</i>	<i>CR</i> **	<i>AVE</i> **
<b>Social Carrying Capacity</b>				0.789	0.798	0.509
Tourism negatively affects the belief system of the local people	0.51	fixed*	0.260			
The crowds caused by tourism prevent local facilities from being used by the public.	0.61	8,960***	0.372			
The noise caused by tourism is likely to disturb the local population.	0.90	10,067***	0,810			
Tourism is leading to increased noise levels in Cappadocia.	0.77	10,006***	0.592			
<b>Community Participation</b>				0.825	0.830	0.552
The residents in this community have been involved in the management of Cappadocia.	0.64	fixed*	0.409			
The residents of Cappadocia have been involved in the decision-making regarding the tourism development and preservation of the heritage sites.	0.78	12,255***	0.608			
My opinions have often been asked regarding the tourism planning and development.	0.81	12,428***	0.656			
My opinions have often been asked regarding conservation projects in Cappadocia.	0.73	11,678***	0.532			
<b>Quality of Life</b>				0.801	0.810	0.518
My living conditions in Cappadocia are excellent.	0.72	10,900***	0.518			
I'm happy with my life in Cappadocia.	0.79	11,317***	0.624			
I had everything I wanted in my life in Cappadocia.	0.72	11,534***	0.518			
If I were born again, I'd want to live my life in Cappadocia.	0.64	Fixed*	0.409			
<b>Support for the Tourism Development</b>				0.830	0.840	0.568
I believe tourism should be actively encouraged in my community.	0.76	Fixed*	0.577			
I support tourism and would like to see it becomes an important part of my community.	0.82	16,443***	0.672			
The local authorities and state governments should support the promotion of tourism.	0.74	14,285***	0.547			
Long-term planning by city officials can control the negative effects of tourism on the environment.	0.69	13,633***	0.476			

**Table 3.** Hypothesis Test Results

	Variables	Path coefficient*	p-value	t-value**	Results
H1	SCC → SDT	-0.24***	0.001	-4.222	Supported
H2	SCC → CP	-0.32***	0.001	-4.977	Supported
H3	SCC → QL	-0.12**	0.005	-1.973	Supported
H4	CP → SDT	0.43***	0.001	6.890	Supported
H5	QL → SDT	0.20***	0.001	3.750	Supported

Fit indices: ( $\chi^2 = 229.807$ ,  $df = 99$ ,  $p < .01$   $\chi^2/df = 2.321$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.056$ ,  $CFI = 0.950$ ,  $NFI = 0.916$ ).

\*\*\* $p < .01$  ( $t > 2,58$ ), \*\* $p < .05$  ( $t > 1,96$ ), \* $p < .10$  ( $t > 1,65$ )

## DISCUSSION

### Evaluation of the Findings

According to the findings of the hypothesis test, the perceived SCC overrun of the local people reduces SDT (H1). This shows that SCC is one of the main determinants of SDT. Another finding is that overrunning SCC reduces the level of CP of the local people in tourism (H2). This shows that SCC is among the antecedents of CP. Besides, the results from the H1 and H2 hypotheses coincide exactly with the SET's judgment that the local people's point of view about tourism will change negatively with the negative impact of tourism. Among the findings, it was proven that SCC overrun reduces the QL of the local people (H3). This shows that the SCC, which is a result of tourism, is a premise of the QL of the local people. Furthermore, the result of the H3 hypothesis is in line with the decline stage in Butler's (1980) life cycle model. Because SCC overrun in a destination causes the decline of tourism in the destination, reducing the QL of the local people.

According to another finding of the study, the level of CP perceived by the public increases SDT in a proportionate way (H4). This is an indication that the public has a say in tourism and that their support for tourism will increase. It also shows that CP is one of the premises in the support of hosting people for tourism development. On the other hand, the QL perceived by the public positively increases SDT (H5). This finding suggests that QL is a key factor in SDT. In short, QL can be explained as a premise that proportionately affects the development of tourism. This result supports the SDT's judgment that levels of SDT will increase depending on the increase in the quality of public life. Another important finding of the research is that SCC affects SDT through CP and QL (H6). In this context, it mediates the effect on support for tourism development and CP and QL.

This finding is in line with the judgement of Doxey's Irridex Model that local people experience problems over time and come to the stage of hatred towards tourism as a negative consequence of tourism development in their region. This is because overrunning SCC decreases the QL and CP levels of the local people, reducing their SDT. Research findings revealed SCC as a premise differently from the research in the literature (Milman & Pizam, 1987; Simmons, 1994; Tosun, 2006; Wang et al., 2010; Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011; Xu et al., 2016; Lin & Simmons, 2017; Sinclair, 2017; Kang & Lee, 2018; Suess et al., 2018). This reveals the significance of this study to the relevant literature.

### Theoretical Findings

In this study, the fact that overrunning SCC negatively affects SDT was explained with SET. While overrunning SCC is a negative consequence of tourism, the attitude of the hosting people changes negatively in this direction. In line with the review of relevant literature (Perdue, Long & Allen 1990; Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Waitt, 2003; Gursoy & Kendall, 2006; Nunkoo, 2016; Kang & Lee, 2018; Shakeela & Weaver, 2018), SET was used to explain local people's perception regarding the negative and positive effects of their support for tourism. However, there has been no study investigating SCC overrun as a consequence of the negative effects of tourism in a destination as a premise. This suggests that the relevant theory is not adequately addressed in the context of SCC. In the research, the fact that SET explained that SCC overruns reduce the levels of SDT by reducing the QL and CP levels of local people fills in an important gap in the literature. Besides, the findings of this paper seem to be significant for both the theory and related literature.

Butler's destination life cycle theory consists of the stages of exploration, involvement, development, stagnation, consolidation, and decline or rejuvenation (Agarwal, 1997). During the stagnation stage, the destination begins to lose its appeal and problems start to emerge. It is at this point that the problem of SCC overrun occurs. In short, SCC overrun could be claimed to be closely related to the decline stage of Destination Life Cycle Model developed by Butler (1980). In the relevant literature, studies are examining the SCC and destination life cycle model together (Cole, 2012; Wren, 2014; Tang, Zhong & Ng, 2017; Güney & Somuncu, 2018). However, there is not any research examining the effect of SCC overrun on support for the tourism development and destination life cycle. This is a clear indication that this research has contributed to the theory and relevant literature.

The basis of Doxey's (1975) Irridex Model is the behavioural changes of the hosting people resulting from the social consequences of tourism. The model consists of the stages of happiness, indifference, anger and hatred. In the study, SCC overrun, which is among the negative results of tourism in a region was examined. The fact that the SCC overrun perceived by the local people negatively affects the QL, CP and SDT is in line with this model. From this point of view, there is no study examining SCC and Doxey's Irridex Model, which has provided a basis for much research in the literature (Zaidan & Kovacs, 2017; Ma, Dai & Fan, 2020). This research fills that gap and contributes to the Doxey Irridex Model and relevant literature.

### Contribution to Practice

The findings of this study could be beneficial to the management of tourism destinations. In tourism planning, destination managers must plan the noise, crowding and cultural interaction that tourism will generate in a way that does not harm the social facilities and culture of the local population. Ignoring this could lead to an increase in the SCC and disrupt the sustainable development of tourism. The fact that overrun of SCC may negatively affect both CP and QL reveals the importance to protect the living standards of the local people as well as tourism. In their plans for the development of tourism, destination management should aim to increase the QL of the hosting people who are important stakeholders of tourism and to encourage hosting people to participate in tourism.

The positive impact of CP on SDT has shown that public participation is a key element in sustainable tourism development. In this context, it shows that those planning tourism must consider the ideas of the local community while ensuring tourism development in the region. Besides, they must avoid any attempt to harm the community, both socially and economically. Finally, the positive impact of the QL perceived by the public on the SDT reveals the importance of living standards in the planning of tourism. Tourism planners need to make recommendations that will ensure that tourism develops along with the living standards of the people. All of these details show that research has many contributions to practice.

### Limitations and Recommendations

The main limitation of the research is that the proposed model was tested in Cappadocia. Testing this model in different destinations and countries in future research will contribute to the development of the model. Besides, only SCC was examined in the context of the local population. Future research could focus on both social and psychological carrying capacity by collecting data from both tourists and local people and revealing the effects of carrying capacity. Besides, a comparative analysis of this model on both the public and the employees of accommodation companies could produce different results.

The following hypotheses are proposed for future research to be carried out at different destinations.

P1: QL and CP mediate the support of the positive environmental effects of tourism in tourism development.

P2: QL and CP mediate the support of the negative environmental effects of tourism in the development of tourism.

### CONCLUSION

This research examined the role of QL and CP in the effect of SCC on tourism development. According to the results, it has been proven that CP and QL mediate the relationship between SCC and SDT. Besides, SCC overrun negatively affects the QL and CP. Besides, the research also revealed that SCC positively affects SDT. Finally, the QL perceived by the public positively affects the SDT.

The results of the research provide necessary and useful information to tourism planners in a tourism destination. This is because the necessity for SCC is pointed out to ensure the sustainability of tourism in a region. As a result, it is possible to claim that this research has an original value. Finally, the research has contributed to the literature in 4 different ways. The first is that the premises in the public's support for the tourism development have been put forward. The second is to demonstrate that SCC overrun negatively affects SDT. The third is that social carrying capacity is treated as an independent (leading) variable affecting tourism development. The fourth contribution is the support of the model, which reveals how SCC reduces SDT.

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**Informed Consent Form:** All authors are involved in the study of their own free will.

**Ethics Approval:** The authors declare that ethical rules are followed in all conduction processes of this study. In case of determination of a contrary situation, the tourism academic journal has no responsibility and all responsibility belongs to the article authors.

**Ethics Committee Approval:** The data collection process in this study was carried out between February 2018 and April 2018, and the Council of Higher Education Committee criteria were announced on January 1, 2020.

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