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Türkiye as a Tourist Destination from the Perspective of International Educational Tourists

Uluslararası Eğitim Turistlerinin Gözünden Turistik Bir Destinasyon Olarak Türkiye

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Abstract

Scientific, social and cultural events within the scope of educational tourism are important promotional activities for both universities and tourism. In this context, such events benefit the promotion of the country, universities and the tourism industry. The studies in the literature mainly focused on students within the scope of educational tourism. The sample of this study consists of people working at higher education institutions who travel internationally within the scope of Erasmus events as a product of educational tourism. In this context, it was aimed to evaluate Türkiye as a touristic destination through the eyes of educators who came to Amasya in May and June 2023 within the scope of staff week events. In the study in which qualitative research method and semi-structured interview technique was used and 21 educational tourists from 9 countries participated in the research. A word cloud was created using the Maxqda 24 program. According to the results of the analysis, it was determined that the concepts of "people", "hospitality", "history" and "cultures" were mainly prominent. In addition, according to the results of the research, it was determined that the difficulty encountered was the "foreign language" problem.

Key Words: Educational Tourism, Educational Tourist, Türkiye.

Öz

Eğitim turizmi kapsamında yer alan bilimsel, sosyal ve kültürel etkinlikler hem üniversiteler için hem de turizm açısından önemli bir tanıtım faaliyetidir. Bu bağlamda bu tür etkinlikler ülke tanıtımına, üniversitelere ve turizm endüstrisine fayda sağlamaktadır. Literatürdeki çalışmalar ağırlıklı olarak eğitim turizmi kapsamındaki öğrencilere odaklanmıştır. Bu çalışmanın örneklemini eğitim turizmi ürünü olarak Erasmus etkinlikleri kapsamında uluslararası seyahat yapan yükseköğretim kurumlarında çalışan kişiler oluşturmaktadır. Bu bağlamda personel haftası etkinlikleri kapsamında Mayıs ve Haziran 2023'te Amasya'ya gelen eğitimcilerin gözünden Türkiye'nin turistik bir destinasyon olarak değerlendirilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Nitel araştırma yönteminin kullanıldığı araştırmada, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme tekniğinden faydalanılmıştır ve araştırmaya 9 ülkeden 21 eğitim turisti katılmıştır. Maxqda 24 programı kullanılarak kelime bulutu oluşturulmuştur. Analiz sonuçlarına göre ağırlıklı olarak "insan", "misafirperverlik", "tarih" ve "kültür" kavramlarının öne çıktığı tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca analiz sonuçlarına göre karşılaşılan zorluğun "yabancı dil" sorunu olduğu belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Eğitim Turizmi, Eğitim Turisti, Türkiye.

Extended Summary

Purpose

The studies in the literature mainly focused on students within the scope of educational tourism. The sample of this study consists of people working at higher education institutions who travel internationally within the scope of Erasmus events as a product of educational tourism. In this context, it was aimed to evaluate Türkiye as a touristic destination through the eyes of educators who came to Amasya in May and June 2023 within the scope of staff week events.

Background

There are similarities in the behaviors of students and tourists when choosing a destination, and the choices students make when choosing a university to stay abroad are similar to the choices tourists make when choosing holiday destinations (Marinescu, 2017). Educational tourism has economic, social, and cultural benefits to society and affects all tourism stakeholders. Considering that the behavior of a person who will go to a destination within the scope of educational tourism when choosing a destination and tourist behavior are similar, the opportunities offered by the destination are very important. In this context, it is very important for tourism stakeholders, especially universities and tourism directorates in the destination, to cooperate. Educational tourists influence the preferences of potential people because of sharing their positive or negative experiences at a destination with their family, friends and on social media. Because, thanks to technology, people search for information on the internet, and social media platforms and pay attention to other people's shares.

It is noteworthy that there are few studies in the literature on educational tourism (McGladdery and Lubbe, 2017a; Castillo Arredondo et al., 2018). According to McGladdery and Lubbe (2017b), international educational tourism has the potential to promote global learning, but there is relatively little empirical research in the literature to support this claim. It is seen in the literature that there are mainly studies on international students within the scope of educational tourism (Quezada, 2004; Huang, 2008; Asgari and Borzooei, 2013; Abubakar, Shneikat and Oday, 2014; Asgari and Borzooei, 2014; Castillo Arredondo et al., 2018; Tomasi, Paviotti and Cavicchi, 2020; Hançer, 2021; Heydarov and Gülmez, 2021).

Method

The sample of this study consists of people working in higher education institutions who travel internationally within the scope of Erasmus activities as a product of educational tourism. In this context, it is aimed to evaluate Türkiye as a tourist destination through the eyes of educators who came to Amasya in May and June 2023 within the scope of Erasmus + staff week events. Semi-structured interview technique, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the research. 21 educational tourists from 9 countries participated in the research voluntarily. The answers given by the participants were analyzed using the Maxqda 24 program and a word cloud was created. In order to ensure the validity of the research, examples of the answers given by the people participating in the research were given.

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Findings

It was determined that most of the participants were from Poland. It has been determined that education tourists who previously came to Türkiye were mainly in Istanbul. Factors affecting the participants' choice of Türkiye; it has been revealed that Turkish cuisine has historical and cultural values. Participants stated that what they liked most about Türkiye was the Turkish people, food, and hospitality. And finally, it was determined that they wanted to come to Türkiye again and would recommend Türkiye as a tourist destination. It has been determined that the concepts of "human", "hospitality", "history" and "culture" come to the fore. In addition, it was determined that the difficulty encountered was the "foreign language" problem. This study tried to contribute to this field and the literature by considering the development potential of educational tourism. Türkiye was evaluated as a tourist destination from the eyes of educational tourists and suggestions were made to tourism stakeholders.

Results

People's sense of curiosity and their desire to see new destinations and experience different cultural and social diversity also affect their destination preferences. Educational tourism, which is developing more and more every day, is considered a type of niche tourism and represents one of the examples of this change. Especially in recent years, it is anticipated that the increase in cooperation between universities in different countries and the popularization of exchange programs will further develop the field of educational tourism. Because, thanks to educational tourism, people can both improve themselves in terms of education and participate in tourism activities. They can get to know different countries and engage in cultural exchange. According to Heydarov and Gülmez (2021) educational tourism is not affected by seasonal factors. In addition, among the types of tourism, educational tourism is on affected by seasonal factors and can be done in all seasons, which is one of the important advantages of this type of tourism. International staff and student exchange mobility projects and programs, especially the Erasmus+ program, make educational tourism attractive.

1. Introduction

Educational tourism is defined as a niche type of tourism since the main motivation of tourists is learning and education (Voleva-Petrova, 2020). The main purpose of travel in educational tourism is that it focuses on activities that involve visiting other countries to learn about different cultures (Živković et al., 2022). One of the important advantages of educational tourism is that it helps both students and adults gain a good perspective on the world, in this regard educational tourism allows traveling to different countries, communicating with local people, gaining information about the visited countries and regions, getting to know new cultures, and gaining experiences (Attaalla, 2020).

Educational tourism is not affected by seasonal factors, increases the economic welfare of the country visited for educational purposes and contributes to its economy (Heydarov and Gülmez, 2021). Additionally, educational tourism addresses negative concerns about authenticity and the commodification of cultures, and in doing so, promotes the development of global tolerance and peace (McGladdery and Lubbe, 2017a: 327). In this respect, it can be said that the characteristics of educational tourism eliminate the seasonal nature of tourism, increase cultural interaction, contribute to the country's economy, and create an environment of tolerance.

Additionally, depending on the type of educational tourism product, people can participate in both educational, social and cultural activities.

Today, educational tourism consists of educational activities such as applied training, theoretical training, congresses and seminars, student, and faculty exchange Erasmus- Farabi, etc. (Heydarov and Gülmez, 2021). Erasmus+ is a grant program of the European Union implemented between 2021-2027. The program covers the fields of education, sports and youth. The Erasmus+ program aims to provide people with new skills, increase employment opportunities and strengthen their personal development. The budget of the Erasmus+ Program throughout Europe for the years 2021-2027 is 28.4 billion Euros (Turkish National Agency, n.d.).

Recently, staff week events have been organized by universities in many countries. According to the data dated 26.05.2024, there are staff week announcements; Ireland (417), Romania (32), Spain (32), Czech Republic (21), Germany (21), France (18), Poland (11), Italy (10), Portugal (7), Türkiye (7), Greece (6), Lithuania (6), Georgia (4), Hungary (4), Finland (3), Belgium (2), Cyprus (2), Austria (1), Bulgaria (1), Denmark (1), Norway (1), Slovakia (1), Slovenia (1) and Sweden (1) (iMOTION, n.d.). Considering the universities currently in the announcement process, it can be said that this number will increase. It is noteworthy that there has been an increase in the number of universities organizing staff weeks in Türkiye recently. The aim of this study is to evaluate Türkiye as a touristic destination from the perspective of international education tourists who come to Türkiye by participating in staff week events organized for at least one week within the scope of the Erasmus program.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Educational Tourism

The history of educational travel dates back to the 17th century, however, despite having such a long history, the concept of educational tourism is a relatively new concept and educational tourism, also known as "*edu-tourism*", emerged as a reaction to mass tourism (Dulce and Muntele, 2021:150). The product of educational tourism, which includes basic tourism services such as transportation, accommodation, food and beverage, can vary and in this context, training, seminars, student mobility, research trips, summer camps, courses lasting less than 12 months, one-year educational master's programs, educational tours and more can be the product of educational tourism (Voleva-Petrova, 2020).

Educational tourism can be defined as a touristic activity carried out by people who spend at least one night in an accommodation establishment and whose main or secondary motivation for travel is to participate in trips and learn only for the destination (Ritchie, 2003 cited in Dulce and Muntele, 2021:144). According to Heydarov and Gülmez (2021:264) educational tourism occurs when individuals go to a country other than their own to advance themselves in a certain field, to acquire brand-new knowledge and develop their careers or to conduct scientific research.

Since educational tourism has not been researched enough, there are few studies in the literature on educational tourism (McGladdery and Lubbe, 2017a; Castillo Arredondo et al., 2018). According to McGladdery and Lubbe (2017b), international educational tourism has the potential to promote global learning, but there is relatively little empirical research in the literature to support this claim. It is seen in

the literature that there are mainly studies on international students within the scope of educational tourism (Quezada, 2004; Huang, 2008; Asgari and Borzooei, 2013; Abubakar, Shneikat and Oday, 2014; Asgari and Borzooei, 2014; Castillo Arredondo et al., 2018; Tomasi, Paviotti and Cavicchi, 2020; Hançer, 2021; Heydarov and Gülmez, 2021). It is seen that there are studies about Türkiye; Hançer (2021) conducted research on the factors that are effective in making this decision of international students who come to Türkiye for higher education within the scope of educational tourism and Heydarov and Gülmez (2021) determine the perceptions of foreign students towards the city they visit for higher education purposes within the scope of educational tourism activities.

2.2. Factors Affecting Destination Selection in Educational Tourism

Educational tourism refers to a tourism activity in which education is the primary or secondary reason for staying at the destination and these include working and developing skills in different and new environments, such as student exchange programs and study tours, as well as numerous international internships (Živković et al., 2022). Activities that shape educational tourism; school trips, seminars, conference or symposium trips, language schools and educational events (Dulce and Muntele, 2021). According to Bunghez, (2022:2) tourists participate in educational tourism activities for various reasons; the main motivations of educational tourists are to explore new places and visit countries, learn new things, and attend various international meetings, conferences and forums.

Factors affecting the decision-making process of educational tourists in destination selection; pull and push factors, influence from the social network, image of the destination for education, cost of the program, cultural environment and online communication culture (Kenfack and Öztüren, 2021). As a result of Yang, Ayavoo and Ab Aziz's (2023) study investigating the pull and push motivations of students in visiting rural educational tourism areas in China, it was revealed that pull motivation factors directly contribute to loyalty and push motivation is the strongest structure affecting loyalty through general satisfaction.

According to Marinescu's (2017) study, which aims to analyze educational tourism, one of the main trends shaping tourism in the European Union, within the scope of the Erasmus program, it has been revealed that there are similarities in the behavior of students and tourists in choosing a destination. It has been determined that the choices students make when deciding on the university they will stay in abroad are like the choices tourists make when choosing holiday destinations. According to the results of their study, in which García-Rodríguez and Mendoza Jiménez (2015:185) explained the role of the tourist destination in the selection of academic centers by international students with the example of the Erasmus program in the Canary Islands, it was determined that the potential offered by academic tourists to tourist destinations such as the Canary can be further developed. They also state that to benefit from this potential, it is important for destination managers to implement strategies to develop this segment.

2.3. Economic and Socio-cultural Benefits of Educational Tourism

International students can be accepted as educational tourists, because international students staying in the destination can benefit themselves and the destination and in this respect, universities promote learning in the destination and can actively facilitate relationships between tourists and local stakeholders to improve the sustainability of

the local economy (Tomasi, Paviotti and Cavicchi, 2020:1). Dulce and Muntele (2021) state that educational tourism has developed due to the increase in Erasmus international mobility in cities where university students participate more actively in international mobility programs.

As a result of Samah and Ahmadian's (2013) study investigating the effects of educational tourism on social development practices in Malaysia, it was revealed that there is a significant positive medium-level relationship between attitude, environmental impact, economic impact and socio-cultural impact and practice. As a result of Tang's (2021) study investigating the threshold effects of educational tourism on economic growth, it was revealed that educational tourism has a significant positive effect on economic growth. In this context, it can be said that educational tourism has economic, social and cultural contributions to the destination.

2.4. Purpose and Importance of the Research

The Erasmus program reveals that the mobility of students and educators is both a feasible and profitable activity and in addition, the Erasmus program is an education and tourism mobility that benefits the participants and the higher education institutions that cooperate in this field (Bunghez, 2022). In this context, considering the changing consumer behavior and tourism movements in the globalizing world, it is important to know why educational tourists prefer a destination. Evaluating a destination especially from the eyes of educational tourists, knowing the difficulties they encounter and experiencing, and making improvements in this regard are very important for the satisfaction of tourists in the future. In addition, determining the elements that attract the most attention and influence tourists about a destination is very important in promoting the destination and creating its image.

As a result of the study on push and pull motivations that are effective in visiting educational tourism sites in China, the authors stated that future studies could alternatively use a qualitative research approach to investigate how external motivational factors affect consumer behavioral intentions (Yang, Ayavoo and Ab Aziz, 2023). Based on this, it is aimed to evaluate Türkiye as a tourist destination through the eyes of educational tourists coming from different countries within the scope of educational tourism by using the qualitative method.

3. Method

It can be seen in the literature that there are mainly studies on international students within the scope of educational tourism. However, with this study, educators traveling within the scope of the Erasmus program as an educational tourism product were discussed for the first time. Within the scope of staff week events, it was aimed to evaluate Türkiye as a tourist destination from the perspective of educators who came to Amasya in May and June 2023. As part of staff week events, which usually last a week, participants participate in both educational meetings and cultural and social activities. Within the scope of the program, they taste local delicacies, participate in cultural activities and trips to different destinations.

Simple random sampling technique was used in this research. In simple random sampling, each element in the research population is given an equal chance to be selected for sampling and to apply this sampling technique, the researcher must have the sampling frame list (Gürbüz and Şahin, 2017:135). In this research, the researcher has the list of educational tourists who came to Amasya in May and June 2023. The

questionnaire was sent to all participants online. 21 people participated in the research voluntarily.

In the study where qualitative research method was used, participants were asked to fill out a semi-structured interview survey online. The semi-structured interview form prepared by taking expert opinion includes the following questions:

- Which country did you come from?
- What is your area of expertise?
- What is the first thing that comes to your mind when Türkiye is mentioned?
- Have you been to Türkiye before? If yes, which cities have you been to?
- What are the factors that influenced your choice of Türkiye?
- What do you think about Türkiye's historical, cultural and natural beauties?
- What do you like most in Türkiye?
- What are the issues you find most difficult in Türkiye?
- Would you like to visit Türkiye again? If yes, what makes you visit again?
- Would you recommend Türkiye as a tourist destination?

Word cloud analysis of the answers given by the participants was conducted using the Maxqda 24 program. Frequency was examined to determine which words were repeated the most. The validity of the research was tried to be ensured by giving examples from the answers given by the participants. "Ethics Committee Approval" was received for this study from Amasya University Social Sciences Ethics Committee with the document number 161622 and dated 16.11.2023.

4. Results

It was determined that most of the participants in the research were from Poland (7). After Poland, the most participants are Portugal (5) and Lithuania (3). It was determined that 21 participants working in higher education institutions from 9 different countries, including Canada, England, France, Germany, Hungary, and Slovakia, were in the research. Additionally, these participants also work at different universities in a country. For example, people participating from Poland work at universities in different regions of Poland.

Figure 1: Word cloud of the question "What is the first thing that comes to your mind when Türkiye is mentioned?"



When the answers of the participants to the question "What is the first thing that comes to your mind when Türkiye is mentioned?" as a result of the word cloud frequency analysis these words; people (7), beautiful (4), history (4), country (3), hospitality (3), culture (2), food (2), modern (2), sea (2), traditions (2), warm (2) and welcoming (2) were repeated. It has been revealed that when Türkiye is mentioned, the hospitality of the Turkish people, culinary culture, nature, history, and culture are the first factors that come to mind. Some examples of the answers given by the participants:

"Combination of tradition and modernity, open and hospitable people" (K1). "Hospitality, Turkish cuisine and marvelous history" (K6). "Wide area of options- from sea to the mountains, from big history to modern life, from traditions to innovations. Modern country with traditions" (K12). "Warm and welcoming people, culture, history, food and hospitality" (K15). "Wonderful natural and built heritage and welcoming people" (K17). "Beautiful country and people!" (K19). "A beautiful country with a rich culture and beautiful summer holiday destinations by the sea" (K21).

When the answers of the participants to the question "**Have you been to Türkiye before? If yes, which cities have you been to?**", participants stated that they were mostly in İstanbul (14). İstanbul is followed by Amasya (9), Alanya (2), Balıkesir (2), Bodrum (2), Denizli (2), Diyarbakır (2) and Konya (2). Additionally, the participants also stated that they were in Akyaka (1), Alaçatı (1), Bursa (1), Çeşme (1), Datça (1), Elâzığ (1), İzmir (1), Karadeniz (1), Kuşadası (1), Malatya (1), Marmaris (1) and Trabzon (1). Four participants stated that they had never been to Türkiye before.

When the answers of the participants to the question "What are the factors that influenced your choice of Türkiye?"; the participants mainly stated that Turkish cuisine, history, and cultural heritage were effective in choosing Türkiye. Some examples of the answers given by the participants:

"Willingness to meet new people and cultures, the desire to try delicious Turkish cuisine" (K1). "Hospitality, food, cultures" (K3). "To experience hospitality, to try Turkish cuisine, to acknowledge history and geography" (K6). "Landscape, history, cultures" (K8). "The desire to learn about culture, friendly residents, the opportunity to visit interesting places" (K14). "I want to get to know a country with a history, heritage and culture that is very different from my own" (K17). "I wanted to learn more about the history and culture of Türkiye, as well as its people and cuisine" (K21).

Figure 2: Word cloud of the question "What do you think about Türkiye's historical, cultural and natural beauties?"



When the answers of the participants to the question "What do you think about **Türkiye's historical, cultural and natural beauties?**" as a result of the word cloud frequency analysis these words; country (5), interesting (5), Turkey (5), very (5), historical (4), amazing (3), natural (3), beauty (2), cultural (2), cultures (2), heritage (2), history (2), magnificent (2), people (2), rich (2) and variety (2) were repeated. It has been revealed that the participants stated that Türkiye's history, culture, and natural beauties are magnificent, striking, unique, rich in history and culture and natural wonder. Some examples of the answers given by the participants:

"Türkiye boasts a spectacular national heritage that can rival the heritage of Italy and Greece. It is a country with a well-organized tourist infrastructure, welcoming to foreigners, and economically" (K1). "The country is rich in history, there is a big variety of natural wonders" (K5). "It's stunning, magnificent and very much unique" (K6). "I love it. The weather is perfect. People are friendly. Culture and religion delight" (K7). "Because of history and nature, Türkiye has variety of options to offer to tourists. As I have been in Türkiye only once, I cannot name and describe everything I would recommend" (K12). "Türkiye has amazing historical, cultural and natural beauties which I am promoting all the time to staff, students, family and wider audience" (K15). "Very interesting, beautiful, and enigmatic. Interest in discovering the essence and values of the people of Türkiye" (K17). "Simply magnificent!!!! One lifetime is not enough to discover all its beauty!!!!!" (K19). "I am impressed by the natural beauty of this country and the cultural richness accumulated over the centuries. The temples, museums, and historical sites that I had the pleasure to see are delightful" (K21).



Figure 3: Word cloud of the question "What do you like most in Türkiye?"

When the answers of the participants to the question "What do you like most in Türkiye?" because of the word cloud frequency analysis; it is seen that the word people (14) are repeated the most. Respectively: food (5), hospitality (4), cultures (3), history (3), landscapes (3), Turkish (3), architecture (2), cities (2), cuisine (2), cultures (2) and natural (2) follows the words. Participants stated that what they liked most about Türkiye was that Turkish people were friendly, warm-blooded, polite, and hospitable. Some examples of the answers given by the participants:

"Historical sites, nature" (K5). "The hospitality of the people, food, traditions, cities, history, landscapes" (K8). "Warm people, landscapes, cultures" (K11). "Great hospitality" (K13). "Turkish culture visible in architecture, Turkish food, people" (K14). "The people, their culture, and the natural and built heritage" (K15). "Everything!

Especially their kindness and hospitality!" (K19). "People, their cheerfulness and hospitality. And the above-mentioned locations and food" (K20).

When the answers of the participants to the question "What are the issues, you find most difficult in Türkiye?" most participants stated that they did not encounter any difficulties. However, there are also participants who state that they have a language problem. Some examples of the answers given by the participants:

"Language" (K3). "I did not experience any particular difficulties during my stay in Türkiye" (K14). "I would like to and am trying to learn the language" (K15). "Comunication most of the Turkish Citizens doesn't speak English" (K16).

When the answers of the participants to the question "Would you like to visit Türkiye again? If yes, what makes you visit again?" it was determined that all participants responded positively. Some examples of the answers given by the participants:

"Definitely! I would gladly come again to explore other beautiful places (such as Lake Van, Mount Ararat, Anamur, Butterfly Valley, Demre) and visit friends whom I had the chance to meet during my last stay in Amasya" (K1). "Yes, want to acknowledge more history and geography" (K6). "Yes. I want to feel Türkiye again" (K7). "Yes. Is a huge country with many different places (cities, beaches, mountains)" (K8). "There are a lot of different things to discover" (K11). "Yes, I would like to see other parts of the country" (K14). "Yes, the people, culture, history, food and climate in the summer months" (K15). "Undoubtedly. Taking my family to discover this country and visit new places" (K17). "Yes, I would love to !!! Another educational program or cultural program!" (K19). "I would love to visit the country again to explore other great places related to the country's history and culture. I would love to learn the basics of Turkish" (K21).

When the answers of the participants to the question "**Would you recommend Türkiye as a tourist destination?**" it was revealed that all the participants stated that they would recommend Türkiye as a tourist destination. Some examples of the answers given by the participants:

"Of course! I mentioned to many friends many times how amazing country Türkiye is" (K3). "Yes. I already did that" (K17). "Yes! All the time!" (K19). "Definitely, yes" (K20).

5. Conclusion

Educational tourism products are very suitable for development and diversification. Many events and organizations, from international student mobility to Erasmus projects and student exchange programs, have an important place in educational tourism. Considering the developments in the fields of technology, transportation, information, and communication, it is seen that the potential of educational tourism is quite high. In this context, it can be said that one of the biggest advantages of educational tourism is that it makes a significant contribution to the promotion of the country.

When asked what is the first thing that comes to mind when Türkiye is mentioned, what affects them the most, and what they like the most, it can be seen that the participants mostly answered "*people*". It is also noteworthy that hospitality, history, and culture are also prominent concepts. In this context, thanks to educational

tourism, people have the chance to see and experience the hospitality of the Turkish people on site. As a result of the study conducted by Heydarov and Gülmez (2021) on educational tourism, it was revealed that the perceptions of foreign students coming to Antalya towards the city were generally positive. It is also noteworthy that people who have been to Türkiye before are mainly in İstanbul. In this respect, it can be suggested that Türkiye's promotions should mainly emphasize the hospitality of the Turkish people, İstanbul, history, culture, and natural beauties.

When asked what difficulties they encountered in Türkiye, participants stated that they mainly had a "*language*" problem. To communicate, it can be recommended that people working in tourism businesses should know a foreign language at a basic level. In this context, it can be said that the education and tourism sectors should act together in a coordinated manner. Voleva-Petrova (2020) also stated that the education and tourism sectors should cooperate.

Scientific, social and cultural events within the scope of educational tourism are important promotional activities for both universities and tourism. In this context, such events benefit the promotion of the country, universities and the tourism industry. Such as staff week events are held within a certain period of time and academic, social and cultural activities are organised for the participants. Thanks to these events, academic and cultural shares are ensured and cooperation between countries and institutions is strengthened. In this context, it makes significant contributions to the promotion of countries and destinations. Since this study deals with people working in higher education institutions within the scope of educational tourism, considering that these people can share their experiences in Türkiye with their students at their own universities, it can be effective in foreign students and academicians choosing Türkiye. It can also be said that it will make positive contributions to the country's image to increase Türkiye's recognition and awareness on the international platform. Considering that educational tourism has socio-cultural and economic benefits for tourism stakeholders, it can be recommended that universities and Provincial Directorates of Culture and Tourism cooperate.

Considering that people who come within the scope of the Erasmus program organized by universities pay attention to the opportunities offered by the destination, it can be recommended that universities promote the destination by emphasizing what it offers. Can be recommended to consider the touristic attractions of the destination, especially its social activities, natural beauties, historical and cultural values.

One of the limitations of this research is the limited number of studies in the literature on educational tourism. Therefore, considering the development potential of educational tourism, more research can be done in this field, contributing to the literature, and determining which factors affect the country preferences of educational tourists and what their motivations are. Another limitation is that the research was conducted only on educational tourists who came to Amasya within the scope of staff week. In future studies, it can be recommended to reach out to people who participated in all staff week events held in different cities of Türkiye and conduct a more in-depth investigation. In addition, in future studies, different geographies can be compared through the eyes of educational tourists and the reasons for choosing these destinations can be investigated.

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Hakem Değerlendirmesi: Dış bağımsız.	Bilgilendirilmiş Onam Formu: Tüm taraflar kendi rızaları ile çalışmaya dâhil olmuşlardır.
Teşekkür: Katkılarından dolayı hakemlere teşekkür ederim.	Araştırmacıların Katkı Oranı: Çalışma tek yazarlıdır.
Destek Bilgisi: Herhangi bir kurum ve/veya kuruluştan destek alınmamıştır.	Etik Kurul Onayı: Amasya Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Etik Kurulu'ndan 16.11.2023 evrak tarih ve 161622 sayısı ile etik kurul onayı alınmıştır.
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