



**ENDERUN DERGİSİ**  
**JOURNAL OF ENDERUN**



e-ISSN: 2618-592X

YIL/YEAR: 2026 CİLT/VOL: 10 SAYI/ISSUE: 1

Çevrimiçi olarak / Available online at [www.dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/enderun](http://www.dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/enderun)

**EXAMINING THE MOTIVATIONS OF TOURISTS TO  
PARTICIPATE IN RURAL TOURISM AND ETHNIC  
RECREATIONAL TOURISM: A COMPARATIVE STUDY  
OF GENERATIONS X, Y, AND Z**

**TURİSTLERİN KIRSAL TURİZM VE ETNİK REKREASYONEL  
TURİZME KATILMA MOTİVASYONLARININ İNCELENMESİ:  
X, Y VE Z KUŞAKLARI KARŞILAŞTIRMA ÇALIŞMASI**

Makalenin  
Gönderim Tarihi:  
27/05/2025

Makalenin  
Kabul Tarihi:  
05/03/2026

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**DOI: 10.59274/enderun.1707108**

**ABSTRACT**

This study aims to compare the motivations of Generations X, Y, and Z for participating in rural tourism and ethnic recreational tourism. Tourism is based on various motivations shaped by cultural and social dynamics, with rural areas and ethnic experiences playing a significant role in tourism preferences. Using quantitative research methodology, 390 surveys were administered to tourists from different age groups. The findings indicate that gender has no significant effect on motivations in either type of tourism. However, education level and income status variables led to significant differences in both rural and ethnic-recreational tourism motivations. Notably, lower income and certain education groups demonstrated lower tourism motivations. Regarding generational variables, rural tourism participation motivation was highest among Generation Z and lowest among Generation X; whereas in ethnic-recreational tourism, Generation Z's motivation was significantly lower compared to Generation X. Analysis of motivation statements revealed that rural tourism motivations were generally high, with nature-based and psychological relaxation elements

being particularly prominent. In ethnic-recreational tourism, participation in cultural activities and package tour preferences were predominant. The study's findings support the determinant role of demographic factors on tourism motivations, demonstrating that motivation structures vary across different types of tourism.

**Keywords:** Rural Tourism, Ethnic Tourism, Recreation, Motivation.

## ÖZET

Bu çalışma, X, Y ve Z kuşaklarının kırsal turizm ve etnik rekreasyonel turizme katılım motivasyonlarını karşılaştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Turizm, kültürel ve sosyal dinamikler tarafından şekillendirilen çeşitli motivasyonlara dayanmakta olup, kırsal alanlar ve etnik deneyimler turizm tercihlerinde önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Nicel araştırma metodolojisi kullanılarak, farklı yaş gruplarından 390 turiste anket uygulanmıştır. Bulgular, cinsiyetin her iki turizm türünde de motivasyonlar üzerinde anlamlı bir etkisinin olmadığını göstermektedir. Bununla birlikte, eğitim düzeyi ve gelir durumu değişkenleri hem kırsal hem de etnik-rekreasyonel turizm motivasyonlarında anlamlı farklılıklara yol açmıştır. Özellikle, düşük gelir ve belirli eğitim grupları daha düşük turizm motivasyonları sergilemiştir. Kuşaksal değişkenler açısından, kırsal turizme katılım motivasyonu Z kuşağında en yüksek, X kuşağında en düşük düzeyde iken; etnik-rekreasyonel turizmde Z kuşağının motivasyonu X kuşağına kıyasla önemli ölçüde düşük bulunmuştur. Motivasyon ifadelerinin analizi, kırsal turizm motivasyonlarının genel olarak yüksek olduğunu, özellikle doğa temelli ve psikolojik rahatlama unsurlarının öne çıktığını ortaya koymuştur. Etnik-rekreasyonel turizmde ise kültürel aktivitelere katılım ve paket tur tercihleri ağırlık kazanmıştır. Çalışmanın bulguları, demografik faktörlerin turizm motivasyonları üzerindeki belirleyici rolünü desteklemekte ve motivasyon yapılarının farklı turizm türleri arasında değişkenlik gösterdiğini ortaya koymaktadır.

**Ahahtar Kelimeler:** Kırsal Turizm, Etnik Turizm, Rekreasyon, Motivasyon.

## 1. Introduction

Tourism creates significant economic, social, and cultural impacts in contemporary societies (Smith, 2012). In recent years, alternative forms of tourism such as rural tourism and ethnic recreational tourism have gained increasing attention as they aim to meet visitors' diverse expectations, diverging from traditional tourism concepts (Lane, 1994; Timothy, 2011). While rural tourism facilitates the experience of natural environments, traditional lifestyles, and local cultures (Sharpley & Roberts, 2004), ethnic recreational tourism is shaped by interest in the cultural and social fabric of specific ethnic groups (Smith, 2012). These tourism activities are expected not only to provide entertainment for participants but also to contribute to their personal development and cultural awareness (Richards, 2018).

Tourist motivations carry significant importance in this context. Different generations shape their tourism preferences influenced by their social, economic, and cultural conditions (Williams & Shaw, 2011). Generations X, Y, and Z have lived through a period of rapid technological, cultural, and

societal value changes, which have been determinative in their tourism behaviors (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). For instance, while Generation X tends to prefer traditional and nature-oriented holidays (The Independent, 2007). Generation Y gravitates toward experience-focused and sustainable tourism approaches, and Generation Z, in a digitalized world, places importance on authentic travels with direct cultural connections (Bolton et al., 2013).

This research aims to examine the differences between Generations X, Y, and Z by comparing their motivations for participating in rural tourism and ethnic recreational tourism. Understanding these generational differences is crucial for developing strategies in the tourism sector. Particularly in the future development of rural and ethnic recreational tourism, understanding tourist motivations will contribute to providing appropriate service delivery and experience design that meets tourist expectations.

The significance of this research lies not only in providing a strategic guide for the tourism industry but also in developing a comprehensive understanding of different generations' values, expectations, and travel motivations. The unifying role of ethnic and rural tourism can enhance understanding between different cultures and help preserve cultural heritage. This study will represent an important step both in contributing to tourism literature and in helping to establish effective tourism policies in practice.

## **2. Motivation for Rural Tourism Participation**

Rural tourism, when evaluated conceptually, is often expressed through various terms. It is observed that various concepts that fall within the scope of rural tourism, such as agricultural tourism, farm tourism, village tourism, and highland tourism, are used synonymously with rural tourism (Çeken et al., 2012). In the world tourism literature, rural tourism has been used by researchers under various names. These include farm tourism, village tourism, highland tourism, agro-tourism, eco-tourism, and alternative tourism. This is due to the lack of consensus among experts regarding the scope of rural tourism and the difficulty in defining rural tourism in a way that encompasses all countries and rural regions (Koroglu & Koroglu, 2006). Rural tourism, which is considered a key component in the socio-economic development of rural areas, is recognized as an important type of alternative tourism with its characteristics of being developed outside urban settlements, engaging in small-scale production in large areas, utilizing rural natural and cultural resources in various ways, and contributing to local development (Torre & Gutiérrez, 2008). Rural tourism is not limited to accommodation, food-beverage provision, and product supply, but is also a broad and multidimensional concept that encompasses public and private sector natural

and cultural resources, infrastructure, and service facilities (Cawley & Gillmor, 2008). According to the European Commission, rural tourism is defined as "the entirety of journeys where tourists spend their holidays in rural areas, discover the heritage of these regions, and experience the lifestyles of individuals living there" (Sarıođlan, 2020). According to Soykan (1999), rural tourism is defined as "a type of tourism where individuals visit a rural area for relaxation or to learn about different cultures, stay there, and participate in or observe region-specific activities."

Rural tourism is an alternative form of tourism that takes place in rural areas and, unlike traditional holiday concepts, offers generally short-term accommodation opportunities during various periods of the year (Barke, 2004). This type of tourism, which is distinct from mass tourism products and tailored to individual consumer preferences, provides opportunities for active participation in rural life while also offering experiences of local culture and heritage (Dashper, 2014). Lane (1994) states that rural tourism is not solely an agriculture-based type of tourism, but also encompasses many different types of tourism such as special interest holidays, ecotourism, walking, mountaineering and horseback riding holidays, adventure, sports and health tourism, hunting and fishing, educational travel, art and history tourism, and in some regions, ethnic tourism. Rural tourism activities encompass various activities related to sports, animation, or real life that are conducted in indoor or outdoor areas with passive or active participation. In these activities, different arrangements are made for children, youth, adults, and the elderly according to the age group of participants (Soykan, 1999). OECD lists rural tourism activities as follows: walking, mountaineering, adventure holidays, canoeing, rafting, cross-country skiing, bird watching, photography, hunting, bicycle tours, horseback riding, research on rural heritage, tours to towns and villages, small-scale conferences and meetings, festivals held in rural areas, angling (river, lake, canal, etc.), and sports activities conducted in rural areas, etc. (OECD, 1994).

Rural areas, with their natural and cultural richness, play an important role in meeting the recreational needs that have emerged in large cities with the industrialization process. The foundations of rural tourism were laid in England in the 19th century with the back-to-nature movement, and this understanding subsequently spread to industrialized countries of Europe. The rapid development of rural tourism has been significantly influenced by the improvement of social and economic conditions of urban residents and their desire to escape from air pollution, stress, and noise (Ceken et al., 2007). The preference of tourists who want to learn about local cultures and people's lifestyles for rural areas, with the aim of preserving traditional characteristics, lifestyles, and food and beverage cultures, can contribute to the development

of these regions. Additionally, tourists spending their leisure time in these areas provides significant support for the economic and social development of rural regions (Avcikurt & Koroglu, 2008). Many European countries such as France, Netherlands, Italy, Portugal, Austria, Ireland, Germany, England, Switzerland, Belgium, Spain, and Scandinavian countries have made significant progress in rural tourism. In these countries, rural tourism has evolved to serve not only domestic tourism but also international tourism. In Europe, rural tourism has long existed as an element that combines rural and urban culture (Soykan, 2000). In Turkey, with the planned development period in the 1960s, emphasis was placed on rural development projects to reduce inter-regional welfare disparities and prevent migration from rural areas to cities. The prevention of rural-to-urban migration, which is one of the most important agenda items of rural development projects, has made the implementation of rural tourism policies within an integrated rural development approach a necessary and important component (Kuner and Unal, 2013). Besides preventing migration, the importance of rural tourism can be listed as benefits such as preservation of natural and sociocultural heritage, organization of production, promotion and sale of local foods which are elements of cultural heritage, contribution to local development, and helping to improve the social and economic quality of life of the local population (Kaya et al., 2012).

Tourists make their travel decisions not only based on psychological and physical reasons but also by considering the destination's attractiveness, accessibility, price, and image (Ünal & Bayar, 2020). Along with factors such as climate, gastronomic diversity, and natural environment, the preferred type of tourism also plays an important role. Different types such as sea-sand-sun tourism, rural tourism, winter tourism, cave tourism, and gastronomy tourism make tourism a sector that appeals to individuals from all classes and with various characteristics in a very wide spectrum. Moreover, individuals' preferred holiday style can change over time. There are many different reasons and motives that drive people to travel (Correia et al., 2013). Today's 'new tourist' is characterized as more experienced, environmentally aware, more spontaneous, more unpredictable, flexible, and independent compared to the past (Aguiló et al., 2005). These characteristics of the new tourist, particularly concepts such as ecological awareness and independence, strongly align with rural tourism. Understanding motivations for rural tourism is of great importance in terms of establishing cause-and-effect relationships. These motivations include rural origins, economic factors, low infrastructure expenses (such as transportation, nutrition, entertainment costs), social and cultural effects, health, and age factors (Demircioglu, 1993).

### 3. Motivation for Participating in Ethnic and Recreational Tourism

The initial conceptualization of ethnic tourism was defined as "the marketing of interesting, indigenous, and exotic people's traditions to the public" (Smith, 1978). This definition was influenced by studies conducted on Eskimos, Panama's San Blas Indians, and Indonesia's Toraja people. In an alternative definition, ethnic tourism can be described as "travels aimed at experiencing ethnic or local heritage, traditional use of natural resources, local settlements, traditional lifestyles, customs, language, cuisine, ethnic architecture, folklore, and local culture" (Aleksandrova & Aigina, 2017). Similarly, ethnic tourism is expressed as "a type of tourism where a specific ethnic group and its unique culture serve as the primary motivation for travel" (Hitchcock, 1999). Ethnic tourism encompasses activities such as visiting local homes and villages, observing dances and ceremonies, and trading primitive artifacts and antiques of art historical value. Participants in ethnic tourism typically consist of curious and selective visitors who avoid popular tourist areas; this group is often motivated by elite approval and interest. In tourism literature, ethnic tourism and cultural tourism are frequently mentioned together. Cultural tourism encompasses travels aimed at discovering vanishing lifestyles that include local distinctions, traditional houses, hand-woven textiles, horse or ox carts, plows, and handicrafts. Destination activities consist of events such as dining in rural guesthouses, folklore shows, costumed wine festivals, or Wild West-style rodeo shows. However, since rural settlements are generally far from tourist resort areas, conflicts can arise between hosts and visitors. For instance, many visitors may independently visit villages to photograph villagers' lives, which can sometimes cause local people to react negatively to tourists (Smith, 1978).

According to Özyurt's (2021) compilation of studies on ethnic tourists' travel motivations, "learning" is identified as the most prominent and common motivation factor for ethnic tourists' travel. Learning motivation includes elements such as learning about local culture, understanding different cultures, gaining knowledge about local cultural heritage elements, learning ethnic handicrafts, discovering ethnic dance and music, learning about ethnic architecture, understanding the matriarchal structure of ethnic groups, exploring ethnic group history, and observing their daily life routines. Another important motivation is "culture." Within the scope of cultural motivation, tourists travel to observe local lifestyles, see ethnic groups' living spaces, and experience this firsthand. Another motivation for ethnic tourism is "personal development." Personal development motivation is related to tourists' aims of gaining new perspectives, enhancing personal growth, and establishing connections with the past. Additionally, "experience" is an

important motivation factor for ethnic tourists. Under experience motivation, tourists travel with goals such as having different experiences, seeking authentic experiences, and experiencing nostalgia. These motivations are shaped by factors such as "nature," "memory," "activities," "communication contact" (direct relationship and communication with ethnic communities), "ethnic cuisine," "consuming modern and postmodern tourism products evaluated under other categories," and "providing children with a different learning opportunity." Ethnic tourism considers the experience of cultures directly associated with ethnicity and ethnic groups, rather than local elements, as its primary source of motivation. In other words, ethnic tourism encompasses travels aimed at establishing direct connections with ethnic groups and exploring their cultures, rather than just specific local communities (Diker, 2019).

In North America, the term "tourism" is frequently used not only in place of "travel" but also "recreation." In fact, what is called tourism in Europe often means "outdoor activities" or simply "recreation" in many cases in North America. A report published by the Canadian government explicitly states that the terms "tourism" and "outdoor activities" are used synonymously. The terms "recreation" and "outdoor activities" are not only used in place of "tourism," but some authors also consider the term "tourism" less significant than "recreation." In this context, tourism (travel, outdoor activities) is seen as one of the forms of recreation, and mostly refers to "recreation that includes tourism" (Mieczkowski, 2023).

Cordes and Ibrahim (1999) believe that leisure time ranks above physiological needs, security needs, love needs, self-esteem, and self-actualization needs. They also argue that leisure time plays an important role in self-satisfaction and realizing personal potential. Self-actualization is one of the fundamental uses of leisure time shaped by recreation. Since the need for self-actualization expresses an individual's desire to realize their full potential and live life to the fullest, it directly aligns with recreational purposes. Through recreational activities, people can both meet their self-actualization needs and satisfy needs such as rest and entertainment. Therefore, individuals who lack recreational opportunities, meaning they cannot find the necessary freedom for self-actualization, generally experience unhappiness (Karakucuk, 1997). Gunn (1972) emphasized that individuals' values and interests play an important role in their recreation and tourism preferences, explaining why people prefer various natural and man-made attractions. Many values also encompass recreational activities experienced through outdoor activities. For example, many people attribute value to exotic, unusual, or rare things like seeing the Eiffel Tower or an erupting volcano. While individuals seeking challenging experiences aim to overcome

nature with human skill and power, those with cultural and educational curiosity are interested in museums, architectural structures, and minority cultures. Similarly, cultural and historical values such as the redwood forests in California or ghost towns attract people with the narratives offered by old structures. Leitner and Leitner (1996) provide examples of recreational activities that can meet each of the needs indicated by Maslow (1954). These are:

- Physiological needs: Running, cycling (exercise), eating outdoors (meeting basic needs such as hunger and thirst).
- Security needs: Sports with defined rules and boundaries such as tennis, volleyball, football (activities regularly conducted in a safe environment).
- Love and belonging needs: Volunteer work, membership in organizations and clubs, socializing (these activities strengthen social interaction and bonds between individuals).
- Self-esteem needs: Artistic activities (receiving praise for completed projects increases self-esteem), tennis (defeating an opponent creates a sense of personal achievement).
- Self-actualization needs: Theater, music performances (these activities allow individuals to develop themselves and reveal various talents).
- The relationships between tourism and recreation are fundamentally as follows (Karakucuk, 2014; Hazar, 2022):
- Both recreation and tourism utilize natural and human values as resources.
- Directing people in a region (locality, country, etc.) toward recreation contributes to both touristic recreation and domestic tourism.
- Recreational areas and activities conducted in these areas enliven animation services, making recreation an important part of the tourism product.
- Places and businesses providing recreational services offer leisure time opportunities for many tourists, positively affecting their length of stay.
- While time spent in tourism activities is not continuous, time allocated for entertainment and rest shows continuity.
- While economic income is the determining factor in tourism, personal happiness is the prominent value in recreation.

Recreational tourism activities are defined as voluntary activities that individuals engage in during their leisure time with complete willingness and satisfaction, which are enjoyable and have no negative effects (Shivers &

DeLisle, 1997). Recreational activities can be classified in relation to tourism as follows (Lawson & Band-Bovy, 1977):

- High-level socially comprehensive activities
- Culture and art-oriented activities
- Sports activities
- General outdoor activities

In periods when the concept of leisure time was not fully developed, leisure activities were generally limited to religious holidays, festivals, and celebrations. After antiquity, with the transition to the Middle Ages and subsequently the Industrial Revolution, there was a shift from agricultural society to urban society. The emergence of work and labor concepts during this process increased people's demand for leisure time. With this new understanding, recreational activities began to be considered among basic needs that must be met. With this change, societies' tendencies and desires to participate in recreational activities have been increasing over time (Karakucuk, 2014). Although leisure participation and habits can influence holiday and tourism behaviors, the main factor determining the connection between holiday and leisure time is tourism motivation. This is because tourism motivation is the most important element directly guiding holiday and tourism behaviors (Crompton, 1979; Iso-Ahola, 1983; Pearce & Caltabiano, 1983). According to Eagly and Chaiken (2005), while needs express a more general, ultimate state for people such as a good job and achieving specific goals, requirements define the goals or ultimate states that individuals aim to achieve. "Motivation" is the locomotive of reasons that guide thoughts and behaviors. Accordingly, although needs and reasons may seem similar, needs are more abstract while motivation is a more concrete concept. Additionally, some studies suggest that needs lead to motivation, and these motivations subsequently guide behaviors (McDonough & Crocker, 2007).

In conclusion, recreational tourism has become a source of happiness for people with all its functions. However, to properly realize the functions associated with recreational tourism, it is important to understand people's participation levels in such activities along with their real needs and expectations.

## **4. Methodology**

### **4.1. Purpose and Significance of the Research**

The objective of this research is to examine tourists' motivations for participating in rural tourism and ethnic-recreational tourism. In line with the study's purpose, it will analyze whether these motivation types differ

according to participants' demographic characteristics. The findings of the study are expected to make original contributions to the literature regarding leadership approaches in the hospitality sector and provide practical recommendations for sector stakeholders in developing process improvement strategies.

## **4.2. Research Method**

This study employed a survey technique from quantitative research methods. Following literature review, two different previously used and validated scales were utilized. The first scale is the "Rural Tourism Participation Motivation" scale developed by Frochot (2005), consisting of 13 items. The second is the "Ethnic-Recreational Tourism Participation Motivation" scale developed by Kim and Littrell (2001), comprising 8 items to perceive and measure the constructs. The scales were reviewed with expert academics' opinions. Additionally, questions regarding participants' demographic characteristics were included in accordance with the study's purpose. The scale items were designed in 5-point Likert type, where: 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (agree), and 5 (strongly agree).

Since it was not possible to apply the research to all potential tourists in Istanbul, it was decided to conduct the study on a specific sample. Convenience sampling, a non-random sampling method, was preferred. Surveys were administered online between 10.08.2023 – 30.02.2025. The survey was conducted with tourists over 18 years old, living in Istanbul, who volunteered for the study and were accessible. 390 valid surveys were analyzed in the study. The required ethics committee approval for data collection was obtained from Doguş University on 02.08.2023 with document number 2022/68.

## **4.3. Normality, Reliability, and Validity Analyses**

To examine the normal distribution of the "Rural Tourism Participation Motivation" scale developed by Frochot (2005) consisting of 13 items, descriptive test was applied, and the results showed that mean (3.5842) and median (3.7692) values were close; skewness (-0.486) and kurtosis (-0.983) values were within the desired range (+1.5 / -1.5). For the "Ethnic-Recreational Tourism Participation Motivation" scale developed by Kim and Littrell (2001) consisting of 8 items, the results were as follows: mean (3.4373) and median (3.5000) values were close; skewness (-0.225) and kurtosis (-0.935) values were within the desired range (+1.5 / -1.5). These

values falling within this range created a structure suitable for using "parametric" tests in relational analyses.

Cronbach's Alpha values of scale items were examined to test data reliability. Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.70 are sufficient for scale reliability (Büyüköztürk, 2013; Nunnally, 1978). As shown in Tables 1 and 2, Cronbach's Alpha values for each scale were greater than 0.70, indicating internal consistency of the scales.

**Table 1. Reliability Analysis of Rural Tourism Participation Motivation Scale**

Cronbach's Alpha	Items
,934	13

**Table 2. Reliability Analysis of Ethnic-Recreational Tourism Participation Motivation Scale**

Cronbach's Alpha	Items
,898	8

Factor analysis with Varimax rotation was conducted to make the data more explanatory and meaningful. Upon examination of the scales' variance and eigenvalue coefficients, their factorial explanatory power was found to be at satisfactory levels. Factor analysis results are presented in Tables 3 and 4.

**Table 3. Factor Analysis Results of the Motivation Scale for Participating in Tourism in Rural Areas**

Items	Factor Loadings
RAS - The desire to experience something previously undiscovered motivates me to participate in rural tourism	,626
RAS - The desire to learn about nature and wildlife motivates me to participate in rural tourism	,669
RAS - The desire to experience open space - rural life motivates me to participate in rural tourism	,782
RAS - The desire to be in nature and outdoors motivates me to participate in rural tourism	,791
RAS - The desire to discover scenic beauty motivates me to participate in rural tourism	,812
RAS - The desire to experience and learn about different cultures motivates me to participate in rural tourism	,771
RAS - The desire to meet local people motivates me to participate in rural tourism	,735
RAS - The desire to experience rural life motivates me to participate in rural tourism	,814
RAS - The desire to escape from my current location motivates me to participate in rural tourism	,738

RAS - The desire for relaxation motivates me to participate in rural tourism	,804
RAS - The desire for psychological relaxation motivates me to participate in rural tourism	,815
RAS - The desire to participate in adventures motivates me to participate in rural tourism	,755
RAS - The desire to engage in fitness and sports motivates me to participate in rural tourism	,624
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy: .851 Total Variance Explained: 56.504%	

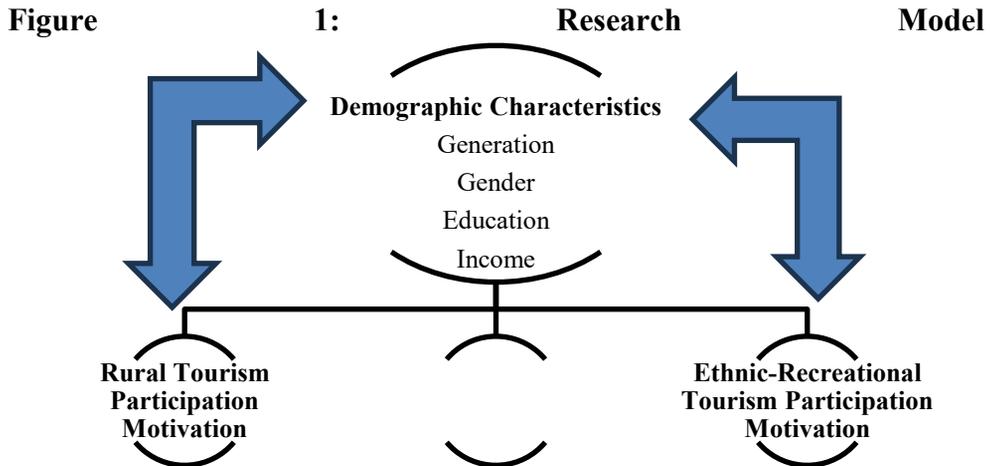
**Table 4. Factor Analysis Results of Ethnic-Recreational Tourism Participation Motivation Scale**

Items	Factor Loadings
ERTAS - The desire to visit ethnic unions and groups motivates me to participate in tourism	,788
ERTAS - The desire to attend ethnic or community festivals or fairs motivates me to participate in tourism	,803
ERTAS - The desire to meet interesting people different from myself motivates me to participate in tourism	,772
ERTAS - The desire to go shopping motivates me to participate in tourism	,739
ERTAS - The desire to visit recreational theme parks for tours and sports motivates me to participate in tourism	,771
ERTAS - The desire to bring back souvenirs from the journey motivates me to participate in tourism	,756
ERTAS - The desire to participate in nighttime entertainment such as dancing or nightclubs motivates me to participate in tourism	,739
ERTAS - The desire to take a complete package tour motivates me to participate in tourism	,752
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy: .916 Total Variance Explained: 58.560%	

In the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, the "Rural Tourism Participation Motivation" scale value was found to be .851, and the "Ethnic-Recreational Tourism Participation Motivation" scale value was .916. The significant value ( $p=0.000$ ) of the scales indicates the suitability of the data distributions for the research.

#### 4.4. Data Analysis and Findings

This section presents the results of correlational and descriptive analyses. Variables will also be examined according to demographic expressions. The research model and developed hypotheses are as follows.



Main Hypothesis H<sub>1</sub>: Participants' motivation to participate in rural tourism has a positive structure.

Main Hypothesis H<sub>2</sub>: Participants' motivation to participate in ethnic-recreational tourism has a positive structure.

Main Hypothesis H<sub>3</sub>: Participants' motivation to participate in rural tourism differs according to their demographic characteristics.

Sub-Hypotheses:

- H<sub>3a</sub>: Participants' motivation to participate in rural tourism differs according to their generation.
- H<sub>3b</sub>: Participants' motivation to participate in rural tourism differs according to their gender.
- H<sub>3c</sub>: Participants' motivation to participate in rural tourism differs according to their educational status.
- H<sub>3d</sub>: Participants' motivation to participate in rural tourism differs according to their income level.

Main Hypothesis H<sub>4</sub>: Participants' motivation to participate in ethnic-recreational tourism differs according to their demographic characteristics.

Sub-Hypotheses:

- H4a: Participants' motivation to participate in ethnic-recreational tourism differs according to their generation.
- H4b: Participants' motivation to participate in ethnic-recreational tourism differs according to their gender.
- H4c: Participants' motivation to participate in ethnic-recreational tourism differs according to their educational status.
- H4d: Participants' motivation to participate in ethnic-recreational tourism differs according to their income level.

The testing of hypotheses and interpretation of analyses are presented below.

**Table 5. Frequency Analysis Results for H<sub>1</sub> – H<sub>2</sub> Hypotheses**

<b>Rural Tourism Participation Motivation Statements</b>	<b>Rural Tourism Participation Motivation Statement Mean Values</b>	<b>Ethnic-Recreational Tourism Participation Motivation Statements</b>	<b>Ethnic-Recreational Tourism Participation Motivation Statement Mean Values</b>
RAS - The desire to experience something undiscovered motivates me to participate in rural tourism.	3.3282	ERTAS - The desire to visit ethnic associations and groups motivates me to participate in tourism.	3.4359
RAS - The desire to learn about nature and wildlife motivates me to participate in rural tourism.	3.4333	ERTAS - The desire to participate in ethnic or community festivals or fairs motivates me to participate in tourism.	3.5436
RAS - The desire to experience open space - rural life motivates me to participate in rural tourism.	3.6103	ERTAS - The desire to meet interesting people different from myself motivates me to participate in tourism.	3.5256
RAS - The desire to be in nature and outdoors motivates me to participate in rural tourism.	3.5179	ERTAS - The desire to shop motivates me to participate in tourism.	3.2846
RAS - The desire to explore visual beauties motivates me to	3.7949	ERTAS - The desire to visit recreational theme parks with tours and sports	3.4590

participate in rural tourism.		motivates me to participate in tourism.	
RAS - The desire to experience and learn about different cultures motivates me to participate in rural tourism.	3.7487	ERTAS - The desire to bring back souvenirs from the journey motivates me to participate in tourism.	3.4590
RAS - The desire to meet local people motivates me to participate in rural tourism.	3.5462	ERTAS - The desire to participate in nighttime entertainment such as dancing or nightclubs motivates me to participate in tourism.	3.1513
RAS - The desire to experience rural life motivates me to participate in rural tourism.	3.6333	ERTAS - The desire to take a complete package tour motivates me to participate in tourism.	3.5615
RAS - The desire to escape from my current location motivates me to participate in rural tourism.	3.5308		
RAS - The desire for relaxation motivates me to participate in rural tourism.	3.7333		
RAS - The desire for psychological relaxation motivates me to participate in rural tourism.	3.7513		
RAS - The desire to participate in adventures motivates me to participate in rural tourism.	3.5308		
RAS - The desire to engage in fitness and sports motivates me to participate in rural tourism.	3.2385		
<b>Statement Scale Mean</b>	<b>3.5690</b>	<b>Statement Scale Mean</b>	<b>3.4276</b>

In this study, participants' responses to various statements regarding their motivations for participating in rural tourism and ethnic-recreational tourism were evaluated. The statements measuring rural tourism participation motivation generally exhibited high mean values. Among the motivation statements with the highest levels of participant agreement were "desire to explore visual beauties" ( $X=3,79$ ), "desire for psychological relaxation" ( $X=3,75$ ), and "desire to experience and learn about different cultures" ( $X=3,75$ ). Overall, the motivation level for rural areas was found to be relatively high with a mean of 3,57.

Regarding ethnic-recreational tourism motivation statements, the highest mean values were observed in "desire to participate in ethnic or community festivals or fairs" ( $X=3,54$ ) and "desire to take a complete package tour" ( $X=3,56$ ). However, some statements such as "desire to participate in nighttime entertainment" ( $X=3,15$ ) and "desire to shop" ( $X=3,28$ ) indicated lower motivation levels. The overall motivation level for ethnic-recreational tourism was found to be relatively lower compared to rural tourism, with a mean of 3,43. These findings indicate that participants are more highly motivated by nature-based, cultural, and psychological relaxation-oriented rural experiences, while in ethnic-recreational tourism, their interests predominantly focus on cultural events and organized tours.

**Table 6. Analyses for Differentiation Detection of H<sub>3</sub> Main and Sub-Hypotheses**

<b>T-Test Analysis for Rural Tourism Participation Motivation According to Participants' Gender</b>					
Mean	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for Equality of Means		
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	3,216	,074	1,208	388	,228

<b>ANOVA Homogeneity and Significance Analysis for Rural Tourism Participation Motivation Differences According to Participants' Educational Status</b>					
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	P		
15,560	3	386	,000		
	Mean.	df	Mean Square	F	P
Between Groups	19,354	3	6,451	9,284	,000
Within Groups	268,217	386	,695		
Total	287,570	389			

<b>ANOVA Homogeneity and Significance Analysis for Rural Tourism Participation Motivation Structures According to Participants' Income Levels</b>					
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	P		
11,387	4	385	,000		
	Mean	df	Mean Square	F	P

Between Groups	38,881	4	9,720	15,048	,000
Within Groups	248,689	385	,646		
Total	287,570	389			
<b>ANOVA Homogeneity and Significance Analysis for Rural Tourism Participation Motivation Structures According to Participants' Generations</b>					
<b>Levene Statistic</b>	<b>df1</b>	<b>df2</b>	<b>P</b>		
7,984	2	387	,000		
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P</b>
Between Groups	22,832	2	11,416	16,688	,000
Within Groups	264,739	387	,684		
Total	287,570	389			

T-test analysis was conducted to examine rural tourism participation motivation based on participants' gender. The Levene's test value (0.074) met the expected homogeneity threshold ( $P > 0.05$ ). In the significance analysis, the Sig value ( $P = 0.228$ ) did not meet the required coefficient ( $P < 0.05$ ). Consequently, hypothesis H3a was not supported. The analysis revealed no significant motivational differences between males and females regarding rural tourism participation.

In the ANOVA Test conducted within the research framework, the homogeneity coefficient (0.000) obtained based on participants' educational status did not meet the statistically significant homogeneity threshold ( $p > 0.05$ ). The significance value ( $p = 0.000$ ) was found to be below the critical threshold ( $p < 0.05$ ) in the analysis for detecting significance differences. In light of these findings, hypothesis H3b was accepted. Dunnett C - Post Hoc analysis, preferred for non-homogeneous variance conditions, was applied to examine intergroup differences in detail. The analysis results revealed a statistically significant and notable difference between participants with associate degrees and those with bachelor's degrees or high school and lower levels of education. These individuals demonstrated lower motivation for participating in rural tourism compared to others.

The analyses conducted within the research scope revealed that the homogeneity assumption was not met in the evaluation based on participants' income levels ( $p = 0.000$ ). Moreover, when examining the significance level, the obtained value ( $p = 0.000$ ) was observed to be below the generally accepted threshold in social sciences ( $p < 0.05$ ). Based on these findings, hypothesis H3c was supported. Dunnett's C - Post Hoc analysis, preferred for heterogeneous variance conditions, was applied to examine intergroup differences in detail. The analysis results revealed a statistically significant and notable difference between participants who perceived their income level as poor and those who considered it moderate, good, or very good. Individuals

with poor income levels demonstrated lower motivation for rural tourism participation compared to those with good income levels.

ANOVA Homogeneity analysis was applied according to the participants' generational variable, and the data was found to show non-homogeneous distribution ( $P = 0.000$ ). The significance value obtained from the analysis ( $P = 0.000$ ) was consistent with the generally accepted significance threshold in social sciences of  $P < 0.05$ . In light of these findings, hypothesis H3d was statistically supported. According to the Dunnett C - Post Hoc test used in non-homogeneous difference analyses, Generation Z showed significantly different motivation structures from all other generations, as did Generation X and Generation Y from all other generations. Rural tourism participation motivation was found to be notably high in Generation Z, followed by moderate levels in Generation Y, and comparatively lower but still moderate levels in other generations.

**Table 7. Analyses for Detecting Differences in H4 Main and Sub-Hypotheses**

<b>T-Test Analysis for Differentiation of Ethnic-Recreational Tourism Participation Motivation Structures According to Participants' Gender</b>					
Mean	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for Equality of Means		
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	,053	,817	-,233	388	,816
<b>ANOVA Homogeneity and Significance Analysis for Differentiation of Ethnic-Recreational Tourism Participation Motivation Structures According to Participants' Educational Status</b>					
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	P		
6,685	3	386	,000		
	Mean	df	Mean Square	F	P
Between Groups	13,873	3	4,624	5,730	,001
Within Groups	311,519	386	,807		
Total	325,391	389			
<b>ANOVA Homogeneity and Significance Analysis for Differentiation of Ethnic-Recreational Tourism Participation Motivation Structures According to Participants' Income Levels</b>					
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	P		
,811	4	385	,518		
	Mean	df	Mean Square	F	P
Between Groups	48,193	4	12,048	16,734	,000
Within Groups	277,198	385	,720		
Total	325,391	389			
<b>ANOVA Homogeneity and Significance Analysis for Differentiation of Ethnic-Recreational Tourism Participation Motivation Structures According to Participants' Generations</b>					

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	P		
,228	2	387	,797		
	Mean	df	Mean Square	F	P
Between Groups	10,584	2	5,292	6,505	,002
Within Groups	314,808	387	,813		
Total	325,391	389			

A significance T-test analysis was conducted to examine differences in ethnic-recreational tourism participation motivation structures based on participants' gender. The T-test analysis revealed that the Levene's value (0.817) did not meet the expected homogeneity threshold ( $P > 0.05$ ). In the significance analysis, the Sig value ( $P = 0.816$ ) did not meet the required coefficient ( $P < 0.05$ ). Consequently, hypothesis H4a was not supported.

In the analyses conducted within the scope of the research, the homogeneity coefficient (0.000) obtained according to participants' educational status did not meet the statistically significant homogeneity threshold ( $p > 0.05$ ). The significance value ( $p = 0.001$ ) from the analysis for detecting significance differences was found to be below the critical threshold ( $p < 0.05$ ). In light of these findings, hypothesis H4b was accepted. To examine intergroup differences in detail, Dunnett C - Post Hoc analysis, preferred for non-homogeneous variance conditions, was applied. Analysis results revealed a statistically significant and distinct difference between participants with bachelor's degrees and those with associate degrees. These individuals demonstrated higher motivation structures for participating in ethnic-recreational tourism compared to others. Based on the analyses conducted within the research scope, the homogeneity assumption was met in the evaluation according to participants' income levels ( $p = 0.518 > 0.05$ ). Moreover, when examining the significance level, the obtained value ( $p = 0.000$ ) met the generally accepted threshold in social sciences ( $p < 0.05$ ). In light of these findings, hypothesis H4c was supported. To examine intergroup differences in detail, Tukey HSD - Post Hoc analysis, preferred for homogeneous variance conditions, was applied. Analysis results revealed a statistically significant and distinct difference between participants with very good income levels and those with medium, poor, and very poor levels. These individuals demonstrated higher perceived motivation structures for participating in ethnic-recreational tourism compared to others.

ANOVA Homogeneity analysis was applied according to participants' generation variable, and the data was found to show a homogeneous distribution ( $P = 0.797$ ). The significance value obtained from the analysis ( $P = 0.002$ ) was found to be consistent with the generally accepted significance threshold in social sciences of  $P < 0.05$ . In light of these findings, hypothesis

H4d was statistically supported. According to the Tukey HSD - Post Hoc test used in homogeneous difference analyses, Generation Z was found to have significantly lower motivations for participating in ethnic and recreational tourism compared to Generation X.

## **Results and Recommendations**

According to the study results, no significant gender-based differences were observed in tourists' motivations for participating in rural tourism. However, differences were identified based on educational status, income level, and generational cohorts. Individuals with lower income levels were found to have lower motivations for participating in rural tourism compared to those with higher incomes. This finding aligns with Hall and Müller's (2004) results, which demonstrated that socioeconomic status influences tourism participation. In the generational analysis, Generation Z exhibited significantly different motivational structures compared to Generations X and Y. Generation Z showed the highest motivation for rural tourism participation, followed by Generation Y. This supports the increasing interest of younger generations in nature and sustainable tourism. Similarly Hurma et al. (2016) indicated that younger generations possess higher motivation towards rural tourism orientation. Based on these results, it is recommended to develop target audience-focused promotion and marketing strategies for rural tourism, particularly appealing to youth. Future studies would benefit from examining the underlying socio-cultural factors of intergenerational differences in greater depth.

When examining tourists' motivations for ethnic-recreational tourism participation, no significant gender-based differences were found; however, significant variations were observed across educational status, income level, and generations. Motivational differences were noted between undergraduate and associate degree graduates, with higher-income individuals showing greater motivation. This finding corresponds with Yıldız and Dogan's (2019) study on cultural tourism participation. Generationally, Generation Z demonstrated lower participation motivation in ethnic-recreational tourism compared to Generation X. This indicates that young tourists may have limited interest in cultural heritage and authentic experiences. Similarly, Yilmazer et al. (2024) analysis of intergenerational cultural tourism motivation found Generation Z's interest in this area to be lower. Conversely, Generation X tourists showed higher interest in ethnic-recreational tourism. This is thought to be influenced by intergenerational differences in values and lifestyles. In this context, communication strategies emphasizing cultural richness, sustainability, and multifaceted experiences should be developed to

increase Generation Z's interest. For Generation X, which shows high motivation, themed tourism products integrating local values and meeting their expectations and comfort levels can be designed. Finally, qualitative research to reveal the reasons for Generation Z's low motivation towards ethnic-recreational tourism would contribute to developing sectoral strategies.

Based on the findings of this study, special communication and promotion strategies should be developed for Generations Z and Y, who show high motivation for rural tourism participation. Considering young generations' intensive use of digital and social media platforms, original content highlighting nature experiences, sustainability, and adventure themes in rural tourism should be produced. This can increase participation rates by attracting young tourists' interest. Additionally, it is important to offer affordable and flexible tour packages to facilitate access to rural tourism for individuals with lower income levels. This can create a more inclusive tourism policy by reducing participation barriers caused by socioeconomic differences.

Considering Generation X's higher interest in ethnic-recreational tourism motivations, themed tourism products suitable for this generation's expectations and comfort levels should be designed. Tours offering comfortable and special experiences integrated with local culture can further increase Generation X tourists' interest. On the other hand, Generation Z's low motivation towards this type of tourism indicates young tourists' limited interest in cultural heritage and local traditions. Therefore, to increase Generation Z's interest, the cultural richness, sustainability, and multifaceted experiences offered by ethnic-recreational tourism should be highlighted through interactive and technological methods. For example, cultural heritage experiences can be presented digitally through augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) applications to increase young people's interest in this area.

Education and awareness activities are also important for better understanding tourists' varying motivations across different generations. Raising awareness among young generations about cultural heritage and sustainable tourism can increase interest in ethnic-recreational tourism in the long term. Additionally, organizing training programs for business and destination managers in the tourism sector on intergenerational differences and motivational structures can facilitate the development of marketing and service strategies accordingly.

Finally, it is recommended to conduct qualitative studies to investigate the underlying causes of intergenerational differences in greater depth. Particularly, identifying the reasons for Generation Z's low motivation towards ethnic-recreational tourism will enhance the effectiveness of

strategies implemented in the sector. Furthermore, conducting applied research addressing experience design, technological innovations, and sustainability themes together will contribute to making tourism products more attractive to younger generations.

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