

The effect of sports tourism and recreation sector perception on student career plans

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Abstract

In this study, the effects of the recreation and sports tourism perception formed by the 3rd and 4th grade students, who take recreation and sports tourism courses at Marmara University Sports Sciences Faculty by taking place in the sector as a customer or employee as well as the education they get at the university, on their career plans are investigated. During the study, the quantitative research method was adopted and the questionnaire that Olcay and Düzgün (14) used in their study is utilized. As a result of the study carried out with the sample group of 70 people in order to see which gender is more suitable for the sector, no significant difference was found among the students who were considering to choose recreation and sports tourism as their career targets. There was also no significant difference between sexes regarding the negative impact of irregular and intense working conditions of the sector on family. In addition, in terms of career, it has been found that the ratio of those who see the sector as suitable for being employed for long times high. As a result of the analysis carried out at this high rate, the amount of those who think about graduate education calls attention.

Key words: Sports tourism, recreation, career planning.

INTRODUCTION

Today, sports tourism is one of the most demanded types of tourism. In particular, with the disappearance of borders, by making appropriate planning, almost everyone can participate in sports tourism organizations actively or as an audience. In the simplest terms, sports tourism can be defined as a type of tourism created by those who travel for the purpose of sporting activities. According to Weed (12), sports tourism is a journey for the purpose of participating in and watching sports activities away from home. Gibson (8) explained sports tourism as an active participation in sports activities or as an audience for recreation purposes by moving away from the place where people reside. Activities for sports tourism are carried out in 3 ways. The first way is for those who will participate in sport activities, the second one is for those who will not participate in sports activities but just as an audience, and the third one is for those who are not active athletes but want to participate in sports activities. (15). Sports tourism includes all sports activities with active and passive participation, casual or planned participation, and travels from home or work (1).

The importance of customer satisfaction will be better understood considering that the revenue

generated in the sector is 32 percent of the world total tourism activity (10). The adequacy of the trained personnel enables the tourists to receive services at the level they expect. Qualified personnel can only be trained by high-quality education of tourism (2).

In this study, the effects of the recreation and sports tourism perception of the 3rd and 4th grade students, who take recreation and sports tourism courses at Marmara University Sports Sciences Faculty by individually practicing in the sector as well as the education they get at the university, on their career plans are investigated.

The first known study on sports tourism is the study done by the Central Council for Physical Recreation in 1966, in which sport is included in tourism (13).

Olcay and Düzgün (14) examined the impact of the employment quality of tourism on the students' career plans and, as a result, it was observed that the students are willing to be employed in the tourism sector in the future. Students think that having a career in the sector will earn them respect.

In the study of Baltacı et al. (4) to determine the future perspectives of the students who study

tourism, it was found that the future anxiety of male students is higher than that of females.

Aymankuy (3) observed that the students who prefer undergraduate tourism education at their own will regard the tourism sector and the career in the sector more positively.

Richardson (16) examined the career attitudes of students in tourism undergraduate programs in Australia and found that more than half of those surveyed did not plan a career in the field of tourism. As a justification to this issue, students have pointed out working hour, wage and promotion problems.

In the study of Roney and Öztin (17) on the career perceptions of undergraduate students in tourism, it was found that only a quarter of the participants regards the sector as a respectable profession.

Duman et al. (6) reached a conclusion that the undergraduate, associate degree and high school students who study tourism want to have a career in the sector; however, they regard the working conditions of the sector negatively.

Türker et al. (19) reached a conclusion in their study that students think the money they earn from the sector extremely inadequate.

Hypothesis of Research

There are intense working conditions in the sports tourism and recreation sector. The thing examined in our study is whether there is a significant difference between females and males in terms of the suitability of employment in the sector according to gender.

H1 : There is a significant difference between females and males in the suitability of employment in the sport tourism and recreation sector according to gender.

A person may not show enough interest in himself and his family due to the workload. Therefore, the second hypothesis is constructed to examine the significant difference between female and male employees in terms of their inability to take care of their families due to the intensive workload.

H2 : There is a significant difference between females and males in terms of the effect of working conditions on family life in the sport tourism and recreation sector.

Although this sector includes recreational and leisure elements, it can cause an employed person in the sector to look for a job in other fields due to difficult working conditions (11). Individuals who want to work in this field for a long time must have some differences to separate themselves from other colleagues in order to be able to be employed in the higher levels under better conditions. Graduate education is one of these differences. In addition to the education received during the undergraduate period, with the completion of the graduate education, the individual will possibly be regarded as an expert in his/her job and receive a promotion. Since the difficulties and burdens of the job are done by lower-ranking employees, graduate education is considered as an important factor for working many years in the sector.

H3 : There is a significant difference between those who want to receive a graduate degree and those who do not in terms of their ideas whether the sports tourism and recreation industry is suitable for being employed for long years.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

This research was carried out by applying a questionnaire to a sample size of 70 people who take sports tourism and recreation courses at the Marmara University Faculty of Sports Sciences out of a population size of 250. All the polls were valid and evaluated. In the study, the questionnaire, utilized by Olcay and Düzgün (14) in their study, is used.

Participants in the questionnaire were selected mainly from 3rd and 4th grade students since they would be graduated soon and the professional path they would choose was more prominent than that of the lower grades. Students who were enrolled in the previous years and who did not attend classes despite the fact that they were still students, were not included in the questionnaire. Furthermore, the first and second grades were not included in the study because they were less likely to be interested in work life than the upper grades. It is accepted as the reason of this thought that the student who comes to the graduation stage set more concrete goals than the student who has just entered the school and wants to be in the business life as soon as possible (18).

The questionnaire consists of 17 questions and includes 6 dimensions of career perception. The

questionnaire was prepared in the form of 5-degree Likert Scale.

Marking on the form is prepared as "1=Definitely Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Definitely Agree". As mentioned above, 6 dimensions of career perception are considered for accurate evaluations of the results. 6 dimensions include "Employment and Working Conditions, Perception of the Society towards the Sector, Career Expectations, Education, Wage and Gender.

The data were evaluated by the SPSS program and Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was calculated for the reliability of the measurement. After seeing that the results are appropriate, normal distribution tests were applied to the data to see if they show normal distribution. After realizing that the normality test data obtained were in the range of appropriate values, the validity of the hypotheses was checked by performing independent sample t test from the parametric tests in the scope of the research.

INTERPRETATION OF ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The results of the questionnaires were analyzed in SPSS 14 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Cronbach's Alpha coefficient value was used to test the reliability of the measurement (5). As a result, Cronbach's Alpha value of 17 questions in the questionnaire is calculated as 0,714. The alpha value takes the value between 0 and 1 and it is desirable that an acceptable value should be at least 0,7. In some sources related to the subject it is stated that, if the value of alpha coefficient is 0,00-0,39, the scale is not reliable, if it is 0,40-0,59, the reliability is low, if it is 0,60-0,79, the reliability is high and if it is 0,80-1,00, the scale is evaluated as having high reliability (2). As a result, it is possible to say that the measurement is quite reliable when all the questions in the questionnaire are taken into consideration.

Normality tests of the data is done and it is found that the independent variables examined in the hypothesis are normally distributed since skewness and kurtosis values of the variables range between -2 and +2 (7). Therefore, the examination of the hypotheses created for the research is seen to provide the necessary conditions for the continuation of parametric test applications which

give stronger statistical results than nonparametric tests. In this context, the most frequently used Independent Sample T Test was used in order to check whether there is a significant difference between two different sample groups by comparing their mean values.

According to Table-1, 38.6% of the students are female and 61.4% are male. When the demand for graduate education is examined, 61.4% of the students want to receive graduate degree and 38.6% of them state that they do not plan graduate degree. When we look at the cross-table values, 32.5% of those who want to receive graduate degree are female and 67.5% of those are male. When working background in the sports tourism and recreation is considered, it is seen that 30% of the participants worked in the sector before, 70% of them did not. When this comparative ratio is examined, it is measured that the proportion of female students who have worked in the sports tourism and recreation sector before is 42,8% while the proportion of male students is 57,2%.

Table 1. Information indicating the gender of the participants, the request for graduate education and previous working status in the sector.

Gender Status	Frequency (n)		Percent (%)	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Gender Status	Female	27	38.6	
	Male	43	61.4	
Request for graduate education	Yes	Female: 14	32.5	
		Male: 29	67.5	
		Total: 43	61.4	
	No	Female: 13	48.1	
		Male: 14	51.9	
		Total: 27	38.6	
Working status in the sports tourism and recreation sector before	Yes	Female: 9	42.8	
		Male: 12	57.2	
		Total: 21	30.0	
	No	Female: 18	36.7	
		Male: 31	63.3	
		Total: 49	70.0	
Reason for choosing this field	Voluntarily	Female: 23	36.5	
		Male: 40	63.5	
		Total: 63	90	
	For other reasons	Female: 4	57.1	
		Male: 3	42.9	
		Total: 7	10	

Table 2. Table of suitability of employment in the sports tourism and recreation sector for males

Gender	N	avg.	ss	t	sd	P
Female	27	3.44	1.121	.743	68	.460
Male	43	3.63	.926			

According to the t-test conducted to examine whether working in the sports tourism and recreation sector has a significant difference between females and males in terms of suitability of employment according to gender, and it was determined that there is no significant difference between the sexes in terms of being employed in the sector. [t(68)=0,743, p>0,05] and [t(68)=1,316, p>0,05]. In this context, the H1 hypothesis, which suggests that there is a significant difference between females and males

Table 4. Independent T-Test results for the effect of the working conditions of the sector on family life by gender.

Gender	N	avg.	ss	t	sd	p
Female	27	2,89	1,311	,018	68	,985
Male	43	2,88	1,028			

According to t-test conducted to examine the effects of working conditions of the sports tourism and recreation sector on family life, it was found that there is no significant difference between the females and males in terms of the effects of the intensive working conditions of the sector on family life [t (68) = 0.018, p > 0.05]. In this context, the H2 hypothesis, which argues that there is a significant difference between the females and males in the negative effects of the sports tourism and the recreation sector on family life due to intense working conditions, is rejected.

Table 3. Table of suitability of employment in the sports tourism and recreation sector for females

Gender	N	avg.	ss	t	sd	P
Female	27	3,67	,961	1,316	68	,193
Male	43	3,35	,997			

in the suitability of employment in the sport tourism and recreation in terms of gender, is rejected.

The second hypothesis of the study, which argues that there is a significant difference between females and males in terms of the effects of working conditions on family life in the sports tourism and recreation sector, was applied to independent sample t test. The relevant data as a result of the test are shown in Table-4.

The independent sample t test was applied to the H3 hypothesis, which argues that there is a significant difference between those who want to receive a graduate degree and those who do not in terms of their ideas whether the sports tourism and recreation industry is suitable for being employed for long years. The relevant data as a result of the test are shown in Table-5.

Table 5. Independent T-Test results between those who want to receive a graduate degree and those who do not in terms of their ideas whether the sports tourism and recreation industry is suitable for being employed for long years.

Gender	N	avg.	ss	t	sd	p
Female	27	3.40	1.050	1.133	68	.261
Male	43	3.11	.974			

Table 5, it was found that there is no significant difference between the students who want to receive

a graduate degree and those who do not in terms of their ideas whether the sports tourism and recreation industry is suitable for being employed for long years. [T(68)=1.133, p>0.05]. In this context, the H3 hypothesis, which argues that there is a meaningful difference between those who want to receive a graduate degree and those who do not in terms of their ideas whether the sports tourism and recreation industry is suitable for being employed for long years, is rejected.

Table 6. Independent T Test Table, which examines the significant differences between sexes in all dimensions.

	Gender	N	avg.	ss.	t	sd	p
1. DIMENSION of EMPLOYMENT and WORKING							
It has irregular and long working hours.	Female	27	3.19	1.111	.521	68	.604
	Male	43	3.05	1.068	.516	53.740	.608
Working conditions negative affects family life.	Female	27	2.89	1.311	.018	68	.985
	Male	43	2.88	1.028	.017	45.753	.986
It is harder than working in other sectors.	Female	27	3.00	1.177	-.087	68	.931
	Male	43	3.02	1.035	-.084	50.074	.933
Being a seasonal job is not good for my career.	Female	27	2.67	1.109	-2.380	68	.020
	Male	43	3.28	1.008	-2.328	51.382	.024
Working is fun and enjoyable.	Female	27	3.96	1.091	.218	68	.828
	Male	43	3.91	1.019	.214	52.526	.831
2. DIMENSION of CAREER							
I'm glad I'm going to choose this sector as a career path.	Female	27	3.11	1.155	.893	68	.375
	Male	43	2.88	.956	.855	47.741	.397
This sector provides the opportunity to use my skills.	Female	27	3.37	1.079	-.101	68	.920
	Male	43	3.40	.955	-.098	50.299	.922
The sector is suitable for working long years.	Female	27	3.41	1.010	.786	68	.435
	Male	43	3.21	1.036	.791	56.470	.432
Working in this sector does not cause boredom.	Female	27	3.26	1.259	.183	68	.856
	Male	43	3.21	1.013	.174	46.681	.863
3. DIMENSION OF PERCEPTION TOWARDS SECTOR							
Working in this sector gives the individual respectability.	Female	27	3.74	.859	1.636	68	.106
	Male	43	3.37	.952	1.676	59.607	.099
Working in this sector gives the individual responsibility.	Female	27	3.93	1.072	-.226	68	.822
	Male	43	3.98	.801	-.212	44.105	.833
4. DIMENSION OF EDUCATION							
Education is required to work in this sector.	Female	27	3.96	1.018	-.232	68	.817
	Male	43	4.02	1.080	-.236	57.830	.815
Career opportunities are quite high.	Female	27	3.70	.869	1.685	68	.097
	Male	43	3.37	.757	1.632	49.682	.109
5. DIMENSION of WAGE							
Wages are higher than in other sectors.	Female	27	3.00	1.038	-.241	68	.810
	Male	43	3.05	.575	-.213	36.174	.832
It is easy to find a job in this sector.	Female	27	3.19	.962	-.235	68	.815
	Male	43	3.23	.718	-.220	44.043	.827
6. DIMENSION of GENDER							
This sector is suitable for men to work.	Female	27	3.44	1.121	-.743	68	.460
	Male	43	3.63	.926	-.711	47.659	.480
This sector is suitable for women to work.	Female	27	3.67	.961	1.316	68	.193
	Male	43	3.35	.997	1.328	56.943	.190

As a result of independent t test analysis of dimensions including the employment and working conditions, career expectations, the perception of the

society towards the sector, education, wage, gender and as well as sub-dimensions, Table-6 did not reveal any significant differences between the sexes. This shows that, in our male dominated society,

females' participation in this sector is not a problem for both females and males, on the contrary their participation is supported.

CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION

In this study, the perception formed by the undergraduate students who take sports tourism and recreation courses in universities towards the sector they are relatively accustomed to is analyzed and its effect on their career planning is examined.

According to Table-1, 90% of those who participated in the questionnaire stated that they have chosen their fields of education at their own will. In this way, it is understood that the students in this study have chosen their fields of education completely voluntarily. Of the 70 students in the sample group, 27 (38.6%) were female and 43 were male (61.4%). In the tests carried out to examine whether there is a significant difference between female and male in the suitability of the sports tourism and recreation sector according to gender, it was found that there is no significant difference between the sexes in terms of the suitability of employment in the sector according to Table-2 and Table-3. In other words, there is no evidence that working as a male or female creates any advantage or disadvantage in the sector.

When the questionnaire results are analyzed, the high rate of indecisiveness in the career dimension attracts attention. In particular, the indecisiveness dimension of the sport tourism and recreation sector being chosen as a career path coincides with the studies of Olcay (14), Turker et al. (19) and Köşker (11).

In addition, in the analysis of whether the perception of tourism by gender makes a difference, our study supports the studies of Roney and Ozdin (17) and Güzel, et al. (9). However, our study does not comply with the results of Aymankuy (3), in which the perception differs in terms of gender.

According to Table-6, within the scope of employment and working conditions, students think that there are irregular and long working hours in the sector and that due to seasonal characteristics, the sector poses a danger to their careers. Despite these negativities, they suggest that their work will not adversely affect their family life. In addition, they think that it is very enjoyable and fun to work in the sports tourism and recreation sector.

In terms of career expectations, the indecisiveness of the students calls attention. The reason for hesitation in choosing this sector as a career path may be that the sport tourism and recreation sector in our country is just started to prosper. It should not be forgotten that a certain period of time has passed even in order to understand the purpose of recreation departments opened in our country in 2000 (20). Therefore, the indecisiveness of students in career planning in this developing sector should be taken into consideration in this context.

In the perception dimension of the society towards the sector, students think that the sport tourism and recreation sector gives them prestige. This positive view is considered to be effective on the students' career planning.

From the educational point of view, it is widely accepted that education is necessary to be employed in the sector. This emphasis of the students on the education shows the degree of importance they give to sports tourism and recreation. It is promising for students to be aware of the importance of being an educated personnel in this sector where they are expected to work individually after graduation.

When the study is addressed from the wage dimension, it appears that wage is one of the greatest indecisiveness among the responders. It is considered that the reason for this issue is that the sector is still new in the market. Although the students are educated on the subject, it is considered that this indecisiveness is due to the unrooted nature of our country in the field of sports tourism and recreation.

As a result of analysis of sports tourism and recreation performed on the gender dimension, no significant difference was found between the females and males in the sector.

It is necessary to state that there are some limitations of the research. One of the limitations is that although there are enough documents and studies on tourism in the literature, there is not enough work in the sports tourism and recreation. Another limitation is that the research is limited only to students studying at Marmara University. It is expected that with similar studies from other universities offering education in the sports tourism and recreation, this subject will be rich in terms of literature.

This research is a modest study to enrich literature about the subject in order to guide people who will work in this field in the future. Being carried out in only one university, in one province and lack of previous similar studies constitute the limitations of the research. With a detailed study to be carried out with the participation of students in other universities in Turkey, it is considered to be useful to examine the career perceptions of undergraduate students towards sports tourism and recreation sector by measuring the differences and common points of the students by means of criteria such as course contents, sports tourism events degrees in the region and so on.

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