

Tourism Development in Mountainous Regions, Social Structure's Point of View; Advantages and Disadvantages, Erzurum/Turkey Case Area

Dağlık Alanların Turizm ile Gelişiminde Sosyal Yapıdan Kaynaklanan Avantajlar ve Dezavantajlar; Erzurum/Türkiye Örnek Alanı

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Abstract: Mountainous regions have a global importance with their potentials like difficult topography, changing climate, biological, cultural and ethnical diversities, unique landscape values. However, despite to all the positive qualities, mountainous areas are less developed in many parts of the world due to some limitations caused by above listed values. There are too many researches done on how the sustainable development, particularly in mountainous areas can be realized, and different development models for mountainous areas are proposed. Tourism based development models are one of the most preferable development methods for the mountainous areas because of their characteristics. The social structure of the society is also an important component for the development in any situation and for every type of development model. For this reason this paper will try to analyze the effects of social qualities with both positive and negative effects. After a brief theoretical introduction of the topic, and a short description of the case area, the social indicators of sustainable tourism will be discussed. The indicators which are directly related with the social structure of the local society, like gender distribution, age pattern, education level are measured with questionnaires in Erzurum case study area for tourism sector. The observational results which are getting by interviews are also discussed. In conclusion, based on the results obtained, in development of mountainous areas the advantages and disadvantages, due to the social structure, will be discussed and practical suggestions will be evaluated.

Key words: Sustainable tourism development, mountainous regions, social indicators, Erzurum, Turkey.

Özet: Dağlık alanlar, sahip oldukları potansiyeller sebebi ile (topografik yapıları, iklim yapıları, biyolojik, kültürel ve etnik çeşitlilikleri, eşsiz peyzaj nitelikleri vb.) küresel ölçekte önemli bir yere sahiptir. Ancak tüm bu pozitif niteliklerinin yanı sıra, sahip oldukları niteliklerden kaynaklanan kısıtlılıklar sebebi ile, dünyanın pek çok bölgesinde az gelişmiş alanlar arasında yer almaktadırlar. Dağlık alanlar özelinde, sürdürülebilir kalkınmanın ne şekilde sağlanabileceği konusunda Dünyada pek çok araştırma yapılmakta, bu alanların kalkınmasına ilişkin farklı modeller geliştirilmektedir. Dağlık alanlar için, sahip oldukları nitelikler de göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, turizm temelli kalkınma modelleri en çok tercih edilen modeller olarak öne çıkmaktadır. Hangi tür kalkınma modeli tercih edilirse edilsin, toplumların sosyal yapıları kalkınmada en önemli bileşenlerden birisidir. Bu nedenle, makale kapsamında yerel toplumların sosyal niteliklerinin, sürdürülebilir kalkınmadaki pozitif ve negatif etkileri analiz edilmeye çalışılmıştır. Konuya ilişkin kısa bir teorik girişin ardından çalışma alanı genel özellikleri ile tanımlanmış, üçüncü bölümde ise sürdürülebilir turizmin sosyal göstergeleri tartışılmıştır. Aynı bölümde, yerel toplumun sosyal yapısını tespit etmeye yönelik gerekli veriler (nüfusun cinsiyet dağılımı, yaş dağılımı, eğitim seviyesi vb.) ve çalışma alanı için belirlenen sürdürülebilir turizmin sosyal göstergeleri arazi çalışmaları ve anket yöntemleri ile ölçülmüş, elde edilen veriler, arazi gözlemleri ve sözlü görüşmeler de değerlendirilerek tartışılmıştır. Sonuç bölümünde, elde edilen verilere dayanılarak, dağlık alanların kalkınmasında, yerel toplumun sosyal yapısından kaynaklanan avantajlar ve dezavantajlar tartışılarak, uygulamaya yönelik pratik öneriler geliştirilmeye çalışılmıştır.

Anahtar sözcükler: Sürdürülebilir turizm gelişimi, dağlık alanlar, sosyal göstergeler, Erzurum, Türkiye.

1. Sustainable Tourism Development and Mountainous Areas

The subject of “mountainous regions sustainability” was taken into consideration for the first time in 1992, with the chapter 13 of Agenda 21 (Price and Kim, 1999). The year of 2002 was crowned as the “international year of mountains” and more attention has been paid to mountain societies. Approximately 10% of world population earns their livings through mountain resources (Price and Kim, 1999; Price, 2002, Price et al., 2004, Funnell and Parish, 2001). The sources gained and the services taken from these areas are believed to be important for the half of the world population (Price and Kim, 1999, Ives, 1992).

Mountainous areas are wealthy and important regions of the world from the points of their flora, fauna and cultural diversity, water, minerals and energy resources, forest and agricultural products, and recreational opportunities (Dax, 2002; Denniston, 1996; Euromontana, 2004; Funnell and Parish, 2001; Messerli and Ives; 1997; Mountain Institute, 1999; Nepal, 2002; Price, 2002; Price and Kim; 1999; Price et al., 2004). The existence of natural values and resources act as driving forces for social and economic development processes, and they are added value for the sustainability of these resources with their positive outputs (Somuncu and Inci, 2004). As a result of rapid population growth, lack of suitable transportation systems and poor social infrastructure (education, health and services) the natural and cultural heritage is influenced negatively (Mountain Agenda, 1997; Price et al., 2004).

In many parts of the world, tourism initiatives which use natural resources (like eco-tourism, mountain tourism, rural tourism etc.) are valued for creating job and infrastructure opportunities, solving problems and decreasing negative environmental effects for local development (Briquel, 2006; Heberlein et al., 2002; Kruk et al., 2007; Mountain Agenda, 1997; Nepal, 2002; Price, 2002; Rogerson, 2002) and mountains provide different activities for people, who love impressive landscape, want to experience special lifestyles, traditions, besides they create land for peace and different sportive activities.

For achieving the tourism sustainability in ecologically sensitive areas, visitor satisfaction, awareness of the benefits for the local people and environmental protection policies must be integrated.

Tourism has two-sided effects, on one side it has positive impacts like creating different job and income opportunities, on the other side it has negative impacts such as social and environmental degradation. It is important to be aware of possible negative impacts while getting positive earnings (Pickering et. al., 2003; Price, 2002).

2. Case Study Area; Erzurum Mountainous Region

Erzurum is a province of Turkey, in the Eastern Anatolia Region of the country. The surface area of the Erzurum province is 25.323 km² and it is the fourth biggest province in Turkey. The majority of the province is its elevated. Erzurum region has high mountain ranges extending in east-west direction, plateaus, pastures, both surface and ground water resources, diversity of flora and fauna. The altitude of the province is 1950 m. Most plateaus are about 2,000 m (6,500 ft) above sea level, and the mountainous regions beyond the plateaus are 3,000 m (9,800 ft) and higher. In addition to these already existing natural values, the region had been hosting several civilizations in history. These merits make the cultural diversity richer. The region has high potential for the development of sustainable tourism with its natural, cultural, archeological richness and diversity (Gürer, 2010).

The population of the province is approximately 785 000 people (1.11% of Turkey) according to 2007 census of population. 62% of the population lives in the urban area and 38% lives in the rural part of the province (Table 1). The gender distribution of the population is equal, 50% of men, 50% of women, similar with Turkey (Table 2).

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Table 1. Urban and rural census distribution of Erzurum province

	Total	% Tr*	Urban	% Tr	% In province	Rural	% Tr	% In province
Erzurum	784 941	1,11	485 563	0,98	61,86	299 378	1,44	38,14
Türkiye	70 586 256		49 747 859		70,48	20 838 397		29,52

* Percentage in Türkiye (TÜİK, 2007)

Table 2. Gender distribution of Erzurum

	Total	Men	%	Women	%
Erzurum	784 941	393 589	50	391 352	50
Türkiye	70 586 256	35 376 533	50	35 209 723	50

(TÜİK, 2007)

After this brief introduction of Erzurum, in the next section, the social indicators of sustainable tourism which was chosen as measurable for the case area will be detailed and the results will be given.

3. Selected Social Indicators of Sustainable Tourism for the Case Area

The set of indicators were determined with respect to their subject matters and measurability parameters for the case study area. After deciding the weight factors, measurements were made for Erzurum province. Some of the indicators were measured with the data obtained from responsible institutions, governmental and non governmental organizations, academic sources and researches etc., but some of them could not be measured due to the lack of suitable input data sets. In such situations, the needed data were collected by the questionnaire as mentioned above.

The questionnaire was applied both to the local hotels having “tourism operation license” and “municipality registration”. The aim of the questionnaire was to determine the tourism infrastructure and measuring the added value of tourism on economical structure. The questionnaire has 17 questions focusing on analysis of physical conditions and physical capacity of the accommodation units, social structure of the workers and operating approaches of the enterprises. The sampling of the questionnaire was applied 100% of the case area which means all the tourism units in the provinces were included in the study and the results obtained were evaluated with multi-criteria decision-making method (Gürer, 2009).

This paper focuses on the social indicators (Table 3) of sustainable tourism like social structure of the employees who are working for the touristic enterprises, cultural and historical environments, sites and their diversity, quality and attraction capacities. Methodologically, after a brief description of the indicator, the measurement way is explained and the results are given.

Table 3. Selected social indicators of sustainable tourism

IS1.43	Social effects of tourism on employment (Existence of educated labor force in tourism sector)
IS1.44	Women employment in tourism sector
IS10.62	Number of cultural environments, diversity and quality of them
IE8.125	Attraction capacity and fame of sites and activities
IS10.63	Information on local culture and conservation of intangible cultural heritage
IS8.75	Economic and human losses related to natural disasters

(Gürer, 2009)

Indicator 1. Education level of labor force in tourism sector

Education level is an important indicator among the social indicators of tourism. Employing the high level educated employees in the sector will create opportunities which help to protect and evaluate the potentials and sustainable development.

For measuring this indicator, the distribution of men and women employees in the sector and their positions are tried to define. The aim is to create equal positions both men and women employees with the same and high education level.

Evaluation for Erzurum Province

The number of educated employees in the enterprises is important in the tourism sector. The subject of qualified staff existence must be studied because it creates opportunities for tourism development. This is why we tried to analyze the education level of the staff which works for touristic enterprises.

In all accommodation units the total number of employees is 603 people in Erzurum case study area. 94 people of them are working as administrative staff, 509 are working as service staff. When the educational level is analyzed for the tourism sector, the questionnaires show that 63% of the staff is graduated from high school in Erzurum. Although in administrative status 52% of the staff is university graduated, in service status in the first place secondary school graduated staff is exists with 70% (Table 4) (Gürer, 2009).

Table 4. Education level of labor force in tourism sector

Erzurum	Women (number)	Men (number)	Total	%	Administrative Status	%	Service Status	%
University Educated	20	33	53	9	49	52	4	0,8
Vocational School of Tourism Graduated	2	27	29	5	19	20	10	0,2
Vocational High School of Tourism Graduated	-	20	20	3	1	1	19	4
High School Graduated	13	366	379	63	24	26	355	70
Secondary School Graduated	3	65	68	11	1	1	68	14
Primary School Graduated	4	50	54	9	-	-	53	11
Total	42	561	603	100	94	100	509	100

(Gürer, 2009)

When the educational status analyzed according to gender, in tourism operation licensed hotels, female employees are working as administrative staff largely, and 84% of them are university graduated. Male staff is just 45% in the same status. In service staff category, majority for the women is high school graduated with 59% and for men 72% for the same education level. In municipality registration certificated hotels, there is just one woman working as administrative staff and she is high school graduated. In these hotels, men employees that work in administrative status are high school educated in majority with 72%. Among the service staff, majority is high school educated men, its percentage is 47 (Table 5) (Gürer, 2009).

According the results of questionnaires, the employees who are working in tourism operation licensed hotels are more qualified than employees of municipality registration certificated hotels. If a similar evaluation evolved for gender distribution of employees, it is possible to say women employees are more educated than men in tourism operation licensed hotels. In municipality registration certificated hotels women staff is not preferred too much and they are less educated according to men employees.

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Table 5. Educational status of employees according to license types of accommodation units

Erzurum	Tourism Operation Licensed				Municipality Registration Certificated				Total	
	Administrative		Service staff		Administrative		Service staff		Women	Men
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men		
University Educated	20	25	-	4	-	4	-	-	20	33
%	84	45	-	1	-	31	-	-		
Vocational School of Tourism Graduated	2	17	-	10	-	-	-	-	2	27
%	8	30	-	2	-	-	-	-		
Vocational High School of Tourism Graduated	-	1	-	19	-	-	-	-	-	20
%	-	2	-	4	-	-	-	-		
High School Graduated	2	13	10	330	1	8	-	15	13	366
%	8	23	59	72	100	62	-	47		
Secondary School Graduated	-	-	3	59	-	-	-	6	3	65
%	-	-	18	13	-	-	-	19		
Primary School Graduated	-	-	4	38	-	1	-	11	4	50
%	-	-	23	8	-	7	-	34		
Total	24	56	17	460	1	13	-	32	42	561

(Gürer, 2009)

Indicator 2. Cultural Diversity

This indicator shows the level of conservation of cultural sites, defines their advantages and diversity. This is also a basic step for creating a data bank. Heritage is not just a tool for tourism; it is also a part of cultural identity of the society. It acts as a connectivity and creation of awareness of cultural identity.

For measuring this indicator, the cultural environments are detailed with number of cultural properties and their diversity.

Evaluation for Erzurum Province

Cultural values and civil architectural heritage samples are too limited in this area while compared with Türkiye, but Erzurum city is rich enough for tourism development according to other cities in the region (Table 6).

Table 6. Types of cultural properties and their numbers

	Erzurum	Türkiye
Mosque	73	3 819
Tomb	12	1 291
Cupola	7	80
Castle	30	670
Church	14	995
Grave	26	2 718
Turkish Bath	18	1 012
Khan	3	576
Fountain	35	3 111
Bridge	23	1 132
Madrasah	7	234
War cemetery	13	215
Door	2	22
Bastion	24	68
Tumulus	17	2 566
Waterfall	1	25
Residential unit (Civil architectural sample)	31	42 471
Administrative buildings (Civil architectural sample)	29	2 103
Total	365	63 108

(Kültür Varlıkları ve Müzeler Genel Müdürlüğü, 2009)

Indicator 3. Existence of historical structure and architectural heritage

This indicator shows the usage of local architecture and local materials, and it measures the sustainability of local architectural characteristics and techniques and level of usage of local materials. The harmony of local architecture with the usage of local materials in the construction of touristic enterprises is an important indicator. The measurement method of this indicator is to define the usage percentage of local materials in the construction process for local architecture.

Evaluation for Erzurum Province

In field study, it was observed that, no traditional construction material was used in buildings of touristic purpose.

Indicator 4. Attraction capacity and fame of the sites

This indicator uses for defining the level of attraction capacity and the fame of sites. The target of this indicator is determining that how does sense the touristic destinations by tourists. The factors which are added values to touristic destinations are originality, hospitality and high quality management. The values of these areas depend on the conservation studies, the conservation level of the area and existence of attractive components.

This indicator can be measured with the number of sites which make the area more famous.

Evaluation for Erzurum Province

In Erzurum region there are 35 sites; most of them are archeological sites (Table 7). There are also natural sites, urban sites, historical and mixed sites. Compared to Turkey, in case study area less number of urban, historical and mixed sites exists.

Table 7. The number of sites according to their types

Type of Site Sit Alanı Türü	Erzurum	Türkiye
Natural Sites	4	1166
Archeological Sites	28	7766
Historical Sites	1	142
Urban Sites	1	220
Mixed Sites	1	428
Total	35	9722

(Kültür Varlıkları ve Müzeler Genel Müdürlüğü, 2009)

Indicator 5. Increasing the integration of women labor force to tourism sector

This indicator was evaluated for measuring the ratio / percentage of women labor force and defining their working conditions in tourism sector. It measures with the accessing capacity of women to job opportunities, and its percentage (across/converse/contrary 100 men). The results of this indicator have the percentage of the integration ratios of women and men labor forces.

During the evaluation process of this indicator, gender distribution of the employees and their working status in the accommodation units were taking into consideration.

Evaluation for Erzurum Province

The number of employees is also analyzed according to the type of licenses of accommodation units. In Erzurum, the gender distribution of the employees which are working in the hotels that have tourism operation licensed, 7% is women and 93% is men employees. In municipality registration certificated hotels, 2% of employees are women and 98% are men (Table 8).

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Table 8. Distribution of employees according to type of entrepreneur

Erzurum						
	Tourism operation licensed		Municipality registration		Total	
	Sayı Number	%	Sayı Number	%	Sayı Number	%
Women	41	7	1	2	42	7
Men	516	93	45	98	516	93
Total	557	100	46	100	603	100

(Field study, 2007)

In tourism operation licensed hotels, 59% of women employees work in administrative status and 41% in service status. 11% of men employees are working in administrative status and 89% are working as service staff. In municipality registration certificated hotels, all women employees are working in administrative status, and 29% of men employees in administrative status and 71% of them are working in service staff (Table 9).

Table 9. Distribution of employees according to license type of accommodation units

Erzurum								
	Tourism operation licensed				Municipality registration			
	Women		Men		Women		Men	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Administrative	24	59	56	11	1	100	13	29
Service	17	41	460	89	-	-	32	71
Total	41	100	516	100	1	100	45	100

(Gürer, 2009)

The distribution of women employees in tourism sector is an important indicator. The integration level of women staff to tourism sector is one of the key subjects for local development. In case area, the majority of the staff is consisting of men workers. In Erzurum, women employees are hiring especially in tourism operation licensed hotels.

In Erzurum, women employees are working in the hotels which are located in Palandöken Mount densely. This result also accept as an indicator which shows tourist profile is an important factor on gender distribution of the staff in accommodation units. Besides, the capacity of the hotels and their occupancy rate has a direct impact on the number of staff. In Erzurum, a significant part of employees which are working at tourism operation licensed hotels are in Palandöken mountain region.

Erzurum has a strict and close up socio cultural structure. Specially in the hotels that are located in the city center, the existence of little or no women employees can be accept as a reflection of social structure of the city. As a result, except mountain hotels, the number of women employees in all accommodation units is unsatisfactory.

Indicator 6. Assessing the advanced health services

One of the social indicators of sustainable tourism can be accept as the level of health services. In developing countries, especially in tourism regions, the level of health services is a prior criterion for choosing the destination. This is why this indicator selected separately and taking into consideration.

The measurement method of this indicator is to define general hospital opportunities, existence of specialists and educated health staffs, physical capacities etc.

Evaluation for Erzurum Province

For measuring the level of health services provided the number of hospitals in the case study area, number of beds, specialists (doctor) and health staff per person are handled as criteria. According

to these criteria, Erzurum is found to be the most developed province in the region. There are totally 25 hospitals in the region, 14 of them are in Erzurum, one private hospital is included. Thus, the bed capacity, number of specialist and the number of health staff in the province is higher than the others in the region (Table 10).

Table 10. Basic indicators of health services and health staff

	Erzurum
Number of Hospitals (Public/ Government)	13
Number of Hospitals (Private)	1
Total	14
Number of beds (Public /Government)	3055
Number of Beds (Private)	45
Total	3100
Number of person per bed	253
Number of specialist	390
Total number of specialist	1094
Number of person per specialist	717,5
Number of Dentist	76
Number of Pharmacist	117
Total number of health staff	1287
Number of person per health staff	609,8

(TÜİK; 2007)

Erzurum province has the most advantages situation in the region. It also serves as the area headquarters in the region. This makes the province more preferable both for the local people and for tourists.

Indicator 7. Existence of specialists in the sectors related with tourism

This indicator defines the effects of tourism development on general situation of employees. This indicator can be measured by season dependency, hometown of workers and their income levels.

Evaluation for Erzurum Province

In Erzurum, 65% of all employees are working as permanent, 35% is seasonal (Table 11). In tourism operation licensed hotels, 65% of all employees are working as fulltime, 35% is part time. In municipality registration certificated hotels 91% of workers are in fulltime status, whereas 9% in part time (in season only) status (Table 11).

Table 11. Seasonal and permanent employee's status of tourism operation licensed and municipality registration hotels.

Tourism operation licensed				
	Administrative	Service	Total	
			Number	%
Erzurum				
Permanent	57	307	364	65
Seasonal	23	170	193	35
Total	80	477	557	100
Municipality registration				
	Administrative	Service	Total	
			Number	%
Erzurum				
Permanent	13	29	42	91
Seasonal	1	3	4	9
Total	14	32	46	100

(Gürer, 2009)

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This indicator shows, with the data getting from the questionnaire, the number of seasonal staff is directly related with the bed capacities of the accommodation units. In Erzurum, especially the hotels at the Palandöken Mount, has more customers in winter season, and these hotels need extra staff in this season for more qualified serving. The statue of seasonal staff is important because it creates additional employment.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

The sustainability of social issues in mountainous regions is an important subject because of relatively low development level of them. But in this process, each indicator that handled has to be analyzed with both its advantages and disadvantages. In this extent possible advantages and disadvantages of each indicator can be listed as follow;

Indicator 1. Education level of labor force in tourism sector

Advantages

- Improving service quality makes the region more preferable by tourists
- Improving customer satisfaction
- Contribution to sustainability of resources with more conscious consumption
- More effective promotion of the region

Disadvantages

- The migration demand of educated labor force to developed regions

Indicator 2. Number of cultural environments, diversity and quality of them

Advantages

- Existence of cultural areas create diversity and contributes to development with tourism

Disadvantages

- Densely use of sensitive areas makes the sustainability more difficult

Indicator 3. Existence of historical structure and architectural heritage

Advantages

- Creates richness for tourism

Disadvantages

- Limits the new construction opportunities in the heritage areas

Indicator 4. Attraction capacity and fame of sites and activities

Advantages

- More effective promotion of the region
- Increases the number of visitors

Disadvantages

- Increased number of visitors makes more pressure on the sites and natural recourses, and this creates difficulties in conservation

Indicator 5. Women employment in tourism sector

Advantages

- Improves the quality of services
- Creates their economic independency for women
- Strengthening the social position of women

Disadvantages

- The migration demand of educated labor force to developed regions

Indicator 6. Assessing the advanced health services

Advantages

- Improves quality of life
- Makes the region more preferable for tourists

Disadvantages

- Creates possibility of decreasing service quality
- Makes the sustainability more difficult

Indicator 7. Existence of specialists in the sectors related with tourism

Advantages

- Contributes the development with tourism

Disadvantages

(It couldn't define any disadvantages for this indicator).

Finally, it is possible to say, the social structure of the society and the tourism labor force is important for the sustainability of the natural, cultural and historical values. And it is also important for the development of tourism sector. The quality of services and the promotional activities that belong to social structure makes the area more attractive and more preferable. The diversification of local values and conservation level of the area and the quality of services are the first decision making parameters for the tourists. If an area improves the advantages and eradicates disadvantages, sustainable tourism development will be more easily.

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