

ASSESSMENT OF EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS OF PEOPLE OF EDİRNE ON ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF TOURISM

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ABSTRACT

Tourism development policies are destined to fail if they do not include local people's expectations and perceptions. Therefore, local people's perception of the effects of tourism and the level of their expectations are crucial for any attempt to develop a destination. Keeping this in mind, the main aim of this research is to measure the expectations and perceptions of tourism's impact on environmental issues by reaching out to local people in Edirne. To do so, a questionnaire is developed to collect data from Edirne residents, using a convenience sampling technique. The data obtained has been analysed with SPSS. According to the results gathered from the research conducted on 750 respondents, no statistically significant differences are expected from the effects of tourism on environmental factors. Discussion and implications of this study are provided.

Keywords: Effects of tourism, Environmental factors, Edirne, Locals, Expectations and Perceptions

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INTRODUCTION

Thanks to tourism development, and to meet with the needs of businesses, the infrastructure of roads, airports and water, sewer, communication, transportation systems, and services such as electricity and social services are being developed or improved (Avcikurt, 2009). There are negative and positive impacts of tourism. These impacts occur because tourism, both international and domestic, brings about an intermingling of people from diverse social and cultural backgrounds, and also a considerable spatial redistribution of spending power, which has a significant impact on the economy of the destinations focused primarily on economic aspects. The positive and negative impacts of tourism (Archer, Cooper and Ruhanen 2005, p. 79).

Tourism is attracting the attention of local authorities and local people, who make an effort to make more gain from the increasing numbers of tourists and their expenditures. Through the income received from tourism development, the region in which they live is also improving, which also benefits local people.

Due to the development of tourism in the region, locals are subject to complicated effects. Locals will face both positive and negative effects, including being introduced to unfamiliar cultures, which can result in changes in the dominant culture. Tourism is not only an economic phenomenon but also an international act that has social, cultural, political and especially environmental aspects, and it plays an important role in society and social structure. For this reason, while evaluating the effects of tourism, it is important to take into account not only its financial and economic consequences, such as revenue and foreign currency generation, but also its social and cultural effects.

Increasing tourist numbers in Edirne cause the burden on the environment to increase. Edirne is number 68 on the report of cities with the greatest number of tourists in the world, with 2,845,400 tourists annually, and it is predicted that Edirne will host 3,185,300 tourists in 2020 and 3,851,900 tourists in 2025 (Euromonitor, 2019). These increasing tourist numbers indicate the need for this study to be conducted. In this context, the focus of this study will be on the environmental effects, rather than other effects mentioned.

1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.1. Tourism's Effect on the Environment

According to Dwyer et al. (2010) during the development of tourism, both positive and negative effects can occur on the environment. Generally, tourists love the environment, though they affect the environment negatively at the same time. Tourism hurts the environment through the interaction of natural resources with humans and human resources. The natural and cultural environment is the

fundamental reason for the existence of tourism, but tourism's positive and negative effects on the environment are a double-edged sword and tourists can bring environmental disturbance and devastation with them. In any region, tourism can cause unplanned and uncontrolled housing, unguided urbanization and insufficient infrastructure, which will thus result in destruction of the natural environment and wildlife, as well as pollution of the air and water (Inskeep, 1991).

According to Dwyer et al. (2010), resources affected by tourism development and tourism activities are natural resources, human resources and built resources.

- a) Natural Resources include, natural regions, wild life, oceans, rivers, lakes, coastal views, desert ecosystems, flora and fauna et cetera.
- b) Human Resources include, local people, cultural identity and cultural activities. Effects that occur between locals and tourists show itself on behaviours, perceptions, values and expectations. It is a known fact that tourism has the power to change value systems, community life, family and social interactions for better or for worse.
- c) Built Resources include, historical ruins, historical places, monuments, street views, shopping complexes, theme parks, transportation services, museums, leisure and sport complexes et cetera (Dwyer et al., 2010, p. 630).

Various studies of tourism psychology and motivation show that individuals normally travel for more than one reason, and for many, perhaps the majority, tourism is the outcome of a combination of motivations (Bhatia 2007, p. 22-23). Existing physical resources are the main resources that attract tourists to a region. It is commonly thought that the main motivations for traveling are uniqueness, richness and other features of nature and the environment, such as the attractions and availability of mountains, lakes, deserts and canyons (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003). However, Dudley et al. (2010) warns that improvements in tourism may be accompanied by substantial dangers. With the preference for high-energy transportation and the increasing dependence of tourism on non-renewable energy, there are inevitable pressures caused by the rapid growth of domestic and foreign tourism, as well as the tendency to travel to further-away places. Tourists' greater water use than locals, discharge of untreated waters and trash pose a threat against land and sea biodiversity and the lives of local residents and their cultures (Dudley et al., 2010, p. 418).

According to Dudley et al. (2010) in tourism, direct water usage can vary between 100-2,000 litres per overnight tourist. The numbers are much higher in large resort hotels and lower in accommodation units such as hostels and camps. Among touristic venues that consume the most water are golf fields, irrigated gardens, swimming pools, spas, wellness facilities and accommodation rooms. In 2003, it was estimated that, in the USA, 946 million cubic metres and, in Europe, 843 cubic metres of water were consumed in tourism and recreation facilities. Every single tourist consumes, on average,

300 litres of clean water a day. In luxury tourism, this can go up to 880 litres, whereas, In Europe, residences are estimated to consume 241 litres of water a day per person. In Europe, every international tourist creates at least one kilogram of solid waste and this may go up to 2 kilograms in the USA. It has been estimated that a tourist will consume up to 2,000 litres of water in an island in East Africa; this number is 70 times more than local people who live there consume (Dudley et al., 2010, p. 422).

“Ecological factors can significantly reduce the scale of environmental damage associated with recreational and tourist development” (Edington and Edington 1986, p. 2). There are examples of harmful effects of tourism on biodiversity in places with high volumes of tourism. It can harm coral reefs, coastal wetlands, rainforests, arid and semi-arid ecosystems and mountainous systems (Dudley et al., 2010). Avci Kurt (2009) states that, in touristic areas where nature is damaged because of developed tourism and in places with pollution, touristic attraction diminishes and the perception of locals towards tourists and tourism is affected negatively.

Figure 1: Positive and Negative Effects of Tourism on Environment

Positive Effects	- Protection of chosen natural environment or prevention of ecological decline
	- Protection of historical buildings and monuments
	- Improved image in the area (Visual and aesthetic)
	- Clean industry (Smokeless)
Negative Effects	- Pollution (Air, water, noise, solid waste and visual)
	- Destruction of natural scenery and agricultural fields
	- Loss of open fields
	- Destruction of vegetation and animal existence (Plants, animals, coral reefs or anything man-made for tourists)
	- Destruction of scenery, historical places and monuments
	- Lack of water
	- Disturbance of exotic species
- Disruption of wild life reproduction stage and behaviours	

Source: (Kreag, 2001, p. 8)

1.2. Contribution to Nature and Environmental Development

There is some research on tourism's effects on local people. In these studies, some people ambivalence toward the environmental benefits (Liu and Var 1987), local people stated that tourism affected the environment both positively and negatively. Some people stated that the environment and natural beauty are protected and need to be protected for the purpose of tourism. In one study, 91% of respondents stated that natural beauties are at a higher quality and maintained better for tourism and

93% said they believed tourism affected the quality of national provincial parks. However, others believe tourism causes environmental pollution, destruction of natural resources, disrupting vegetation and damaging wild-life (Altintas, 2010).

1.3. Evaluating Natural Resources with Regards to Tourism

Humanity depends on natural resources. For a human life to keep going, different natural resources must be discovered (Raina, 2005). Another need of developing human-kind, the need to travel, can depend on natural resources.

For tourism business investments to have profitable results, these businesses need to be set up in appropriate areas and during the choosing of the location, economic, social and environmental elements must be considered. Destruction of already scarce natural values will result in disruption of ecosystems and, consequently, significant financial loss in touristic areas (Avcikurt, 2009, p. 47).

Tourism is known as environment-friendly and a smokeless industry. This perception improves with the existence of beautiful, virgin, exotic beaches and mountains. With correct use of natural resources in tourism, natural resources can be maintained, and local people can have a higher living standard (Holden, 2000).

With the development of tourism superstructure, accommodation places, entertainment and attraction centres become necessary. Tourism is often an economic rival to agricultural and natural fields. Tourism superstructure can be built and set up in such places. However, tourism development poorly regulated and without a solid plan, endangers natural resources; high demand from tourism, resulting in high use of resources, can be problematic for the continuation of economic activities and sustainability of natural resources (Liu et al., 1986; Holden, 2000). For effective and unproblematic use of natural resources in tourism, local authorities and national governments must take an active role in promotion, arrangement, presentation, planning, observation, protection, coordination and organization of them (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003).

1.4. Tourism's Effects on The Protection of Natural Resources

Human kind have always tried to use natural resources as much as they can. In modern ideology, manipulation of natural resources is legitimate. In industrial societies, as a result of society drifting away from its natural habitat, people's connections to the natural environment have weakened. With the birth of the eco-tourism and sustainable tourism concepts, rediscovering the natural environment and a return to natural philosophy can be shown as a solid example (Tuna, 2011, p. 7).

Ritchie and Crouch (2003) separate natural resources into two categories, as "resources that are

renewable and resources that are impossible to renew". Renewable resources include those resources that are bestowed on humanity by wild-life through hunting, fishing et cetera. Resources impossible to renew are described as delicate ecological resources that cannot be taken back and are impossible to renew if used to gain land for agriculture or mining.

According to Raina (2005, p. 9), natural resources can be harmed by excessive dependence on natural resources in tourism.

These are some of the ways that tourism can lead to environmental degradation;

- a) Sudden Rise in Population: causes decrease in every kind of natural resource. With a sudden rise in population, demands on natural resources and the environment will increase. Population size and consumption per person affect the environment significantly. This results in environmental pollution.
- b) Pollution: With a population rise, pollution increases and lakes, rivers and ground water are contaminated with industrial waste, heat, radioactive materials, detergents, fertilizers and insecticides.
- c) Loss of Soil Fertility: Over-harvesting, use of fertilizers and minerals or natural phenomena gradually destroy fertile soil.

According to another perspective, tourism is effective in the protection of natural resources. Sustainable tourism concepts include alternative tourism, tourism based on the society, ecotourism, ethical tourism, green tourism and responsible tourism. These all aim at reducing the use of resources that are impossible to replace and any increase in the quality of life that will be gained by having fewer negative effects on nature and people, while allowing significant growth in tourism (Avcikurt, 2009).

Tourism raises awareness of the need for protection of the environment. The most important commodity marketed by tourism is the environment. There are natural values, such as national parks and conservation areas presented to the service of tourism in many countries. Policies, precautions, plans and supervisory aspects are added and improved for the protection of these resources. Increasing the demand for international tourism and keeping this demand stable depend on the existence of such environmental values (Kozak et al., 2012), "loss of environmental degradation (crowding, noise, litter, traffic congestion, driving hazards, and air or water" (Andereck and Jurowski 2006, p. 137).

1.5. Effects of Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism is a type of tourism that protects resources and provides long-term inhabitability, while minimizing negative effects on locals, tourists and the environment, maximizing positive effects, and providing sustainable growth for tourism and everyone who is engaged in tourism wherever tourism is conducted (Weaver, 2006).

Weaver (2006, p. 10) used Budowski's sustainable tourism description, which is, "the growth of tourism that provides needs right now and without risking future generations to provide their needs." According to Pigram and Wahap (2005), sustainable tourism is critically important for the future growth of tourism. As a result of the growth that is in the nature of tourism, the environment is affected and negative socioeconomic effects are seen.

Altintas (2010) mentions sustainable tourism as a phenomenon that, while struggling to minimize the negative effects of tourism on the local population and natural environment, aims to benefit local people. Sustainable tourism is described as seeking improvements for the environment that local people and visitors depend on, for guest groups and visitors to have a better experience.

There are many positive contributions of sustainable tourism in touristic areas. Among the advantages of sustainable tourism are conservation of natural, historical, cultural and other resources, ensuring visitor numbers remain proportionate to the regional capacity, sustaining and improving general environmental quality, making economic gains locally, and keeping the relationship between locals and tourists on a tolerable level (Altintas, 2010, p. 33).

Local people are the element that determines whether the tourism industry is successful or unsuccessful. In a region, the society (local people, civil leaders, entrepreneurs) demands that tourism should be attractive; the people of the region want their social and economic conditions to improve. Tourism should not be planned and developed without regard for the people who live in the region; local people are the most important players who will be affected by the success or failure of the tourism industry. They should play a part at different stages in the operation of touristic attractions in their area (Ap, 1992).

According to Duran and Ozkul (2012), it is important for sustainability and improvement of sustainability to determine local people's attitude towards existing tourism development, preventing possible negative effects and maximizing possible positive effects. Unhealthy and unplanned tourism development in a touristic area and a resulting excessive flow of tourists can cause irreversible negativity, environmentally and among both local people and tourists. Because it will be costly to reverse this negativity, sustainable planning must be done in regard to social, cultural, environmental, infrastructure and superstructure considerations in areas that have just opened to tourism or will be opened (Duran, 2011).

2. METHOD

This research studies expectations and perceptions of local people and their attitudes. It aims to measure the level of perceptions and expectations of local people about tourism's effects on the environment. Also, it aims to discover if the relationship between variables depends on local people's length of residence, revenue from tourism and relation to tourism. Given that, Edirne located

strategically acting a vital gate of Turkey opening to Europe and its historical and cultural heritage, this study conducted in Edirne. Moreover, as suggested by Ay (2014) there are only handful research projects investigated Edirne tourism. To answer his call for further research this study focused on the environment aspect and its effects on Edirne.

The survey method is used in this research as a means of data acquisition. The necessary data for the study were collected through face to face surveys for them to be credible. The survey form used in the study was created by (Andriotis, 2000), based on Ap and Crompton (1998). Participants of the survey were selected through convenience sampling. The survey form had 4 questions about tourism, 9 expectation and 9 perception questions about environmental elements and lastly 7 demographic questions; a total of 29 questions were asked. Participants were asked to answer questions on a five-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neither Agree nor Disagree (3), Disagree (2), Strongly Disagree (1). As the venue of the survey, Edirne Saraçlar Bazaar was chosen. 1.000 survey forms were handed to people one by one. 4 retired teachers helped our survey as survey conductors. Surveys were conducted in August-September 2017. Participants did not complete 250 surveys in full as a result they were not included to the final analyses. Remaining 750 surveys with %75 response rate were analysed. The research was conducted and evaluated in light of these surveys. At the end of the study, SPSS 22,0 statistical analysis software was used to analyse the data obtained through the survey. In this way, frequency, percent analysis, arithmetic mean, factor analysis, and comparison analysis were executed.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The distribution of demographic features obtained through analysis is presented in Table 1. In terms of sex, 58,5% of participants are male and more than half of male participants are above 35 years old. In terms of education, 46.3% of participants are university graduates. In terms of occupation 29.5% of participants stated their occupation as public servants, 22.4% of them identified it as labourer. In terms of income, 47.9% of participants stated that they make between 2001-3000 TRY. And when participants were asked if they lived in Edirne, 97.5% of them stated that they lived in Edirne.

When asked how much of their income comes from tourism, participants to the survey responded mostly (80.4%) that their income wasn't related to tourism. When participants to the survey were analysed according to their social relation to tourism, most of the responders (61.2%) said they weren't related to tourism, though 9.6% of them stated they were in constant contact with tourism. When responses to the surveys were analysed according to how long they've been living in Edirne, it was observed that most, 32.7 percent, of the participants had lived in Edirne for more than 31 years. These factors are shown in Table 2.

Table 1: Demographic Breakdown of the Respondents (n=750)

Demographic Variables	Frequency	%
Sex		
Male	439	58.5
Female	311	41.5
Age		
18-25	171	22.8
26-35	242	32.3
36-50	220	29.3
Above 50	117	15.6
Education		
No Education	6	0.8
Primary Education	67	8.9
High school	223	29.7
Associate Degree	48	6.4
University	347	46.3
Master's Degree	33	4.4
Ph.D. Degree	26	3.5
Occupation		
Labourer	168	22.4
Public Servant	221	29.5
Self-Employed	106	14.1
Farmer	18	2.4
Student	101	13.5
Housewife	38	5.1
Unemployed	19	2.5
Other	79	10.5
Income		
1000 TRY and below	161	21.5
Between 1001-2000 TRY	139	18.5
Between 2001-3000 TRY	359	47.9
More than 3001	91	12.1
Lives in Edirne		
Yes	731	97.5
No	19	2.5

Table 2: Tourism Income, Social Relations and Length of Residence Distribution of the Sampling

Demographic Variables	Frequency	%
How Much of Their Income is Tourism Related		
All of it is Tourism Related	43	5.7
Some Part of It Is Tourism Related	104	13.9
No Tourism Related Income	603	80.4
Social Relation to Tourism		
No Relation/Connection to Tourists	459	61.2
Somewhat related to Tourists	219	29.2
Constant Relation to Tourists	72	9.6
Length of Residence in Edirne		
0-5 Years	130	17.3
6-10 Years	50	6.7
11-15 Years	66	8.8
16-20 Years	87	11.6
21-25 Years	82	10.9
26-30 Years	90	12.0
More than 31	245	32.7

Many studies in Social Sciences aim to evaluate some qualities of the participants. When these qualities are measured, the validity and reliability of the measurement must be considered as well. A Validity test checks if the research instrument is measuring what it is supposed to measure (Foster, 1998, p. 202). In this context, to detect the reliability of the scale used in the research, an internal consistency test has been completed. Cronbach's Alpha is a method often preferred to measure internal consistency. Values measured with Cronbach's Alpha can range between 0 and 1. In Social Sciences, 0.7 and above is seen as acceptable (Andrew et al., 2011, p. 202). Cronbach's Alpha is used in this research to measure the reliability of the survey; Cronbach's Alpha values of every scale are checked. As can be seen in Table 3 below, Cronbach's α values of the scale used in the research are above the acceptable level of 0.70. In light of these data, it can be stated that the scales have a high internal consistency and they are reliable. As a result of this reliability analysis, no questions were omitted.

Factor analysis is an analysis used to test structural validity in Social Sciences. Examining interactions among variables helps to present the variables in a more meaningful and summarized way. The way the interactions among variable groups will be described shows these interactions simply. In other words, this analysis tries to find common features that lie under the interactions among variables

in the data group. Furthermore, the analysis is also described as dimension reduction and destroying dependence patterns (Bayram, 2012, p. 199).

Anti-Image values of every question in our survey were determined. It was seen that none of the questions were below 0.50. As a result of factor analysis, a number of questions were seen to be grouped in factors; none of the factors should have a single question under it. As a result of the factor analysis conducted using this process, factors included in the factor analysis table below have been found.

Table 3: Explanatory Factor Analysis Results

Factor Names and Question Expressions	Average ¹	Standard Deviation	Factor Weights	Cronbach Alpha	Average* differences 1-2	T-Values**
Environmental effect expectations				0.77		
Tourism will cause pollution (air, water, noise, solid waste and visual) in a region.	2.77	1.06	0.72		-0.09	-1.53
Natural areas will be destroyed for tourism development.	2.81	1.14	0.74		0.41	1.80
Tourism will affect the infra-structure of a region negatively with intense tourist flow.	2.79	1.12	0.69		0.28	0.95
Hotels and other touristic investments in a region will destroy natural environment in a region.	2.18	0.95	0.64		0.17	0.14
More facilities will be needed for tourism development.	3.04	1.22	0.68		-0.33	-1.60
Domestic and international tourists will affect environment negatively.	2.22	0.89	0.67		-0.42	-1.82
	Average ²	Standard Deviation	Factor Weights	Cronbach Alpha		
Environmental Effect Perceptions				0.79		
Tourism caused pollution (air, water, noise, solid waste and visual) in a region.	2.86	0.97	0.75			
Natural areas are destroyed for tourism development.	2.45	1.06	0.77			
Tourism affected the infra-structure of a region negatively with intense tourist flow.	2.51	1.03	0.71			
Hotels and other touristic investments in a region destroyed natural environment in a region.	2.01	0.99	0.68			
More facilities were needed for tourism development.	3.37	1.18	0.62			
Domestic and international tourists affected environment negatively.	2.64	0.92	0.59			

Notes: *Average differences are calculated by extracting average 1 from environmental effect expectation and extracting average 2 from environmental effect perceptions. Negative values show that expectations are lower than perceptions.

**T-values test significance of this difference statistically. Values above +/-2.00 show statistical significance.

4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

For healthy development of tourism, local people's expectations from tourism, their doubts and how they perceive tourism must be measured. For any tourism plans or regional development, this is a necessity. In this context, this study researched expectations and perceptions of the people of Edirne about environmental factors in tourism development.

First, as can be seen in Table 3, the people of Edirne reported that tourism will not have a serious negative environmental effect. When Average 1 numbers are reviewed, it can be seen that these numbers are grouped on the lower side of the five-point Likert scale. This means that the people of Edirne expect that tourism won't have a harmful effect on environment. In other words, these results prove that the people of Edirne don't think the development of tourism will harm the environment.

The same table shows the perception dimensions of the questions. These results are presented under Average 2 dependence. It shows that, consistent with the expectations, perception results are grouped at the lower side of the five-point Likert scale. In other words, the people of Edirne who participated in the research when data was collected, stated that tourism didn't hurt the environment.

When expectation and perception differences (average differences 1-2) are taken into account, it can be observed that the resulting numbers are relatively small. These differences were tested in a T-value analysis to see if they were significant or not. Values above positive or negative 2.00 show statistical significance (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001). As can be seen in Table 3, when six questions are considered, all differences are insignificant. In other words, there is no difference between the expectations and perceptions of people of Edirne. There may be a number of reasons for this if the people of Edirne have realistic expectations about the environmental effects of tourism. First, it may be that tourism development has not raised critical environmental results that surprised the people of Edirne. Also, it may be that tourism development in Edirne was extended over a period and its effects were, therefore, minimized; there were no sudden and significant changes or existing changes did not hurt the environment.

Time and cost were important limitations in regard to difficulties in reaching out to the whole universe of the research. Other studies are suggested to aim for the whole universe. Also, the fact that the researcher preferred an area that is close to him for accessibility and ease and the research was more focused on the central district can be seen as a limitation. Representation of other regions will increase the generalizability of the study. This study is part of a much bigger project and it is focused more on environmental expectations and perception differences. Including factors such as economic, social, cultural etc. would be a more realistic approach. In addition, investigating differences among

demographic variables (income, education and so on) may provide fruitful information on the characteristics of the respondents and their opinions. Lastly, tourism development is a process extending over many years, although it takes place slowly and there is no beginning or end. Hence, it is possible that expectations are affected by perceptions. This study is a descriptive study despite these limitations and presents valuable results to the members of the industry and tourism-related branches of the government.

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