

How do residents perceive tourism development? A small community perspective

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Abstract

This study examines residents' attitudes and behaviors toward possible tourism development in a small community. Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews with 20 residents living in a small community, namely Kapisuyu Village in Turkey. Findings suggest that trust in authorities, involvement and the current state of the local economy are important determinants of locals' perceptions of tourism impacts. Although residents have some reservations on negative impacts of tourism development, community members favor tourism development in their small community due to positive benefits it is expected to generate. Findings also indicate that while residents favor tourism development, they want a tourism development that is sustainable and small. Both theoretical and practical implications of the findings are discussed and conclusions are drawn on the basis of study findings.

Keywords: Tourism development, tourism impacts, resident attitudes, small community

1. Introduction

Residents' attitudes and behaviors toward tourism development have been studied extensively by a large number of tourism researchers during the last few decades (Akis, Peristianis & Warner, 1996; Chen & Chen, 2010; Gursoy, Chi & Dyer, 2010; Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012; Park, Nunkoo & Yoon, 2015). While the results of those studies suggest that host community's attitudes toward tourism are affected by a number of factors, perceived impacts of tourism have been identified as the most critical determinant, which include economic (Meleddu, 2014; Turker, 2013), environmental, social, and cultural impacts (Garau-Vadell, Diaz-Armas & Gutierrez-Tano, 2014; Garcia, Vazquez & Macias, 2015). While previous studies have undoubtedly contributed to a wider understanding of the factors that are likely to influence locals' attitudes towards tourism development (Sharpley, 2014), most of those studies have focused on medium to large size destinations that are at growth or maturity stage of their lifecycle. Those studies reported that while residents viewed tourism as having positive impacts on their

community regardless of the stage, significant increases in negative impact perceptions were reported as destinations move from growth to maturity stage.

Although a large number of studies have examined residents' attitudes and impacts of tourism, the research on small communities' perspective is still lacking. In fact, smaller places such as small towns or villages are characterized by declining population and increasing gaps in the quality of life. The situation is further worsened by lack of businesses and other economic opportunities that result in a high rate of migration to urban areas (Scholtz, 2019). Further challenges smaller places face may be listed as lack of new infrastructure, lack of investors, poor relations between the local government and residents, declining economy, increasing businesses closures and fragmented public support (IOL, 2017). As a result, in recent years, many countries have been pushing tourism as a development tool in undeveloped or developing regions, small towns and villages in order to improve the local economy and the quality of life of local residents.

While residents of medium to large sized tourist destinations who perceive tourism as having more negative impacts than positive ones can easily minimize their interactions with tourists, it may not be possible in destinations where the population is very small. Especially considering the fact that new generation of tourists are seeking for more authentic and intense tourism experiences, residents of small destinations that offer unique and high touch tourism experiences may not be able to avoid having interactions with tourists. On the contrary, in smaller destinations, interactions between tourists and residents are likely to be more frequent and intense compared to larger destinations (Gursoy, Ouyang, Nunkoo & Wei, 2019).

For the reason that the success of any tourism development heavily depends on the participation of local residents, their dissatisfaction or satisfaction are eventually projected in their attitudes and behaviors towards tourists. Therefore, it is vital to identify and understand critical determinants of local residents' support for tourism development in very small destinations because negative attitudes and behaviors of a few residents can have devastating effects on the success of the development in very small communities (Drummond & Snowball, 2019; Gursoy, Jurovski & Uysal, 2002; Ribeiro, Valle & Silva, 2013). Thus, sustainability of the development heavily relies on host community involvement and participation (Lee & Jan, 2019). Furthermore, considering the fact that any form of development in very small communities are likely to have very influential impacts on locals' everyday life, residents of very small communities may have different perspectives on tourism development and its impacts on their everyday life compared to medium and large size communities. Therefore, it is important to understand locals' concerns and expectations from tourism development in order to minimize negative impacts while enhancing positive ones.

Albeit the importance of tourism development in small communities, there is still theoretical and empirical gaps in the literature on resident attitudes in small, emerging destinations (Boley, McGehee, Perdue & Long, 2014). Therefore, this study aims to examine locals' concerns and expectations from tourism development in a very small community with a population of around 120 residents, namely Kapisuyu Village, Bartın, Turkey. Findings will provide critical insights for tourism planners and local bodies to better integrate the locals in tourism development and understand the causes of their concerns, frustrations and dissatisfaction.

2. Literature Review

A successful tourism development demands the collaboration and support of all stakeholders including local residents, local administration and investors. As an important stakeholder, participation of residents in the planning efforts and their support play crucial roles in the success of such initiatives. As such, magnitude and direction of locals' attitudes are important concerns for planners and investors. Thus, locals support and

participation has received serious attention from the academic community over the last few decades (Gursoy, Ouyang, Nunkoo & Wei, 2019; Nunkoo, Smith & Ramkissoon, 2013; Williams & Lawson, 2001). Several studies have conceptualized locals' attitudes by measuring their perceptions of both positive and negative impacts of tourism (Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Huh & Vogt, 2008; Keogh, 1990; Sinclair-Maragh & Gursoy, 2016; Çalışkan & Özer, 2020).

Although studies on residents' perceptions can be traced back to 70ies, most studies have focused on the examination of the relationships between locals' perceptions of impacts and their support (Hanafiah, Jamaluddin & Zulkifly, 2013; Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012), place identity and image (Stylidis, Biran, Sit & Szivas, 2014; Wang & Xu, 2015), satisfaction (Ko & Stewart, 2002; Xie, Bao, & Kerstetter, 2014), stress and coping framework (Jordan, Vogt & DeShon, 2015), destination life-cycle (Sinclair-Maragh & Gursoy 2015), environment and sustainability (Lo, Ramayah, & Hui, 2014), mass and alternative tourism (Gursoy, Chi & Dyer, 2009), event tourism (Gursoy, Yolal, Ribeiro & Netto, 2017; Yolal, Gursoy, Uysal, Kim & Karacaoğlu, 2016), resident concerns (Sharma, Dyer, Carter & Gursoy, 2008), and personal values (Williams & Lawson, 2001).

Studies have conceptualized locals' support/opposition as a behavioral intent or a behavior determined by a number of factors (Dyer, Gursoy, Sharma & Carter, 2007; Gursoy et al., 2017; Jackson & Inbarakan, 2006). Some studies have investigated locals' expectations and their view of socio-economic, socio-cultural and environmental factors, and the influence of those expectations and perceptions on their attitudes (Assante, Wen & Lottig, 2010; Pavlic & Portolan, 2016). Several studies have also examined the impacts of socio-demographic characteristics of residents and the impact of those characteristics on residents' reactions towards tourism development (Liu, & Var, 1986; Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012). Those studies have reported variations in residents' reactions towards tourism based on residents' view of the level of development, their socio-demographic characteristics, their trust in the local authorities, planners and the central government, their attachment to the place, etc. (Gursoy, et al., 2017; Rothman, 1978).

The Social Exchange Theory (SET) has been the most frequently utilized theory to conceptualize resident attitudes (Ap, 1992; Chen & Hsu, 2001; Getz, 1994; Gursoy et al., 2010; Hadinejad, Moyle, Scott, Kralj & Nunkoo, 2019). Ap (1992) argues that SET is a rational conceptual framework that can explain the impact perception formation process of locals. The SET has been instrumental in studying locals' support due to its ability to factor in various perspectives emerging from experiential and psychological outcomes (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011). Socio-economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits/costs have been argued to be the main determinants of the exchange process under this theory (Gursoy et. al., 2019; Jurowski & Gursoy, 2004). For example, Gursoy et al. (2017) study the influence of trust on locals' impact perceptions and support for a mega-event. Their results suggest that community support for tourist activities depends on residents trust in the government and local authorities. In a similar study on recurring events, Ouyang, Gursoy and Chen (2019) report that perceived quality of life plays a significant role in influencing residents' support to the event. In their study on the effects of distance, Jurowski and Gursoy (2004) report that people who used the attraction heavily due to their proximity to it feel more negatively about tourism development than others. Nunkoo and Ramkissoon (2011) note that locals' support is mainly determined by perceptions of expected benefits and costs, and satisfaction with the local community. Moreover, their results indicate that perception of expected benefits are determined by satisfaction with the local community, trust in institutions, perceived power, and neighborhood conditions. Similarly, Xie, Lee and Wong (2019) report that residents' rights, co-creation, 'not in my back yard' attitudes, place attachment and authenticity are major concerns of the residents for the redevelopment of industrial heritage tourism development.

In addition to the SET, the Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) model can also be used to understand locals' support in a destination. The TALC model proposed by Butler (1980) includes six stages: exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, and post-stagnation stages (Uysal, Woo & Singal, 2012). The last stage can result in a period of decline, rejuvenation, or stabilization. A relatively steady process of tourism development and a recognizable cycle of evolution is sooner or later results in a threshold where a destination's appeal starts declining (Butler, 1980). In the same vein, the TALC model suggests that as tourism evolves in a destination, changes are observed in the natural and the sociocultural environments that trigger shifts in the attitudes of the host community. Residents' responses to each stage of the development may depend on how tourism activities influence residents' lives. For example, the increase in the number of arrivals will result in the involvement of more residents for additional income. While interaction between visitors and locals tend to be minimal, the development and the tourism business in the community mainly focus on providing the basic services, which also benefits the local residents (Uysal, et al., 2012). Consequently, residents in search of opportunities and benefits support the tourism development in their area. On the other hand, development stage is distinguished as one where excessive numbers of visitors start to arrive to the area, which can result in significant changes in the physical appearance of the area, and not all of the changes might be favored by the locals. In other words, residents may start developing negative attitudes thanks to negative impacts caused by increasing numbers of visitors.

Similarly, locals' attitudes can also be explained by the Irridex Model developed by Doxey (1975) in several studies (Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997; Long, Perdue, & Allen, 1990; Uysal, et.al., 2012). The Irridex Model groups residents' attitudes under four categories. Visitors and investors are welcomed in the euphoria stage. Apathy is followed where visitors are taken for granted. When the development is saturated annoyance develops where locals and grassroots organizations start developing negative opinions about tourism development and challenge institutionalized tourism. Finally, residents start to perceive tourists as the cause of the problems in their community in antagonism stage.

As suggested by both TALC and Irridex Model, Jurowski et al. (1997) explain that the utilization of the resources have a significant influence on support for tourism. Furthermore, level of interaction and the intensity of those interactions between tourists and locals are likely to be critical determinants of residents' attitudes and behaviors towards tourism. Both the resource use and the level of interactions can have critical impacts on local residents' quality of life, especially in very small destinations. Thus, this study aims to understand the factors that are likely to influence attitudes and behaviors of residents of a small community towards tourism utilizing a qualitative research methodology since the total population of the study site is around 120.

3. Methodology

3.1 Study Site

Black Sea coast of Turkey is underdeveloped in terms of tourism development. However, in recent years, tourism is seen as an important opportunity for economic restructuring, particularly in regional and coastal areas. As a result, small communities are encouraged to consider tourism as a development opportunity to improve the economic, social and cultural aspects of their community, and consequently the quality of life in their communities. While the number of communities initiating tourism development has been rapidly increasing in the region, research into tourism development in very small communities is limited. Therefore, this study focuses on a small community in the coast of Black Sea that is considering developing tourism in their small community. This community, Kapısuyu Village, is a typical village in the region where the residents are predominantly engaged in agriculture. However, in recent years, the number visitors to the community have been increasing rapidly. Kapısuyu Village is located closer to the Kure Mountains National park, and is a candidate for being a

tourism destination with its natural and cultural resources (Figure 1). Kapısuđu and the neighbouring areas have a mix of turquoise seascapes, streams, and unique natural and cultural attractions.

Figure 1. Sketch map and photos showing the location of the Kapısuđu Village



Source: Google maps, Tripadvisor, (2018) and Uder, (2013) arranged by authors.

Kapısuđu Village is composed of two parts as Kapısuđu 1 and Kapısuđu 2. The 2018 statistics show that there are 125 residents who live in this village, among them, 69 are female and 56 are male (TUIK, 2019) and 122 of them are above 18 years old (Kaya, 2019). The village suffers from continuous migration due to the limited employment opportunities. Residents of Kapısuđu Village strive to maintain their traditional lifestyles by participating in science village projects and organizing activities. Until the 1970s, the village had been serving as a shipyard for constructing yachts. The major economic activities in the village were fishing, honey production as well as agriculture such as growing nuts and chestnut. Yet, these activities have been gradually replaced by tourism and hospitality services in the recent years.

Kapısuđu Village primarily attracts families and daily excursionists. While the village offers various recreational activities along with an array of attractions including streams, waterfalls, pristine forests, canyons, wildlife, endemic flora, traditional lifestyle and local architecture, the main motivations of visitors to this village are sea, sun and sand (National Parks of Turkey, 2018). Kapısuđu Village attracts visitors from the surrounding cities and districts throughout the year thanks to its one-kilometer long sandy beach and its hotel equipped to serve tourists. Although tourism has been emerging as a core industry for the village, the perceptions of locals on the impacts of this trend are little known. Thus, this study seeks to explore the perceptions, opinions, attitudes and willingness of locals to support tourism development in their village.

3.2 Data Collection

This exploratory study aimed to investigate locals' attitudes toward tourism development in Kapısuđu Village. More specifically, this study aimed to understand locals' perception of tourism, their ideas about tourism development, their attitudes and support by utilizing a qualitative approach that employs interview techniques

and observations to achieve study objectives (Patton, 1987). The researchers personally observed the behaviors and attitudes of the residents and the visitors in the village between May and September 2018 and interacted with both the residents and the visitors. During the observations, researchers attempted to study the interactions between hosts and guests focusing on the body language and environmental conditions. Afterwards, a series of face-to-face interviews were conducted. The literature on resident attitudes was used to develop interview questions (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Latkova & Vogt, 2012). Consequently, a total of nine interview questions that focused on locals' perceptions and attitudes towards tourism development, life satisfaction, level of trust in other stakeholders and willingness to support the development were asked during the interviews. In order to obtain a representative sample as much as possible, a stratified random sampling approach was utilized based on residents' demographic characteristics. Moreover, the study and the interview process were designed to identify and understand the cause-and-effect relationships in residents' attitudes toward tourism development. In this regard, participatory observations were also used to supplement the interview data. Participants were informed about the process and the interviews were conducted with the ones who were selected to take part in the study. Participants over 18 years old were selected through a stratified random sampling procedure. A total of 20 individuals were selected to participate in the study. The interviews were conducted in the village with each participant, and recorded after taking permission from the participant. Each interview lasted approximately 30 to 48 minutes. Interviews were then transcribed by the researchers.

3.3 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed utilizing a discourse analysis, which has been utilized in previous qualitative studies to examine various aspects of social life (Altinay, Paraskevas & Jang, 2016). Discourse analysis is composed of six steps as suggested by Aziz (2015): decoding, interpretation, structuring, cycling processing, macro-structure formation and representation in episodic memory. Thus, these six steps were followed to analyze the data.

4. Results

The demographic profile of participants reflected the composition of the demographic profile of resident of the village itself (Table 1). Participants were mostly male (65%). The majority of respondents had completed elementary school (45%). As expected, respondents were found to be relatively older. Majority of participants reported a monthly income between of 381.00US\$ and 540.00US\$. A large portion of them (90%) indicated that they were living in the village for more than 12 years. All of the respondents were born in the village, and the ones who had migrated for better life conditions in urban areas have started to come back to their homeland.

Findings revealed that almost all of the respondents were happy to live in Kapisuyu Village. In this regard, they explained the positive aspects of being in Kapisuyu as the environment, beach, sea and river, peaceful life. Further, they indicated that being familiar with everyone was an important aspect of their daily routine. However, they also complained about their proximity to the urban areas and substandard transportation infrastructure. Moreover, they also complained about the population decrease because of the lack of employment opportunities. They were also found to be concerned about the low levels of environmental awareness and inadequate cooperation among the residents. Last but not least, they were also anxious about the side-effects of Hydroelectric Power Plant (HPP) which is being built closer to the village.

Findings showed that tourism development was seen as a convenient tool to increase participants' quality of life. In particular, residents living closer to natural attractions such as the coastline and environmentally sensitive resources indicated strong support for tourism development. Residents also believed that tourism development

would foster improvements in public facilities and services, investments and increase opportunities for recreational activities in Kapısuyu Village.

Table 1. Findings of Demographic Attributes

No	Gender	Age	Education	Length of Residency	Job
1	Female	31	High school	25 years	Private security guard
2	Male	46	Associate degree	1 year	Musician/manager
3	Male	56	Primary school	18 years	Chef
4	Male	60	Primary school	1 year	Retired
5	Male	54	Primary school	12 years	Retired
6	Female	43	Primary school	12 years	Housewife
7	Male	63	Primary school	61 years	Retired
8	Male	35	Associate degree	33 years	Business manager
9	Male	42	Bachelor	38 years	Physiotherapist
10	Male	76	Postgraduate	72 years	Retired
11	Male	63	Bachelor	19 years	Retired
12	Female	50	Primary school	37 years	Housewife
13	Female	66	Primary school	50 years	Housewife
14	Male	62	Primary school	60 years	Business manager
15	Male	26	Bachelor	22 years	Student
16	Male	46	Bachelor	23 years	Freelance
17	Male	32	High school	30 years	Business manager
18	Female	22	Associate degree	22 years	Student
19	Female	35	Primary school	35 years	Housewife
20	Female	30	Bachelor	26 years	Teacher

Perceived impacts and willingness to support tourism development were influenced by the expected opportunities that are likely to be created by tourism development. Although, some residents had different perspectives about trust and cooperation, all participants indicated their willingness to support tourism development in the village. The reasons for strong support were found to be the improvements tourism development is likely to bring to the village such as investments, improved public services and employment opportunities that would foster better life conditions in the village. Findings indicated that support for tourism development was directly related to the positive assessment of economic, social and cultural impacts. Findings indicated that there were two groups of residents in the village: the ones receiving economic benefits and the ones with no gains. While the former group favored tourism development, the latter expressed their negative attitudes. However, almost all participants indicated that tourism development generates more gains than negative impacts. However, most of the participants specifically mentioned their anxieties about over-construction, crowding and traffic.

Findings showed that residents perceived tourism as a mean to strengthen inter-cultural understanding, and residents believed that tourism is likely to result in more cultural exchange between tourists and residents. Thus, development of alternative tourism forms was highly appreciated by the respondents. In this regard, they underlined the importance of diversifying tourism offerings and noted that their village offers a bundle of opportunities for the investors and marketers. Further, participants claimed that nature based tourism, yacht tourism and watersports tourism could be developed when supported by necessary infrastructure.

Residents' perception of tourism impacts and support is highly dependent on their level of trust to other institutions. This was observed in Kapisuyu. Findings indicated that the problems experienced in the daily lives of the residents such as substandard public services, the deterioration of cultural and natural resources and the lack of environmental awareness decreased residents' trust to others. The university was found to be the only institution that the residents trust (e.g. Bartın University). Although they had moderate level of trust to institutions such as Governorate and Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, their trust in municipality and investors were found to be low. Even though residents had low levels of trust in local authorities, they were willing to cooperate and partner with Kurucaşile municipality. This may be explained by the critical role the municipality is likely to play in tourism development but also the role municipality plays in delivering basic services such as garbage collection and drainage and sewage system.

Although respondents noted their concerns about possible negative impacts, they explained that tourism was an important tool to increase quality of life standards. As such, interviewee 2 explained that:

Tourism will help us improve the living standards and conditions in the village, but if we receive too many visitors, attractions may be deteriorated and cultural deformation may occur. But, our village needs the development and I support tourism development as much as I can.

Participants also pointed out that Kapisuyu was ignored for decades and consequently, the lack of investments negatively affected the development. In this vein, interviewee 10 underlined that:

Authorities were speechless about the village. Kapisuyu Village offers lots of attractions. . . Neither the local authorities nor the villagers made any efforts to attract tourists to our village. Tourism development may change things in Kapisuyu.

Similarly, respondents were satisfied to live in the village. However, they believed that they were ignored by the authorities. As such interviewee 11 indicated that:

I am happy to live in here in the midst of the nature... But travelling in and out of the village is difficult because of the substandard motorway infrastructure. Unfortunately, Kapisuyu has not attracted the attention of the authorities. Yacht construction was the primary economic activity in the region since the Ottoman period in Kapisuyu. Currently, it is non-existent.

Participants indicated support for the tourism development mainly for the expected economic gains. This was apparently expressed by interviewee 11:

Since we have nothing else in Kapisuyu, tourism development is highly appreciated. Once a hotel with 15 beds was opened and followed by two pensions, we invited TV program producers to the village and tried to promote our village with gastronomy, but its impact was short lived. Indeed, tourism is beneficial if it is attentively planned. If tourism is developed in the village, both economic improvements and social developments will change people's opinions.

Locals in Kapisuyu village agree that the village currently receives a small number of visitors, which suggest that the village is in the exploration stage of tourism development as indicated by the TALC model. Although the total economic benefits from tourism development are insignificant at this stage, its impact on the lives of the community seems to be important, and locals are happy with the visitors travelling to their village in small groups. Moreover, locals believe that tourism development would yield future investments and employment opportunities that would revitalize the village, and public euphoria is developed in the village. However, as in many cases, if

the number of visitors to the village increases significantly in a short period of time, it may result in significant negative impacts that are not likely to be appreciated by the host community. Therefore, a planned tourism development strategy is needed in the village for the long term sustainability and success of the tourism development. In this regard, host community support both the tourist activities and the related institutions in the region. As such interviewee 2 explained that:

The village is culturally rich with lots of natural attractions. Tourism can help the village unless we start receiving too many tourists that can result in excessive development. Investors will invest in the infrastructure and the environment. Tourism creates employment opportunities for residents but too much development may not be good for the village.

Locals were also aware that tourism development may cause negative impacts in the long run. This awareness has the potential to change residents' support over time. This was clearly explained by the interviewee 17:

I want tourism development, and I do always support it. We have many infrastructure and superstructure issues. We need the tourism development to address these issues. But more people means more noise and pollution. We need to be careful about how much tourism we want.

Similarly, the interviewee 20 explained:

Foreigners may harm our cultural assets.

It was clear that residents developed a positive attitude towards tourism development and they indicated that they would support the initiatives in their community. However, they complained about the lack of cooperation and understanding among the residents. This was explained by the lack of trust among community members and the third parties. This may be explained by the previous failed initiatives and resulting disappointments due to unexpected outcomes of those initiatives. They mostly complained about the consequences of Hydroelectric Power Plant (HPP), which was built too close to the village. After noticing negative impacts of this plant, they were angry with themselves for not objecting to this investment earlier. Similarly, their trust in local and governmental institutions was significantly decreased because of the consequences of previous experiences. This was apparent in the interviewee 12's words:

Hydroelectric power plant negatively influenced this place, the vegetation on the top of hills over there were exterminated. People were insensitive, no one protested against the plant... They even supported it expecting job opportunities. But now, no one from the village is employed at the plant...

In the same vein, discussing the poor governmental support for the village, the interviewee 4 explained that:

Support from the government is lacking here. For years, the government failed to help the region. Integration with the people cannot be achieved. Unfortunately, I do not trust the government. I think the university can contribute to the village.

However, they were still hopeful about their future and this hope shaped their attitudes toward tourism development. In this regard the interviewee 4 continued:

I do support tourism development in any circumstances, because the region will benefit.

Results confirmed that expected economic impacts was the main motive for locals' support. Kapısuyu village, as a small community, has gone through substantial changes over the past decades. Yacht building, which was once the primary economic activity in the village, collapsed in the 70ies and resulted in significant economic difficulties. Thus, residents of Kapısuyu Village embraced tourism as a panacea for their economic depression. Findings indicated that residents undervalue the costs of tourism development and highlight the economic gains. Therefore residents were eager to tolerate negative impacts in exchange for economic benefits. This is consistent with the results of previous studies that in economically and socially depressed regions, locals are likely to underestimate negative impacts while glorifying the positive impacts. Findings clearly suggested that tourism development will definitely contribute to community development, residents' wellbeing and quality of life in the village. Consequently, a sound understanding of residents' attitudes, their trust in other stakeholders, and collaboration among stakeholders should be developed while planning for tourism.

Findings indicated that community attachment might impact and alter perceptions and attitudes in terms of economic, social, and cultural impacts, and trust in institutions. Specifically, trust in governmental institutions was found to be a significant determinant in terms of residents' support for tourism development.

5. Discussions

Hospitable attitudes of residents play a key role in the success of tourism development. For that reason, it is vital to identify and understand the factors that can affect locals' support, specifically in small communities as those factors would be useful in planning efforts and ensuring a successful development. In this regard, previous studies suggest that residents' support for any project is determined through their evaluation of perceived costs and benefits (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006). Trust is prerequisite for the participation of locals in future exchanges. Lack of trust and involvement in various stages of the planning and development process may yield devastating outcomes for the area and investors, especially in very small communities (Gursoy et al., 2017). Therefore, this study investigates the attitudes of locals towards possible tourism developments in a small community.

Findings of this study contributes to the existing literature on the attitudes of residents towards tourism development, particularly in the case of small communities. Findings clearly suggest that residents of a very small village, namely Kapısuyu Village, have favorable attitudes towards tourism development. While they express serious concerns about the negative impacts of such development, they are likely to support tourism development because of expected benefits. Furthermore, they articulate their concerns about the possible barriers that will hinder their access to attractions and possible disruptions to their daily life in the village; yet, they also believe that tourism development is essential to ensure the long-term economic survival of their community. Residents who receive economic benefits directly from tourism favor tourism development in the village, which is congruent with the findings of other studies (Boley et. al., 2014). These residents appear to be highly optimistic about the contributions of tourism development to the society they live in. Findings further demonstrate that local residents tend to support tourism development as long as they think that benefits or rewards outnumber the negative impacts, as indicated by the social exchange theory. Thus, mainly the expected economic benefits for the individuals and the community will shape their perceptions and attitudes as well as their support in this regard.

Findings of this study also identifies significant concerns/problems in the village. First, the infrastructure and superstructure necessary for the daily lives of the residents have been ignored for many years. Even though residents value natural resources, a clear understanding of the environment and environmental awareness has not been evolved among residents yet. Cultural and natural resources have been ignored both by the residents and the decision makers. Such ignorance has resulted in negative attitudes over time. Residents also complain about environmental pollution, problems in transportation, and substandard motorways. These concerns should be

clearly addressed in future tourism development plans. Also, the efforts for constructing motorway and building the infrastructure should be accelerated.

While trust is viewed as an important component of the social exchange process, none of the previous studies has examined the trust and support for tourism development in the context of small communities. When high levels of trust is developed among residents, they may believe that key players in the planning and development process will develop strategies to minimize negative consequences while maximizing the positive outcomes. The trust of the residents in the development and in other stakeholders may be enhanced by getting residents actively involved and participate in the planning process. Fukuyama (1995) argues that trust plays an important role in societal functioning and is considered as an important source of social capital within social systems. As such, trust in institutions can have significant impacts on residents' perceptions and attitudes of expected tourism impacts and their willingness to support tourism development. However, as the findings of the study suggest, residents' level of trust in local or governmental bodies except for the university is very low. Therefore, governmental bodies should find ways to increase public trust among the residents. Cooperation with the university may increase residents' support and willingness to participate in the process since their trust in the university is relatively higher than their trust in other governmental agencies. Furthermore, getting residents involved in the decision making and democratizing the planning process has the potential to regain community trust.

This study is the first attempt in exploring the attitudes of the residents towards tourism development in a small community. Kapisuyu has recently experienced a rapid tourism development, and this emphasizes the need for further studies to examine the socio-cultural, economic and environmental impacts of tourism. This study identified residents' concerns and attitudes toward tourism development, state of the local economy, trust and community engagement as critical determinants of support for tourism development. Further, the results of this study are limited to the data obtained from the participants interviewed. However, studies suggest that residents' perceptions and attitudes, level of trust are likely to change over time. As suggested by previous research, while residents' support is likely to remain strong over time, they tend to become increasingly more concerned about the negative impacts (perceived liabilities) over time as the destination moves along the lifecycle stages (Gursoy et al., 2017; Gursoy, Chi, Ai & Chen, 2011; Kim et al., 2005). Thus, it is important to monitor changes in residents' attitudes and behaviors toward tourism overtime as the destination continues to develop.

This study did not examine temporal effects on the relationships between tourism development and the factors that are likely to influence that development in small communities. For that reason, further studies, which seek to enhance our comprehension about the attitudes of residents towards tourism development and to analyze the factors with a potential impact on this development in small communities, are required. Furthermore, it may be necessary to develop a conceptual framework and a model that depicts the process of support for tourism development and its antecedents in small communities in order to further our understating of the process.

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