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Do the Positive Aspects of Tourism Affect Hotel Staff's Perceptions of Tourists? A Study in Antalya and Eskisehir

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Abstract

Tourism is a field of activity given importance by both the participants and the tourism investors. In addition to the environmental factors affecting tourism activities, there are economic, social and physical factors depending on tourism activities. As well as the positive aspects of these factors, there are negative ones, too. This study sets out to seek an answer to whether the positive social, economic and physical impacts of tourism affect the perception of tourist thought the opinions of hotel employees. The study data were obtained from hotels tourism establishment certificate in Eskişehir and Antalya in 2015. The total number of questionnaire form evaluated is 874. In order to test the relation among the variables under consideration structural equation model has been employed. The coefficients among the variables in the structural equation model are statistically significant. Considering the study on the whole, hotel employees have awareness of tourism and tourist concepts alike, and there is an inverse relationship between the social impacts of tourism on the perception of tourist in both cities. Besides, there is a linear relationship between the economic and physical impacts of tourism and the perception of tourist.

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism has taken its place in the lives of certain societies in a limited manner and has increasingly become a field of interest by large masses. Nowadays, tourism has become an indispensable part of people and not regarded as something enjoyed by the wealthy only. Together with its intricate relationship with psychology, sociology, management, politics and architecture, tourism plays an inevitable role in all aspects of science, reaching a wider masses than ever before. Along with this, the number of disciplines as well as research topics have increased as a result of the ramification of tourism. To provide a robust understanding of the effect of tourism across the world, statistics released by World Tourism Organization should be examined. It is seen that in 2015 and 2016, 1.184 and 1.234 b people took part in international tourism activities and 1.2 trillion American Dollars was spent as tourism expenses (WTO, 2015; WTO, 2016). The data obtained show that tourism related developments are likely to increase and economies of such emerging countries will be in the first places in the list. It is of great significance that statistical bulletins released annually should be appropriately analysed and interpreted by the shareholders. To serve this purpose, the perception level of such concepts as "tourism" and "tourist" should be well-acknowledged. The perception created by the concepts of tourism and tourist is directly associated with the level of development of the societies. While developed countries obtain more tourists and income, it is just the opposite for the less-developed ones. In fact, when the distribution of scientific publications are examined, the rate in the developed countries is higher than the less developed ones. Hence, societies with a philosophical understanding of "tourism and tourist" both experience it and sustain it.

In the general literature review, the main topics under discussion in the field of tourism happen to be "customer satisfaction", "service quality", "tourism education", "tourism economics" and "management/marketing". Each topic mentioned above has contributed to the advancement of tourism discipline. The most important feature of this paper is that it reveals whether the social, economic and physical impacts of tourism are important in creating positive perception of tourist through the opinions of hotel employees. The related literature hosts a great many studies into the issue under consideration; that is to say, economic, social and physical effects of tourism. Schubert et al., (2011), suggest that the increase in tourism demand enlarge economic growth and terms of trade, leading to transition dynamics. Andraz et al., (2015), put emphasis on the fact that tourism development along with the development of national economy offers a window of opportunities to lessen the imbalances among regions. Khoshkam et al., (2016), hold that tourism development will have a positive impact on the general attitude towards the perceived social and cultural impact of tourism and put that there is a relation between the attitudes of the locals to tourism development and the impacts of tourism. According to Davies and Cahill (2000), the economic benefits of tourism offset the negative environmental impacts, even if it is partial. To illustrate, communities adjacent to national parks enjoy the economic benefits of tourism primarily. Parks attract more visitors to these communities and with the increasing employment opportunities, an enhanced life standards are experienced. Türker and Türker (2014) express that tourism employees perceive the impacts of tourism in a more positive manner compared to other fields of occupations and have a tendency to support tourism. Besides, they show a positive attitude to the social impacts of tourism. Gürbüz (2002) states that locals in Safranbolu are of the opinion that tourism has a

positive impact on the social environment. Özel (2014) holds that among the social and cultural impacts of tourism are the notable roles of the women in the family and society alike, in other words, their will to express themselves. Türker et al., (2016), conclude that the economics, social and cultural impacts of tourism have a positive effect on the quality of life of the people living in Safranbolu. Yıldız (2011) points out that the investment in tourism will have contributions to the solution of unemployment problems, even if not with itself alone. Lin et al., (2017), in their study in China, lay emphasis on the positive effects of the economic and social and cultural benefits of tourism on both value creation and life satisfaction. Altinay et al., (2016) remark that the required basic resources in creating a social value in tourism are natural, financial, political, institutional and human capital. Agovino et al. (2017) indicate that the development and empowerment of national tourism create an essential resource in generating employment and foreign income. Demirbulat (2012) suggests that tourism contributor to a mutual understanding among different cultures and societies and individuals and makes it easy for women to participate in labour life.

The examples of the studies on the impacts of tourism could be enumerated. On the whole, the common point seen the previous research is that tourism sectors holds a crucial place through the eyes of shareholder.

The Aim and Methodology of Study

The main objective of this study is to determine the positive (social, physical and economic) impacts of tourism on the perception of hotel employees on tourist through structural equation model. As data collection tool, questionnaire forms have been made use of. In the first part of the questionnaire there are 7 questions related to demographics, in the second part of the questionnaire 19 items on the positive impacts of tourism and 5 items on the positive dimensions of tourist perceptions, in total being 24. Items other than demographics are on a 5- point Likert scale, ranging from (1) definitely disagreed to (5) definitely agreed. The second part of the questionnaire form was developed through the previous literature (Eralp, 1974; Ahmed, 1987; Toksay, 1989; Tsartas, 1992; Brunt and Courtney, 1999; Carmichael, 2000; Davies and Cahill, 2000; Doğan, 2004; Çalışkan and Tütüncü, 2008; Gümüş and Özüpekçe, 2009; Farahani and Musa, 2011; Roney, 2011) and examined by field specialists in terms of content and clarity. The population of the study is comprised of the employees at hotels with tourism certificate in Eskişehir and Antalya provinces of Turkey in 2015. The sample magnitude has been calculated through the n= $\sigma^2 Z_{\alpha}^2 / H^2$ formulae suggested for infinite populations (N>10000) and quantitative studies. The sampling size has been calculated as 385 for each province. However, in order to enhance the reliability of the study and the possibility that there could be invalid questionnaire forms, 900 participants have been planned in the sampling. As the sampling method, random sampling has been used. As a result of the evaluation of the collected questionnaire forms, 874 questionnaire forms were deemed valid for the use in the study.

Increasingly used in social sciences with increasing importance, SEM (Structural Equation Model) applications offer a wide variety of advantages in scientific studies (Şimşek, 2007). SEM has been used commonly in formulating the theories and explaining the relations among the variables in social sciences (Kaplan, 2000).the discussions in the historical progress of SEM are the ones that spill over into four models, which are regression

analysis, path analysis, confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation model. The first model covers the linear regression model related to the use of the least squares criterion and correlation coefficient in order to compute regression weights. (Schumacker and Lomax, 2004). SEM is created through the combination of path analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. In other words, SEM is the combination of observed variables and the latent variables. The package software used in the Structural Equation Model (SEM) analysis shows different results for the compliance indices. LISREL users usually interpret the results based on the compliance indices such as GFI, AGFI, RMSEA, CFI and NNFI in addition to the Chi-Square value (Sümer, 2000).

Findings

Table 1 reports the demographics of the hotel employees. 44.7% of the participants are from the hotels located in Antalya and 55.3% in Eskişehir. The 42.9% of the participants are male and 57.1% female. In terms of age groups, 6.8% of the participants are 20 and below years of age, 44.7% 21-30 years of age, 32.4% 31-40 years of age, 13.8% 41-50 years of age and 2.4% 51 and above years of age. As for their marital status, 51% of the participants are married and 49% are single. When it comes to their educational background, 17.5% of the participants have primary school degree, 36.6% high school degree, 16.9% associate's degree, and 24.8% university degree, 2.9% graduate degree and 1.3% stated they have educational background not listed in the questionnaire form. As for experience in tourism sector, 38.9% of the participants have experience of 0-4 years, 31% 5-9 years, 15.8% 10-14 years, 7.2% 15-19 years and 7.1% more than 20 years

Table 1: Sample Demographics

Province	**n**	**%**
Antalya	391	44,7
Eskişehir	483	55,3
Gender	**n**	**%**
Erkek	499	42,9
Kadın	375	57,1
Age group	**n**	**%**
20 and below	59	6,8
21-30	391	44,7
31-40	283	32,4
41-50	121	13,8
51+	20	2,3
Marital Status	**n**	**%**
MArried	446	51,0
Single	428	49,0
Education	**n**	**%**
Primary	153	17,5
High	320	36,6
Associate's	148	16,9
University	217	24,8
Graduate	25	2,9
Other	11	1,3

Experience	**n**	**%**
0-4	340	38,9
5-9	271	31,0
10-14	138	15,8
15-19	63	7,2
20+	62	7,1
Department	**n**	**%**
Food and Beverage	279	31,9
Housekeeping	185	21,2
Front Office	143	16,4
Marketing and Sales	49	5,6
Maintenance	44	5,0
Accounting	36	4,1
Security	35	4,0
Human Resources	24	2,7
Other	79	9,0
Position	**n**	**%**
Worker	629	72,0
Section Chief	143	16,4
Department Director	62	7,1
General Director	8	0,9
General Coordinator	7	0,8
Assistant General Coordinator	4	0,5
Other	21	2,4

According to Table 1, 16.4% of the participants work at front office department, 31.9% at food and beverage, 4% at security, 21.2% at housekeeping, 2.7% at human resources, 5.6 at marketing and sales, 5% at maintenance, 4.1% accounting and 9% at other departments. Concerning the positions they hold, 0.8% works as general coordinator, 0.9% as general director, 0.5% as assistant general director, 7% as department director, 16.4% as section chiefs, 72% as worker and 2.4% at other departments.

Table 2 presents the findings of factor analysis of the items used in the questionnaire form. The variance explanatory value, Eigen value, factor loadings of each item, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of each factor are given in Table 2. Besides, the structural equation model on the tourist perceptions on tourists is given in Figure 1.

Table 2: Results of the Explanatory Factor Analysis (Antalya Province)

Factors		Factor Loadings	Eigen value	% variance explained	α
S	**Social Impacts of Tourism**		**1,619**	**15,846**	**0,797**
S1	Decreases the gap between social classes	**0,778**			
S2	Enhances urbanization in the rural parts	**0,801**			
S3	Increases the level of awareness of people	**0,782**			
S4	Creates and atmosphere of tolerance	**0,691**			
E	**Economic Impacts of Tourism**		**1,452**	**13,755**	**0,741**
E1	Eliminates the inter-region distribution of income	**0,768**			
E3	Increases employment	**0,833**			
E4	Increases income levels	**0,790**			
F	**Physical Impacts of Tourism**		**2,264**	**16,548**	**0,829**
F1	Protects historical resources	**0,826**			
F2	Creates a sense of environmental protection	**0,826**			
F3	Supports planned development	**0,752**			
F4	Improves infrastructure investments	**0,716**			
A	**Perceptions on Tourists**		**4,933**	**18,023**	**0,807**
A1	Tourists spend money	**0,691**			
A2	Tourists look for psychological satisfaction	**0,732**			
A3	Tourists travel for physical needs	**0,771**			
A4	Tourists expect their needs to be met unconditionally	**0,790**			
A5	Tourists travel for cultural values	**0,708**			

The results of the structural equation model examining the perceptions of entrepreneurs regarding the impacts of tourism can be observed in Figure 1. The results of the structural equation model examining the perceptions of entrepreneurs regarding the impacts of tourism can be observed in Figure 1. The results show that the developed structural equation model was congruent with the empirical data. The value of X^2/sd., which is used to evaluate the model's compliance, is less than 3, which demonstrates that the model's compliance is acceptable (Yılmaz et al., 2011). As a result of these analyses, factor analysis was applied to the data to ensure the validity of the structural equation modelling approach. The calculation of the KMO value about 0.837 shows that factor analysis can be applied to the data. The ratio of total variant explanation was determined to be approximately 65%.

As a result of the evaluations performed, in Figure 1, "S" represents the positive social impact of tourism, "E" positive economic impacts, "F" positive physical effects and "A" perceptions on tourists. Furthermore, it is seen that the three factors have an effect on the perceptions on tourists in Figure 1. The effect with the highest

magnitude is the factor of the physical impacts of tourism with 31% value. In other words, a unit of change in physical impacts will lead to an increase of 0.31 on the perceptions. In addition, while the economic impact on the perception has a 30% value, the social impact has a negative 8% value. As for the physical impacts, four variables can be said to have an impact. The variable with the least effect is the item F4 (improves infrastructure investments) with a value of 67%. The variable with the highest effect is the item F3 (supports planned development) with a value of 80%. Economic impacts are best explained by three variables. Of these variables, the one with the highest effect is the item E3 (increases employment) with 66% value, while the lowest effect is the item E4 (increases income levels) with 61% value. The last of the factors under discussion is the social impact factor. This factor is explained by four variables. Among the variables, the one with the highest effect is S3 (increases the level of awareness of people) with a coefficient of 0.84 and the one with the lowest effect is S1 (Decreases the gap between social classes) with a coefficient of 0.67. Finally, perception on tourists is explained by 5 variables. Of these variables, the one with the lowest effect is A1 (Tourists spend money) with a rate of 63% and the one with the highest effect is A4 (Tourists expect their needs to be met unconditionally) and A5 (Tourists travel for cultural values) with a rate of 74%.

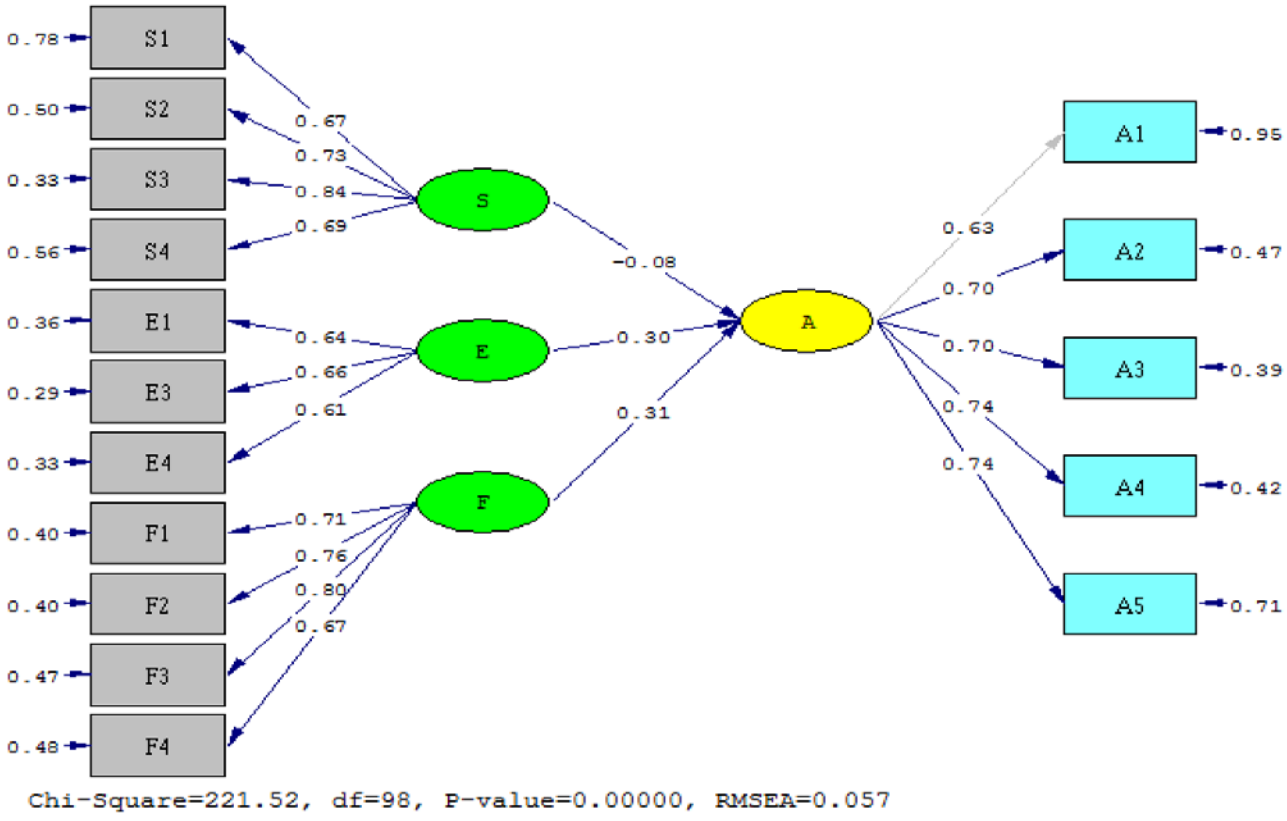

Figure 1: Structural Equation Model on Perception on Tourists (Antalya Province)

The package software used in the Structural Equation Model (SEM) analysis shows different results for the compliance indices. LISREL users usually interpret the results based on the compliance indices such as GFI, AGFI, RMSEA, CFI and NNFI in addition to the Chi-Square value (Sümer, 2000). As a result of the analysis, Table 3

indicates that the model's compliance indices show good compliance. In addition, corrections were made in line with the modifications suggested by the software.

Table 3: Compliance Indices (Antalya İli)

Measurement Index	Goodness-of-fit statistic	Acceptable	Model
RMSEA	0<RMSEA<0.05	0.05 ≤ RMSEA ≤ 0.10	0,057
NFI	0.95 ≤ NFI ≤1	0.90≤ NFI ≤ 0.95	0,950
NNFI	0.97 ≤ NNFI ≤1	0.95≤ NNFI ≤ 0.97	0,960
CFI	0.97 ≤ CFI ≤1	0.95≤ CFI ≤ 0.97	0,970
GFI	0.95 ≤ GFI ≤1	0.90≤ GFI ≤ 0.95	0,930
AGFI	0.90 ≤ AGFI ≤1	0.85≤ AGFI ≤ 0.90	0,910

Source: (Schermelleh-Engel and Moosbrugger, 2003).

Table 3 presents the findings of factor analysis of the items used in the questionnaire form. The variance explanatory value, Eigen value, factor loadings of each item, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of each factor are given in Table 4. Besides, the structural equation model on the tourist perceptions on tourists is given in Figure 2.

As a result of the evaluations performed, in Figure 2, "S" represents the positive social impact of tourism, "E" positive economic impacts, "F" positive physical effects and "A" perceptions on tourists. Furthermore, it is seen that the three factors have an effect on the perceptions on tourists in Figure 2. Of these factors, the one with the lowest effect is the economic impact of tourist with a value of 36%. In other words, a unit change in economic impact will bring about an increase of 0.36 on perception fact. Also, while the economic impact has a magnitude of 36% on perception, social impact has a negative 8% effect. The physical impact on perception on tourist has an effect of 27% value. That's to say, a change of one unit on physical impact will have a change of 0.27 on perception on tourists. There are four variables effective on the social impact. Among these variables, S1 and S3 variables have the highest effect with 74% value. The variable with the lowest effect is the S2 variable with 70% value. Similar to the social impact, four variables are effective on economic and physical impacts. The coefficients of the variable are clearly observed in Figure 2. Lastly, it is seen that five variables are effective in perception on tourists. Of these variables, the variable with the highest effect is A4 with 0.90 value. The one with the lowest effect is A1 variable with 61% value.

Table 4: Results of the Explanatory Factor Analysis (Eskişehir İli)

Factors		Factor Loadings	Eigen value	% variance explained	α
S	**Social Impacts of Tourism**		**1,424**	**15,654**	**0,789**
S1	Decreases the gap between social classes	**0,803**			
S2	Enhances urbanization in the rural parts	**0,735**			
S3	Increases the level of awareness of people	**0,724**			
S4	Creates and atmosphere of tolerance	**0,704**			
E	**Economic Impacts of Tourism**		**1,212**	**14,503**	**0,800**
E1	Eliminates the inter-region distribution of income	**0,477**			
E2	Encourages other investments	**0,801**			
E3	Increases employment	**0,815**			
E4	Increases income levels	**0,712**			
F	**Physical Impacts of Tourism**		**6,251**	**17,396**	**0,877**

F1	Protects historical resources	**0,828**			
F2	Creates a sense of environmental protection	**0,863**			
F3	Supports planned development	**0,799**			
F4	Improves infrastructure investments	**0,665**			
A	**Perceptions on Tourists**		**2,093**	**17,033**	**0,801**
A1	Tourists spend money	**0,705**			
A2	Tourists look for psychological satisfaction	**0,800**			
A3	Tourists travel for physical needs	**0,741**			
A4	Tourists expect their needs to be met unconditionally	**0,767**			
A5	Tourists travel for cultural values	**0,600**			

The results of the structural equation model examining the perceptions of entrepreneurs regarding the impacts of tourism can be observed in Figure 2. The results show that the developed structural equation model was congruent with the empirical data. The value of X^2 /sd., which is used to evaluate the model's compliance, is less than 3, which demonstrates that the model's compliance is acceptable (Yılmaz et al., 2011). As a result of these analyses, factor analysis was applied to the data to ensure the validity of the structural equation modelling approach. The calculation of the KMO value about 0.876 shows that factor analysis can be applied to the data. The ratio of total variant explanation was determined to be approximately 65%.

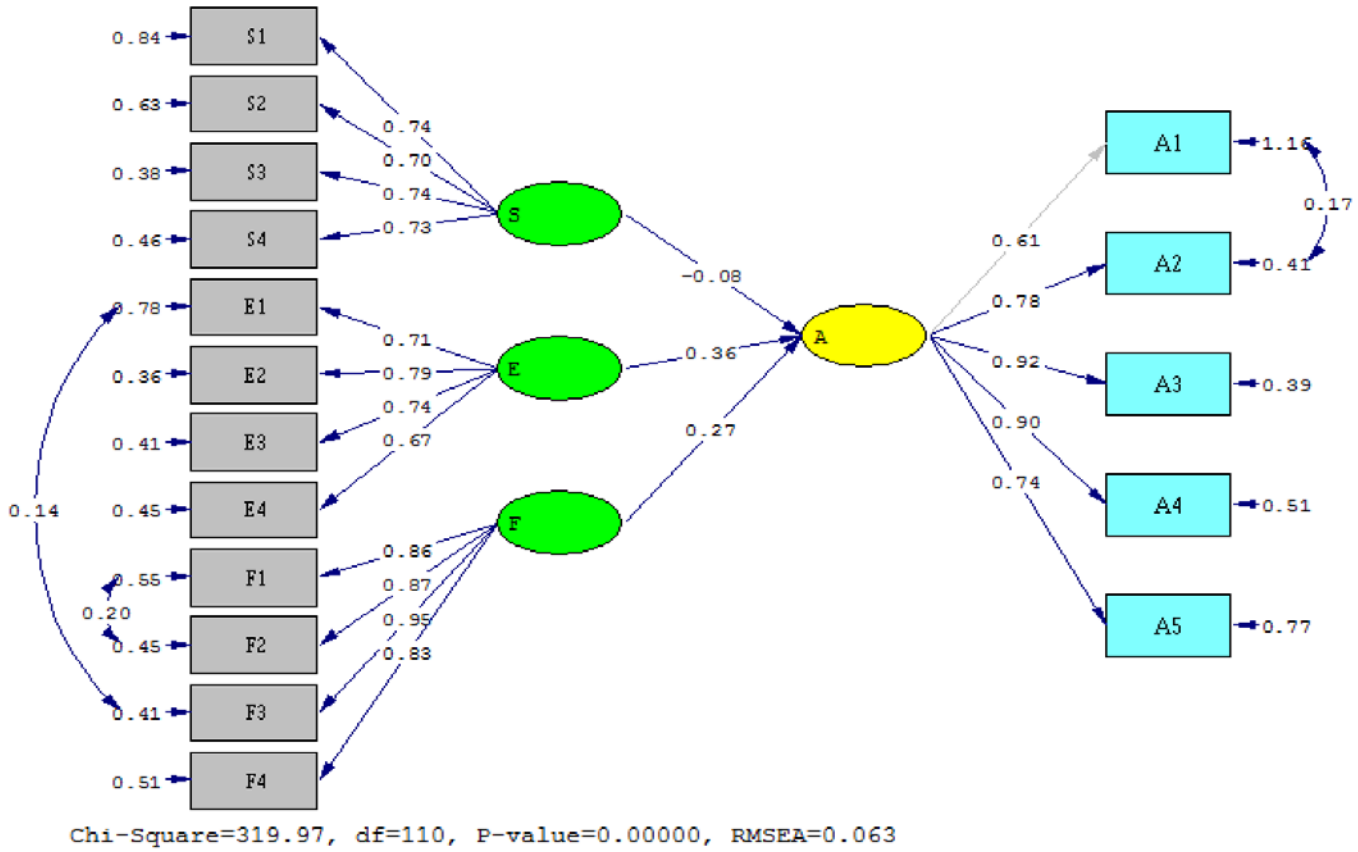

Figure 2: Structural Equation Model on Perception on Tourists (Eskisehir Province)

The package software used in the Structural Equation Model (SEM) analysis shows different results for the compliance indices. LISREL users usually interpret the results based on the compliance indices such as GFI, AGFI, RMSEA, CFI and NNFI in addition to the Chi-Square value (Sümer, 2000). As a result of the analysis, Table 5

indicates that the model's compliance indices show good compliance. In addition, corrections were made in line with the modifications suggested by the software.

Table 5: Compliance Indices

Measurement Index	Goodness-of-fit statistic	Acceptable	Model
RMSEA	0<RMSEA<0.05	0.05 ≤ RMSEA ≤ 0.10	0,06
NFI	0.95 ≤ NFI ≤1	0.90≤ NFI ≤ 0.95	0,96
NNFI	0.97 ≤ NNFI ≤1	0.95≤ NNFI ≤ 0.97	0,97
CFI	0.97 ≤ CFI ≤1	0.95≤ CFI ≤ 0.97	0,97
GFI	0.95 ≤ GFI ≤1	0.90≤ GFI ≤ 0.95	0,93
AGFI	0.90 ≤ AGFI ≤1	0.85≤ AGFI ≤ 0.90	0,90

Source: (Schermelleh-Engel and Moosbrugger, 2003).

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In this part of the study, the variables with an effect on the perception on tourist of the employees at tourism-certificate hotels located in Eskişehir and Antalya provinces of Turkey and their extent of effect have been analysed through structural equation model and comparisons have been made. Antalya province, where the questionnaire forms were administered to the participants, is one of the most important tourism destinations and a centre of attraction towards sea, sand, sun and culture and convention. On the other hand, Eskişehir, located in Central Anatolia Region, is a city drawing the attention of both domestic and foreign tourist as the city of culture. Moreover, Eskişehir ranks high in education level across Turkey. Hence, both provinces with high awareness of tourism and culture have become the focal point of this paper.

According to the results of comparisons, the social impacts of tourism on the perception of tourist through the eyes of the employees at hotels in Eskişehir and Ankara were determined in inverse direction (-0.08). Among the social impacts, the item "Increases the level of awareness of people (0.84)" has the highest, while the item "Decreases the gap between social classes (0.67)" has the lowest value in Antalya. As seen in Figure 1, as the level of awareness increases the social impact of tourism increases, but perception on tourist decreases in a negative manner. In Eskişehir, on the other hand, it is seen that the items "Decreases the gap between social classes (0.74)" and "Increases the level of awareness of people (0.74)" have the highest, while "Enhances urbanization in the rural parts (0.70)"has the lowest value. As seen in Figure 2, as the gap between social classes decreases and the awareness level increases, the social impact of tourism increases. However, while the social impact increases, the perception on tourist decreases in negative way.

It is determined that the opinions of hotel employees on the economic impacts on tourist perception is (0.30) in Antalya, while it is (0.36) in Eskişehir. Among the economic impacts that affect perception on tourists, it is seen that the item "Increases employment (0.66)" has the highest value in Antalya, "Increases income levels (0.61)" is the item with the lowest value. Antalya is one of the cities with high density of tourism investments. Thus, the density of tourism investments affect the population density of the city, too, which increases the employment suppl. For this reason, the income increase expected from tourism does not go up in real terms and we can say that due to the excess labour force the expected income from tourism is below the expectations. As for Eskişehir, the item

"Encourages other investments (0.79)" has the highest, while "increases income levels (0.67)" has the lowest value in Eskişehir. It is seen that the employees at hotels in Eskişehir know of the relation of tourism with other sectors. This situation shows that the intellectual awareness level of hotel employees in Eskişehir is at high levels. Besides, they hold similar opinions with the ones in Antalya with respect to the idea that tourists increase income level. As the factor that causes this situation, we can point to excess labour and the opportunist attitudes of tourism-related businesses.

On the other hand, the rate of the opinions of the hotel employees on the physical impacts on perception on tourists in Antalya is (0.31), while it is (0.27) in Eskişehir. Among the physical factors that affect the perception on tourist, the item "Supports planned development (0.80)" has the highest value, while the item "Improves infrastructure investments (0.67)" has the lowest value in Antalya. As for Eskişehir, the item "Supports planned development (0.95)" has the highest value, while the item "Improves infrastructure investments (0.83)" has the lowest value in Eskişehir. Both in Antalya and Eskişehir, hotel employees underline the importance of planned development in physical impacts of tourism. In both cities, we can hold that, hotel employees indicate awareness that unplanned urbanization will have a negative impact on tourism. It is seen that the hotel employees do not agree on the idea of "infrastructure development".

It is observed that the items "Tourists expect their needs to be met unconditionally (0.74)" and "Tourists travel for cultural values (0.74)" have the highest values, while the item "Tourists spend money (0.63)" has the lowest value for those hotel employees in Antalya. When it comes to Eskişehir, the item "Tourists travel for physical needs (0.92)" has the highest value, while the item "Tourists spend money (0.61)" has the lowest value. The results suggest that hotel employees are aware of the concept of "tourist" and why they travel and their expectations. This awareness level is something appreciated for tourism sector. On the other hand, the fact that they do not regard tourists as those not only spending money indicate that employees have a good grasp of understanding of tourism and tourist related issues.

On the whole, it can be held that hotel employees have the consciousness about the concepts of "tourism" and "tourist". Concerning some issues, their opinions may vary or show similar aspects. The awareness of such tourism activities as entertainment, resting in Antalya is in the foreground, while in Eskişehir cultural trips are in the foreground. As for the limitations of this study, only in two cities questionnaire forms were administered in specific times. In order to increase the generalisation of the results, it is suggested that in different parts of the seasons (high-low) in a bigger population, the questionnaires could be administered. To be more specific, in the same two cities in different years, different results could be obtained. Furthermore, fuzzy logic computations and analyses could be implemented in order to calculate the correlation coefficients among the variables in a more robust manner. In order to test the differences among demographics t test and variance analysis could be employed, too.

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