



*Araştırma Makalesi • Research Article*

**An Evaluation on the Problems and Solutions of Cappadocia Regional Tourism**

*Kapadokya Bölge Turizminin Sorunlarına ve Çözüm Önerilerine Yönelik Bir Değerlendirme*

Şule Ardiç Yetiş\*, Gaye Deniz\*\*, Şule Aydın\*\*\*, Filiz Dalkılıç\*\*\*\*

**Abstract:** The aim of this study is to put forth how much of the ongoing tourism problems in the Cappadocia Region could be solved by in-depth analysis or what steps can be taken to solve them. From this point of view, by using the qualitative research approach, the single-case embedded design was used in the study. In this context, the outputs of meetings such as conferences, seminars, and workshops held so far to identify the problems that prevent tourism development in the destination have been examined by document analysis. Regarding the tourism of the Cappadocia region, lack of promotion, vocational/in-service training, and qualified workforce, poor working conditions, insufficient incentives for the sector, failure to manage crises, unplanned construction in the region, security problems, not adopting the concept of sustainability, inability to activate alternative tourism types, standard service quality and inadequate supervision, lack of historical and cultural inventory, transportation problems and many problems regarding inter-institutional communication and cooperation have been revealed. Based on the research results, possible solutions for the problems experienced in the tourism sector in the region are presented. Since there has been limited research in terms of addressing the current problems of the tourism sector in the Cappadocia Region, It is expected that the findings of this study will contribute to the field and provide practical benefits by creating a resource for subsequent research and offering suggestions.

**Keywords:** Tourism, Problems, Suggestions, Cappadocia Region.

**Öz:** Bu çalışmanın amacı, Kapadokya Bölgesi'nde süregelen turizm sorunlarının derinlemesine incelenmesi suretiyle ne kadarının çözülebildiğinin ya da çözülmesi için atılabilecek adımların neler olduğunun ortaya

\* Doç. Dr., Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli Üniversitesi, Turizm Fakültesi, Turizm İşletmeciliği Bölümü  
ORCID: 0000-0002-9792-9079, ardicsule@nevsehir.edu.tr

\*\* Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli Üniversitesi, Turizm Fakültesi, Turizm İşletmeciliği Bölümü  
ORCID: 0000-0002-9980-8506, gaye.yuksel@nevsehir.edu.tr (Sorumlu yazar)

\*\*\* Prof. Dr., Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli Üniversitesi, Turizm Fakültesi, Turizm İşletmeciliği Bölümü  
ORCID: 0000-0002-8760-643X, suleaydin@nevsehir.edu.tr

\*\*\*\* Arş. Gör., Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli Üniversitesi, Turizm Fakültesi, Turizm Rehberliği Bölümü  
ORCID: 0000-0002-5984-6655, filiz.dalkilic@nevsehir.edu.tr

**Cite as/ Atıf:** Ardiç Yetiş, Ş., Deniz, G., Aydın, Ş. & Dalkılıç, F. (2022). An evaluation on the problems and solutions of Cappadocia regional tourism. *Anemon Muş Alparslan Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 10(1), 71-83. <http://dx.doi.org/10.18506/anemon.1017029>

**Received/Geliş:** 31 October/Ekim 2021

**Accepted/Kabul:** 28 November/Kasım 2021

**Published/Yayın:** 30 April/Nisan 2022

koyulmasıdır. Bu noktadan hareketle, çalışmada nitel araştırma yaklaşımından yararlanarak iç içe geçmiş tek durum deseni kullanılmıştır. Bu kapsamda destinasyonda turizmin gelişmesini engelleyen sorunların tespit edilmesine ilişkin bugüne kadar yapılan konferans, seminer ve çalıştay gibi toplantıların çıktılarını doküman analizi ile incelenmiştir. Kapadokya bölge turizmine ilişkin tanıtım, mesleki/hizmet içi eğitim ve nitelikli işgücü yetersizliği, çalışma şartlarının kötü olması, sektöre yönelik teşvik yetersizliği, krizlerin yönetilememesi, bölgede çarpık yapılaşma, güvenlik sorunu, sürdürülebilirlik anlayışının benimsenmemesi, alternatif turizm türlerinin etkinleştirilememesi, standart hizmet kalitesi ve denetim yetersizliği, tarihi ve kültürel envanterin olmaması, ulaşım sorunları ve kurumlar arası iletişim ve işbirliğine yönelik pek çok sorun olduğu ortaya konmuştur. Araştırma sonuçlarından yola çıkarak, bölgede turizm sektöründe yaşanan sorunlara ilişkin olası çözüm önerileri sunulmuştur. Çalışmaya dair bulguların, özellikle Kapadokya Bölgesi'nde turizmde mevcut sorunları ele alması ve öneri sunması açısından sınırlı sayıda araştırma yapılmış olması nedeniyle bu alana katkı sağlaması ve sonraki araştırmalara kaynak oluşturarak pratik anlamda fayda sağlaması beklenmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Turizm, Sorunlar, Öneriler, Kapadokya Bölgesi.

## Introduction

Cappadocia Region, which has hosted various civilizations throughout history, has been a destination that has been visited for many years with its rich cultural heritage, unique geography, and alternative tourism potential. With the evolution of tourism demand in line with new trends, alternative tourism types such as balloon tourism, equestrian nature tourism, sports and golf tourism, entertainment tourism, thermal tourism, congress tourism, gastronomy tourism, and wine tourism are made in order to go beyond the existing cultural and religious tourism potential in the region. (Yılmaz & Özdemir, 2017; Özen & Güneren Özdemir, 2020). However, it is seen that many problems experienced in the tourism sector in the country are experienced in similar or different ways in particular regions. These problems, which are generally experienced as a result of wrong or unsuccessful moves, have been in a wide range for years, from wrong structuring to the lack of marketing and promotion, from the inadequacy of infrastructure and superstructure to the inability to diversify tourism, from the image problem to lack of planning.

Although the supply opportunities of the region are sufficient in terms of tourism, it is crucial to examine and solve the current problems of the Cappadocia Region in-depth to take place it deserves in the country's tourism. To determine the tourism development problems of the Cappadocia which is an important destination in the country's tourism, many studies have been carried out, and the results have been revealed. Even though the problems of excessive tourism in the region (Eren & Bozkurt, 2020), sustainability of tourism (Karacaoğlu & Yolal, 2019; Somuncu & Yiğit, 2009; Ardıç Yetiş, 2019; Uslu, 2017), the authenticity of cultural heritage in terms of tourism (Çokışler, 2018; Özen, 2021), and qualified workforce (Ardıç Yetiş & Çalışkan, 2019; Cem, Keskin & Serçeoğlu, 2015) have been discussed for a long time, the fact that the same problems are still being discussed today can be interpreted as the solutions to problems are not taken into account sufficiently, and the implementation of the action plans is insufficient.

In this context, the study aims to reveal how much of the ongoing tourism problems in the Cappadocia Region can be solved or what steps can be taken to solve them. In the light of the findings obtained, alternative suggestions will be presented in order to reach the place it deserves in terms of promotion in the Cappadocia Region.

## Conceptual Framework

Considering that Turkey is an ultra-rich country with all kinds of opportunities in terms of its geographical location, natural resources, and labor force, it is not a coincidence that it is among the leading countries in the world in the tourism sector. At the point it has reached today, the country's tourism draws the impression of a sector that acts with sustainable development goals. However, talking about balanced progress only depends on all the stakeholders of the sector coming together to identify the problems encountered both nationally and regionally correctly and make efforts to solve them in

mutual solidarity. This issue, which is important in terms of not hindering the dynamic structure of the tourism sector, will bring positive results when it is consciously discussed.

Although the problems experienced in the tourism sector in Turkey have been researched and discussed for years (Akbulut, 2010; Aras, 2017; Avcıkurt, 1997; Dinçer & Dinçer, 1989; Göral, 2017; İlban & Kaşlı, 2009; İnanır, 2019; Okuyucu & Somuncu, 2013; Yanardağ & Avcı, 2012; Yılmaz, Tabak & Samur, 2020), the shallowness of the proposed solution offers or the deficiencies in practice cause the problems experienced to be served in the same way for years. Considering the research on this subject, it is seen that many issues such as not being able to put forward a vision, insufficient promotions, problems in direct transportation, price policy dependent on agencies, security weaknesses, lack of regional development, disadvantages of all-inclusive systems, and lack of law of occupation in the sector are considered as problems (Sosyal Demokrasi Derneği, 2019).

Similarly, it is important to address and solve regional tourism problems, especially in terms of sustainability and development. The tourism sector has an important place in eliminating the imbalances between the regions by using the resources effectively and ensuring a regional development (Çeken, 2008: 295). From this point of view, many studies in the literature deal with the issue at the regional level, and each one focuses on a different problem. Akbulut (2010), based on the distribution of thermal springs by regions in Turkey, discussed the problems experienced due to the inability to utilize the existing potential. It has been revealed that many factors such as problems in infrastructure and enterprises, lack of health personnel and health-related tools and equipment, insufficient promotion, and the fact that other tourism activities are at the forefront, pose a problem in terms of not adequately evaluating thermal resources in terms of health tourism. On the other hand, Akbulut states that environmental protections could not be realized adequately due to the failure to observe the principle of using protection for practices that contradict the understanding of sustainable tourism. He also states that the thermal resource potential cannot be used effectively because agriculture, service, industry, and other types of tourism are at the forefront in the Aegean and Marmara and there are not enough initiatives in Central Anatolia. For this purpose; he suggested that it is necessary to increase the interest in thermals by organizing promotional events such as festivals, fairs, and spa weeks for the implementation of the correct zoning plans and making the necessary legal arrangements, increasing the academic studies on the subject, raising the awareness of the local people, having certain equipment, privatizing the inspections of the enterprises and promoting the thermal springs.

Çizel (1999) discussed the potential and problems of congress tourism in the Antalya destination in the Mediterranean Region in his postgraduate thesis.

It has been revealed that this issue, which is important within the scope of diversification of tourism, cannot get enough share from the world market and that the demand is mostly derived from the domestic market. He stated that at the point of evaluating the region with alternative tourism types other than sea-sand-sun, as Karakuş and Çoban (2018) stated, it is important to provide adequate equipment for the facilities to increase the congress tourism potential by intensifying the contacts with the professional congress organizers who direct the demand, by being a member of the relevant international organizations, and by having expert staff within the scope of congress tourism.

In the studies conducted by Mansuroğlu (2006) in the Mediterranean and Öztürk (2020) in Central Anatolia, Erkilic (2019) in Eastern Blacksea Region and Dedeoğlu et al. (2021) in Cappadocia, they discussed the perspectives of the local people towards tourism and emphasized that the problems that could prevent the development of tourism could be eliminated by raising awareness. In this sense, the studies that underline the necessity of providing the support of the local people suggest that destinations with touristic potential and alternative attractions can be developed more in parallel with the changes in the touristic demand structure.

In another study conducted to reveal the problems experienced in Eskişehir, which wants to be in a pioneering position within the scope of city tourism (Seçilmiş, 2011), it is seen that the most important problems arise in the issues of infrastructure and superstructure, product diversification, promotion, attitude, and service quality. For the development of tourism, it is suggested that healthy infrastructure

and superstructure opportunities should be developed, the factors that will attract qualified employees to businesses, and the employment of qualified personnel with professional formations, and participation in tourism fairs and festivals in different regions of the world in terms of promotion. In another study, which deals with the problems affecting the development of tourism, Yılmaz and Ön Esen (2015) revealed four dimensions as attitude and service quality problems, product diversification and planning-promotion problems, superstructure problems and infrastructure problems. Stating that although there are sufficient supply opportunities and attractiveness for consumer preferences, there are destinations that cannot reach the desired levels due to certain problems and cannot benefit from many positive effects of tourism, the researchers offered similar solutions as Seçilmiş (2011).

The Cappadocia Region has both rich historical artifacts and cultural assets left by the civilizations that dominated the region in the historical process, as well as unique natural wonders and geographical formations due to being surrounded by volcanic mountains.

The region is a paradise for tourists with its natural, historical, and cultural beauties. Many results have been revealed in the studies, especially the ones examining the critical aspects of the region in terms of tourism, opinions are expressed by considering the current situation regarding regional tourism (Buyruk, 2012; Can & Can, 2019; Demirçivi, 2017; Ersun & Arslan, 2009; Somuncu & Yiğit, 2009; Uslu, 2017; Yorgancı, 2018; Yiğit & Şahin Perçin, 2021). The results of all the steps taken so far to address the current problems of tourism in the Cappadocia region and the effectiveness of the implemented action plans are worth evaluating. From this point of view, this study aimed to examine the problems experienced in the tourism sector in Turkey in the context of Cappadocia destination and presented various suggestions by revealing the existing issues in the region, both by making document analysis and taking the opinions of the sector stakeholders.

### **Method**

A qualitative research approach was used in the research. The qualitative method is a type of research the reasons behind social reality and human behavior are tried to be understood by using qualitative data collection methods such as observation, interview, and document analysis (Gürbüz ve Şahin, 2018). The main purpose of choosing the qualitative approach in this research is to examine the ongoing tourism problems in the Cappadocia Region in-depth and to reveal how many of the issues can be solved or what steps can be taken to solve them. In this research, the single-case embedded design was used. The single-case embedded design can be used when there is more than one substrate or unit in a single state. In this context, as data collection techniques document review from qualitative research approaches were used. Document analysis helps to classify the data subject to research by organizing them into main themes, categories, and case examples, especially through content analysis (Labuschagne, 2003). Document analysis is generally used with other qualitative research methods to diversify/triangulate. This is to increase credibility in research using different data sources and methods, to aid in categorization, classification, support, and validation of what was done in the study. In addition to existing documents, in document analysis, interviews, participant and non-participant observations, and all hard-copy documents can be analyzed together (Yin, 1994). Diversifying data also allows researchers to prove that their research is reliable.

The research method consists of two consecutive complementary elements. First, the documents in the domestic and foreign literature on the subject related to the determination of the issues that prevent the development of tourism in a destination were examined. Then, meeting with tourism stakeholders in the Cappadocia Region were arranged and generally collected their material or documents of previous meetings about ongoing tourism problems in the Cappadocia Region. The information about meetings, such as workshops and conferences on the development of tourism in the region, was obtained in the light of the literature review made during the interview. This information includes the written documents of the meetings held and the ones that need to be added. Finally, the documents of the meetings were examined, and the problems related to the ongoing tourism development of the Cappadocia Region were categorized. After this categorization, suggestions for solutions that have been made or should be done regarding the problems are presented.

## Findings and Interpretation

To reach the results of the study, people who could represent the tourism stakeholders operating in the region were reached and data related to the research were obtained from documents to relevant institutions and organizations. In this context, the explanations on the main themes according to the categorization made regarding the tourism problems of the region.

### Main Themes and Explanations on Themes

Data was received from the participants about their participation in the workshops held within the scope of tourism development, during their stay in the region. In the light of the information given by the participants, it is seen that many meetings were held in Nevşehir, dealing with the problems experienced in the development of tourism. However, not putting the results of these meetings in writing, turning them into action plans, or not following them makes it difficult to access the documents of these meetings.

Although there have been many meetings regarding the problems of tourism in Nevşehir over the years, it has been determined that there are few meetings whose results have been written down. In the interviews, three meetings that were turned into written documents were mentioned. Accordingly, documents related to these meetings were obtained from the participants and document analysis was performed.

In the document analysis, the TR 71 Region Tourism Research and Analysis Report published by Ahiler Development Agency (AHİKA) in 2013, the 11th Academic Tourism Education Search Conference organized in cooperation with the Cappadocia Vocational School and Anatolia Tourism Academy in 2016, and the Industry in 2018. The information obtained from the KOP Region Integrated Tourism Master Plan Final Plan and Plan Report published by the Ministry of Technology and Technology has been examined in detail. In this context, in this study, which was conducted to evaluate the meetings held for the problems and solution proposals of Cappadocia regional tourism, the themes and explanations for the most frequently mentioned problems in regional tourism are given in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Themes and Descriptions Regarding the Problems of Cappadocia Regional Tourism

Themes	Descriptions
Lack of publicity	Refers to the scarcity or lack of diversification of the promotional activities carried out to make the destination stand out from the rival destinations.
Lack of vocational training/qualified personnel and in-service training	It covers the workforce at the level and quality to meet the needs of the tourism sector at the secondary and higher education level and the training given in the enterprise for their development.
Flexible working hours and insufficient incentives for the sector	The increase in the demand for employees in tourism establishments according to the density of the guests, and accordingly the inability of the working hours to be fixed and the lack of support provided by the state to the investors in terms of financing
The shift of skilled employment to different sectors in times of crisis	Transfer of qualified personnel to other sectors depending on the ups and downs in the tourism sector
Increasing unplanned construction/infrastructure and security problems in touristic places	Refers to the destination's infrastructure such as electricity, water, communication, transportation facilities, and superstructure opportunities such as touristic facilities, activity, shopping opportunities
Not adopting the concept of sustainable tourism	Emphasizes the awareness of ensuring the natural attractions, cultural and historical beauties of the destination, which should be passed on to future generations without deterioration
The inadequacy of alternative tourism types in the marketing of the region as a product variety	Refers to the development of new products by evaluating the main product type(s) according to the

	quality, size, and power of the destination, or the use of existing and new products together
Lacking standard of service quality in regional facilities	Emphasizes the lack of a standard for service quality in service businesses located in the destination.
Problems in the development of thermal tourism and health tourism	Failure to develop the types of tourism that the destination has
Insufficient inspections and lack of standard architectural texture in the region	The scarcity of management studies on the infrastructure and superstructure works in the conservation areas and the architectural differences of the superstructures and not being suitable for the regional texture.
Lack of historical and cultural inventory	Lack of reporting on the rich historical and cultural heritage of the region
The lack of vehicles suitable for the texture in the region and the inadequacy of transportation alternatives to the destination from outside	Refers to the inadequacy of vehicles, including conservation areas, in the destination, and the scarcity of environmentally friendly vehicles suitable for the regional texture
Lack of inter-agency communication and cooperation	All tourism stakeholders, both private and public, are far from each other and there is little cooperation on issues that require unity

As a result of the examination of the written documents obtained from the participants, in addition to these problems that were frequently mentioned in the meetings, different problems were also addressed according to the purpose of each meeting. These problems are;

- The absence of tourism monitoring units and the active use of tourism information offices to monitor the economic, social, and cultural effects of tourism activities carried out in the region,
- Failure to attract national and international investments to the region,
- The damage of ATV and safari tours to the regional texture and the lack of control over the execution of these activities in a particular region,
- Lack of use-protection balance and security problem in museums and ruins,
- Inadequate information system for the sector and inaccuracy of statistical data,
- Not understanding the tourism multiplier effect,
- Deficiencies in destination branding and image creation,
- Extension of the tourism season and overnight stay in the region.

According to the document analysis, the “problem of publicity” was especially emphasized in the meetings. However, it is understood that no different method has been applied for promotion and marketing other than traditional methods such as fairs, congresses, promotional days and workshops. In addition, each stakeholder in the region (municipality, NGO, travel agencies, etc.) carries out promotional activities on its behalf. These promotions consist of activities such as the individual efforts of local governments and the use of websites. In this sense, it has been evaluated that the activities carried out for the promotion of the region are far from cooperation, plain and shallow. Social media and the opportunities offered by the information age should be used extensively, especially in the promotion. One of the steps taken towards this is the use of a common platform for the promotion of the region. In terms of marketing, an evaluation should be made according to the nationality of the tourists and an agreement should be made about the target market.

Another problem that was especially emphasized in the meetings is the inadequacy of the region in terms of vocational training. Currently, one foundation and one state university provide education in the field of tourism in the region. Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University has a Tourism Research Institute, a Tourism Faculty, and a Vocational School. Cappadocia University has one Applied Sciences School and one Vocational School. At Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University, 1077 students are studying at the Faculty of Tourism, 1217 students at Ürgüp Sebhat and Erol Toksöz Vocational Schools, and 757 students at Cappadocia University are studying in the field of tourism. In addition, Nevşehir Hacı

Bektař Veli University Tourism Faculty organized the “University-Tourism Sector Cooperation Workshop” in 2018. In the workshop, a revision was made in the education and training at the university by consulting about the needs of the tourism sector. On the other hand, in the one-to-one meetings held by the Faculty of Tourism with the sector stakeholders, the lack of qualified personnel to work in the sector is particularly noted. At the same time, there is a claim that students who graduate in the field of tourism are deficient in knowledge and skills for the demands of the sector. Few of these students are willing to work in the field of tourism in the region. The fact that tourism enterprises operating in the region do not offer sufficient wages to students, do not provide social opportunities, and do not offer social security are among the most important reasons for this problem. In this sense, tourism sector stakeholders' expectations and the situation of current tourism education should be examined in depth. However, it is thought that institutions and organizations operating in the field of tourism in the region and NGOs do not benefit enough from these sources. However, it is observed that no concrete steps have been taken for the demands of the sector by any institution or organization other than the Faculty of Tourism in the region. In addition, it is stated that various public and private institutions, organizations, and businesses in the region can be visited, and through mutual interviews, which subjects needed more research can be revealed and the research problems can be determined according to these needs before starting the researches and theses to be carried out. To this end, steps have been taken to establish a "Tourism Strategy and Research Center" in cooperation with the Tourism Academicians Association, Tourism NGOs and NEVÜ Tourism Research Institute.

It was frequently mentioned at the meetings that the infrastructure problem was tried to be solved quickly or that this problem would be solved by the local administrations, especially during the periods when the increasing unplanned construction and especially the tourism were active. It is a fact that the budgets of local governments are prepared within the scope of certain plans, and in this sense, infrastructure works cannot be done by local governments alone. In this context, tourism enterprises need to complete their infrastructure deficiencies. On the other hand, the inability to prevent different constructions in the districts is one of the most crucial problems. It is assumed that this problem creates visual pollution and is thought that this assumption is put forward due to the deterioration of the geological structure of the region. One of the most important steps taken to prevent unplanned construction is the implementation of site management in the region. The necessity of adapting the arrangements made to the texture of the region, the demolition of the distorted structures made in the past period, and the regular follow-up of the restoration works are among the important developments in this regard.

Another issue mentioned in the region is security. Especially the security problem in valleys and natural historical places has been discussed. On the other hand, it is known that there have been negative issues such as harassment, theft, and murder against foreign tourists in the valleys in recent years. In this sense, it is a fact that there are problems that need to be solved more priority than changing the plates of valleys and historical places. However, security measures such as security cameras or lighting to solve the problems raised in these meetings are still insufficient.

Adopting a sustainable tourism approach is one of the most important agendas of the meetings, emphasizing that nature and cultural values are among the most important resources in Cappadocia tourism and therefore the importance of transferring resources to future generations. It is evaluated that the sustainability understanding of the sector does not go beyond the income obtained from tourism in economic terms. In this sense, it is observed that there is still not acting with a responsible consciousness and that sustainable development and growth do not work for the tourism sector.

It was emphasized in the meetings that Cappadocia tourism should not be built only on culture and belief tourism, and it was stated that this is a problem in terms of transforming it into alternative tourism types and touristic products. On the other hand, although the use of tourism types in product diversification has been mentioned, a product variety related to this has not been presented to the market. Apart from the hot-air balloons, quad bikes, and Göreme Open Air Museum offered to the target market, it is known that there are alternative touristic products with highly competitive power such as gastronomy, thermal water potential, cross golf, wine, and different excursion routes for different needs

and requests in the region. In this context, it is necessary to turn the mentioned touristic products into a type of tourism apart from the existing touristic products and to create a market that will demand this product. Marketing strategies prepared by local initiatives should be re-examined with travel agencies and tour operators and should be brought to a level that will win the appreciation of the potential target market. Cappadocia needs to be introduced to different markets. At this point, a database should be created about the behavior of the nationalities in the target market, and promotional activities should be carried out for the created touristic products.

The effect of quality on guest satisfaction in the tourism industry was also discussed at the meetings. The Faculty of Tourism has made offers to provide in-service training to tourism enterprises in the projects it has carried out within the university but the enterprises have made a negative return in recent years due to occupancy rates and workload excuses. In this context, businesses are insufficient to complete the lack of professional knowledge and skills of their employees. However, the staff reluctantly fulfills the job they do in the department they work. Therefore, there are service problems with the guests. However, it is observed that the enterprises and tourism stakeholders do not have sufficient knowledge and awareness about the importance and necessity of service quality.

During the meetings, the development of health and thermal tourism problems was also evaluated. Although the importance of the competence of the personnel is quite significant (Onat, Sarıgül & Karakuş, 2021), it has been argued that, despite this, it has been claimed that problems continue in the development of facilities and training of competent personnel. The two higher education institutions in the region train personnel for health and thermal tourism. However, the working conditions and fluctuations in the region make it difficult for these employees to work in the region. In addition, the criteria for the facilities preferred by the European countries, which are the target markets for third age tourism (Norway, Germany, etc.) and health tourism, and the development of plans and projects accordingly are ignored (Inactive use of the thermal water source in Mustafapaşa, insufficient evaluation of Kozaklı thermal facilities, etc.).

Although problems such as illegal tours, illegal guiding activities and illegal construction were mentioned, it was stated that the inspections were insufficient. It is observed that there are no plans and standards for standardization and regular execution of audits. For this purpose, field management studies continue.

It was stated as a problem in the meetings that the labor and labor legislation could not meet the needs of the Cappadocia tourism sector and that new regulations should be introduced according to flexible working conditions. However, there is no application or call for regulation by the region to ISKUR or any other relevant institution. Business managers have a one-sided defense mechanism in terms of protecting personnel and continuing their employment in the sector in times of crisis. This situation causes the shift of employment from the sector to other sectors.

Scientific research on cultural values and inventory should be supported and archived. Official institutions need to come together and determine a strategy for this.

It was discussed to create vehicles suitable for the texture of the region and areas closed to traffic. However, the Göreme National Park road route and important areas are still open to vehicle and Quad Bike traffic. A study carried out within the scope of transportation after the meetings is the open-top tour bus activity. However, since the price of this bus is expensive and it is not suitable for the texture of the region, it is not seen as an effective solution. Efforts to increase the transportation opportunities, which are planned to attract more tourists to the region, are aimed at completing the Ankara-Nevşehir highway project, mentioned flight schedules and high-speed train projects are not active. The volume of tourists coming to the region should be increased by opening existing airports to international flights and improving road and rail connections with the region's surroundings. Passengers arriving by transfer from Kayseri Airport should be offered a safe transportation alternative. Active work should be done at the point of completing the planned train transportation.

Insufficient cooperation among tourism stakeholders and lack of inter-institutional communication are among the outstanding problems in the meetings. It was recommended to act as an umbrella organization in the meetings, but central management consisting of the top managers of the relevant institutions was not established.

There is no study on the tourism monitoring units planned to be established in the region. In addition, tourism information offices are still not actively used.

The mentioned problem in attracting national and international investments to the region continues. There is no other investment activity in the region apart from the hotel project carried out by an Azerbaijani investor.

The damage of Quad Bike and safari tours to the region is among the problems mentioned. In the meetings, it was mentioned that a plan would be made for these tours to continue their activities in a certain area, but it was not put into operation yet.

An active strategy has not yet been determined to set up a tourism information system in the region and the information system for the sector.

There is still no practice in tourism businesses for sustainable tourism and responsible tourism. The people of the region and their investors are far from this understanding with illegal construction and illegal works. Implementations for waste management in the region are limited. There are limited applications for local people to have different views on the use of tourism as a tool in economic development and to eliminate the lack of knowledge of stakeholders about tourism. It is obvious that universities and other institutions do not cooperate in their development.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Known as Rocky Cappadocia, Nevşehir, which has a unique potential for nature and cultural tourism, is home to Göreme Natural and Historical National Park, which is on the UNESCO World Natural and Cultural Heritage list, Zelve Open Air Museum, Hacıbektaş Veli Museum, magnificent valleys made up of tuff lands, churches, caravanserais, natural sites, and underground cities. Apart from this, there are activities for many types of tourism in the region, such as faith tourism, thermal tourism, balloon tourism, congress tourism, and equestrian tourism. In the meetings, where the current situation for regional tourism was discussed and opinions were expressed, the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the region, which are of critical importance in terms of tourism, were examined and many results have been revealed. This study was carried out specifically to the Rocky Cappadocia destination. In this research, the outputs of the meetings, conferences, and workshops were analyzed by document analysis to examine the problems experienced in the tourism sector and to reveal possible solutions.

As a result of the document analysis, it is found that increasing visitor satisfaction would contribute to the development and promotion of the image of the region more positively and increase demand for the region. The main objective is to increase the satisfaction level of visitors visiting the region. WOMM (Word of Mouth Marketing), which has emerged in recent years, emphasizes the importance of word of mouth advertising, as people share their good experiences. Increasing customer satisfaction, therefore, coincides with intending to increase the market share of the region. It should be possible to obtain information about the region from different environments. In addition to this, opening Information Offices within the Culture and Tourism Directorates of the provinces of the region and increasing the functions of existing ones, establishing information desks in accommodation facilities and taking other similar measures, the issues such as differentiating accommodation and food and beverage facilities in urban and rural areas according to demand, encouraging boutique hotel-type facilities, increasing the service quality of the facilities, highlighting the local cuisine and features, increasing the education level and quality of the personnel who deal with the visitors, should be coddled. These findings are similar to studies on destination marketing and visitors' visits to destinations (Zhang et al., 2014; Aliman et al., 2016; Prayag et al., 2017; Marchiori and Onder, 2017; Gün et al., 2019). In destinations that create a negative image for the visitors for the marketing of the destinations, the

satisfaction level of the visitors, the intention to revisit, and the behavioral tendencies to recommend to others are high.

Another point that emerged as a result of the analysis is that although the region has many unique tourism products, the audience of these products is limited to only a specific segment. It is necessary to open up to new markets to increase the market share, and therefore the income of regional tourism.

Marketing strategies prepared by local initiatives should be re-examined with travel agencies and tour operators and should be brought to a quality that will win the appreciation of the potential target market.

Based on the results of the research, the following can be mentioned as solution suggestions for the problems experienced in the tourism sector in the region:

- Labor and labor legislation cannot meet the needs of the tourism sector in the Cappadocia region. In this context, the employment support quota applied by the Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR) in the Mediterranean and Aegean Regions can be increased for the Cappadocia Region and adapted according to the operating capacities in the region.
- It is observed that the accommodation data of the tourism sector related to the region are not shared with the public sturdily. The data processed by the Ministry of Interior can be shared with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and published on a web platform that can be easily accessed by relevant institutions and organizations.
- It is seen obviously that the protected areas in the region are not well protected, there is no architectural construction suitable for the texture of the region, and the lack of control mechanism for Quad Bike and safari tours.
- Here is what needs to be done on the subject: spending a certain percentage of the revenues from museums and archaeological sites for the development of the region, assigning security personnel at certain distances to the valleys, installation, and maintenance of mobile toilet systems and garbage cans, encouraging the use of stones extracted from the region in architecture, ensuring that deterrent penalties are imposed by inspecting Quad Bike and safari tours more frequently by the Governor's Office and the Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism.
- State organs and local administrations do not know enough about the richness of the region and are reluctant to protect it. It may be considered to establish an umbrella organization representing all stakeholders in the region by taking the opinion of the decision-makers of non-governmental organizations and universities.
- There is an increasing dependence on electronic distribution channels. The effectiveness of customer relations management in the electronic environment can be ensured by establishing electronic reservation systems on a regional basis, and destination management-marketing organizations can be established on a regional basis.
- In order to eliminate the lack of communication between institutions and to speak a common language, the Cappadocia Tourism Council can be established.
- Monitoring units can be established to monitor the effects of tourism, so that, environmental, economic, social, and cultural impacts, with sustainability and compliance, can be monitored.

This study has some limitations. First of all, the sample in the study was selected from among the stakeholders in the region who attended meetings such as workshops and conferences that evaluated the problems experienced in the tourism sector. Reaching other participants with the advice of the determined participants is a limitation. On the other hand, the use of qualitative methods in the study is also a limitation. In this sense, the mixed-use of quantitative and qualitative methods in future studies will be beneficial in obtaining more detailed information on the subject.

## Disclosure Statements

1. Contribution rate statement of researchers: First author %25, Second author %25, Third author %25, Fourth author %25.
2. No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

## References

- Akbulut, G. (2010). Türkiye'de kaplıca turizmi ve sorunları. *Gaziantep University Journal of Social Sciences*, 9(1), 35-54.
- Aliman, N. K., Hashim, S. M., Harudin, S., & Wahid, S. D. M. (2016). Tourists' satisfaction with a destination: An investigation on visitors to Langkawi Island. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 8(3), 173-188.
- Aras, H. (2017). Türkiye'de turizm güvenliği sorunu. *Hitit Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 10(1), 585-610.
- Ardıç Yetiş, Ş., & Çalışkan, N. (2020). Turizm sektöründe kadın istihdamı: mevcut duruma ilişkin bir değerlendirme. *Manisa Celal Bayar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 18(3), 105-119.
- Ardıç Yetiş, Ş. (2019). Otel işletmelerinde yeşil pazarlama uygulamalarına personelin bakış açısı. *Iğdir University Journal of Social Sciences*, (17), 509-532.
- Avcıkurt, C. (1997). *Avrupa Birliği ile bütünleşme sürecinde Türk turizmi (Sorunlar ve çözüm önerileri)*. Yayınlanmamış doktora tezi. Balıkesir Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.
- Eren, D., & Bozkurt, İ. (2020). Aşırı turizm sorunsalı: Kapadokya Bölgesi'ne yönelik bir çalışma. *Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies*, 8(4), 3090-3107.
- Buyruk, L. (2012). Kapadokya'da butik otel işletmeciliğinin gelişimi ve sorunları, *I. Uluslararası Nevşehir Tarih ve Kültür Sempozyumu*, Nevşehir Üniversitesi, 16-19 Kasım 2011.
- Can, M., & Can, Ç. Ü. (2019). Kapadokya'da balon turizmi deneyimi ve kabul edilebilir risk durumu. *Türk Turizm Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 3(3), 188-198.
- Cem, I., Keskin, G., & Serçeoğlu, N. (2015). Turizm sektöründe nitelikli işgücü açığına yenilikçi yaklaşım: Kapadokya örneği. *Journal of Entrepreneurship And Innovation Management*, 4(2), 27-48.
- Çeken, H. (2008). Turizmin bölgesel kalkınmaya etkisi üzerine teorik bir inceleme. *Afyon Kocatepe Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, 10(2), 293-306.
- Çizel, B. (1999). *Kongre turizmi, kongre organizasyonu ve Antalya bölgesi'nin kongre turizmi polansiyeli, sorunları ve gelecekteki beklentilere yönelik bir araştırma*. (Yayınlanmamış yüksek lisans tezi). Akdeniz Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Antalya.
- Çokışler, Ü. N. (2018). Kapadokyalı teyzenin savunması: turizm açısından kültürel mirasın otantikliği sorunu. *Milli Folklor*, 30(120), 119-130.
- Dedeoğlu, B. B., Karakuş, Y., Çalışkan, C., & Aydın, Ş. (2021). A complexity perspective for antecedents of support for tourism development. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights*.
- Demirçivi, B. M. (2017). Göreme Millî Parkı ve Kapadokya Kayalık Bölgeleri'ne ilişkin UNESCO raporu değerlendirmeleri ve öneriler. *Turizm Akademik Dergisi*, 4(2), 91-106.
- Dinçer, M., & Dinçer, F. (1989). Türkiye'de konaklama sektörünün gelişimi ve başlıca sorunları üzerine bir araştırma. *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, 47(1-4), 45-57.
- Erkiliç, E. (2019). Yerel halkın turizm algısı ve turizmin gelişimine yönelik tutumları: Rize örneği. *International Journal of Contemporary Tourism Research*, 3(1), 66-82.

- Ersun, N., & Arslan, K. (2009). Alternatif turizm çeşidi olarak Kapadokya Bölgesi'nde kongre turizmini geliştirme olanakları. *Erciyes Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, (34), 139-164.
- Göral, R. (2017). Dünya ekonomik forumu turizm rekabetçilik raporu ışığında Türkiye turizminin rekabetçilik sorunları. *Akademik Bakış Uluslararası Hakemli Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, (61), 141-166.
- Gün, S., Durmaz, Y. & Tutcu, A. (2019). Destinasyon imajının ziyaretçi memnuniyeti üzerindeki etkisi: Mardin'e gelen yerli turistler üzerinde bir araştırma. *Mukaddime*, 10(1), 375-392.
- Gürbüz, S. & Şahin, F. (2018). *Sosyal bilimlerde araştırma yöntemleri*. Ankara: Seçkin Yayıncılık.
- İlban, M. O., & Kaşlı, M. (2009). Termal turizmin gelişmesini etkileyen sorunları belirlemeye yönelik Gönen'de bir araştırma. *Ege Academic Review*, 9(4), 1275-1293.
- İnanır, A. (2019). Türk turizminde tanıtım sorunları üzerine bir değerlendirme. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Issues*, 1(1), 58-65.
- Karacaoğlu, S., & Yolal, M. (2019). Kültürel mirasın korunması ve sürdürülmesinde turist rehberlerinin rolü. *Türk Turizm Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 3(4), 833-847.
- Karakuş, Y., & Çoban, S. (2018). Evaluation of stakeholders' expectations towards congress tourism by kano model: case of Nevşehir. *Anais Brasileiros de Estudos Turísticos-ABET*, 8-20.
- Labuschagne, A. (2003). Qualitative research: Airy fairy or fundamental? *The Qualitative Report*, 8(1), 100-103.
- Mansuroğlu, S. (2006). Turizm gelişmelerine yerel halkın yaklaşımlarının belirlenmesi: Akseki/Antalya örneği. *Akdeniz Üniversitesi Ziraat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 19(1), 35-46.
- Marchiori, E., & Onder, I. (2017). A comparison of pre-visit beliefs and projected visual images of destinations. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 21, 42-53.
- Okuyucu, A., & Somuncu, M. (2013, May). Türkiye'de inanç turizmi: bugünkü durum, sorunlar ve gelecek. M. Kar (Ed). In *International Conference on Religious Tourism and Tolerance*, (p.9-12).
- Onat, G., Sarıgül, D. S., & Karakuş, Y. (2021). Evaluation of employee competence by quality function deployment method: the case of hotels in Cappadocia. *Revista Turismo Estudos e Práticas-RTEP/UERN*, 10(2).
- Özen, A. (2021). Evaluation of tourist reviews on TripAdvisor for the protection of the world heritage sites: Text mining approach. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Academic Tourism*, 6(1), 37-46.
- Özen, A. & Güneren Özdemir, E. (2020). Relationship between destination image change and behavioral intention: a study on Cappadocia hot air balloon experience. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Academic Tourism*, 5(1), 39-54.
- Öztürk, Y. (2020). Yerel halkın bölge turizmine bakış açılarının ve farkındalıklarının belirlenmesi üzerine Çankırı'da bir araştırma. *Seyahat ve Otel İşletmeciliği Dergisi*, 17(3), 427-443.
- Prayag, G., Hosany, S., Muskat, B., & Del Chiappa, G. (2017). Understanding the relationships between tourists' emotional experiences, perceived overall image, satisfaction, and intention to recommend. *Journal of Travel Research*, 56(1), 41-54.
- Seçilmiş, C. (2011). Ziyaretçilerin gözüyle Eskişehir turizminin gelişmesini etkileyen sorunlar. *İşletme Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 3(3), 37-57.
- Somuncu, M., & Yiğit, T. (2009). Göreme Milli Parkı ve Kapadokya kayalık siteleri dünya mirası alanı'ndaki turizmin sürdürülebilirlik perspektifinden değerlendirilmesi. *Ankara: V. Ulusal Coğrafya Sempozyumu*, (p.16-17).

- Sosyal Demokrasi Derneği, (2019) Turizm sektöründe yaşanan sorunlar ve çözüm önerileri, (Retrieved from: 19.10.2021) [http://www.sdd.org.tr/public/images/24\\_63237.pdf](http://www.sdd.org.tr/public/images/24_63237.pdf)
- Uslu, S. (2017). *Sürdürülebilir turizm kapsamında Kapadokya'ya gelen yabancı turistlerin Türkiye'ye bakışı ve güvenlik algısı*. (Yayınlanmamış yüksek lisans tezi). Necmettin Erbakan Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Konya.
- Yanardağ, M. Ö., & Avcı, M. (2012). Turizm sektöründe istihdam sorunları: Marmaris, Fethiye, Bodrum ilçeleri üzerine ampirik bir inceleme. *Ege Stratejik Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 3(2), 39-62.
- Yılmaz, İ., Tabak, G. & Samur, A. N. (2020). Vandalism problem in tourism and solution proposals: The case of Nevşehir. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Academic Tourism*, 5 (2), 95-103.
- Yılmaz, G., & Özdemir, B. (2017). Turizm destinasyonlarında restoran biçimleşmeleri: Kapadokya bölgesi üzerine nitel bir araştırma. *Anatolia: Turizm Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 28(1), 81-95.
- Yılmaz, E., & Esen, F. Ö. (2015). Turizmin gelişmesine etki eden sorunlar ve destinasyon sadakati ilişkisi: Yerli turistler üzerine Ayvalık'ta bir araştırma. InKelkit A. (Ed.) 16. *Ulusal Turizm Kongresi Bildiriler Kitabı*, (p.704-718).
- Yiğit, S. & Şahin Perçin, N. (2021). Analysis of the perception of foreign tourists about Turkish cuisine through the word association test: The case of Cappadocia region. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Academic Tourism*, 6 (1), 1-6. DOI: 10.31822/jomat.708996
- Yin, R. K. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Yorgancı, B. (2018). *Gastronomi turizmi ve Kapadokyanın gastronomik unsurları hakkındaki turist algılarının araştırılması*. (Yayınlanmamış yüksek lisans tezi). Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Nevşehir.
- Zhang, H., Fu, X., Liping, A. C. & Lin, L. (2014). Destination image and tourist loyalty: A meta-analysis. *Tourism Management*, (40), 213-223.