

Anatolian Landscape and Faith Tourism: Ancient Times to Present

Conference Proceedings

August 25-28, 2022



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Is Islamic Culture Have a Negative Impact on Faith-Based and Religious Tourism Marketing?

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Abstract

Although there is a growing and impressive interest to tourism in Islamic countries, many of them still have a negative perception for tourism. Especially, if the issues are related to faith-based and religious values and marketing of them, the results will be probably more negative and problematic. There are many reasons for this because interpretation of faith-based and religious strictures, rules and the level of conservativeness are very different across Islamic countries. And many Islamic cultures in different countries have a high sensitivity about sharing cultural and religious values with people of different religions. Therefore, although some Islamic organizations want to follow the developments related to the economic aspect of tourism, it seems very difficult to market faith-based and religious tourism in Islamic countries. Based on these evaluations, the study tries to discuss tourism marketing problems of Islamic culture particularly about faith-based and religious tourism. The discussion has designed as a theoretical approach. Based on theoretical frame, literature has been reviewed. These theoretical viewpoints will provide critics about marketing of faith – based and religious tourism and the results can help to produce marketing strategies for developing competitiveness of Islamic countries in tourism market.

Keywords: Islamic culture, faith-based, religious, marketing

The Relationship Between Faith Motivation and Tourism

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Abstract

Belief is a natural impulse that forms the basis for self-actualization and devotion in the human journey of existence. There are motives arising from various wishes and needs under the direction of a person, whose behavior is quite complex, to a meaningful and specific action. Regardless of the individual's belief orientation, he/she has needed holy places existentially. Since the existence of mankind, she/he has revealed concrete elements that are called cultural heritage today such as temples, mosques, tombs, statues, idols, altar vessels, which represent religion in line with the beliefs. Based on the knowledge that faith motivation is an important impulse in the context of travel, it is thought that there is a close relationship between tourism and faith from past to present. Religious buildings, feasts, rituals, festivals, faith-oriented ceremonies are assumed as important tourism attractions. Among the reasons for the development of this discipline are the spread and development of tourism organizations; the purpose and activities of spreading faith orientations; increasing the attractiveness and presentability of cultural regions and countries; increase in people's desire to experience, learn, know foreign cultures and psychological factors; the differentiation of reasons for traveling and the increase in the variety of touristic products.

Keywords: faith, motivation, tourism

The Role of Geographical Indications in Faith Tourism: The Case of the Route of the Seven Churches

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Abstract

Geographical indications (GIs) are considered as a tool to preserve traditional knowledge and cultural heritage, to support rural development, and to contribute to tourism. However, there are certain limits to take advantage of the opportunities and benefits of GIs, such as low awareness, understanding and recognition of GIs in the tourism sector. This study, therefore, focuses on the role of geographically indicated food products in faith tourism routes such as the Seven Churches of Asia, which are all located in Anatolia: Ephesus, Smyrna, Laodicea ad Lycum, Sardis, Pergamum, Philadelphia, Thyatira. Determining the food products with geographical indications on the Seven Churches route (İzmir-Manisa-Denizli) and revealing the awareness of tour guides on these intangible assets may fill the research gaps about a possible combination of two alternative tourism experiences including faith and food tourism in terms of geographically indicated food products. A qualitative approach based on a content analysis of in-depth interviews with tour guides is conducted for the data collection. Results indicate that awareness of tour guides about geographical indications on faith routes is limited, and a targeted GI training would provide a necessary skill for improving tour guides' personal developments and qualifications.

Keywords: geographical indications, faith tourism, seven churches, tour guides, awareness

Determination of the Potential of Faith Tourism in Thrace Region

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to find out if it is necessary to create a religious route to ensure sustainability of cultural heritage assets, such as mosques, churches, synagogues, temples, shrines, etc., which have historical significance in terms of faith tourism, in three main cities within the Thrace Region: Edirne, Tekirdađ, and Kırklareli. One of the qualitative research methods, e-interview method, was used in this study. Within this context, the structured interview questions, which were prepared in accordance with the purpose and method of this study, were used for collecting data. The interview form was emailed to 34 individuals between June 2021 and July 2021, including government executives involved in tourism activities, academic members working in the fields of art history, history, and tourism, individuals, who were assigned in unions and chambers, urban and regional planners, and professional tour guides. The data obtained showed that the cultural heritage assets in Thrace Region had a significant potential for faith tourism, and a faith tourism route should be created to ensure sustainability of the heritage. However, the data also showed that to successfully create a faith tourism route, the cultural heritage assets should be accurately determined, the promotion and marketing activities should be conducted more efficiently, and the restoration works of these cultural heritage assets should be accurately and rapidly performed.

Keywords: sustainable tourism, cultural heritage, faith tourism, cultural routes

Determination of Faith Tourism Routes in the Context of Touristic Product Diversification: A Study on Manisa Province

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Abstract

Natural, historical, and cultural resources of destinations also influence the holiday choices of tourists in addition to the traditional mass tourism products, which are the sea sand sun trio. Therefore, destinations with various supply sources use alternative tourism products such as congress activities, faith, hunting, health, culture, and rural tourism to diversify their tourist products to gain a competitive edge. Therefore, the aim is establishing faith tourism routes to diversify touristic products in Manisa province, which is rich in faith tourism attractions. Four important daily faith routes have been developed within the scope of diversifying touristic products in Manisa because of observation and document review, one of the qualitative research data collection methods. The first of these routes has been designated as the faith route of Islam. The faith route of Islam includes the Great Mosque and Complex, Mevlevihane, Hatuniye Mosque and Complex, Saruhan Bey Tomb, Muradiye Mosque and Complex and Sultan Mosque and Complex. The second route including Sardis Antique City, Alaşehir Antique City, Akhisar Antique City and Kula Virgin Mary Church have been designated as the route of the Christian faith. Sardis Synagogue and Akhisar Synagogue are on the faith route of Judaism faith route while the Mother Goddess Kybele Stone Monument, Artemis Temple and Bintepeleer Tumulus are on the pagan route.

Keywords: touristic product diversification, faith tourism, Manisa

Lost Cultural Heritage: Antalya Kaleiçi (Old Town), Kesik Minaret Past and Present

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Abstract

In Kaleiçi (Antalya Old Town), which constitutes the center of the city in Antiquity as it is today, many archaeological and cultural heritage remains of the past have disappeared because of natural disasters and the cruelty of time. Undoubtedly, the continuous settlement of the city has a leading role in the emergence of this result. However, the few buildings remain (Hadrian's Gate, Hıdırlık Tower, City Walls, Kesik Minaret, Necropolis) and the archaeological and epigraphic data unearthed in the rescue excavations in Kaleiçi provide tangible information about the city, which has hosted civilizations shaped by different religious beliefs. A very large church was built inside the Roman Period Agora, which was partially preserved after the change in the religious structure of the city after the Antiquity. Although assumptions were made that there was a temple before the church was built in the area, the remains of this temple were not found during the research. In addition, architectural equipment that may belong to stately structures used as spolia or scattered in the area is also remarkable. The church has a long-term usage phase, and later, it was converted into a mosque during the governorship of Şehzade Korkut. After it was converted into a mosque, it suffered a fire in 1896, its wooden dome burned down, and after that date, it had an important place in the cultural heritage memory of the city under the name of "Kesik Minaret". With the recent restoration works, its dome has been renewed and the "Kesik Minaret" has lost its identity.

Keywords: Antalya, Kaleiçi, Kesik Minaret, faith, tourism

Turkiye Potential in Faith Tourism in the Context of the Christian Faith, Effects of Risks and Security Problems on Tourism

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Abstract

With a rich historical background, Türkiye has cultural heritage assets belonging to the followers of various faiths, including Islam, Christianity, and Judaism, as well as very important destinations within the scope of faith tourism. It is observed that important works belonging to Christianity are spread throughout the region. A look at reasons why foreign visitors come to Türkiye indicates that statistical data concerning faith tourism are not satisfactory. The low number of visitors and, therefore, low effect on income compared to other types of tourism indicates that there is a need for effective strategy development efforts regarding faith tourism destinations and products in the country. It may be concluded that there may be shortcomings in the fields of promotion, marketing and determination and implementation of future strategies among reasons why faith tourism is not at the desired level in Türkiye. This study is intended to analyze the current capacity of faith tourism in Türkiye, especially in the context of Christian faith in Anatolia and the impact of risk and security problems on tourism is investigated in this context. At the same time, it is aimed at raising awareness on risks and safety problems that people who participate in religious activities in tourism at a global scale and in Türkiye, face or may encounter.

Keywords: faith tourism, Christian faith, risk, security

Adoption of Faith Tourism Among Indian/Bolivian Christians in Turkiye

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Abstract

Christianity is the third largest religion in India and is the first religion in Bolivia. According to the history, the Christian religion in India was introduced by St. Thomas as early as 52 EC. In Bolivia the Christian religion arrived with the Spanish conquerors after 1492. In Bolivia Christian religion has coexisted with other types of religious expressions from original cultures, this phenomenon has led to a definition of religious syncretism and in India the religion is related to spiritualism. Religion is part of the of being human and with the Covid-19 pandemic, a rise in faith and related matters has been observed around the world. This research aims to identify the adoption of Faith Tourism using the theory of planned behavior and the research will be based on semi-structured interviews and surveys.

Keywords: faith tourism, adoption of faith tourism, theory of planned behavior, tourism industry, India, Bolivia

Evaluation of the Contribution of Mardin Assyrian (Syriac) Churches to Faith Tourism by the People of Mardin

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Abstract

Syriac-Muslim peoples live together in Mardin (Özhan-Öztürk, 2022, p. 32). Mardin attracts attention in terms of faith tourism with its cosmopolitan cultural (Demircan and Çeken, 2022, p. 6). The aim of this research is to reveal the contribution of Assyrian (Syriac) culture and lifestyle to faith tourism from the opinion point of the people of Mardin. In this research, it is known to be one of the qualitative research design, interview technique was used. The population of the research is Mardin. Total of 40 people were interviewed. The importance of Mardin in Turkish tourism is insusceptible. So, it is seen that travel related to faith tourism is on the rise. There is attention that tourists coming to the region may cause possible damage to architectural structures. There have a lot of awareness of the faith structures of Mardin. According to the data receive in the research, Syriac and Muslim people live in peace and defend it. People including reverend both religions have adapted to everyday life and respect differences of faith. The biggest difficulty to the growth of faith and cultural tourism in Mardin is imitating some traditions that are not in accordance with the original to generate income. This situation does harm the image of the region. Therefore, it also undermines confidence in tourism.

Keywords: Mardin, Syriac church, faith tourism

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Examination of Hasankeyf's Tourism Potential

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Abstract

Hasankeyf is an historical district of Batman Province. Even though the exact date of establishment isn't known, studies suggest that its history goes back to ancient times. Hasankeyf, which has been under the domination of different civilizations, hosted various cultures and faiths throughout history. Therefore, many attractions that especially belong to İslam (Sultan Süleyman Koç Mosque, İmam Abdullah Zawiya, Er-Rızık Mosque and minaret, Zeynel Abidin Shrine, Eyyubi Mosque, and large scaled structures such as middle entrance portcullis, shrines, and zawiyas) reside in Hasankeyf. From this point of view, this study aims to examine Hasankeyf's potential for faith tourism. In this regard, perspectives of stakeholders who are the parts of tourism value chain in this region towards faith tourism have been evaluated. Data have been gathered from nine tourism stakeholders who actively operates in this region by semi-structured interview method. Those stakeholders consist of tourism establishments (managers of accommodation establishments, travel agencies, transportation establishments, and food and beverage establishments), local authorities (executives of district governorship, municipality, directorate of youth and sports), local people, and non-governmental organizations (women entrepreneurs association). The data have been analyzed through MAXQDA analysis software. According to the results, İmam Abdullah Shrine is the most valuable attraction of Hasankeyf in terms of faith tourism potential. Along with that, according to tourism value chain stakeholders, Haydar Baba Shrine, Şeyh Sevinç Shrine, and Aslan Baba Shrine are the other attractions with faith tourism value. Results of this study suggest that poor superstructure and infrastructure, and lack of affective marketing are the main reasons which restrict the development of faith tourism in this region. Within the scope of the results of this study, suggestions have been offered for the stakeholders of the tourism value chain to develop faith tourism. First, the attractions which need further development have been identified in Hasankeyf District. Secondly, it is revealed that superstructure and infrastructure are significant restrictions for the development of faith tourism in the district. In terms of solutions, necessity of more investments that will be made by the local governments and entrepreneurs is the most pressing issue. Following that process, product development, promotion and marketing activities are important to develop faith tourism in the region.

Keywords: faith tourism, Hasankeyf, Batman

Assessment of Seven Churches in Faith Tourism Routes in Turkiye: A Route Proposal

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Abstract

In this study, it is aimed to examine the Seven Churches and propose a route within the framework of faith tourism routes in Turkiye. From this point of view, faith tourism routes in Turkiye have been examined to reveal the importance of the Seven Churches in terms of faith tourism. In this study, document analysis from qualitative research methods was used. Examined sources, the tour itineraries of the Seven Churches, faith routes in Turkiye, St. Paul's travels and the Bible. In the analysis of the sources, the principle of similarity and contrast was taken as the basis. The order of the Seven Churches in the holy book and the places related to St. John were revealed as a route. A map was created using the Java program and the routes were marked with the Photoshop method. Finally, the route of the Seven Churches tour for 6 nights and 7 days has been designed. The route; starting from St. John's Monastery on Patmos Island in Greece (where St. John received the vision about the Seven Churches) respectively will continue with Ephesus (İzmir/Selçuk), Smyrna (İzmir/Konak), Pergamos (İzmir/Bergama), Sardis (Manisa/Salihli), Philadelphia (Manisa/Alaşehir), Thyatira (Manisa/Akhisar) and Laodicea (Denizli/Pamukkale) Churches and It is designed to end with the Church of St. John, located in the Selçuk district of İzmir, where St. John's tomb is located. The strategy and cooperation of the two countries (Turkiye and Greece) is needed to elaborate the designed tour route.

Keywords: faith tourism, faith routes, seven churches, Turkiye

Semsis and Harranis: Two Religious Communities in Anatolia That Are Nearing to Disappear

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Abstract

Harran and Urfa have become two important locations as the capitals of different civilizations and cultures in the Mesopotamian region since the early ages. Although it is said that the name Harran was seen in the inscriptions in the Old Babylonian period, it is not known exactly when and by whom Harran was created (Gündüz, 2001). Semsis and Harranis were named as Harranis by their neighbors, depending on the city of Harran where they lived. Under the leadership of the moon god Sin, the Harranis adopted a paganist religion based on the cult of planets and stars (Özcoşar, 2007). On the other hand, when we consider the Sabians the Mendais and Harranis come to mind. However, Sabii and Harranis are more integrated. It is known that the Sabians of Harran are also among the people who have made important contributions to the history of science. There is no definite information about when and why the name Sabii was given to the Harranis. There are opinions stating that the Sabians accepted Idris as their prophet (even though they are called as those who are against Abrahamic religions) due to Sabi Mari who rejected Hanifism during the Abraham period (Polat, 2001). According to some sources, Harranis are used to name the pagan community in the Harran region, while in some sources they are seen as Semsis/Semsis (Sun worshipers) due to their belief in the Moon, Sun, and other planets. We can see that the terms Semsis and Harranis are used interchangeably according to some sources, and that Sabians and Harranis are confused with each other in some sources (Tümer, 1991). Another claim is that the Semsis are Harranis. According to this claim, the concepts of Harrani and Şemsî express a common belief. The beliefs of the communities living in the Mesopotamian region towards the sun and other planets are generally shown under the name of Semsis. It was also used specifically to indicate the religious beliefs of the communities in and around Harran. According to the meaning of the word, Semsî or Semsis are described as sun worshipers. According to Akyüz (2004), Harranis stated as Assyrians who took their names from Harran, their settlement and continued their lives until the 12th century, who did not accept Christianity and remained pagan (Akyüz, 2004). There are beliefs about the Sun and the Moon in Diyarbakir and its surrounding areas, whether it is because of the Semsis or not. While it is believed that the sun cures, the moon is also believed to cause various diseases. In fact, when we consider Anatolia, various beliefs about the Moon and the Sun are encountered in many parts of it. Influenced by religions such as Semsis, which emphasizes the Sun and the Moon, these beliefs have survived to the present day (Eyüboğlu, 1987). There were three main religious groups in Diyarbakir before Islam. These are the Semsis (Sun worshipers), Jews, and Christians, respectively. Christians are divided into five sects and form Armenian, Syriac, Ancient, Orthodox, Orthodox Syriac, and Assyrian (Yılmaz, 2011). The aim of this study is to examine Semsis and Harranis in Anatolia in the light of literature and to provide information about the beliefs and places of worship of Semsis and Harranis. When evaluated in general, Semsis Harranis are confused with Sabians. In fact, these three are different from each other. For example, while the Sabians do not worship stars and planets, the Semsis worship the sun and the Harranis the planets. It can be said that the Semsis and Harranis were

subject to the Sabian religion to get rid of the pressures and tyranny encountered over time. Therefore, Harranism, Semsis and Sabii are mixed. Harrani and Semsis lived in Anatolia for the first time around Harran, Urfa, Mardin and Diyarbakır, but they migrated to different cities and regions over time. In Diyarbakır, Urfa, Mardin and Harran, there are temples that were sun temples during the Harranids and are used as mosques or churches today.

Keywords: Semsis, Harranis, Anatolian religious communities

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The Influence of Purpose of Visit on Service Failure, Justice, Service Recovery, and Service Recovery Paradox Perceptions of Tourists

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Abstract

This study aims to identify tourists' perceptions of a service failure experienced at a restaurant and their responses vary according to their purpose of visit, their feelings of justice, and the extent to which the service recovery paradox occurs. The study particularly aims to explore whether the responses of tourists are milder when they are on a faith tourism visit. Based on two scenarios the respondents will be required to respond to the questions regarding their perceptions of the severity of the failure, the level of dissatisfaction with the failure, their intentions revisit to engage in WOM, and the severity of the messages they would make if they intended to engage in WOM. The study also aims to measure whether there are differences in terms of the justice perceptions of the guests according to the difference in the purpose of the visit. Finally, the study aims to identify whether there are differences in terms of the recovery expectations of tourists and the extent to which the service recovery paradox takes place.

Keywords: service failure, justice, service recovery, service recovery paradox, restaurants

Existential Authenticity in Faith Tourism Destinations: A Case of Seven Churches Tours (Turkiye)

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Abstract

Existential authenticity, in contrast to staged authenticity or object-based authenticity, is related to the individual's state of being and sense of self and is thus rooted in Heideggerian philosophy. Existential authenticity generally means that the individual is in a "special state of being" in which she is real to herself and acts in opposition to the disappearance of her real self within her roles and public spaces in modern Western society. As a subject studied in the field of tourism, existential authenticity is generally examined in two ways: intra-personal authenticity and interpersonal authenticity (Wang, 1999). Intra-personal authenticity covers bodily feelings, self-making while interpersonal authenticity consists of family ties and *communitas*. The term *communitas* involves the concepts of liminality (Graburn, 1983) and pilgrimage (Turner, 1973) and it is of great importance to study this subject in faith tourism destinations. This study explores the people's experiences of existential authenticity while visiting Seven Churches of Revelation which are the seven major churches of the Early Christian period and are within the borders of Turkiye. These churches, which are mentioned in the Revelation section of the Bible written by John, also have a symbolic importance in Christianity. For this purpose, online reviews of visitors of the churches located in Ephesus (İzmir), Smyrna (İzmir), Pergamon (İzmir), Thyateira (Manisa), Sardis (Manisa), Philadelphia (Manisa), and Laodicea (Denizli) are examined with content analysis. Through thematic coding, the reviews are analyzed with the help of NVivo software program. Keywords for review search are Biblical Tour, Seven Churches of Revelation, Seven Churches of Asia. As a result of this search, 294 online reviews in English are analyzed. The coding is conducted in parallel to the predetermined themes in the literature: intra-personal authenticity (bodily feelings, self-making) and interpersonal authenticity (family ties, *communitas*). As a conclusion, it is deduced that these tours are indeed transformative and memorable experiences, helping individuals find their authentic self during the tours.

Keywords: existential authenticity, authentic self, faith tourism, seven churches of revelation

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Sentiment Analysis of the Comments on Hagia Sophia Mosque, Topkapi Palace, and Blue Mosque

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the perception of foreign tourists towards Hagia Sophia Mosque, Topkapi Palace, and Blue Mosque located on the Historical Peninsula of Istanbul by sentiment analysis method. With the development of the Internet technologies, the ease of access to big data has motivated researchers to analyze and interpret this data since it is very difficult to obtain such a large amount of data by traditional research techniques (Alaei, Becken & Stantic, 2019; Thelwall, 2019). When the tourism literature is examined, it can be presumed that the interdisciplinary technique used in this research can contribute to the related research field. Sentiment analysis is a method that has attracted a lot of attention during recent years and has started to be used frequently in natural language processing problems (Mehraliyev, Chan, & Kirilenko, 2021). The models obtained with machine learning methods given as labeled before are applied on the new incoming data. In this study, Google Cloud sentiment analysis was used. A sentiment score between 0-1 for each sentence is calculated. 0 represents a negative sentiment while 1 represents a positive sentiment. Each result in between can be evaluated as close to positive or negative. In this context, the posts (in English language) on the three important faith and culture centers located in the Historical Peninsula of Istanbul (Hagia Sophia Mosque, Topkapi Palace, Blue Mosque) in the TripAdvisor social media sharing platform were examined. Between January 2010 and April 2021; 22871 reviews for Hagia Sophia Mosque, 13833 reviews for Topkapi Palace and 17728 reviews for Blue Mosque were evaluated on TripAdvisor. When the most used adjectives in the comments on the three attraction points are examined, it has been determined that the adjectives “beautiful, amazing, great” are used for the Hagia Sophia Mosque, “beautiful, many, great” for the Topkapi Palace, and “beautiful, free, blue” for the Blue Mosque. When the distribution of the comments made according to nationalities is examined, it is seen that the most comments for the three attraction points are made by the citizens of the United Kingdom. It is understood that the comments made by US citizens ranked second for the Hagia Sophia Mosque and the Topkapi Palace Museum, and the comments made by Australia citizens for the Blue Mosque ranked second. In addition, a world cloud was created using the comments in the short comment sections. After creating the word vectors of each sentence in the comments, three different sub-topics were clustered with the k-means algorithm, which is an unsupervised learning method. Although there is no sharp transition in this clustering, the words that represent the groups that are far from each other the most are listed. In the cluster analysis results of the comments made for the Hagia Sophia Mosque, the first group of comments (named as the group of “city”) includes adjectives describing Istanbul and the city, the second group (named as the group of “architectural attractions”) includes comments such as historical buildings, interior designs, worth to visit, and in the last group (named as the group of “faith”), there are comments containing words such as Hagia Sophia, museum, church and mosque. As a result of the cluster analysis of the comments for the Topkapi Palace Museum; emerged clusters were place, experience, and cost. In the results of the clustering analysis of the comments on the Blue Mosque, however, derived clusters were visit, experience, and rules.

When the sentiment scores were examined, it was seen that the Hagia Sophia Mosque had 0.4791, the Topkapi Palace had 0.3880, and the Blue Mosque had 0.4061 sentiment score. In this context, it has been understood that the most positive comments are for the Hagia Sophia Mosque. It was observed that the year with the highest number of comments and sentiment scores was 2015. In addition, it was seen that the Blue Mosque has had a remarkably low sentiment score since 2017. When the comments were examined, it was thought that the reason for this situation may be the effects of the restoration started in the Blue Mosque in 2017 and the dress code applied. As a result, this exploratory research provides sentiment analysis of visitors' comments. It is thought that the study can contribute to the relevant literature in terms of revealing the changes in these sentiments over the years. In general, visitor reviews appeared to have positive sentiment score. However, it was detected that Topkapi Palace Museum had relatively lower sentiment score. It was also understood that the comments on the Hagia Sophia Mosque had more positive sentiment score than the others. When the content of the comments was examined, it was seen that the restorations may have caused a negative effect on sentiments. Additionally, the effects of the rules and the costs that the tourists must bear (in terms of time and money) were reflected negatively on the comments. The fact that sentimental changes were evaluated only for three touristic attraction points was one of the limitations in terms of the generalization of the study results. In future studies, it may be useful to evaluate the positive, negative, or neutral dimensions of different attraction points in terms of tourist sentiments. In addition, examining the comments on different travel sites may also be beneficial in terms of enriching the results. To evaluate the touristic memory in terms of place related issues such as restorations, museum-mosque conversion, crises, and rules, it may be useful to compare the contents of the comments timewise and to analyze the sentiments and opinions of the tourists who visits the points at different times. To evaluate the effect of the conversion into mosque on the tourists' sentiments in terms of the place identity in particular, the comparison of the comments before and after 2020, and the examination of the change in the perception of place and belief can also contribute to the related literature.

Keywords: Hagia Sophia Mosque, Topkapi Palace, Blue Mosque, sentiment analysis

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India Post's Perspectives on Tourism in Reference to the Post Offices Located in Tourist Attraction Spots in NW India

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Abstract

To better understand India Post's viewpoints on tourism, we went back to several areas, particularly in northwestern India to look at the post offices located in popular tourist destinations and cities. The study is the first of its type and is exploratory in nature. We have concentrated on talking about this job of post offices on an individual basis. In addition, a broad overview of the region's culture and tourism scene is provided. In summary, the Postal Services network offers very significant amenities everywhere. It often aids in improving the regions and locality's tourism-related possibilities, as previously said, and occasionally plays a significant role.

Keywords: North-Western India, travel, India Post, travel hotspots

The Importance of Faith Tourism in Destination Management

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Abstract

Spirituality has been influential in people's decision to travel since the earliest times of history in faith-related travels (Bozonelos, 2021). Faith-based tourism, which contributes to economic growth, has increased rapidly in recent years despite the significant financial crises. (Munro, 2020), and in this context, faith tourism has taken an important place in general tourism mobility. The relatively insufficient number of studies on faith tourism among tourism types (Durán-Sánchez, A. 2018; Daniel H. Olsen, Dallen J. Timothy, 2021) reveals the need for scientific studies on the subject. It has been shown in bibliometric studies that scientific (master's and doctoral) studies related to faith tourism have not been fully revealed in Türkiye either (Özçoban, 2020). Despite the general increase in faith-based tourism, the data for the last ten years before the epidemic (2019) unfortunately moved in the opposite direction when tourist arrivals were classified according to the purpose of arrival (faith/pilgrimage) for Türkiye (TUIK, 2022). Reversing this situation can be possible by revealing the cultural assets with scientific studies within the scope of destination management, planning, putting into practice and following the results. In the main context of tourism, all cultural heritage should be revealed through scientific research in departments such as Geography, History, Archeology, Gastronomy, Ecology, Philosophy, Economy, and Health. In terms of branding, addressing destination studies with different disciplines can provide alternative contributions to solving problems (Ruiz et al., 2020). Touristic products, services, and resources, which are all planned within the body of DMO, can be effectively promoted to target markets and audiences with appropriate tools. In this process, recreation areas should be carefully determined, and the balance of protection and use should be followed in the context of sustainability. The purpose of faith-based tourism is to experience food, architecture, art, and other traditions as well as religious experience (Gabor, 2016). Leisure is an important concept that affects human life from ancient times to the present. When the visits of individuals to faith points are evaluated in the context of leisure time, the effect of factors such as cultural, spiritual, economic, and environmental should be investigated, together with the integration of destination management. While doing this, individual and social values and benefits must be considered. As it is revealed in the academic studies about faith tourism, eliminating the existing problems (Gündüz, 2016; Ayaz and Eren, 2020), arranging the legal regulations according to present conditions with an understanding that all stakeholders participate the region should be re-organized with a sustainable destination management model at the micro level. In the context of increasing the decreasing duration of stay (Gössling et al. 2018), revealing the belief centers with new discoveries (such as Göbeklitepe and Karahantepe) and providing visits to these places can also contribute positively to the duration of stay. In the light of this information, each region of Türkiye, which has a high potential to be a rich and wide faith destination, should be handled separately within the framework of sustainable destination management. Faith tourism can be organized within destination management with tourism types such as Bleisure, which has increased

in recent years. Thus, the duration of stay of these destinations can be increased and contribute to the environmental, economic, and social structure.

Keywords: faith, leisure, destinations management, cultural tourism

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Investigation of the Promotion of the Sheikh Hamid-i Veli (Somuncu Baba) Tomb and Social Complex of Malatya Within the Scope of Faith Tourism

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Abstract

Turkiye has important potential in the context of faith tourism with its rich geography and history. Among the most important sacred structures in Turkiye, and particularly for domestic tourism, are its tombs. One of these tombs is the tomb and social complex of Sheikh Hamid-i Veli (Somuncu Baba), who was the sheikh of Hacı Bayram-ı Veli and was claimed by the provinces of Aksaray, Bursa, and Malatya. Proper promotion is very important for the development of the potential of such tombs and social complexes for religious tourism. The aim of this study is to examine the promotion of the Somuncu Baba Tomb and Social Complex in Malatya with discourse analysis. As a result of searching YouTube, three promotional videos uploaded by the Hulusi Efendi Foundation were identified. One of these videos was prepared by the Hulusi Efendi Foundation, one by TGRT, and one by TRT. The fact that the videos were uploaded by the Hulusi Efendi Foundation, the use of appropriate images while recounting the life of Somuncu Baba, and the reinforcement of the information with interviews are positive elements in terms of promotion. However, although the first of the videos was uploaded in 2015 and the other two in 2017, their numbers of views are low. To promote potential faith tourism for the Malatya Somuncu Baba Tomb and Social Complex and to market this destination, it is recommended to prepare more interesting promotional videos with all stakeholders and share them on both social media and official tourism promotion sites.

Keywords: faith tourism, tomb, Somuncu Baba, Malatya

Evaluation of Olive Plant in the Context of Faith Tourism

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Abstract

This study is based on faith to examine the impact of olive production on many civilizations in human history, starting from the land of olive production, and to explain symbols of olive to the source of faith. In the study, the reason for sacredness of olives, from mythology to the monotheistic religions, is explained. The research surveyed to professional tourist guides and the views and attitudes of tourist guides on olive plant with mean of faith tourism were investigated. Online interviews with 33 tourist guide and face-to-face interviews were conducted with 17 tourist guides. Results of the survey: Olive is the second holy food after wine, as part of faith tourism. It was concluded that the guides mostly included the olive in their mythology and that they associated the olive plant with faith tourism, which is one of the tourism areas, with a rate of 74%. It was concluded that olive/olive oil is not only a subject of agriculture and gastronomy, but also a subject of faith.

Keywords: faith tourism, olive, olive oil

Mapping of Faith Tourism Studies

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Abstract

Although studies on faith tourism started in 1995, they have attracted the attention of researchers since 2006. However, the scopes and intellectual structures of these studies have not been revealed. Therefore, this study presents the social network map of faith tourism studies by revealing the most influential research groups, journals, corporation networks between authors, standard citation networks and keyword networks in the field of faith tourism from 1995 to 2021 using bibliometric mapping method. For this purpose, the Web of Science Core Collection database was used to obtain data between the years 1995-2021. The data were obtained by searching the terms ‘faith tourism’ and ‘religious’ in the Web of Science Core Collection database and filtering research articles written in English. Since the studies for the year 2022 continue, the studies carried out in the first six months of 2022 are not included in the scope of this research for the data to reveal healthy results. Thus, 84 articles related to faith tourism were included in the scope of the research. Relational bibliometric methods were used to analyze 84 articles. The evolution of knowledge in the field of faith tourism has been determined by centrality measures and network mapping methods. Analyzes were made with the Voswiever and the Ucinet programs. The results of the study are important in terms of revealing the line of progress and potential improvement areas for researchers interested in faith tourism.

Keywords: social network analysis, bibliometric analysis, science mapping, faith tourism

A Research on the Experiences of Slovenian Tourists Coming to Turkiye Within the Scope of Faith Tourism

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Abstract

Turkiye (Anatolia) has been a very important destination within the scope of faith tourism with its approximately 12.000 years of history. Many important religious centers in terms of Islam, Christianity and Judaism are in Anatolia. The aim of this study is to reveal the experiences of Christians during the pilgrimage activities in Turkiye. The main research question of the study is how people perform their Hajj activities and how they feel in a country where people from different religions the majority are. In this context, a Slovenian group consisting of 18 people who came to Turkiye to fulfill their pilgrimage was examined. The research was designed in the pattern of phenomenology, which is one of the qualitative research methods, and data collection tools consist of participant observation, interviews, and brochures. The main phenomenon in the research is the pilgrimage in a community of mostly different religions. The descriptive analysis technique was used in the research, and it was aimed to reflect the group experiences as much as possible. The researcher, who makes participant observation in the study, also guides the group. Research data was obtained during the 10-day tour in March 2019. According to the findings, it has been seen that people are very pleased to perform their prayers in Turkiye and create different feelings, and the pleasure of visiting their own holy places, as well as the natural and historical beauty of Turkiye and the tolerance of people are important factors affecting the group.

Keywords: faith tourism, phenomenology, Turkiye, Slovenian tourists

Touristic Destination Marketing Within the Scope of Faith Tourism: Eyüp Prophet's Tomb

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Abstract

It is seen that there are diversifications in tourism with the new understandings that have emerged in the tourism sector in recent years. In tourism, where competition is intense, new ones are added to the areas that can be used in terms of tourism every day. One of them is faith tourism. Faith tourism is tourism that covers all religions and beliefs that exist or do not exist in the world, their structures, places, and forms of worship in terms of promoting the cultural lifestyle. Faith tourism: religious buildings, holy lands where religions were born, places of pilgrimage, lands where saints and prophets lived, shrines, etc. it depends on the place. Şanlıurfa is a very rich city in terms of cultural values, rich historical and religious values. It is also very important in terms of faith tourism because it is the place of Prophet Abraham and Prophet Eyüp and the city where Prophet Elijah and Prophet Jacob set foot. In this context, the tomb of Eyüp Prophet, which is within the borders of Eyüp Nebi village in the Viranşehir district of Şanlıurfa province, was examined. The aim of this study is to determine the existing faith tourism potential of the region and to determine what needs to be done in terms of advertising, promotion, and marketing to use this potential more effectively. The research was carried out in qualitative approaches, domestic and foreign sources related to the subject were scanned, and in line with the findings, it was concluded that the region has a high potential for faith tourism, and conclusions and suggestions were made about what needs to be done.

Keywords: faith tourism, Şanlıurfa, Eyüp Prophet

A Qualitative Research on Visitor Experiences Regarding Silifke Faith Tourism Values

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to reveal visitor experiences based on TripAdvisor and Google comments regarding Christian period faith tourism values in Silifke district of Mersin province. A total of 1127 comments were found on TripAdvisor and Google until June 2022 about the Christian period faith tourism values (Uzuncaburç (Diocaesarea) Ancient City, Saint Thecla Church, and Cambazlı Church) in Silifke. The obtained data were analyzed with the MAXQDA program. According to the findings, the main positive impressions of the visitors are well-preserved structures, aesthetic appearance, ease of transportation, proximity to other historical places. The main negative impressions of the visitors are the lack of publicity, the inadequacy of the information signs, the lack of maintenance and the inadequacy of the shopping opportunities in the vicinity.

Keywords: faith tourism, Christian period, Silifke, e-comments

Scoping Review: Perspectives on Faith Tourism in Azerbaijan

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Abstract

This study aims to elaborate on the current state of faith tourism development in Azerbaijan and to suggest strategy directions for further improvements. The mission of faith tourism is to provide an encounter with God, with other people and with us, while discovering our religious and cultural history. Religious tourism includes not only tourist visits with a primarily religious motivation, but also trips by non-believers. Azerbaijan has a very diverse and outstanding religious heritage. There are temples and historical monuments that represent various religions and beliefs originating from different historical periods. However, it is not sufficiently promoted either at national or international level. In some cases, visitors may find it difficult to locate the range of religious treasures offered and the lack of certain infrastructure conditions may also pose a challenge to visitor experience. Temples often face capacity and expertise constraints in the field of religious tourism, while tourism operators often find it difficult to integrate religion into the tourism context. A change of approach is needed from the representatives of communities, state, and the tourism profession, based on a continuous dialogue.

Keywords: religious tourism, Azerbaijan tourism, destination management

Birthday Commemoration Events for a Religious Leader: Mevlana's Birthday Events and Bringing These Events to Van Tourism

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Abstract

Mevlana was born on September 30, 1207, in Belh; died on 17 December 1273 in Konya. Seb-i Arus (reunion night) is celebrated with ceremonies every year in Turkiye. Thanks to these ceremonies, local and foreign guests show great interest in the week of Seb-i Arus, while September 30, which is accepted as the birthday of the scholar, is celebrated only in Iran with limited programs. The fact this awareness does not settle at the level of discovery and participation in Turkiye, shows there is a deficiency and opportunity for the development of tourism in Turkiye. Van is a city with marginally increasing tourism potential by attracting visitors in terms of its natural and cultural richness. Statistical data show that most tourists coming Van are Iranians (DAKA, 2018, p. 41). Despite this, there is no consistent increase in the number of Iranian tourists visiting the region on 30 September. Although Mevlana was not born in Van, he lived within the borders of Turkiye. Thanks to this connection, the celebration of his birthday in Van on September 29-30 will foster the interest of Iranian tourists in the city. In the study, a SWOT analysis of the city was made with the aim of realizing the potential in Van, and then a new branch was added to Van's touristic product diversification and given information about what to do to improve the potential on the axis of Mevlana's birthday and Iranian tourists, and to direct the motivation of these tourists in this direction. In the study, it is aimed to contribute to the development of tourism in the region and the country by shifting the scholar's birthday celebrations from Iran dominance to Van, like the popularity of Iranian tourists show in Konya due to the anniversary of Mevlana's death.

Keywords: faith tourism, Van, SWOT analysis, Mevlana

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Judaism and Christianity Tour Route in Ankara in the Light of Faith Tourism

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Abstract

Ankara has been in existence since it was founded in the 8th century BC and hosted many civilizations from pre-history to the present day. In domestic and international tours made by travel agencies to Ankara, the tour routes had been limited around historic center for years; Ulus, where is known as mostly Roman, Seljuks, Ottoman structures. By means of Muslim faith tourism, Ankara is popular for mosques but beside this there are plenty Jewish and Christian destinations. The aim of this study is to prepare a hybrid (walking+bus) tour route to some important Jewish and Christian destinations and present them to the tourists through the tourist guides. Qualitative method has been used, the history records of the buildings were examined from various publications, and the hybrid tour route was created by the researchers. There are more than 900 tourist guides, registered to the Ankara Tourist Guides Chamber - ANRO. Theoretical and technical training can be given to Ankara tour guides determined within the scope of the Technical Assistance Project to be carried out in partnership with ANRO. The importance of this study is improving a valuable structure of Ankara to the forefront of the special faith and cultural tourism.

Keywords: Ankara, faith tourism, Jewish tourism, Christianity tours

Evaluation of Palimpsest Nicaea in Terms of Sustainable Faith Tourism

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Abstract

Nicaea (İzmit), which has hosted six different civilizations and three different religions, has a tremendous theological value mainly because of the council meetings held in 325 and 787 AD, which were of great importance for the Christian world. The city is also military and strategic due to its proximity to Istanbul and its maritime connection with the Gemlik Bay. In addition, it has geographical and spatial value due to the abundance and diversity of the products grown on the fertile plain where it is established. It has turned into a palimpsest structure due to being home to different cultures with the elements that make up all these values, building and building remains. The diversity of archaeological remains and the values mentioned above have made it a must-visit place in every era. One of the most significant income sources of Nicaea, which has taken the name of Izmit today, is faith tourism. Its location on the Christian pilgrimage route and being the host of council meetings, are the most important reasons of its theological importance for the Christians. Furthermore, there are many more magnificent belief structures due to its military relationship with the capital city. Although not many finds belonging to the Hellenistic period of the city have been found, it is estimated that there is a temple structure belonging to this period in the city center where the Hagia Sophia church is located. Many belief structures belong to the religion of Christianity, which are still in existence in Nicaea and whose remains have been unearthed as the result of archaeological excavations carried out until today. Prominent among these structures is the Hagia Sophia church, which was built in the Roman period and continues to be used as a mosque today, and the Underwater Basilica, the ruins of which were found in the Lake of Izmit and thought to have been built during the Roman period. Among many faith structures built and survived in the Ottoman period, the most important one is the Yeşil Mosque, which is the first representative of the central domed structures in Ottoman architecture. Yeşil Mosque is one of the important monuments of the Ottoman İzmit. In addition, the Hacı Özbek Mosque is among the frequently visited faith structures in the Süleyman Paşa Madrasa. This study aims to develop suggestions to strengthen faith tourism in the city by increasing the number/diversity of tourists. One of the assumptions for this purpose is that the increase in the number and diversity of tourists can be possible by increasing the markers of belief in the city's image. This paper presents an empirical study that was undertaken in İzmit to understand the priorities of the tourists visiting the city. It includes four sections beginning with a brief introduction presenting İzmit together with its physical, socio-cultural, and historical features. The second section determines its importance for the faith tourism via explaining the important religious events throughout history and their physical and symbolic traces today. The third section presents the fieldwork. First, the overlapped routes used by tourists while walking around the city, and the most visited regions of İzmit were determined. Then, the buildings indicated in their cognitive maps that they drew after the trip were listed. By this way the most remarkable historical structures/archaeological remains were determined. With this determination, the most influential religion on the city's identity for tourists and the historical layer in which this religion is dominant were also revealed. Then, the faith structures in the frequently and less used parts of the city which were effective in its image,

were also determined. Finally, the most iconic historical layer and buildings/remains forming the city's image were revealed. The fourth and the last section concludes with the findings and suggestions. As a result of the analysis made it has been determined that; (1) Christianity is the dominant religion in the city's image among tourists, (2) the city's most visited area is the Istanbul gate-Hagia Sophia Church-Roman Theater and Hagia Sophia Church-Yeşil Mosque Square axes that cut each other perpendicularly. The three mentioned Roman structures (Istanbul gate, Hagia Sophia Church, Roman Theater), and the Green Mosque on these axes are also dominant in the cognitive maps, (3) the most frequently drawn belief structures are the Hagia Sophia Church, and the Green Mosque respectively, (4) some belief structures in the less used areas of the city were also seen on the cognitive maps, although they were unknown by the drawers. It is thought that the data obtained in this study and the suggestions put forward are of great value in revealing the importance of the city in terms of faith tourism and carrying on the capacity developing studies for the needs of it. The determinations made within the scope of the study allowed the layers to be revealed and historical structures that should be included in the promotion of the city to improve tourists' perception and provide a sustainable faith tourism economy. Furthermore, identifying and accurately introducing the different layers of the city will let the universal heritage community to understand its historical significance that is on the scene of its physical traces.

Keywords: faith tourism, faith structures, İznik, Nicaea, sustainable tourism, tourist routes

Faith Tourism in the World and Evaluation of Turkiye's Contemporary Situation

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Abstract

Tourism offers individuals social interaction and provides opportunities for encounters in natural, social, and cultural environments. As of the oldest form of faith tourism is also known as religious tourism or spiritual tourism. entails travelling to other towns, cities, or countries for faith and personal reasons. Turkiye has vast and immense historical and cultural resources, with an historical legacy of many different civilizations having lived in Anatolia. Due to this rich heritage, Turkiye offers great significance for the development of faith tourism for different and diversified faith tourists. Hence this study aims to analysis the current faith tourist's movement in the World and to Turkiye without ignoring domestic tourists travelling for faith motivations. And the study brings out some suggestions, marketing, and managerial implications for the purpose of sustainable faith tourism in Turkiye.

Keywords: faith tourism, faith tourism marketing, religious tourism, Turkiye

The Share of Faith Tourism Heritage in Mersin in the Supply of Cultural Tourism: An Evaluation on the Tour Catalogs of Group A Travel Agencies in Istanbul

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Abstract

Mersin province has important settlements such as Tarsus and Silifke, which have tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Islam and early Christianity. These faith heritage elements are very important for people and groups of both faiths and are frequently visited in the context of both faith tourism and cultural tourism. This study aims to examine the share that faith heritage elements in Mersin holds in cultural tourism supply. For this purpose, the tour catalogs published on the websites of the 29 A group travel agencies operating in Istanbul, which has an important place in Türkiye's domestic and foreign tourism market, were subjected to content analysis. Results demonstrate that the share of the faith tourism in the supply of cultural tourism is %4,8. Among the geographical regions Southern East Anatolia has the highest frequency of faith tourism representation in cultural tour catalogs, one of the lowest is Mediterranean which also borders Mersin. The results show that faith tourism heritage of Mersin and as well of Mediterranean has a weak share in both in the supply of cultural tourism and faith tourism. Within the scope of the Faith Tourism Corridor, which covers the provinces of Hatay, Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa and Mardin, starting from Tarsus and within the scope of the Turkish Tourism Strategy 2023, theoretical insights and practical implications are presented.

Keywords: faith tourism, cultural tourism, Mersin

Determination of Halal Tourism Routes in Gaziantep Province

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Abstract

New developments in technology and transportation have led individuals to escape from the daily routine and travel frequently and discover new places. Mesopotamia: It is the place where the first civilizations were born and developed, the first big cities were established, and the first human societies were frequented. In this respect, Mesopotamian lands have important values in terms of tourism activities and wealth. Gaziantep province, located in the Mesopotamian lands, is home to places of worship that are important for the religion of Islam. In addition to this, the province of Gaziantep, which is called 'Little Bukhara', has experienced a very high scientific period with its saints and religious scholars. Gaziantep, which is an important destination for the religion of Islam, many mosques, madrasas, mausoleums, places of worship. However, many saints migrated to Gaziantep, also known as the city of science, and completed their lives here. One of the most important values is the tomb of Prophet Yusa, the nephew of Prophet Musa, in Gaziantep. During the wars in Gaziantep during the time of the second caliph of Islam, Hazrat Omar, Ökkeşiye, who saw and kissed the prophetic seal of the Prophet Muhammad, came to Gaziantep and his tomb is located within the borders of this city. In this context, in this study, it is aimed to reveal the halal tourism potential of this city, which can be called the city of saints, by creating a halal tourism route in the province of Gaziantep, where halal-conscious individuals can visit, can be visited as a guide while visiting, and can reach important information about destinations that can be described in the halal context. In tourism-oriented activities, designing a travel route will increase the awareness of cities and regions and contribute to the promotion and marketing of tourism values. In the study, literature research technique was used, and a halal tourism route proposal was developed. There are 17 mosques and madrasas in this proposed route. These are respectively; Ömeriye Mosque, Esenbek Mosque, Eyyüpoğlu Mosque, Tekke (Mevlevihane) Mosque, Nuri Mehmet Paşa Mosque, Kozanlı Mosque, Hacı Nasır Mosque, Ahmet Çelebi Mosque, Bostancı (Bosnian) Mosque, Ömer Şeyh Mosque, Alaeddevle (Aladola) Mosque, Tahtani Mosque, Handan Bey (Handaniye) Mosque, Ali Nacar Mosque, Şirvani Mosque, Şeyh Fethullah Mosque and Complex, Boyacı Mosque. In addition, 7 mausoleums have been identified in Gaziantep. These; Ökkeşiye Tomb, Yuşa Prophet Tomb, Pir Sefa Holiness Tomb, Hacı Baba Tomb, Şeyh Fethullah Tomb, Dülük Baba Tomb, Nesimi Holiness. In the literature review, studies done in the world and in Turkiye were examined. According to the findings obtained in the study, it has been understood that many sites on the halal tourism route have very interesting riches in terms of tourism and their importance can be revealed by developing them with appropriate tourism policies. After the findings, it was concluded that the halal tourism potential of the region should be evaluated. It has been concluded that promotion and marketing are also important, and that halal tourism is important for our country and that it needs to be developed. Soon, tourism stakeholders are expected to increase their marketing and advertising activities regarding the halal tourism route. In the prepared halal tourism route proposal, In the study, the information about the works included in the itinerary, inscriptions, information boards, signboards, etc., both in written sources and in

the destinations where the work is located. It has been determined that some of the information in the content is missing. In this context, it is recommended to reorganize and develop related documents and promotional products with visual content. In addition, it is recommended to conduct research that measures the intention to visit this halal tourism route created in the future. However, it is recommended that similar studies be carried out in other destinations. It is recommended to include more in the necessary promotional tools to highlight the halal tourism potential of Gaziantep province. In addition, a multi-language feature can be added to deliver the promotions made over the internet to the target audience. A mobile application can be created for the halal tourism route created within the scope of this research, so that tourists can visit it more easily.

Keywords: halal tourism, route, Gaziantep, Mosque, tomb

Unveiling the Potential of Faith-Based Tourism in Denizli, Turkiye: A Qualitative Research on Turkish Tour Guides

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Abstract

Anatolia, having embraced many civilizations and religions over the centuries, possesses unique historical, cultural, and religious values. It is one of the oldest religious centers, covering an area that has hosted countless faith groups over the course of thousands of years, including the three heavenly religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Denizli is geographically located at the junction point of the Anatolian Peninsula, at the crossroads of the Aegean, Central Anatolia, and Mediterranean Regions, has been home to a great number of civilizations throughout history due to its geographical location and natural beauties on the fertile soil of Çürüksu Lykos Valley in the intersection of Phrygia, Lydia, and Caria Regions in ancient geography. Thus, it does have great potential in terms of history, culture, archeology, as well as religion. As an important antiquity settlement, Denizli has an advantageous position about faith-based tourism potential, as it has a wealth of sites not only for Muslims, Christians, and Jewish but also for the followers of several religious denominations. This exploratory study intended to unleash the potential of the faith-based tourism's development in the province of Denizli. It came up with the primary qualitative data obtained from Turkish tour guides, who were associated with the Chambers of Tour Guides in Antalya, Izmir, Aydın, and Muğla in Turkiye. The study revealed that Denizli has great potential as regards to faith-based tourism, particularly in respect of Christianity.

Keywords: tour guides, faith-based tourism, Denizli, Turkiye

Evaluation of Harput in the Context of Faith Tourism

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to evaluate the potential of faith tourism, which is an important type of tourism for the country's economies and whose importance has been increasing in recent years, in Harput and to determine what the values that create attraction in terms of faith tourism are. In this study, a review was made by examining the relevant literature. Harput, a city of history and culture dating back to ancient times, is in a way an open-air museum. Harput is the most visited place of Elazig province by tourists. The fact that Harput is an ancient settlement and home to different civilizations has made it one of the destinations with many sacred places and values. It is a fact that Harput has a sufficient potential for faith tourism with ten mosques, ten madrasahs, eight churches and multiple tombs. In addition, Harput's high potential in terms of cultural, historical, religious, and gastronomic tourism types has been tried to be used adequately by combining this potential with faith tourism. As a result, the fact that it has unique natural, historical, and cultural attractions and their preservation reveals that Harput is a tourism center of attraction.

Keywords: Harput, tourism, faith tourism

A SWOT Analysis on Faith Tourism: Case of Trabzon

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Abstract

There are various sources of attraction that lead people to tourism. Religious visits made with the motive of finding spiritual peace among the sources of attraction constitute an important potential. Trabzon, one of the rich Anatolian lands that has hosted many civilizations, is a very rich city in terms of faith tourism potential. Sümela Monastery, Aya Varvara Church, Ayasofya Mosque are among the main sources of faith tourism supply that attract attention of the province. In the study, SWOT analysis was performed to draw attention to the faith tourism supply sources of Trabzon and to offer suggestions for the effective utilization of these supply sources. After the analysis, evaluations were made, and suggestions were presented.

Keywords: tourism, faith tourism, SWOT analysis, Trabzon

The Effect of Destination Brand Awareness and Destination Brand Quality on Destination Brand Loyalty in Faith Tourism Corridor Cities

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Abstract

With destination brand awareness (DBA), the probability of being chosen for destinations over competitors also increases (Ünal, 2020: 14). Destination brand quality (DBQ) is related to meeting the expectations of tourists (Chi vd., 2020: 3). Destination brand loyalty (DBL) can also be kind of behavior of recommending the destination to other people and revisiting it (Horng vd., 2012; Yoon ve Uysal, 2005). Within the scope of related literature, both DBA (Gül and Bozok, 2015; Kodaş, 2021) and DBQ affect DBL (Davras, 2019; Vinh ve Nga, 2015). This study is of importance because it measures the dimensions of destination brand equity (DBE) in cities with potential in terms of faith tourism. In this respect, it is aimed in this research measuring the effect of DBA and DBQ upon DBL within faith tourism corridor cities. In the research, the survey method was used as a data collection technique as a quantitative research method. Convenience sampling was applied to determine the sample. The research was carried out by face-to-face interviews with domestic and foreign tourists aged 18 and over who visited the cities of the faith tourism corridor. Within the scope of the research, 551 tourists were reached. The study result show that DBA indicates significant positive effects upon DBL, and DBQ poses significant positive effects upon on DBL. Within the light of the research results, the study contributes to the literature and offers suggestions for faith tourism corridor cities.

Keywords: destination brand awareness, destination brand quality, destination brand loyalty, faith tourism corridor

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Evaluation of Şanlıurfa Faith Tourism Potential

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Abstract

Located within the borders of Mesopotamia and in the center of the Fertile Crescent, Şanlıurfa is home to many sacred temples and religions. In this context, it is aimed to evaluate the faith tourism potential of Şanlıurfa with SWOT analysis. Secondary data were used in the research. The data were obtained from academic studies, sectoral reports, and official websites. According to the findings, the strengths are Şanlıurfa is an important religious tourism center. Especially the presence of Göbeklitepe supports this strong aspect. In addition, the belief that the prophet Abraham lived in this region enables individuals from different religions to meet on a common ground. Şanlıurfa has a great potential for the discovery of new religious tourism resources. This potential is among the most important opportunities. When the weaknesses and threats are examined, the carrying capacity problem is one of the main weaknesses of Şanlıurfa. Faith tourism destinations cannot meet the demands physically during periods when tourists are busy. When the threats are examined, the deformation of cultural items used as touristic products is at the forefront. Finally, various suggestions for the faith tourism of Şanlıurfa have been presented in the research. Faith tourism centers, which are one of the richest aspects of marketing activities, should be highlighted. Comprehensive training should be given to the tourist guides working in the region and the unity of expression should be ensured. Various technological infrastructure investments should be made to increase the experience quality of visitors.

Keywords: Şanlıurfa, faith tourism, potential, SWOT

Investigation of the Attractive Values for Faith Tourism: The Case of Diyarbakır

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Abstract

Trips to religious shrines, temples, churches and similar holy places and destinations are the most common touristic travel. Diyarbakır is one of the important destinations with holy places in terms of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. Diyarbakır is an ancient destination that has many structures belonging to different faiths, as it has hosted many great civilizations throughout history. This hosting created many holy places in Diyarbakır and affected it to be an important destination in terms of faith tourism. The aim of this study is to investigate the values that create the attraction power of Diyarbakır in terms of faith tourism and to guide the best way to evaluate the potential of faith tourism. In this study, literature review was made, and data were collected and interpreted because of the sources obtained. As a result of the research, opinions and suggestions that will contribute to the development of faith tourism in Diyarbakır have been put forward.

Keywords: faith tourism, attractive values, Diyarbakır

Investigation of Sveti Georgi Church in Edirne, Turkiye Within the Scope of Faith Tourism

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Abstract

The Sveti Georgi Bulgarian Orthodox Church located in the K1yık district of Edirne city, Turkiye. In 1880, the church was constructed. After seasonal conditions caused damage to the church, it was repaired in 2004 and reopened for prayer. There are numerous centers in Turkiye that serve to faith tourism, a form of alternative tourism. Each year, religious pilgrimages to these centers contribute to the country's tourism industry. When examining prior research, the Sveti Georgi Church was classified as architectural, and no studies on religious tourism were discovered. In this regard, the purpose of the study is to assess the significance of the Sveti Georgi Church to Bulgarian tourists visiting Edirne within the context of faith tourism. In this study, qualitative research methods were employed. Literature review, pertinent document review, and interviews with the Pastor of Sveti Georgi Bulgarian Orthodox Church provided the study data. In the interview, a semi-structured question format was adopted. As a result of the investigation, it has been concluded that the Sveti Georgi Church is of great faith tourism significance.

Keywords: faith tourism, Christianity, Orthodoxy, Sveti Georgi Church, Edirne, Turkiye

Examining Nostalgic Experience and Physical Evidence Elements in Customers' Online Reviews of Their Restaurant Experiences: TripAdvisor Example

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Abstract

Today, online restaurant reviews play an important role in customers' restaurant choices. Considering that many people read online reviews of a restaurant they have been to for the first time or have not been to for a long time, the impact of these reviews on customer satisfaction and customer value cannot be underestimated. Restaurant administrators and marketers consider it worthwhile to investigate what customers pay attention to in online comments about physical elements such as a menu, decoration, location, and employees in restaurants that are appreciated by customers, and what stands out about these physical elements. In addition, this study examines the physical evidence elements as well as customers' comments on nostalgic experiences and revisit intentions. In this direction, the online reviews of The Old Stamp House Restaurant, which was chosen by the TripAdvisor site as the best restaurant in 2021, were analyzed by text mining method. As a result of the analysis, comments on the physical evidence elements of the restaurant were evaluated, and findings on nostalgic experience tendencies and revisit intentions were found.

Keywords: physical evidence, online review, nostalgic experience, TripAdvisor

Faith-Based Economic Activities: Political Economic Review

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Abstract

Faith matters are economic activities as they stimulate the welfare of nations. For the faith based economic activities tourism industry is a vital tool which reveal the economic output. individual spiritual transformation directly related to collective activities. Individuals or groups want to satisfy their spiritual needs, and this is because they travel to the holy or they organize events. These events can be faith traditions of the religions and or beliefs, but it contributes to faith tourism, and it creates economic output. The role and the mission of the institutions are also political economic side of the faith-based activities. Therefore, the aim of this study is to reveal the political economic perspective of faith with literature review and secondly, through theoretical model, we aim to explain the reason to call faith activities as an economic activity. Solow model is expanded to determine the role of faith and to reveal the key role of faith tourism for the economic performance of the countries.

Keywords: political economy, economic performance, faith, faith tourism

Mapping Faith Tourism: A Bibliometric Analysis

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to develop a descriptive map of academic literature on faith tourism, by using the bibliometric method. As the primary data source for this study, we used the Web of Science (WoS), one of the major databases that provide metadata related to scientific research. We found 210 studies, including articles, book chapters, and conference proceedings, when we searched for “faith” and “tourism. 172 scientific articles from the listed studies are included for descriptive analysis. A review of scientific articles drawn from extensive databases gives a general overview of the current and past trends, as well as key terms and highly influential works, in the field of faith tourism research. For examining the related studies, the productivity of the field, conceptual analysis and citation analysis were considered.

Keywords: faith tourism, bibliometric analysis, review, Web of Science (WoS), citation analysis

Halal Tourism Trends: An Application on Generations

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Abstract

Today, new tourist products have been created and developed in the framework of the wishes and needs of individuals traveling with religious motivation. As can be seen, tourism, a halal concept that establishes a sales and marketing network with the framework of religious rules, as well as those rules and product and service is facing great interest. To benefit from this potential market, it is important to understand the motivation and needs that create their intention to buy tourist products to produce and market tourist products and services in accordance with the travel purpose and desires of Muslim individuals. This study was conducted to understand the perceptions of halal tourism of the generations, which are an important partitioning in understanding the motivation and needs of the people. The main purpose of this research is to reveal the differences and similarities of individuals living in Turkiye according to the generations they are involved in the halal tourism tendencies. The research is based on the results of the survey applied to individuals living in Turkiye in 2022. The data collected within the scope of the research were evaluated using the package program and the hypotheses created for the research with frequency, ANOVA and TET were tested after the application of normality, validity and reliability analyzed. According to the 409 surveys obtained from the research, a data set that carries the reliability and validity elements strongly was formed. As a result of analysis on the data obtained, the group of halal tourism followed by 3.9960 average and “baby boomers” with traditional, 3.6090 average and X generation, 3.1442 average and Y generation 2.5801 average and Z generation followed this tendency trend. At the end of the research, the item “it is important for me that the food waste in the hotel is at a minimum level” received the highest rate of participation, and the item “it is important for me that there are separate recreation areas for men and women in the hotel” received the least participation.

Keywords: halal, tourism, generations

The Important Geographical Location of Turkiye Suitable for Islam Faith Tourism

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Abstract

Turkiye is a natural bridge between the two continents, Asia, and Europe, geographically its position is of great importance. Turkiye is also a part of the middle east and a gateway to Europe. The largest city, Istanbul situated on two continents, Asia, and Europe. The largest Anatolian peninsula is considered the westernmost part of Asia, which is divided from Europe because of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles straits similarly. Islamic tourism in the past, prevailed a lot in Turkiye, middle east, Iran, Iraq, and Indo-Pak sub-continent. The light of Islam spread all over the nearby countries after emerging from Mecca and Medina, it spread in all directions towards the African continent, the far east and in the North. The geographical location of Anatolia connects to Asian countries as well as to European countries. Islam faith tourism can be done among the geographically connected Islamic countries. The excellent geographical location of Turkiye provides direct land routes to Azerbaijan, Iran, Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, this can enhance Islam faith tourism among the Muslim countries. The Islamic faith tourism will be very beneficial for economic growth of all the Muslim nations, it will uplift the living standard and flourish brotherhood.

Keywords: geography, Islam faith tourism, Turkiye, Muslim countries, gateway

Aspects of Stimulating Rural Tourism Development: Example of Kazakhstan and Turkiye

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Abstract

Rural tourism belongs not only to the most important segments of the tourism industry, but also to the sustainable development of rural areas and tourism through the organization and integration of various types of its activities. When we talk about rural tourism, we see ecotourism, culture, spiritual tourism, etc., if you do not consider the protection, this trend leads to a decrease in the quality of the tourist product offered in rural tourism, and in the end to an unproductive income. Therefore, rural residents, associations and rural tourism enterprises should make certain contributions to the sustainable functioning of Rural Capital funds for the purpose of preservation and protection. In this paper, we will study the approaches to sustainable development of rural areas, identify the existing elements of Rural Capital, analyze the existing value of the village, how to invest in what needs, how to attract the local population. The primary aim of the work under this project, by examining the development of rural tourism, this increase in the demand for tourist products in Turkiye and Kazakhstan, in order to numerous contributions to the local development of rural tourism in the economy of our country of the effect on, especially about the fact that what will affect the level of Local Government of rural tourism units to a general consideration are included. In addition, some recommendations have been made in terms of the sustainability of tourism activities, which is one of the important tools of rural development.

Keywords: rural tourism, local development, local governments

A Mystery Religion in Anatolia: Mithraism and Its Temples

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Abstract

Mithraism is entirely in the form of a mystery religion, especially in western geographies. For this reason, most of the information about belief is based on archaeological data rather than written sources. The findings show that only men were accepted into the faith after the religion became to a mystery religion and a certain initiation practice was carried out. This initiation practice, which consists of seven grades, also reflects a characteristic of rank among converted followers. Mithra worship which is carried out in great secrecy and completely isolated from the outside, is mostly practiced in temples called “Mithraeum” in secluded areas such as caves or rock cavities. Concepts such as Mithraism, mystery religion, esotericism, initiation, ritual, and sacrifice are among the topics that impress many people even today. In this sense, the topics we have mentioned have a special place in the context of culture and belief tourism and the history of religions. In our country The Mithra Temples that excavated in Zerzevan Castle, Diyarbakir and the double Mithraeum structure in Doliche, Gaziantep have a great importance on archaeology and belief tourism. It can be observed that during the past years, the attraction of these places is greatly increased, and these locations can take part in the tour routes. It’s obvious that the knowledge and introduce of both Mithraism and Mithraeums are going to contribute to Turkish tourism sector. In addition to this, the target number of tourists for the Zerzevan castle in 2025 was expressed as 5 million.

Keywords: Mithra, Mithraism, Mithraeum, mystery religion, Zerzevan, Doliche

Church Rites as Religious Tourism Attraction: Syriac Churches

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Abstract

Assyrians, one of the first communities to accept Christianity, draw attention with their unique belief and worship principles. Hatay, Mardin, Diyarbakir, Adıyaman, and Istanbul are the provinces in Turkiye with the largest Assyrian populations. In this study, which examines the rites performed in Syriac churches within the scope of religious tourism, it is stated that during certain periods of the year, Syriac churches and monasteries host visitors from countries such as Germany, Switzerland, and Belgium and that even during the pandemic when tourist activity is very low, approximately 3 million tourists came to Mardin and a significant part of them visited Syriac churches and monasteries. Consequently, it can be said that the rites performed in Syriac churches are a major draw for both domestic and international tourists.

Keywords: religious tourism, Church rites, Syriac churches

Neolithic Age and Faith Tourism

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Abstract

Belief is one of the most important elements that make up culture. The main subject and impulse of art has been belief throughout history and has played a major role in the birth of civilization. Every archaeological site and museum are filled with structures and artifacts that are the product of faith. The most elaborated and monumental structures were dedicated to gods and goddesses, the most prestigious items were placed in tombs, statues and paintings were made to represent the “sacred” perfectly. In Turkiye, Abrahamic religions generally characterize the scope of faith tourism. However, with the discovery of Prehistoric centers such as Çatalhöyük in the 1960s, and Göbeklitepe and Karahantepe recently, it was understood that complex beliefs had a longer adventure than expected. For the Neolithic peoples, the distinction between the sacred and the mundane is not clear. In prehistoric times, it was understood that the world of the living and the dead were intertwined, and that an object could be religious as well as functional. It is seen that every element of culture is surrounded by religious beliefs and rituals. In this case, while we are describing prehistoric cultures such as Çatalhöyük and Göbeklitepe, we are naturally describing their beliefs as well. This study wants to emphasize that the religious beliefs of prehistoric societies are the most prominent products of both cultural tourism and faith tourism and the deep relationship between them.

Keywords: cultural tourism, faith tourism, prehistoric religion, beliefs and rituals, Neolithic age, Göbeklitepe, Çatalhöyük

The Second Rome Discourse: The Historical and Religious Significance of Istanbul for Russians

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Abstract

Since the end of the Soviet Union Russian tourists have a special interest in Istanbul. One of the main reasons of that interest is the religious and historical identity of the city integrated with the “Third Rome” doctrine. Russian historians and the clergy attribute to Istanbul the role of a historical and religious center, with its origin in Rome. According to the 16th century doctrine “Third Rome”, the ‘First Rome’ - Rome fell because of heresy, the ‘Second Rome’ - Constantinople fell to the Ottomans in 1453, and the ‘Third Rome’ - Moscow would bring salvation to the whole world through Orthodox Christianity. Based on this doctrine, the Russians have always attached special importance to Istanbul, as Istanbul is considered the source of Moscow’s politico-religious status. The purpose of this study is to understand the “Third Rome” doctrine and to explore what role Istanbul played with the ‘Second Rome’ identity in this doctrine. The study also aims to analyze the growing importance of the ‘Third Rome’ concept in internal and external policy of Russia and its effect on Russian tourism sector, specifically concerning Istanbul. This paper intends first to trace the genealogy of the “Third Rome” doctrine, and how Russians evaluated Constantinople from the religious perspective, depending on the 19th century Russian politico-religious rhetoric. Secondly, the study will analyze how the current Russian political elite used religious rhetoric, including the “Third Rome” doctrine, as a tool to maintain and increase the loyalty of Russians living both abroad and within the Federation. Finally, the advertising language used by Russian tourism companies while promoting Istanbul will be analyzed. The study will pay special attention to the analysis of the term ‘Second Rome’ that was frequently used in Russian tourism companies’ advertisements.

Keywords: Third Rome, Constantinople, Istanbul, Russia, Orthodox Christianity

SWOT Analysis on the Faith Tourism Potential of Diyarbakir

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Abstract

Diyarbakir, which is home to countless civilizations and beliefs, is an important faith tourism destination for believers belonging to many faiths, especially Islam and Christianity. Diyarbakir, which is the heart of the Mesopotamian region, which is the birthplace of humanity and civilization in the world, has been greatly affected by terrorism problems in the past. Diyarbakir has become an important attraction center thanks to the investments made in recent years. Although it is suitable for many alternative tourism types, faith tourism is a type of tourism that gains importance in Diyarbakir thanks to its religious and cultural values. The aim of this study is to examine the potential of faith tourism in Diyarbakir and to evaluate this potential with the help of SWOT analysis.

Keywords: religious, faith, tourism, Diyarbakir, SWOT analysis

Familiarity and Experience Levels of Manisa's Faith Tourism Assets by the University Students Studying in the Province

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the extent to which students attending college in Manisa are familiar with and experience the faith tourism assets in Manisa. Data were collected from 265 students studying at Manisa Celal Bayar University, Faculty of Business, through a questionnaire. That is, the students were asked how familiar they are with and how frequently they visit the faith tourism assets on a five-point Likert scale. The analysis indicated that the level of familiarity and experience of all religious tourism structures is below the neutral point. This result shows that these religious structures are not generally known and are not visited. In fact, the low familiarity and experience levels of the students are unexpected and require urgent improvements. The findings further indicate that there is a significant difference between the familiarity and experience levels of all faith tourism structures. When it is examined whether the familiarity and experience levels of Manisa's religious tourism values are different according to the place of residence of the students (living with their families in Manisa, staying in rented houses or dormitories, and daily commuting from Izmir), it is seen that the students living in Manisa with their families have a higher level of familiarity and experience compared to the other groups. The students who are living with their families in Manisa are somehow familiar with and experience the faith tourism assets in Manisa city center; however, when these assets are in surrounding towns, the familiarity and experience of these students significantly drop. The findings of this study offer suggestions to the university and city administrators. The university should offer hospitality and tourism management programs to respond to the industry personnel needs and to train professionals who are informed about the tourism and faith tourism assets of Manisa. In addition to tourism students, other students at the University may be offered elective courses that introduce the tourism and tourism assets of Manisa. The city administrators invest in upgrading and marketing these assets of Manisa and collaborate with the University to organize tours for the students on these religious tourism assets.

Keywords: Manisa, faith tourism, familiarity, experiencing

Faith Tourism Heritage of Mountainous Cilicia Region of Turkiye

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Abstract

The region of Cilicia was divided into two in ancient times and was called Cilicia, one mountainous and the other plain. The plains Cilician city of Tarsus has been added to the corridors of faith due to the birthplace of Paul. Mountainous Cilicia Trakheian (Taşeli Plateau) city Silifke city and its hinterland also have high potential of faith tourism. Since the mountainous Cilicia region is rugged and difficult to access, religious tourism heritages have not been adequately enough publicity. Whence the subject of this article focuses on the faith tourism heritages of Mountainous Cilicia. Some of the faith tourism values are: One of the important council meetings was held in Seleucia ad Calycadnum, in the early stages of Christianity in 359 A.C. Aya Thecla was the first. Christian female Saint in the Christianity lived in Silifke-Taşucu. Her holy Pilgrimage Church was built in the name of Thecla within the borders of Silifke. Alahan Monastery one of the best examples of its kind, is located on the slope of the Taurus Mountains, within the borders of the town of Mut, to the north of the plateau. Its architectural features are famous for its Christian symbol decorations carved into the stone. The region is also rich in important architectural works of İslamic faith such as madrasas, mosques, and bridges from the Seljuk and Karamanoğlu periods. The aim of the article is to raise awareness about the hidden religious heritage of Taşeli Plateau.

Keywords: Taşeli region, Christianity, faith tourism heritages

The Effect of Influencers in Gastronomy Tourism

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to reveal the influence of influencers in terms of gastronomy tourism. For this purpose, first, the Instagram accounts of gastronomy influencers with one million or more followers were examined, then the influence of influencers on the preferences of gastronomy products was investigated and the mediating role of the information factor was discussed. It has been revealed that the influence factor has a significant effect on the preference of the gastronomic products of the influencers and the information factor. At the same time, it has been found that the information factor has a significant effect on supporting the influence of influencers in the preference of gastronomic products. It has been concluded that the information factor has a moderate effect between the influencer effect and the gastronomy product preference.

Keywords: gastronomy tourism, influencer, social media

St. Philip Sanctuary in the Shadow of Pamukkale

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Abstract

Hierapolis Ancient City, whose name is derived from Hiera, the wife of Telephos, the legendary ancestor of Pergamon kings, was founded by Eumenes II, one of the Pergamon kings. The cotton-white pools that give the city its name today, waterfalls where mineral waters flow, and ruins that are on the face of the day with their magnificence ensure that this place is flooded with visitors. However, many tourists visiting Pamukkale are unaware that the ancient city of Hierapolis and the St. Philip Sanctuary is located above Pamukkale. The city, which has one of the largest necropolis areas in Anatolia with approximately one thousand two hundred graves, hosted many visitors in ancient times as well. The fact that the city was a healing center in ancient times undoubtedly had a significant impact on this. The discovery of St. Philip's tomb, one of the twelve apostles of Jesus, in Hierapolis, makes the city one of the most frequently visited places in the Christian world. The remains of a bridge constructed for Christian pilgrims to cross indicates that the city was a pilgrimage center in ancient times as well. The infrastructure problems of St. Philip's Sanctuary, the difficult accessibility of the area, and the disadvantage that this difficulty creates for age groups make it difficult to visit the area. The lack of digital visibility of the St. Philip's Sanctuary on travel sites and maps is also one of the factors that negatively affect its recognition. The aim of this study is to make suggestions to increase the visibility of the Saint Philip Sanctuary in the shadow of Pamukkale, which is flooded by visitors.

Keywords: Pamukkale Hierapolis, St. Philip's Sanctuary, faith-based tourism, Denizli

A Tour Route Suggestion Within the Scope of Religious Tourism: Mosques and Tombs of İznik

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Abstract

This study aims to increase awareness of religious tourism in Iznik and to develop alternate itineraries. The goal of this study, therefore, is to create a religious tourism route that includes mosques and tombs inside and around the city walls in the Iznik district. In this context, a day-trip itinerary was elaborated. To research the monuments, the document analysis was performed, and site visits were made in the locations specified in the itinerary. The mosques and tombs selected in the study are also examples of these historical, cultural and tourist monuments. The mosques and tombs observed in this context are as follows: Kyrgyz Mausoleum, Yakub Çelebi Mosque and Tomb, Mahmut Çelebi Mosque, Hagia Sophia Mosque, Huysuzlar Tomb, Hacı Özbek Mosque, Eşrefzade (Eşrefi Rumi) Mosque and Tomb, Çandarlı Halil Pasha Tomb, Ahi Veyn Sultan Tomb, Davud-i Kayseri Tomb, Aladdin Mısiri Tomb, Şeyh Kutbeddin Mosque and Tomb, Green Mosque, İbrahim Pasha Tomb, Sarı Saltuk Tomb, Çandarlı Halil Hayreddin Pasha Tomb and Abdulvahab Tomb (Bayraklı Dede). On the Iznik tourism map provided by Bursa Municipality, a tour itinerary was specified using the Photoshop CS6 software, and the route were determined. The 7-hour tour, which includes 17 different visit locations, includes a 1-hour lunch break and 1-hour of free time on the coast of Lake Iznik at the end of the tour. The tour distances were measured using Google Maps. The tour lasts from 10:00 AM until 5:00 PM.

Keywords: religious tourism, tour route, İznik, Mosque and Tomb

Contributions of the Sufi Road Project to Yalova Tourism Within the Scope of Faith Tourism: A Stakeholder Analysis

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Abstract

Yalova, which is a destination preferred by domestic and foreign tourists within the scope of faith tourism, has many important artifacts, holy places and in addition to these, thermal tourism opportunities. At the same time, it gains a geographical advantage with its proximity to major cities and the richness of natural tourism resources. In this study, which was conducted to evaluate the contributions of the Sufi Way Project to Yalova as a tourism destination within the scope of faith tourism, it was observed that the Sufi Way had a very important effect in promoting the current attractions of Yalova and increasing the brand value. In addition, within the scope of faith tourism, the contributions of the Sufi Way Project to Yalova as a tourism destination are determined from the perspective of stakeholders. In this context, it is aimed to develop suggestions for more effective positioning of the destination. In this study, semi-structured interview technique was used.

Keywords: faith tourism, Sufi way, Yalova

Generations Y and Z's Position in Faith Tourism

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Abstract

Faith tourism, one of the oldest alternative tourism types, is a tourism activity that meets the socio-cultural and psychological needs of tourists. With each passing day, the reasons for tourists to travel have changed and the types of tourism have also diversified. Tourists have started to prefer different types of tourism because of such factors as income levels, demographic factors (age, environmental conditions, and technological developments). However, faith tourism emerges as a type of tourism that can appeal to almost every generation. Therefore, it is thought that it is extremely important to evaluate the relationship between generations and faith tourism. In this study, importance of the Y and Z generation in faith tourism is handled conceptually and it is aimed to shed light on the research about generations and faith tourism.

Keywords: faith tourism, generations y and z, faith tourism motivations

The Importance of Akdamar Island and the Church of the Holy Cross for the Christianity in Anatolia

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Abstract

A considerable increase in religious structures is seen in the Eastern Anatolia Region following the Medieval Age. The abundance of Christian architectural works around Lake Van also raises concern. Among these architectural structures, Armenian structures come to the fore. Akdamar Island, which occupies an important position within the borders of Van Province, does the honors of important church structure among Armenian structures. The Church of the Holy Cross, located on Akdamar Island, is one of the outstanding Christian religious structures in Anatolia. The monastery takes its name from Akdamar Island and is in the form of a complex. Vaspurakan King Gagik I had the Church of the Holy Cross built by Monk Manuel. The architecture of church, located in the Van Lake basin, has a notable place in the Anatolian region with its architecture and decorations in the cultural context. Akdamar Island and the Church of the Holy Cross draw considerable interest in cultural tourism thanks to their location and important religious architecture. The Church is considered one of the essential cultural values, especially in terms of faith tourism.

Keywords: Akdamar, Church, Van, Anatolia, Christianity

İzник in Faith Tourism: Evaluation by Stakeholders

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Abstract

Journeys to sacred areas through belief systems create a strong relationship between faith and tourism. Belief, which is an important part of cultural life, creates an important tourism potential for Turkiye, which has hosted many civilizations. In Turkiye, especially Iznik (known as Nicaea since ancient times) has a strategic position in terms of faith tourism. It is located on eastern shore of Lake İznik (Askania Limne) surrounded by ranges of hills within the Bithynia (Marmara) region of Anatolia and it is accepted as one of the eight pilgrimage centers in Turkiye, which is considered sacred for Christians. Therefore, strategic studies are needed to improve the faith tourism that already exists in Iznik. The faith tourism that has emerged in the holy areas is developing not only because of the holiness of the areas, but also through the opportunities that the region offers to the tourists. When faith tourism is promoted appropriately, a competitive advantage can be provided for Iznik by developing the commercial activity of the region with the interaction of local people, tourists, and local institutions. For this reason, the present study aims to reveal the current situation and future opportunities of Iznik in terms of faith tourism. For this purpose, SWOT analysis was performed to reveal the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats regarding Iznik. It was thought that such an analysis would provide a basis for taking the necessary precautions to achieve the targets and to establish a stronger roadmap. Primary and secondary data were employed in the research. The primary data were obtained from the relevant stakeholders in Bursa and Iznik by interview technique. Public, private sector, NGOs, tourism business managers and voluntary participants from local people were determined as stakeholders. According to the findings obtained as a result of the evaluation, the strengths include the proximity of the Istanbul-İzmir highway, Yenişehir Airport in Bursa, which increases the accessibility of the district; weaknesses include the absence of the district's tourism master plan, financial and procedural barriers to upgrading the ancient walls and paths; among the opportunities are the increase in demand for alternative tourism types, and among the threats, wrong tourism policies and weak sustainability understanding can be counted. Furthermore, practical suggestions were made to tourism executives and policy makers.

Keywords: faith tourism, Iznik, SWOT analysis

An Evaluation on Food Symbolism in Semavi Religions

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Abstract

One of the most basic needs of human beings to continue their existence is the need for food and drink. Eating and drinking habits have started to reflect the culture and religious identity of the society in which they live. In the process, food has become a social symbol and has influenced every aspect of life with the cultural, social, and political codes it contains. These codes attributed to food classify societies as us and others. Food that is blessed and prohibited by religions within the scope of eating and drinking activities is one of the most important factors that differentiate religions. In our study, the cultural symbols on the eating and drinking practices of the Semavi religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) and the meanings encoded in the foods were researched and compiled. It is hoped that this study will form a basis for future academic studies.

Keywords: Semavi religions, symbolism, food

Faith Tourism Potential of Cappadocia Region

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Abstract

All the varying beliefs of the new world aside, Anatolia is the apple of humankind's eye due to it witnessed numerous civilizations and their religions. Anatolia has a great importance in the spread and transmission of cultural heritage in context of both faith and its physical infrastructures. Cappadocia located in the central part of Anatolia, is full of landscape with fairy-chimneys, unusual underground settlements, rock churches decorated by fascinating frescoes. After all Cappadocia is a world-renowned destination with Hacı Bektaş Veli, one of the greatest representatives of the spirit of humanism in Anatolia, and countless tangible/intangible cultural heritage. Tourists used to visit Cappadocia to see the rock churches which was built in the Early Christian period and to experience the rich cultural heritage. It seems that these ones have left their place to different profiles looking for activities such as taking pictures with balloons and concept suits or ATV rides. This study aims to understand the potential of faith tourism as an alternative to unsustainable tourism activities in Cappadocia. In this research we present an inventory of places that can be visited for faith tourism in the region. Main sources for determining the visiting centers are current literature, newspapers, magazines, internet archives and the cultural inventory created by the Tourism Ministry. Moreover, we discussed the potential of religious tourism in the region based on the findings acquired by 9 interviews. The main findings are region has a great potential in terms of religious tourism, it seems local people and administrators used to give value heritage properties more in the past, however they have different attitudes today for various reasons. Christian heritage is more prominent than Islamic, but we claim Islamic ones' potential will be improved if promoted and stakeholders step forward on this issue. Even Hacı Bektaş Veli alone has a great potential for religious tourism. Further research may investigate whether Cappadocia can turn into a pilgrimage center due to its rich Christian cultural heritage.

Keywords: religious tourism, Cappadocia region, Christianity, Islam, Hacı Bektaş Veli, cultural heritage

Research and Classification on the Values of Faith Tourism Attractions for Kastamonu

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Abstract

In recent years, faith tourism has taken its place among the tourism types and has become an important alternative for the economy of the country and the region. The assets of cultural heritage representing any faith create a significant attraction for faith tourism. Turkiye, which is of great importance for the three monotheistic religions, is rich of these values and assets. When the Turkiye is assessed within the scope of faith tourism, it will be seen that many cities, places, and values are sacred to Islam. Kastamonu constitutes one of the cities which is rich of these values among others. The aim of this research is to examine the Islamic values of Kastamonu in terms of faith tourism and to classify them. The qualitative survey model was employed in the study. To obtain the aims and objectives of the research, the relevant literature has been reviewed in-depth. Then the conceptual framework of the study was established. A working group was formed of individuals living in Kastamonu who have the expertise and experience about Islamic values of city. A structured interview technique was developed, and data were collected through face to face and online interviews. Descriptive analysis was used for the analyses of the data. Researched findings revealed that the assets which have the quality of attraction in terms of faith tourism for Kastamonu are Sacred Spaces, Events, Persons, Holly Goods and Waters. And these can be classified as they are named. In addition to this, it has been commented that these values have a very high potential in terms of religion, history, and culture. It is also stated that Kastamonu does not sufficiently benefit from this potential.

Keywords: faith tourism, faith attractiveness, classification, Kastamonu

Acknowledgment

This study has been developed from the graduation thesis of Ayşe Demir named Research and classification of Kastamonu attractive values for faith tourism.

The Development of Halal Tourism Research: A Bibliometric Review

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Abstract

This study explains the scientific research studies on halal tourism conducted between 2009-2022 April in terms of co-citation analysis and presents the descriptive statistics of these studies. For this purpose, 238 documents were found by searching the Web of Science Core Collection database with the title of “halal tourism”. Obtained documents were analyzed with VoSviewer software. According to the results of the research, halal tourism research is divided into three clusters. It is seen that these clusters are related to the concept of halal tourism and its features, the structure of Islamic tourism, and brand issues in halal tourism. Tourism Management, Journal of Islamic Marketing, and Tourism Management Perspectives are leading in terms of common citation. Additionally, Mohamed Battour, Joan C. Henderson, and Heesup Han are the most cited researchers. In addition, the research results show the most productive and efficient research, researcher, country, and document types. The research is important in terms of providing information about the structure of the area to researchers who are interested in the field of halal tourism.

Keywords: halal tourism, faith tourism, Islamic tourism, bibliometric analyses, Web of Science

An Evaluation of the Faith Tourism Potential of Niğde and Its Region

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Abstract

In terms of tourism marketing, being a preferred destination with touristic product potential facilitates the marketing activities of the region, and it can easily attract the attention of potential domestic and foreign visitors who can be considered as visitors and qualified tourists interested in the region and increase the attractiveness of the region. Many old settlements and cultural assets in Niğde and its region, especially Gümüşler Monastery and Kemerhisar (Tyana Ancient City), are home to faith tourism values in the region. The research aims to reveal that the old religious settlements/areas and faith tourism assets in Niğde and its region, which have national and international tourism potential, are among the faith tourism values and touristic destinations in Türkiye and that they are an important potential together with other faith tourism destinations in the region. Another aim of the study is to create awareness at the local and international level that the faith tourism product potentials in Niğde and its region should be evaluated and managed in the way they deserve. The study has a qualitative design. In the study, faith tourism values and destinations in Niğde and its region are examined by evaluating the literature. Niğde province is home to many faith tourism values, especially Gümüşler Monastery and many churches, mosques, and tombs in the region. These values, which have national and international cultural and faith tourism potential, can become an important potential touristic destination center in terms of faith tourism in the country with marketing promotion activities to be carried out by supporting the proactive use of the internet and social media in the promotion of the region, as well as organizing various social and cultural events, organizations, or festivals at local and global level. In addition, due to the realization of effective marketing activities of the faith tourism values in Niğde and its region and its transformation into a destination center, local and foreign tourists coming to the region will contribute to the socio-economic development of the region and the country's tourism.

Keywords: faith tourism, marketing, Gümüşler Monastery, Niğde

Faith Tourism to Be a Brand City: The Case of Bursa

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Abstract

Bursa, which is one of the important destinations in Türkiye with its historical background and cultural values, is a very rich city in terms of tourism. Within the scope of these riches, the existence of diversity such as coastal tourism, winter tourism and faith tourism in Bursa is also one of the attractiveness of the city. With the increase in the demand for alternative tourism activities, it is inevitable that this potential of Bursa should be taken into consideration. Therefore, these attractions of the destination in question should be introduced and contribute more to tourism. In this study, determinations were made about the important values such as mosques, tombs, madrasahs, and complexes within the scope of faith tourism in Bursa, which was examined within the scope of faith tourism. As a result of the determinations made, suggestions were made in terms of knowing the historical heritage in the city and hosting more tourists. The aim of the study is to determine the potential of Bursa in terms of faith tourism, to increase the number of visitors by drawing attention to faith tourism centers, to promote faith tourism, one of the alternative tourism activities it has, and to ensure the branding of the destination with faith tourism activities.

Keywords: faith tourism, destination branding, Bursa

Investigating the Presentation of Faith Tourism Centers in Turkiye on the Corporate Website of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism by Content Analysis

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Abstract

Religious tourism, which involves visiting places considered sacred within the framework of religious beliefs, involves the travelling and mobility of many people every year for their beliefs and worship. Turkiye, which is one of the important centers of religious tourism, hosts many structures related to the three Abrahamic religions as well as its historical texture and cultural richness. On the other hand, religious tourism is also an important element for the promotion of a country. In this respect, promoting sacred and religious places and artefacts such as places of worship, tombs, madrasahs, temples as well as historical and cultural places in a country and increasing human and tourism mobility in these places has many positive effects, both tangible and intangible, for the country. When the corporate website of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkiye is examined, it is seen that there are important centers and monuments for religious tourism in 44 provinces in Turkiye. While the promotion of these centers is important for Turkiye's country image, attracting domestic and foreign tourists to these centers is also functional in terms of the development of faith tourism. In the context of these explanations, the aim of this study is to examine how the faith tourism centers on the corporate website of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism are presented and which features of these centers are highlighted. Content analysis, one of the qualitative research methods, will be used in the study. The content analysis categories of the study were determined as a) the religion represented by the religious tourism artefact, b) the province where the artefact is located, c) the period in which the artefact was built, d) the elements highlighted while promoting the artefact (by whom it was built, by whom it was built, etc.), e) the type of the artefact (mosque, church, minaret, temple, etc.). In the study, a total of 334 artefacts on the website of the Republic of Turkiye Ministry of Culture and Tourism were analyzed. It was seen that 111 of these artefacts were mosques, 90 were churches, 30 were tombs and 15 were monasteries. It is understood that the artefacts are mostly belonging to Islam (n: 190), followed by artefacts belonging to Christianity (n: 116). The three provinces with the highest number of artefacts are Istanbul (n: 30), Aksaray (n: 25) and Nevşehir (n: 24). Most of the artefacts belong to the 16th century (n: 41), followed by the 13th century (n: 34) and the 14th century (n: 30). The architectural features of the artifacts (n: 161) were highlighted the most. Although the characteristics of the faith tourism centers in Turkiye are given by using written information and visuals on the website of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, augmented reality applications and virtual museums, which have become very popular especially in recent years, can also be used. In addition to virtual museums, virtual tours can be created for some of these faith tourism centers. It is thought that the use of such different promotional tools may increase interest in the relevant faith tourism centers.

Keywords: faith tourism, tourism, content analysis, culture

Religious Tourism in Hatay: An Assessment on the Turbes in Hatay Based on Visitors' Perspective

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Abstract

Religious tourism, one of the popular types of tourism, can be defined as the visit of people to the centers/places that are considered sacred and the events and relations that arise from these visits. There are cities considered holy by different religions in the world, as well as various places/centers considered sacred. One of these various places is turbes (shrines/tombs). A turbe can be defined as a chamber in the form of a tomb of a respected and important person such as a religious scholar, physician, or state official. Visiting the turbes is a very common tradition in Anatolia and people travel to visit the saints and religious figures' turbes which are close or sometimes quite distant, due to their beliefs or some expectations (such as success, fortune, and healing). The province of Hatay has been at the crossroad of important religions throughout history, has hosted many different civilizations, and is an important religious tourism center that carries the traces of three great monotheistic religions, and hosts many turbes. It is important to reveal and research the potential of Hatay, which is an important religious tourism city. This study aims to identify the turbes/maqams in Hatay that have significant visitor potential and compile their stories, to identify and analyze the experiences of the people who visit these places. The concept of "maqam" is used in the sense of important space in this study. The concept of "maqam" is used in the sense of an important place in this study. We have included some suggestions based on the experiences of the visitors in the study. The data of the research were collected between 10 and 20 August 2022 from the comments of visitors who visited the turbes and then write a review on Google. The content analysis technique was used to discover the meanings in the interpretations of the turbe/maqam visitors along with the literature review in the study. The content analysis based on the relevant comments revealed the profile of the visitors, the purpose of their visit, their impressions, and the pleasure they experienced.

Keywords: religious tourism, Hatay, turbe

Evaluation of the Potential of Sinop Province Within the Scope of Faith Tourism

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study is to evaluate the potential of Sinop province within the scope of faith tourism and to try to explain the studies that could be done on this subject. The tourism industry is a sector whose importance is increasing day by day due to its economic, social, and cultural effects for the countries of the world (Dale and Robinson, 2001). Countries that would like to benefit from the positive economic impact of tourism have sought to find new markets in line with the demands of tourists by differentiating or diversifying touristic products (Sriprasert et al., 2014: 216; Yazıt et al., 2017). Countries and regions with tourism potential need to spread the tourism event to all months of the year and to all potential regions to gain more from this industry. At this point, alternative tourism types emerge as an important issue. Although religious tourism is an important type of tourism in Turkiye, it is like holiday and cultural tourism. Faith tourism, known for the first time due to “pilgrimages”, is historically very old (Rodrigo, 2012). Although travelers who believe in the three major monotheistic religions and other polytheistic religions are considered in religious tourism, this is not exactly the case. For a place with a very old cultural background like Anatolia, this idea would be incomplete. Because it is known that documents and proofs of beliefs that were lived in a very long process before the three major religions emerged and became dominant in Anatolia. It could be said that all these are important in terms of tourism (Duru, 2007: 208). Sinop Province, which is the universe of our study, is known as a city of culture, tourism, and education. Although Sinop is a tourism city, it is known that the summer season is at most 4 months including June, July, August, and September. However, Sinop Province has a cultural and archaeological richness, especially due to its 5000-year-old history (Aytuğ et al., 2020). The known history of Sinop, which is estimated to date back to the Neolithic Age, dates to BC. It begins in the 7th century. Sinop, BC. It was founded in the 7th century by immigrants who migrated from the Ionian city of Miletos and sought a suitable settlement (TÜRSAB, 2022). Sinop is another destination with many alternative tourism types, especially sea, history, and cultural tourism (Aydın, 2017:57). Within the scope of faith tourism, the province of Sinop is important due to the presence of historical and cultural assets belonging to the beliefs and worship of the religion of Islam, as well as important churches and cultural assets in terms of Christianity (Akyol, 2012). There are many mosques and madrasas belonging to the Seljuk and Ottoman periods in Sinop. Alaaddin Mosque is one of the beautiful examples reflecting Turkish architecture (Akyol, 2012). Another mosque in Sinop that belongs to the Seljuk period is the Seyit Bilal Mosque. In addition, there are many mosques and masjids such as Fethibaba Mosque, Meydankapı Mosque, Kefevi Mosque, Mehmet Ağa Masjid, Durağan İsmail Bey Mosque, Elmaspaşazade Mustafa Paşa Mosque, İskele Mosque (Akyol, 2012). Another entity that is one of the Turkish-Islamic works is the Süleyman Pervane Madrasa. (T.R. Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, 2022). There are also Seyit Bilal’s tomb, Çeçe Sultan Tomb, Gazi Çelebi’s Tomb, İsfendiyaroğulları Tomb, Yağbasan Tomb and Yesari Baba Tomb, and Sultan Hatun Tomb. In addition to Turkish Islamic works, there are also Christian works in Sinop. At the beginning of these works, M.S. The Balatlar

Church, built by the Byzantines in the 660s, are the icons of Saint Minas, Melek Mihail, Iconic Jesus, Iconic Angels' War with the Enemies, Icona Jesus and Mary, Iconic Great Spirit, Jesus, and Saints (Akyol, 2012). It is understood that all these works are important values in terms of faith tourism. As a result, Sinop Province is an important destination in terms of historical and artistic works belonging to both Islamic religion and Christian religious beliefs and worship. However, when the studies are examined, it is understood that these works are not known enough and that more advertising and promotional activities should be done at this point (Kılıç and Demir, 2017; İpar and Tırlı, 2014). It could be said that it is also important for the local people to know about important centers for faith tourism. Necessary training should be given to the local people and those working in tourist businesses in this regard.

Keywords: Sinop, Sinop faith tourism, faith tourism

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The Importance of Mardin in Terms Faith and Origins Tourism in Syriacs

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Abstract

Mardin is a developing city in the field of tourism recently. Appealing to different cultures in the field of tourism, Mardin attracts the attention of many tourists with its rich historical ruins. In addition, it has become a very important center especially for Assyrians in terms of faith tourism. Although some of the churches and monasteries that can be visited in terms of faith tourism with Early Christian architecture in Tur Abdin, which is considered the homeland of the Assyrians, are in ruins, most of them are in good condition and welcome visitors from different countries of the world. The aim of this study is to examine in detail the importance of Mardin in terms of faith and origin tourism among Assyrians. The tour routes created because of the study will guide domestic and foreign tourists coming to Mardin. When the places visited and preferred by the tourists coming to Mardin are examined, it has been observed that the churches, monasteries, and villages where Assyrians worship are generally observed. For this reason, the contribution of Assyrians to Mardin tourism is quite large. The religious and cultural activities that are important for the Assyrians are examined in detail and the holidays celebrated by the Assyrians are discussed. As a result of the research, it has been revealed that the province of Mardin is a very important center for Assyrians both in terms of religion and culture. The tour route prepared within the scope of the research will be a guide for domestic and foreign tourists who will visit this region. In addition, by creating an alternative second route, a second option was offered to the tourists.

Keywords: Mardin, Syrian, tourism, route, culture, faith

Is Sustainability-Oriented Faith Tourism Possible? An Evaluation of Vatican Destination

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Abstract

In addition to affecting the quality of life of individuals, tourism activities also have socio-economic and environmental effects. Alternative tourism types, which are seen as a solution to the destruction caused by mass tourism, and which enable efforts to spread tourism activities over 12 months, are mostly handled within the understanding of sustainability. It is seen that faith tourism, which has attracted a lot of attention recently among alternative tourism types, contributes more and more to the development of social and economic growth of local economies and communities over time. Faith centers are important both for spiritual reasons and because they have historical and artistic value. It is known that approximately one-fifth of the cultural heritage in the UNESCO World Heritage List has religious or spiritual value. In this respect, besides the social or economic evaluation of sustainability in faith tourism destinations, the principles of ecological and environmental protection should also be considered. Sustainable tourism solutions can improve social inclusion, poverty reduction and environmental protection by promoting peace and intercultural understanding, while strengthening host communities by protecting rural, village and religious routes. In this sense, very few studies have been found on environmental sustainability efforts in faith tourism destinations, which are the common heritage of humanity. The aim of this study is to reveal the applicability of sustainability in the environmental dimension in faith tourism destinations. Based on the qualitative research technique, secondary data were examined in this study. The use of more renewable resources is encouraged for the Vatican City State by 2050 by carrying out projects and initiatives to reduce environmental impact, waste, and energy consumption with the goal of “zero emissions”. Current developments and sustainable policies in the Vatican City destination, which is a Roman Catholic faith center for sustainability and local development, constitute the main motivation of this research and the researchers. As a result of the study, environmentally sustainable processes for faith tourism destinations were listed and summarized and results are intended to shed light on future research.

Keywords: faith tourism, Vatican, sustainability

Traditional Tattoo and Evil Eye Belief: The Sample of Mardin Kızıltepe

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Abstract

Traditional tattooing is a type of ornamentation used to decorate human body using different techniques, the language of visual history that has been passed down from generation to generation over millennia, the DNA of culture, and the mystical expression of unspoken feelings. In Anatolia, we can trace the origins of tattoo tradition, which preserves its existence from the most primitive tribes of the world to the most modern cultures. The traditional tattoo culture, a different means of communication in cultural terms, is as old as the history of humanity. Tattoo symbols created based on mythological and religious beliefs have been transferred from one generation to the next through a silent intercultural language from past to present, and in some places, they symbolize far more than a sign. This article was produced from the master thesis on “The Application of Traditional Tattoo on Ceramic Surfaces (Mardin Kızıltepe Example)”, and it deals with the traditional tattoo culture, rituals, and evil eye belief symbols at Mardin Kızıltepe, which have survived to the present day through the last representatives of the intangible cultural heritage in Mardin Kızıltepe.

Keywords: scar, sign, pictogram, stamp, tattoo

A Qualitative Research on the Roles and Responsibilities of Tourist Guides in the Fields of Faith Tourism

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Abstract

Today, it is seen that the interest and demand for faith tourism is increasing, and the travels made within this scope have turned into an activity area that appeals to large masses. In this context, it is important that the belief centers are not damaged during the visits and that their sustainability is ensured. Tourist guides are one of the important actors who have roles and responsibilities in preserving, maintaining, and transferring to future generations the values and elements in the fields of faith tourism. In this study, it is aimed to determine the roles and responsibilities of tourist guides in the fields of faith tourism. Qualitative research approach was preferred to obtain the data in line with the purpose of the research. A semi-structured interview form was prepared as a data collection tool. Interview questions were arranged by submitting them to expert opinion. The data collected through telephone interviews were subjected to thematic analysis and first coded and then categorized under certain themes. In addition, the data were subjected to descriptive analysis. As a result of the research, the roles, and responsibilities of tourist guides within the scope of faith tourism were grouped under five sub-categories: museums and archaeological sites, cultural heritage, visitors, local people, and other tourism professionals. Among the roles and responsibilities of tourist guides, the most frequently repeated codes have been determined that 'preventing possible damage', 'informing them to dress appropriately', 'guiding/guiding on what to do and not to do in the field', 'providing a balance in the interaction between the local people and tourists', and 'informing the local people about the importance of the belief center in the region'. In addition, the statements of 'being impartial and clear in narratives', 'ensuring the sustainability of buildings and works with correct restoration works' and 'creating a visitor strategy for faith centers' were frequently repeated in the suggestions of tourist guides regarding the preservation of faith tourism centers and their transfer to future generations.

Keywords: faith tourism, tourist guide, role, responsibility

Investigation of Bolu Faith Tourism Potential in Terms of Tourist Guides

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Abstract

Due to its geographical features, the province of Bolu is seen as a destination where nature-based tourism types are carried out. Along with nature-based tourism types, different types of tourism are also carried out in Bolu. It is possible to add health tourism, gastronomic tourism, and cultural tourism to these types of tourism. Within the scope of Bolu province, there are many faith-based attractions. This research aims to determine the religious tourism attractions in Bolu in terms of tourist guides. The importance of the research is that it deals with both faith tourism and tourist guides. The main subject of the research is the faith tourism attractions of Bolu. In line with this information, an interview data collection tool was preferred to reach more detailed answers on the subject. Data were collected by semi-structured interview, one of the interview types. The sample of the study, on the other hand, was preferred over purposeful sampling. In this context, tourist guides guiding in the province of Bolu constitute the sample of the research. The data collection process was carried out face-to-face and online. According to the results of the data obtained, it has been determined that to realize faith tourism in Bolu, it is necessary to give importance to promotional activities and that attractions can be included in tours in more detail by creating a faith tourism route.

Keywords: Bolu, faith tourism, faith tourism attractions

Evaluation of Zonguldak Province in Terms of Faith Tourism

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Abstract

Zonguldak is a city located in the Western Black Sea Region with natural, historical, and cultural tourist attractions and has been developing as a touristic destination in recent years. In this study, by giving information about the existing and potential tourism types in Zonguldak province, the province is evaluated in terms of faith tourism. Within the scope of the evaluation of Zonguldak province in terms of faith tourism, first, literature research and interviews with the representatives of the relevant persons and in-situations were made and all the elements of Zonguldak city center and all its districts that can be evaluated in terms of faith tourism were historically determined. The study, which is qualitative research, is important in that it is the first academic study in which the province of Zonguldak is evaluated in terms of faith tourism, and it can form a source for future research in the Western Black Sea Region. The findings are presented by organizing the data obtained because of the literature research and interviews. In addition, important places that can be evaluated within the scope of the tour have been determined for travel agencies.

Keywords: Zonguldak, faith tourism, cultural heritage

Gökçeada Virgin Mary Fair as Faith Tourism

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Abstract

Even though the sea-sand-sun are the first things associated with tourism, the first tourism activities date back to travels and visits made by people to fulfill their religious duties since ancient times. Today, such activities considered within the scope of faith tourism sustain their prominence. Having emerged based on the desire of people to come together with others adhering to the same belief and to perform their religious rituals, Faith tourism plays an important role in the development and diversification of tourism in our country. In particular, held annually between 14-16 August in Gökçeada by the Greeks to commemorate the 15th of August, which is believed to be the anniversary of the death of the Virgin Mary, the Virgin Mary Fair is of great importance for people of the same faith to come together and fulfill their religious duties. Likewise, the Virgin Mary Fair which attracts great attention from tourists also causes the tourism mobility to reach its pinnacle in Gökçeada. As a literature review, this study addresses Gökçeada Virgin Mary Fair within the scope of faith tourism.

Keywords: faith tourism, Gökçeada (Imbros), Virgin Mary Fair

Mimar Sinan and Edirne in the Context of Faith Tourism

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Abstract

Turkiye has very important centers in terms of faith tourism. The region of Edirne is one of these destinations. Important tourist attractions in Edirne include mosques, tombs, complexes, churches, and synagogues that are revered by the three monotheistic religions of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism as well as other belief systems like Baha'i. One of Mimar Sinan's masterpieces, the Selimiye Mosque, is in Edirne, which once served as the Ottoman Empire's capital. It is also listed as a World Cultural Heritage site. Mimar Sinan, who served as the chief architect in the Ottoman period, made his mark in history with the works he produced. Mimar Sinan, born in 1489, built 375 works including mosques, masjids, madrasas, darül-kurra, tombs, soup kitchens, darüşşifas (hospitals), waterways, bridges, caravanserais, palaces, cellars, and Turkish baths. The Commemoration of Mimar Sinan and Architects Day is celebrated every year in Turkiye on April 9. Mimar Sinan's contributions to architecture have significant implications for faith tourism. In this context, it is important to conduct research on the evaluation of Mimar Sinan's works located within the borders of Edirne province. This study aims to evaluate the potential for religious tourism by considering all of Mimar Sinan's activities in Edirne and by offering recommendations. For this purpose, a SWOT analysis will be conducted in terms of religious tourism in Edirne, and suggestions will be given on how to use the works of Mimar Sinan in Edirne to developed alternative images, marketing, and event. In addition, it is expected to contribute to the literature for future research on faith tourism in Edirne province.

Keywords: Edirne, Mimar Sinan, faith tourism

International Konya Mystic Music Festival on the Axis of the Relationship Between Faith and Music

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Abstract

In the tradition of Sufism, known as the name, given to Islamic mysticism, music was valued and used differently from most Muslim communities. For example, although music does not have a place in Islamic rituals and Muslims' daily life, it appears to play a significant role for Sufis in religious ceremonies and daily experiences. The first of the International Konya Mystic Music Festival, organized as part of the Birth Anniversary activities of Mevlânâ Celâleddîn-i Rûmî, was held in 2004. The festival, enriched with the mystical and ethnic music of different geographies of the world and the dhikr and rites of different mystical traditions in Türkiye, offers the participants a unique experience where music and belief come together.

Keywords: Sufism, music, mystic music festival

Examining Istanbul in Terms of Faith Tourism Through SWOT Analysis

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Abstract

Faith tourism is seen as an important type of tourism in which its participants both provide spiritual satisfaction, rest, and have fun, and make an economic contribution to the centers they visit. Important belief centers in the geography of Turkiye attract these tourism participants. Remains and structures from the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman periods, especially in Istanbul, make this region a popular destination in terms of faith tourism. However, it is necessary to investigate how the richness is presented, what the potential is, and whether there are aspects that need to be developed. In this study, faith tourism in Istanbul, faith centers were researched, the current situation with statistics was determined and the strengths/weaknesses, opportunities/threats were analyzed. As a result of this analysis, suggestions were made to strengthen the weak aspects and to eliminate the threats.

Keywords: faith tourism, faith centers, SWOT analysis, Istanbul

Evaluation of the Expectations and Experiences of the Individuals Visiting the Shrines Within the Scope of Faith Tourism: Sivas Shrines

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Abstract

Religion is a dynamic structure consisting of the whole of worships and beliefs that emerged with the existence of humanity and always continues its existence and everywhere. In this dynamic structure, there are places that each belief attributes to its own sanctity. Among these holy places, there are also shrines that people visit to relax psychologically and to find help in desperate situations. The shrines which are visited for various reasons, provide different experiences for everyone. From this point of view, in this study, it is aimed to examine the reasons for visiting the shrines and their experiences. In this context, the semi-structured interview method, one of the qualitative research methods, will be used to collect data. In line with the data obtained, the findings will be evaluated, and suggestions will be made.

Keywords: faith tourism, Shrine, Shrine visit, faith, Sivas shrines

The Evaluation of Ateşbaz-i Veli's YouTube Videos Within the Scope of Faith Tourism by the Method of the Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

Ateşbaz-1 Veli is seen as a person of great importance in terms of Turkish gastronomy and faith tourism. It is important for both Turkish gastronomy and religious tourism, as it is the first person to be buried as a chef in the world and is an important part of the Mevlevi culture. It is known that in the Mevlevi culture, eating and drinking activities are at the forefront of the elements that direct the main rituals. The research has been discussed in the integrity of faith tourism and gastronomy. The subject of this study is the videos about Ateşbaz-1 Veli on YouTube, one of the most widely used social media platforms, within the scope of events and commemorations organized on behalf of Ateşbaz-1 Veli. In line with this information, the videos shared on YouTube related to the subject were examined by applying content analysis and discourse analysis methods within the scope of the qualitative research method. The sample of the research consists of 7 videos about Ateşbaz-1 Veli shared on YouTube. In the light of the data obtained, it has been determined that the language used in the videos in YouTube promotions within the scope of faith and gastronomy tourism activities of Ateşbaz-1 Veli should be prepared in a comprehensive and official format.

Keywords: Ateşbaz-1 Veli, gastronomy, faith tourism, Mevleviyeh

Cultural and Religious Tourism in Bolu

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Abstract

Bolu province is an important touristic region in terms of tourism with its underground and surface resources. It is an important nature tourism area in our country both in health tourism with its hot springs and with its natural beauties, clean air, and lush nature. In addition, it has cultural values and religious structures. With its geographical proximity to metropolitan cities and ease of transportation, it is a place of interest especially for domestic tourists. Divided, B.C. Since the 1200s, it has hosted different civilizations and states, and especially after the 1071 Malazgirt victory, the Turkmens who spread to the west settled in Bolu 3 years later. With the Turkification and Islamization of Anatolia, it became a center of culture and belief. It is a province that has managed to preserve and deliver its historical values in the center and districts of Bolu. At this point, the province of Bolu has increased its importance as an important center in terms of culture and faith tourism. In this study, it is aimed to determine the situation of the places of Bolu province that are important in terms of culture and faith tourism, and to reveal the use of these potentials. In addition, the obtained data will be evaluated with the SWOT analysis method, and it will be tried to determine the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in terms of tourism. The aim of the study is to determine the status of the city in terms of cultural and religious tourism and to promote the city. As a result of the study, it was concluded that Akşemseddin Tomb is the most important value in terms of faith tourism.

Keywords: Bolu, tourism, cultural tourism, faith tourism

A Healing Center of Antiquity With Faith: Bergama Asklepion

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Abstract

Bergama, the starting point of medicine and medical science, is an important tourism center that hosted civilizations, with its natural healing resources and rich cultural heritage. Its history dates to the Bronze Age (3000 BC). The world's first hospital is the Bergama Asklepion, the healing and treatment center of the ancient age and the first medical school to train physicians such as Hippocrates and Galen who are the pioneering physicians of the medical world. The snake symbol representing medicine and pharmacy also came from the Asklepion. It is the place where medical instruments and many treatment methods used even today first appeared. Bergama Asklepion, which was called the place where death could not approach in the ancient period, is a structure shaped by beliefs and worship, both in its establishment and use. Bergama Asklepion, the temple, and treatment center dedicated to Asklepios, the God of Health, who challenged death by healing people, was founded by priests who took part in the treatments alongside the physicians. The Asklepion, where people healed by worshipping in temples and offering gifts to the gods, is very important in terms of medical and tourism sciences. The purpose of this descriptive study is to reveal the origins of the current traditional medicine understanding used for the treatment of many diseases, to create destination awareness, to offer innovative suggestions, and to contribute to the literature of medicine and tourism sciences.

Keywords: Medicine, tourism, faith, Bergama, Asklepion, innovation

Metaphorical Perceptions of Domestic Tourists Visiting Kırşehir About Akhism and Ahi Evran

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Abstract

Akhism is a moral, professional, and social organization originating in Anatolia and played an important role in the establishment of the Ottoman Empire. In Akhism, the pleasure of Allah is tried to be gained in business and life, good and beneficial works are promoted, Islam is lived with decency, cooperation is adopted as a principle, and good morals become a guide in art and life. The principles of Akhism are directly related to Islamic understanding, which makes the spread and acceptance of Akhism easy. Ahi Evran has a major role in the establishment and development of Ahi-order in Anatolia. Akhism spread all over the Ottoman Empire, but its center is Kırşehir. This research aims to determine the perceptions of domestic tourists visiting Kırşehir about Akhism and Ahi Evran through metaphors. To obtain data in line with the purpose of the study, perceptions of domestic tourists were gained through statements such as “Ahi community means Because.....” and “Ahi Evran means Because”. The sample of the study consists of domestic tourists visiting the Ahi Evran Mosque and Tomb in Kırşehir. The obtained data were subjected to content analysis, and in the study, 21 different metaphors about the concept of “Akhism” and 30 different metaphors about “Ahi Evran” were reached by 90 people. It is determined that all these metaphors were positive.

Keywords: Akhism, Ahi Evran, Kırşehir, metaphor

Historical Perspective of Religions and Beliefs on Recreation

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Abstract

Recreation defined as regular and disciplined activities that people engage in during their free time has been viewed differently in various and belief systems throughout history. Recreation, which is sometimes seen as funny activities that relax people, is sometimes also described as laziness in spare time. Religious activities and religion can be part of relieving tension, relieving anxiety, and creating hope that performance will resolve them. Similarly, people often engage in recreation to reduce stress, improve their mood, and enhance mental and physical well-being. As such, religion and leisure share common social and societal functions and travel motivations. For example, religious holidays such as Christmas and Easter, despite their changing religious influences, have entertainment features, especially in contemporary society. Recreation, which is a part of community life, has been considered important as a study subject due to improving people's quality of life. This study aims to investigate recreation, which reduces its negative effects, provides psychological and physiological contributions, and is important for tourism, from a historical perspective in terms of religions and beliefs.

Keywords: recreation, religions, beliefs, historical perspective