



## The Effects of Tourism on Local Community Quality of Life and Living Place Satisfaction: A Case of TRNC

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### Abstract

Nowadays, living place satisfaction and quality of life play an increasingly important role and more studies are being conducted on these topics. This conceptual paper explores and discusses the concepts and dimensions of sustainable tourism, satisfaction and quality of life. The aim of the study is to determine the extent of tourism development among local community by determining local community's attitudes toward tourism, taking into account tourism development in destination areas. In this research, the questionnaire technique, which belongs to the quantitative research methods was preferred as an instrument for data collection. The data were collected from the local population in the Kyrenia region of Northern Cyprus. Based on the results obtained from 259 participants of the survey conducted with the participation of the local community living in Kyrenia, one of the most important tourist destinations in Northern Cyprus, the results were tabulated and interpreted in terms of the demographic information of the participants and then on the axis of the research scales the influence of the local community on tourism, the quality of life and the living place satisfaction.

### Article Type

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Tourism is one of the fastest growing and developing global economic sectors, making it one of the most important components of many countries' economic development strategies. As such, the tourism sector has become the most important source of revenue for many countries around the world (Buckley, 2011; Sharpley & Telfer, 2015). This situation is even more evident when it comes to destinations that have limited alternatives to achieve economic and social prosperity. In particular, coastal destinations in countries seeking to diversify the components that influence their development are at the forefront of feeling the evolving impact of tourism. As one of the largest economic sectors in the world, the tourism and hospitality sector creates jobs, stimulates exports, and contributes to increasing economic and social welfare around the world (Candela & Figini, 2012; McLennan et al., 2012; Haugland et al., 2011).

Although tourism is treated on the axis of its economic impacts, it is impossible to evaluate the sector by separating these impacts from the social, cultural and environmental impacts (Brida & Zapata, 2010). Today, tourism and hospitality businesses play an important role in shaping social structures as one of the most effective mediators of intercultural interaction and integration. In previous studies, it was found that local community who are positively affected by tourism in economic, cultural, social and environmental terms are more supportive of tourism development in the region (Zaei & Zaei, 2013).

The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is one of the most important tourism destinations with high tourism potential. Kyrenia region has a unique historical wealth that attracts thousands of tourists every year. The tourism potential of Kyrenia region is growing day by day and as well as is attracting thousands of tourists from home and abroad every year. Looking at the tourist statistics for the year 2021, the number of incoming tourists was reported as 552,312 people coming from Turkey and the number of foreign tourists was 122,325. In 2022, the number of incoming tourists was reported as 97,647 people coming from Turkey and the number of foreign tourists as 24,678. In other words, the number of tourists hosted by the destination Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in 2021 and 2022 totaled 796,962 (Kuzey Kıbrıs Türk Cumhuriyeti Turizm Planlama Dairesi, 2022).

The main objective of this research is to determine the perception of local community of the economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts of tourism in tourist destinations. The extent to which these impacts alter the life quality of local community will also be analyzed. In addition, depending on the impact of tourism for the purpose of the research, the degree of satisfaction of the local population with a positive or negative situation that may occur in the living standard will also be investigated. Finally, studying the quality of life and satisfaction with the place in which tourism-related impacts affect the support of local community for tourism development will be another objective of the research. Tourism impact studies are important tools for the implementation of participatory tourism policies, which are necessary to increase and maintain the life quality of local population and to ensure the long-term success of the tourism sector within the strategic plans.

## **Literature Review**

Although they are not counted among tourist activities, it can be said that tourist movements are almost as old as the history of mankind. Over time, these activities have become associated with economic interests and eventually tourism has become a sector that directs the economy (Ivanov & Webster, 2007). The tourism sector, which has been

in continuous and rapid change since the beginning of history, requires both tangible and intangible resources to develop, and the impact of these resources on social life is generally achieved through economic performance. In the current century, the tourism industry is an important component of countries' economic development plans (Pablo-Romero & Molina, 2013). In general, tourism development is expected to have a positive impact on people's living conditions and to eliminate existing negative impacts. For these desired effects to occur, it should be ensured that the economic, cultural, social, and environmental impacts of tourism have positive effects on the lives of communities (Trivellas et al., 2016; Turner, 2007).

Local community perceptions and support for the tourism sector are critical to the progress and sustainability of the tourism destination. It is important to keep in mind that the positive perception of the local population is extremely important for the implementation of tourism plans in the destination. In order for tourism to develop, plan, and sustain in a destination, the effects of tourism over the local population's perception must be studied in depth. The impacts of tourism on local people's perceptions stand an important factor in the successful development and implementation of future tourism programs. The rapid development of tourism in countries that host tourism and the resulting population growth have serious implications for the physical, social, and economic characteristics of the country. The tourism sector provides economic development, social welfare and market benefits by managing the increase in revenues. In addition, new employment opportunities and various business sectors are created thanks to tourism. Tourism contributes to the improvement of infrastructure, preservation of social culture and development of cultural interaction (Mohammadi et al., 2010; Aref, et al., 2009; Eraqi, 2007; Gunce, 2003).

The perception of tourism effects by local community in developed and developing destinations has long been one of the most important areas of investigation in scientific studies. For this reason, it is important for successful and sustainable tourism development that locals embrace and support tourism activities in their destinations (Atun et al., 2019; Lockhart, 1994). As a result, locals' perceptions of the positive and beneficial outcomes of tourism determine the direction of their support for tourism industry development. Therefore, the support of local people for tourism development should be considered as a guarantee for sustainable tourism development, since local people are crucial in ensuring that visitors to the destination have positive and quality experiences (Akis et al., 1996; Abokhamis et al., 2017).

Although the view that the development of tourism will affect the quality of life of the local community is generally accepted, the number of applied studies is quite low (Liang and Hui 2016; Almeida-García et al. 2016). In the study conducted by Kim, Uysal and Sirgy (2013) with 321 participants in Virginia using the Structural Equation Model, it was concluded that tourism is associated with quality of life. It has been determined that the positive economic effects of tourism are related to the economic dimension of the quality of life, positive social effects are related to the social life dimension, and positive cultural effects are related to the emotional dimension. In the same study, a relationship was determined between the negative environmental effects of tourism and the health-safety dimension of the quality of life (Kim et al. 2013).

In the study conducted by Andereck et al. (2007) in Arizona with two different ethnic groups, via telephone and e-mail, it was determined that the effects of tourism were perceived moderately by the participants in their social life, and there was no change in the perception of the effects of tourism on the quality of life compared to those of ethnic origin. In their study conducted in Malta, Croes et al. (2018) suggest that tourism increases the quality of life in the

medium and short-term, and that in order to maintain its effect in the long-term, managements should increase efficiency. In the studies conducted by Woo et al. (2015), the effect of tourism on the quality of life and the effect of quality of life on the development of tourism were investigated.

In the study by Türker, Selçuk, and Özyıldırım (2016) in which they investigated the effect of tourism on the quality of life of the local community in Safranbolu, it was concluded that the economic, cultural and environmental effects of tourism positively affect the quality of life of the local community, while the social effects of tourism negatively affect them.

From above discussions, the first, second and third hypothesis can be devised as;

H1: The economic factor is positively associated with quality of life.

H2: Socio-cultural factor is positively associated with quality of life.

H3: Environmental factor is positively associated with quality of life.

While the attitudes of the local community towards tourism have been studied extensively, few studies have been conducted on the impact of tourism on the quality of life of the local community (Andereck & Nyaupane 2011; Woo et al., 2015).

From above discussions, the fourth, fifth and sixth hypothesis can be devised as;

H4: The economic factor is positively associated with satisfaction.

H5: Socio-cultural factor is positively associated with satisfaction.

H6: Environmental factor is positively associated with satisfaction.

Studies show that tourism affects local people's perception of quality of life. In a study conducted by Andereck and Nyaupane (2011) in Arizona to measure the impact of tourism on the quality of life, it was found that there is a positive relationship between the personal financial benefits (income and employment) obtained from tourism and participation in organized events (festivals, fairs) and the perceived quality of life. and it has been concluded that tourism increases the quality of life. The study by Kim et al. (2013) reveals that tourism development affects the general life satisfaction of the people. Crotts and Holland (1993) concluded in their study that tourism has positive effects on the quality of life of rural communities. They state that these impacts are income, health, recreation, and personal services. Michalkó et al. (2013) states that people are happy to the extent that they benefit from tourism.

From above discussions, the seventh hypothesis can be devised as;

H7: The quality of life is positively associated with satisfaction.

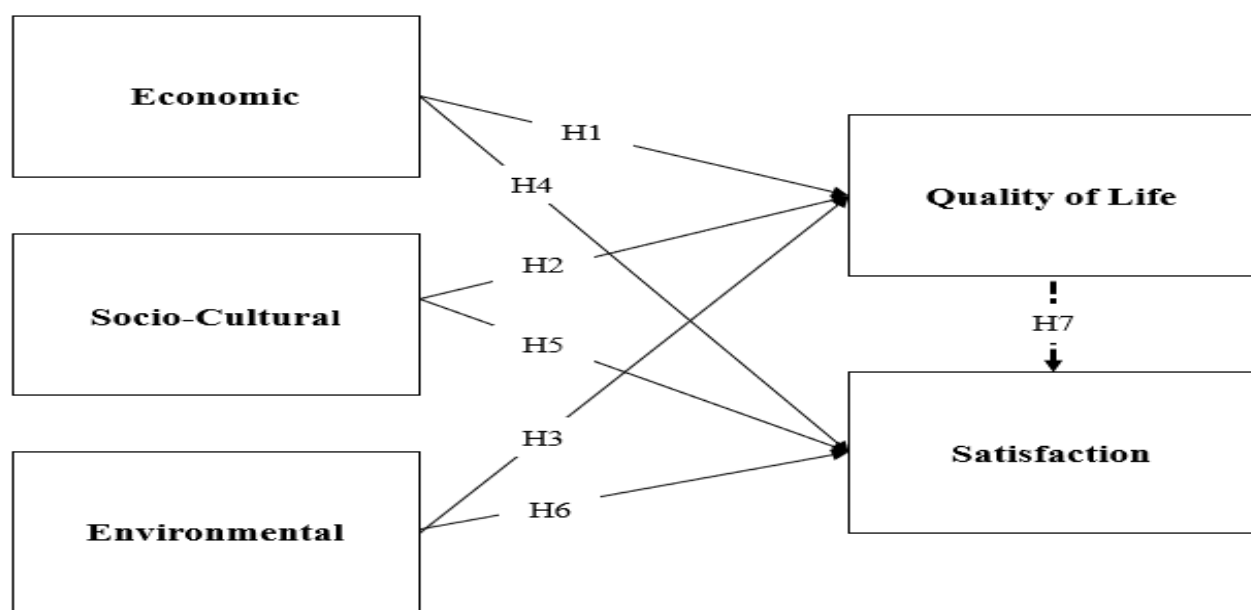
The main purpose of most tourism impact researches is to determine the extent of tourism development among local community by identifying local community's attitudes toward tourism, taking into account tourism development in destination areas. Studies show that locals' attitudes toward tourism are based on their perceptions of tourism impacts. Within these studies, the perceived impacts of tourism are considered to be economic, environmental, and sociocultural (Isik et al., 2016; Peter et al., 2018; Gursay et al., 2019).

From another perspective, it is found that the life standard is one of the main objectives that should be considered in tourism planning in destinations where tourism has completed its development. It is undeniable that tourism

activities have a serious impact on the lives of local community who live in the destination and the studies presented by both tourism operators and researchers. In this regard, the way local community perceive the impact of tourism is very important for the development of tourism.

## Methodology

Exploratory research design from quantitative research method was used in this study. Exploratory research is preferred in areas that have not been studied before and about which not much is known or which are very new. Owing to this study's conduct to test the model that emerged from the hypotheses made based on the literature review, the causal research model has been preferred. As seen in Figure 1, the research model focused on the effects of economic, social-cultural and environment factors on life standard and living place satisfaction, and the effect of life quality on living place satisfaction.



**Figure 1.** Research Model

In this research, the questionnaire technique, which belongs to the quantitative research methods, was preferred as an instrument for data collection. The data were collected from the local population in the Kyrenia region of Northern Cyprus. In order to obtain consistent and realistic results, data were collected from all sections of the society when conducting the surveys. Depending on the purpose of the study, an extensive literature review was conducted. The scales that belong to the variables that are suitable for the purpose of the research were determined.

In this direction, a 14-statement scale developed by Kim, Uysal, and Sirgy (2013) was used to measure the economic, social-cultural and environmental impacts of tourism, which is the main purpose of the research. To measure the life quality of local community, the 4-item scale developed by Lee, Kim, and Kim (2018) was used by adapting it to the research purposes. A 5-point scale developed by Li, Pan, and Hu (2021) was used to measure the satisfaction of the local community. In the survey, there are 7 questions about the demographic information of the participants and a total of 26 statements, 19 scales for the variables. The scales were rated on a five-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree).

There are 382,230 people registered in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) in 2021. According to the population registration system, the number of people living in Kyrenia, which is the research population, was determined to be 69,163. The population was estimated to be about 36,718 men and 32,445 women. In this regard, the fact that the target population is too large showed that it is impossible to reach the entire population and it was decided to take a sample that can represent the population that is commonly used in scientific research for essential reasons such as cost and time. The application of the questionnaires was carried out by the researcher himself between January and March 2022. A total of 259 questionnaires were collected and analyzed during the research. Ethics committee permission document required for the collection of data used in this study, Cyprus Science University Ethics Committee 06.04.2022 date and 2022/04.013 was taken with the decision/number. The data collected during the research was analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structures) statistical programs.

## Findings

As a result of the findings obtained from 259 participants in the survey, which was conducted with the participation of the locals living in Kyrenia, one of the most important destinations in Northern Cyprus, the results related to the demographic information of the participants were tabulated and interpreted and then, on the axis of the research scales, the influence of the locals on tourism, the quality of life and living place satisfaction. The consequences related to the satisfaction of the participants were given as the result of the percentage and frequency distribution values of the participants and were analyzed in depth. The findings regarding the demographic information of the participants are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Demographic Information of Participants

Demographic Variables		f	%
Gender	Male	165	63.7
	Female	94	36.3
Age	18-28 years	40	15.4
	29-39 years	78	30.1
	40-50 years	97	37.5
	50 years and older	44	17.0
Educational Status	Primary Education	42	16.2
	Secondary Education	107	41.3
	Associate Degree	49	19.0
	Undergraduate	50	19.3
	Graduate	11	4.2
Marital status	Married	177	68.3
	Single	82	31.7
Length of Life in Girne	less than 3 years	55	21.2
	4-9 years	49	19.0
	10-15 years	98	37.8
	15 years and above	57	22.0
Ratio of Income from Tourism	All (100%)	58	22.4
	Most (76-90%)	39	15.0
	Some (50%-75%)	78	30.1
	Few (26%-49%)	32	12.4
	Very Few (up to 25%)	28	10.8
	None (0%)	24	9.3
Level of Communication with Tourists	High	123	47.5
	Medium	68	26.2
	Low	38	14.7
	None at all	30	11.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>100</b>

When the individuals participating in the survey in terms of the gender variable, it is found that 36.3% of the participants are female and 63.7% are male. When the participants are evaluated under the age group variable, it is found that the majority of the participants are between 40 and 50 years old with a rate of 37.5%. When the participants are evaluated according to their educational status, it can be seen that the highest participation consists of people who have a secondary school degree. According to the data obtained, it was found that 41.3% of the participants, almost half of the participants, had a secondary school degree. When evaluating the marital status of the study participants, it was found that about  $\frac{3}{4}$  (68.3%) of them were married. The data on the duration of residence in Kyrenia of the participants in the study show that almost half of the participants (37.8%) have lived in Kyrenia for 10 to 15 years. When assessing the share of household income from tourism, 30.1% of the participants indicated that they receive part of their income from tourism, and 9.3% indicated that they do not receive any income from tourism.

It was decided whether the data obtained from the research, the theoretical structure consisting of effects of tourism (the economic, socio-cultural and environmental) on the local population, overlapped with the data collected as a result of the field research. To test the corresponding model, the software AMOS was used and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed for 14 statements of the scale. In the first factor analysis, the  $\chi^2$  value was determined to be 205.815. Accordingly, the  $\chi^2/df$  value was determined to be 3.985; GFI=0.916; AGFI=0.905; CFI =0.940; RMSA=0.076. All values were within the range of those accepted as normal, and examination of the distributions of factor loadings was begun.

**Table 2.** CFA Model Results

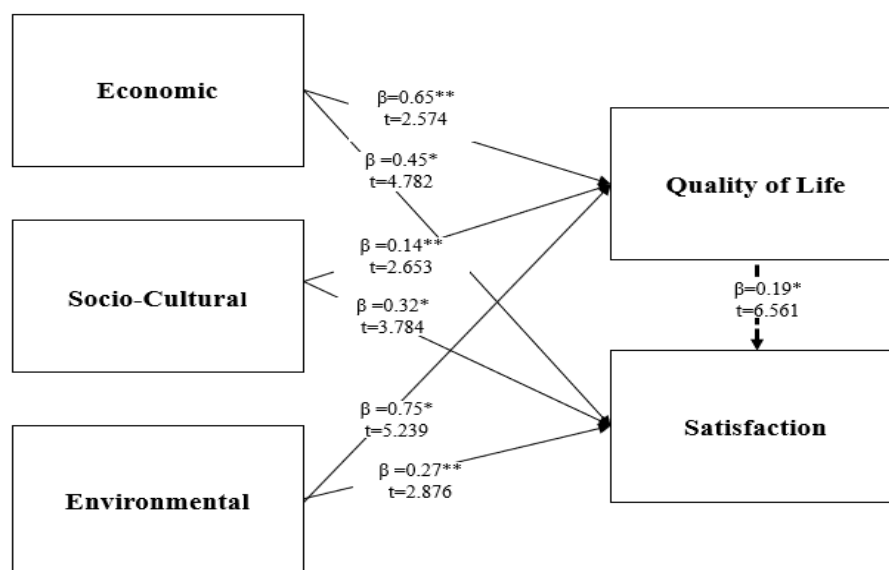
Factors	Factor Loads	Eigenvalue	Variance %	t-value	CR	CA	AVE
<b>Economic Impacts</b>							
Tourism provides new job opportunities.	0.675						
Tourism revenues are a source of income for local businesses and managers.	0.698	5.565	39.395	4.254*	0.763	0.812	0.519
Tourism improves living standards.	0.785						
<b>Socio-Cultural Impacts</b>							
One of the main reasons for the diversity of entertainment in the region is tourism.	0.676						
Transport and other local services are improving thanks to tourism.	0.795						
The development of tourism provides more recreational opportunities for local community.	0.689	3.895	19.234	6.354*	0.891	0.915	0.541
Interaction with tourists from all over the world enriches the lives of local community.	0.813						
Experiencing cultural interaction with tourists is valuable for local community.	0.767						
Cultural interaction with tourists is enjoyable for locals	0.658						
I would like to meet tourists from many different countries of the world to learn about their culture.	0.738						
<b>Environmental Impacts</b>							
Tourism causes noise pollution.	0.678						
Tourism causes environmental pollution.	0.765	2.128	9.873	5.887*	0.876	0.878	0.624
Tourism causes overcrowding.	0.889						
Tourism causes traffic jams.	0.815						
<b>Total Explained Variance: 68.502</b>							
<b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO): 0,859</b>							
<b>Bartlett Test of Sphericity p value: 0,000</b>							

**Table 2.** CFA Model Results (Cont.)

<b>Quality of Life</b>							
So far, the living conditions are excellent.	0.765						
I got the important things I wanted in my life.	0.817	3.819	75.168	7.786*	0.834	0.856	0.627
I am generally satisfied with my life.	0.794						
<b>Total Explained Variance: 75.168</b> <b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO): 0,735</b> <b>Bartlett Test of Sphericity p value: 0,000</b>							
<b>Living Place Satisfaction</b>							
Thanks to tourism, this society has become a more livable place.	0.867						
Living here makes sense to me.	0.865	3.475	85.958	8.429*	0.903	0.903	0.701
I feel a strong sense of commitment to this place.	0.823						
This is exactly where I want to live.	0.792						
<b>Total Explained Variance: 85.958</b> <b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO): 0,848</b> <b>Bartlett Test of Sphericity p value: 0,000</b>							

In Table 2, the consequences of the explanatory factor analysis regarding the perceptions of the people of Kyrenia on tourism impacts, living standard and living place satisfaction are presented. When the table is examined, it is seen that all factor loads have a value of 0.50 and above. In addition, the high Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin sample adequacy measure ( $KMO > 0.700$ ) shows that the collected data set is suitable for factor analysis.

It has been determined that the Cronbach alpha (CA) values, which show the internal consistency of the latent variables (economic, socio-cultural and environmental effects) and quality of life and living place satisfaction in the scale of tourism effects, vary between 0.81 and 0.91. These values show that they are above the minimum value of 0.70 stated in the literature. The construct reliability values of each latent variable were examined as composite reliability (CR) and it was determined that all values were between 0.76 and 0.90. A composite reliability value above 0.70 indicates that the structure is reliable. For the validity of the combination, the Average variance extracted (AVE) values should be examined and the relevant values should be 0.50 and above. It was observed that the AVE values of each latent variable in the study were between a minimum of 0.51 and a maximum of 0.70.

**Figure 2.** Structural Model (Note: \* $p < 0,001$  \*\* $p < 0,05$ )



The findings obtained as an outcome of the analysis are shown in Figure 2. When the figure is examined, it is seen that the economic, socio-cultural and environmental effects of tourism positively affect the living standard. Therefore, H1, H2 and H3 are accepted. In addition, it is seen that the economic, social-cultural and environmental effects of tourism positively affect living place satisfaction. Therefore, H4, H5 and H6 are accepted. Another of the effects examined within the scope of the research is the effect of life quality on living place satisfaction. When the figure was examined, it was determined that a one-unit increase in the quality of life caused an increase of 19% ( $\beta=0.19$ ;  $t=6.561$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) in the satisfaction of the living place. Therefore, H7 are accepted

## Conclusions and Discussions

According to the results of the analysis, the effects of tourism on life quality of the local community are discussed. Three hypotheses formed in this direction were supported. In this study, it has been determined that the economic and social-cultural effects of tourism have a significant  $p<0.05$  value, and the environmental effect has a strong  $p<0.001$  significant effect on the quality of life of the local community. This is in line with the findings obtained in the previous study on the effects of tourism on the quality of life (Kim et al., 2013; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2012; Zengin, 2010). In addition, it was seen that the fourth, fifth and sixth hypotheses, which were created to determine the extent of the effects of tourism were supported. From another point of view, it has been determined that the economic and social-cultural effects of tourism have a significant  $p<0.001$  value, while the environmental effects have a significant  $p<0.001$  value on the satisfaction of the living place. This is in line with the findings obtained in the previous study on the effects of tourism on the satisfaction of the living place in Kyrenia (Mathew & Sreejesh, 2017; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). It was determined that the seventh hypothesis formed within the scope of the purpose of the research was supported. In this study, living place satisfaction increases or decreases depending on the life quality of the local community. The improvement of people's life quality has a positive effect on their satisfaction with living in Kyrenia. Quality of life is evaluated as the level of well-being felt by an individual or people living in a place (Delibasic et al., 2008). According to this evaluation, it is concluded that the level of welfare of the local community living in Kyrenia has increased due to tourism and accordingly they are satisfied with living in the destination of Kyrenia.

The findings of the study have revealed that as the local community's perceptions of the economic, social-cultural and environmental effects of tourism increase, their quality-of-life increases. This situation affects the support they give to the development of tourism by ensuring that they are satisfied with their living place. Within the framework of this finding, it should be taken into account that these dimensions are in strong interaction in the strategies created for the development of tourism, and it should be ensured that the quality of life of the local community, the satisfaction of their place of residence and the support of the development of tourism.

It is an undeniable fact that tourism in our time is one of the fastest growing, most demanding and most important sectors for the development of countries in every way. Technological developments, improvement of transportation facilities and increasing interaction between countries and people make tourism more popular day by day (Posta et al., 2017). The improvement of people's economic situation, which enables them to participate in tourism activities, and the fact that they have more free time due to mechanization, have made people want to travel and see different places, communicate with different cultures, and gain new experiences. All these developments have led to tourism becoming a sector in which all people participate, rather than being of interest only to a certain segment in terms of

income and culture. Therefore, parallel to the increase in the world population, the number of people participating in tourism activities is also increasing day by day. In this study, tourism is a sector with serious positive economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts both at national and regional levels. In addition to the positive economic impact in destinations where tourism activities are carried out under a specific plan and program, by evaluating the balance between supply and demand and requiring the participation of all tourism stakeholders, these destinations are also developing in social, cultural and environmental terms (Avcı, 2018; Bimonte & Faralla, 2016; Aref, 2011; Cengiz, et al., 2011; Byrd, 2007).

This research has some implications. It is assumed that the participants correctly understood the statements in the research scales and interpreted them objectively and uninfluenced. It is assumed that the research sample is sufficient to represent the population and that generalizations are possible based on the interpretation of the results. It is assumed that the data can be obtained from people residing in the Kyrenia region. The research has some limitations. The research was conducted only among the locals living in the Kyrenia region of Northern Cyprus. The collection of the research and study data is limited to a certain period of time. The sample was selected in the study due to time, cost and control difficulties. Although attempts were made to collect survey data on an objective and homogeneous basis, the desired level of participation could not be achieved in regions that are far from the city center of Kyrenia.

### Declaration

The authors of this article have equally contributed to this article and they have no conflict of interest to declare nor have they received any funding from any company. Ethics committee permission document required for the collection of data used in this study, Cyprus Science University Ethics Committee 06.04.2022 date and 2022/04.013 was taken with the decision/number.

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# CYPRUS SCIENCE UNIVERSITY

## ETHICS COMMITTEE DECREE/DECISION

Meeting Date:	06.04.2022
Decree no.	2022/04.013
Responsible Reseacher:	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mehmet Necati Cizrelioğulları
Research Title:	The Contribution of Tourism Enterprises on Local Community Quality of Life and Satisfaction: A Case of TRNC
Starting Date:	06.04.2022
Ethics Committee Permission Period:	1 Year

The application file and related documents of your project, which you have applied the Cyprus Science University Ethics Committee, with the tag above, have been examined by the Ethics Committee of our University, taking into account the rationale, purpose, approach and methods of the research.

As a result of the examination, it was decided that there was no ethical or scientific objection in the realization of the study.

Prof. Dr. Mesut YALVAÇ

Head of the Ethics Committee of Cyprus Science University