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A Socio-Cultural Research on The People of Yağlıdere Living in The Usa within The Scope of Diaspora Tourism **

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Abstract

While many tourists become attached to a destination after repeated visits, immigrant tourists feel connected to the people, culture, and heritage of the destination prior to their visit. In this context, this study examines the visits of immigrants from Yaglidere who visit their ancestral lands as tourists in a sociological dimension from the United States of America. Exploratory research approach and phenomenology model were adopted as the research method in the study. In this study, in which qualitative research design was used, in-depth semi-structured interview technique was used as data collection technique. The research data was determined with maximum diversity using purposive sampling. The data obtained were coded, categorized and interpreted by content analysis used in qualitative data analysis. In the study, it was concluded that the main motivation for the participants to visit Turkey was to fulfill family and homesickness. It was determined that the participants visited Turkey because of its historical background, cultural diversity, food and natural beauties. Based on the results obtained in the study, it is thought that the tourism sector can develop marketing strategies for the development of diaspora tourism by considering the demands of the participants, thus providing more added value to the national economy and increasing the satisfaction rate of diaspora tourists.

INTRODUCTION

Migration can occur for different reasons, ranging from environmental hazards to economic opportunities (Gazard et al., 2014; Carling & Talleraas, 2016; Duru, 2021). Historically, people have migrated to other countries to escape conflict, war, oppression and economic hardship (Williams & Graham, 2014). Today, however, the scale and diversity of international migration raise issues such as identity, nationalism, citizenship, community integration, while addressing key issues such as migrants' established welfare regimes, competence and quality of intervention (Williams & Graham, 2014).

At the beginning of the 21st century, it was estimated that one in every 33 people in the world lived in a place other than their country of birth (Kelner, 2012). This rate has doubled in about 15 years. As of 2020, 281 million people worldwide live in different countries (World Migration Report, 2020). Brubaker (2005) and Sökefeld (2006) define these communities of people residing outside of what they consider their homeland as diaspora. They also state that diaspora members live in a new place without breaking away from their cultures and identities of origin, and that their diasporic identities are constructed in this process. There are many types of diasporas and they are primarily categorized according to the reasons why individuals leave their homeland. These reasons include unemployment, imperialism, political oppression/persecution, religious oppression and cultural factors (Huang & Chen, 2020).

Migration, as a social phenomenon, has been the subject of research for years (Schmitt, 1968). In parallel with modernization processes, it gained prominence in the context of tourism in the late 1960s. Over the past half century, several factors have enabled international tourism to become a point of contact between nation states and their diaspora (Etemaddar et al., 2016). These factors include the commercialization of air travel, the expansion of the global tourism industry, rising affluence, as well as technologies such as the internet and mobile phones that facilitate communication with the homeland (Odlyzko, 2001). The countries of origin or homelands from which people left as refugees, migrants or even slaves are increasingly becoming the destinations to which they and their relatives come as diaspora tourists (Etemaddar et al., 2016). In other words, much of the travel to the homeland is tied to family, business and social relationships (Huang & Chen, 2020).

Diaspora tourism is becoming an increasingly important phenomenon as a growing number of international migrants have a strong desire to maintain ties with their ancestral homelands (Huang & Chen 2020; Li et al., 2020; Otoo et al., 2021; Zhu 2023; Zou et al., 2021). People living in the diaspora travel to their ancestral homelands to feel connected to their origins and personal heritage or to learn about their family history (Teye & Timothy, 2004). Researchers have examined the touristic trips of immigrants to their homelands under various headings such as homeland tourism, visiting friends and relatives tourism, ancestral tourism, root tourism, ethnic tourism, homesickness tourism, and genealogy tourism, especially diaspora tourism (Huang et al., 2015). Most of the studies on diaspora tourism document diasporic identity, diaspora travel to the homeland, attachment to the homeland, and reconnection to their roots. Diaspora communities' visits to the homeland can be influenced by reasons such as generational differences, origin, economic conditions and geographical factors (Huang & Chen, 2020).

The concept of Turkish diaspora began to gain ground in the post-World War I period with increased migration and settlement in the West. The attribution of the concept of diaspora to Turkish immigrant communities emerged in the literature a quarter of a century after the post-World War II migration and was mostly associated with labor

migration (Safran, 1991). However, it is known that very little research has been conducted on Turkish diaspora tourism in the tourism literature. Diasporas, a phenomenon that has been studied worldwide for many years, has recently started to attract the attention of researchers in Turkey. Diaspora movements are recognized to have significant social impacts on individuals as well as economic benefits for tourism. It is noteworthy that there are a limited number of studies in Turkey that examine the socio-cultural impacts of diaspora tourism, which focuses on the tourism movements of immigrant communities towards their homeland. Therefore, this research is important as one of the pioneering studies in Turkey considering the existing understanding of diaspora tourism in the literature. It is thought that this research will contribute to the decision-making processes of cultural tourism centers as well as travel agencies by providing information that can be included in tour packages or promotional campaigns. The aim of this study is to reveal the purpose and motivations of the immigrants from Yaglidere who are living in the United States and visiting Turkey, and to examine their feelings and thoughts that arise when they visit their homeland as tourists in a sociological dimension.

Literature

Diaspora tourism refers to the travel and tourism activities of individuals or groups who have migrated from their country of origin and currently reside in another country or region (Coles & Timothy, 2003). It includes visiting ancestral homelands or cultural heritage sites, reconnecting with their roots, and exploring cultural, historical and social aspects of the diaspora community (Otoo et al., 2020).

The concept of diaspora tourism is closely related to the concept of stem tourism or heritage tourism, as it involves visiting places of personal or ancestral significance (Huang and Chen, 2020). Research has identified various motivations for diaspora tourists, including nostalgia, cultural exploration, family reunions, religious and spiritual connections, and the desire to learn about one's ancestral homeland (Otoo et al., 2020; Zeng & Xu, 2021; Mohammed et al., 2021). Li and McKercher (2016) found that individuals who maintain a strong connection to their original identity and culture of origin are the most motivated to take diaspora trips. Among the purposes of these trips is to combat the cultural alienation that individuals may experience in their current homeland (Huang et al., 2018). Diaspora tourism is of great importance for individuals to experience the cultural differences between their homeland and their current place of residence (Abbasian & Müller, 2019).

The concept of diaspora tourism is vital and is a way for individuals to maintain a relationship with their original homeland (Zeng & Xu, 2021). It allows individuals to experience a sense of belonging to their homeland on a social and emotional level (Uriely, 2010; Etemaddar et al., 2016). Memory plays an important role in decision-making during diaspora trips (Koderman, 2012). During this journey, not only memories are recalled but also actively recreated according to the motivational and situational demands of both the individual and the community. As a result of the memory process, an individual is able to consolidate their identity (Etemaddar et al., 2016). Diaspora tourism is the best choice to experience the homeland and maintain ties with friends and family (Huang et al., 2015; Capistrano & Weaver, 2017). Even second- and later-generation migrants can feel a connection to the homeland, even if they have not visited it before (Huang et al., 2015. They may see it as their duty to make a journey out of loyalty to the homeland of their parents or ancestors (Capistrano & Weaver 2017). They have a very close relationship with their country of origin as they travel to their parents' country of birth and have existing relationships with their families in their country of origin (Huang et al., 2017).

There are three types of diaspora tourism identified by Huang et al. (2017). These are traveling with family, family trips to visit relatives and participate in family activities, and finally university-sponsored studies abroad. According to Marschall (2017), diaspora tourists' travel is motivated by the search for memories, nostalgia and recognition of cultural identity, and the desire to build meaningful social relationships.

Diaspora tourism has gained recognition and importance in the tourism industry as it represents an important niche market. It has the potential to contribute to the local economy, including the tourism and hospitality sector, by attracting visitors with a personal connection or emotional attachment to the destination (Mohammed et al., 2021). The role of diaspora tourism in destination marketing and development has been explored in various studies. It has been suggested that diaspora communities can serve as important supporters and agents for their ancestral homelands by leveraging their social networks and personal connections to attract other diaspora members and non-diaspora tourists (Sinclair & Connelly, 2018; Sutarya, 2022). It is also linked to other subcategories of tourism, such as medical tourism (Huang et al., 2013). For example, diaspora tourism can take the form of family visits where tourists also decide to receive their medical treatment in the country of heritage. Some researchers have noted the limited number of studies on diaspora tourism. For example, Coles and Timothy (2003) noted that while the literature on tourism is endless, the literature on diaspora tourism is very limited. King and Christou (2010) state that there is a complex approach to the concepts of identity and place of belonging in migration and diaspora studies. However, connections to the homeland where their parents were born and lived before migrating have been little explored (King & Christou, 2010). Similarly, Marschall (2017) notes that in the burgeoning literature on migrant transnationalism, research on the second generation or direct descendants of migrants is particularly scant.

Method

In the study, qualitative research method was adopted (Altunışık et al., 2012) and phenomenology model was preferred (Laverty, 2003; Patton, 2002). Reliability in qualitative research is ensured by the researcher conducting the research process correctly, collecting and analyzing the data correctly (Baltacı, 2019; LeCompte & Goetz, 1982). Accordingly, the following practices were preferred to ensure the reliability level of the research:

- Qualitative research design and exploratory research method, which is an approach compatible with the subject of the research, were selected.
- In determining the questions of the study, studies in the literature (Huang et al., 2015; Tören, 2014) were utilized and expert opinion was consulted and necessary arrangements were made.
- Participants were identified with maximum diversity using purposive sampling.

The population of the study consists of adult individuals from Yaglidere who immigrated to the United States. In the study, snowball sampling, one of the non-Probability-based sampling methods, also known as purposeful sampling, was selected (Frank & Snijders, 1994). In-depth semi-structured interviews were used as data collection technique (Kallio et al., 2016; Busetto et al., 2020; Atış-Akyol, 2023). Interviews were conducted between January 1 and December 3, 2022.

During the research process, attention was paid to the confidentiality and ethical issues of the participants. The study was ethically approved by Giresun University Social Sciences, Science and Engineering Sciences Research Ethics Committee with the decision dated December 1, 2021 and numbered 17/12. The data obtained were coded,

categorized and interpreted by content analysis, which is frequently used in the analysis of qualitative data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Liauw, 2022).

Findings

Each participant was assigned a code number. Participants were coded from P1 to P42 and shown in the study. 9 audio recordings were transcribed and notes were taken during the interviews with 33 participants who did not want audio recordings. What was said during the interview was transcribed as it was said and without changing the dialog order. The transcribed interviews were sent to the participants in order to ask about the words that were not understood and to prevent spelling mistakes. The necessary corrections were made and the interview transcripts were read one by one by the researcher. For data processing, the notes were systematically classified and themes and patterns were identified.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Kod	Yaş	Cinsiyet	Doğum Yeri	Medeni Durum	Eğitim Düzeyi	Meslek
K1	32	Female	Yaglidere	Married	Associate Degree	Banker
K2	34	Female	Yaglidere	Single	Master's	Doctor
K3	18	Male	ABD	Single	High School Graduate	Student
K4	26	Male	Yaglidere	Married	High School Graduate	Painter
K5	19	Female	ABD	Single	High School Graduate	Student
K6	23	Male	ABD	Single	High School Graduate	Chauffeur
K7	42	Female	Yaglidere	Married	Master's	Academician
K8	26	Female	Yaglidere	Single	Master's	Teacher
K9	32	Female	Yaglidere	Single	Associate Degree	Beauty Expert
K10	33	Female	Yaglidere	Married	Associate Degree	Banker
K11	47	Female	Yaglidere	Married	High School Graduate	Housewife
K12	57	Male	Yaglidere	Married	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
K13	55	Female	Yaglidere	Married	Primary School	Housewife
K14	24	Female	Yaglidere	Single	Master's	Banker
K15	63	Male	Yaglidere	Married	Middle School	Entrepreneur
K16	59	Female	Yaglidere	Married	Primary School	Housewife
K17	20	Female	ABD	Single	High School Graduate	Student
K18	18	Male	ABD	Single	High School Graduate	Student
K19	44	Female	Yaglidere	Single	High School Graduate	Waiter
K20	36	Erkek	Yaglidere	Single	Bachelor's Degree	Student
K21	27	Female	Yaglidere	Single	Master's	Banker
K22	41	Female	Yaglidere	Married	Middle School	Cleaner
K23	35	Male	Yaglidere	Married	High School Graduate	Entrepreneur
K24	33	Female	Yaglidere	Single	Master's	Teacher
K25	39	Female	Yaglidere	Single	High School Graduate	Waiter
K26	51	Female	Yaglidere	Married	Bachelor's Degree	Entrepreneur
K27	55	Male	Yaglidere	Married	High School Graduate	Entrepreneur
K28	41	Male	Yaglidere	Single	Associate Degree	Entrepreneur
K29	59	Male	Yaglidere	Married	High School Graduate	Construction Worker
K30	43	Male	Yaglidere	Married	High School Graduate	Driver
K31	54	Female	Yaglidere	Married	Primary School	Machinist
K32	24	Male	ABD	Single	Associate Degree	Delivery Person
K33	49	Male	Yaglidere	Married	Primary School	Cook
K34	47	Female	Yaglidere	Married	Primary School	Housewife
K35	20	Male	ABD	Single	Associate Degree	Student
K36	40	Female	Yaglidere	Single	Bachelor's Degree	Nurse
K37	56	Male	Yaglidere	Married	Primary School	Cook
K38	62	Male	Yaglidere	Married	High School Graduate	Entrepreneur
K39	22	Male	Yaglidere	Married	Bachelor's Degree	Hairdresser
K40	41	Female	Yaglidere	Married	High School Graduate	Housewife
K41	38	Female	Yaglidere	Single	High School Graduate	Photographer
K42	19	Female	ABD	Single	High School Graduate	Student

When the demographic information detailed in Table 1 is analyzed, the number of female participants is 24, while the number of male participants is 18. The majority of the participants were women. The most common occupations were students and entrepreneurs. Other important occupational groups include housewives, bankers, teachers and cooks. The majority of respondents were born in Yaglidere, while another group of respondents were born in the USA. The number of married respondents was 22, while the number of single respondents was 20. In terms of education, high school graduates are the largest group, followed by postgraduate graduates and associate degree graduates. Other education levels include undergraduate, primary and secondary school. According to age groups, the most common age group is 18-29 (13 people).

Table 2. Participants' Length of Residence in the United States and Age at Immigration to the United States

Theme	Category	Subcategory Distribution According to Participants	Kişi Sayısı
Life expectancy in the USA	Less than 10 Years	K4, K39	2
	Between 10-19 Years	K1, K2, K3, K5, K7, K9, K12, K18, K19, K22, K30, K31, K40, K41, K,42	15
	Between 20-29 Years	K6, K8, K10, K11, K13, K14, K17, K20, K21, K23, K25, K28, K32, K33, K34, K35, K36	17
	30 Years and Over	K15, K16, K24, K26, K27, K29, K37, K38	8
Age at Immigration to the US	Born in the USA	K3, K5, K6, K17, K18, K35, K42	7
	Departed before age 18	K1, K2, K8, K9, K10, K14, K20, K21, K23, K24, K32, K39	12
	18 Years of Age and Older	K4, K7, K11, K12, K13, K15, K16, K19, K22, K25, K26, K27, K28, K29, K30, K31, K33, K34, K36, K37, K38, K40, K41	23

According to the information obtained from Table 2, 7 of the participants were born in the USA and 35 of them migrated to the USA after they were born. The majority of those who immigrated went to the USA after the age of 18. In terms of length of residence, it is seen that the majority have lived in the USA between 20-29 years.

Table 3 presents the statistics on the frequency of visits to Turkey by immigrants from Yaglidere people living in the United States. When the distribution according to the frequency of visiting Turkey is analyzed, it is seen that the majority of the participants (20 people) visit Turkey once a year or more. Another group of participants (17 people) visit Turkey every 2-3 years. When the number of people coming from the USA during their visits to Turkey is analyzed, it is seen that the majority of the participants (26 people) visit Turkey with 2 or more people and another group of participants (16 people) visit Turkey alone. Looking at the factors influencing the decision to visit, it is seen that 15 of the participants determined their own decision to visit, 22 of the participants' families and 5 of the participants' relatives were influential. This shows that Turkish immigrants from Yaglidere who live in the United States make their decision to visit Turkey on family ties as well as their individual preferences. When the length of stay in Turkey is analyzed, it is seen that 16 participants stayed in Turkey for 1 month and 21 participants stayed in Turkey for more than 1 month. It is seen that the participants' visits to Turkey are generally long-term. In addition, 14 people prefer to stay in their hometowns and 12 people prefer to stay in holiday destinations. It is seen that the participants stayed in their own homes (25 people) or family homes (9 people) for most of their visits. The number of people who prefer hotels is 6.

Table 3. Statistics on Visiting Turkey

Theme	Category	Subcategory Distribution According to Participants	Kişi Sayısı
Frequency of Visiting	Once a Year or More	K2, K3, K4, K7, K8, K10, K11, K13, K15, K16, K23, K24, K26, K27, K33, K34, K38, K40, K41, K42	20
	Every 2-3 Years	K1, K5, K6, K12, K14, K17, K18, K19, K21, K28, K29, K31, K32, K36, K37, K39	16
	Every 4-5 Years	K22, K25, K30, K35	4
	Not Visited for More Than 5 Years	K9	1
Number of People	Alone	K2, K6, K7, K8, K18, K19, K20, K21, K24, K26, K28, K29, K31, K36, K39, K41	16
	2-3 Person	K3, K4, K11, K13, K15, K16, K23, K25, K32, K33, K34	11
	4 and More	K1, K5, K9, K10, K12, K14, K17, K22, K27, K30, K35, K37, K38, K40, K42	15
Influencers on the Decision to Visit	Our own	K2, K7, K13, K15, K18, K20, K24, K25, K26, K27, K28, K31, K36, K38, K42	15
	Family	K1, K3, K4, K5, K6, K9, K10, K11, K12, K14, K16, K17, K21, K22, K23, K29, K30, K35, K37, K39, K40, K41	22
	Relative	K8, K19, K32, K33, K34	5
Length of Stay in Turkey	2-3 Weeks	K2, K7, K8, K18, K26	5
	1 Month	K1, K6, K12, K14, K20, K21, K23, K28, K29, K32, K35, K36, K37, K39, K40, K42	16
	More than 1 Month	K3, K4, K5, K9, K10, K11, K13, K15, K16, K17, K19, K22, K24, K25, K27, K30, K31, K33, K34, K38, K41	21
Accommodation Places	Own House	K2, K3, K4, K5, K9, K11, K13, K14, K15, K16, K17, K19, K21, K22, K23, K25, K26, K27, K33, K34, K35, K36, K37, K38, K42	25
	Family House	K1, K8, K24, K29, K30, K31, K32, K39, K41	9
	Family House and Hotel	K6, K40	2
	Hotel	K7, K10, K12, K18, K20, K28	6

The participants were asked what kind of preparations they made before the trip and it was determined that the majority (29 people) made souvenir shopping for family, relatives and friends during the pre-travel preparations. In addition, some of the Turkish immigrants from Yaglidere who are living in the USA (7 people) stated that they make vacation plans for the places they would visit and were interested in accommodation reservations. Some people see buying gifts as a difficult and time-consuming process, and therefore, it is easier to give money. Others prefer not to inform their family and relatives about their trip in order to surprise them and prefer to shop for souvenirs. Pre-travel preparations include activities such as booking a hotel in the holiday destination, bringing personal necessities, identifying places to visit and getting information about the places they will visit. Participants stated that buying gifts is generally part of the pre-travel preparations and that people find it strange not to buy gifts. In general, souvenir shopping plays an important role in pre-travel preparations for migrants from Turkish immigrants. Gifts for family, relatives and close circles are part of their pre-travel planning.

The participants were asked whether they felt more comfortable in Turkey or the USA and it was determined that the majority (29 people) felt more comfortable in the USA, some (11 people) in Turkey and 2 people in both countries. Some participants stated that since they were born and raised in the USA, they felt freer and more belonged there. In addition, they also expressed that economic conditions are better in the USA than in Turkey, health services are more developed and social life is more comfortable, and they feel safer in the USA due to the reliability of the justice

system and the importance given to equality and human rights. It was observed that some of the participants (11 people) felt comfortable in Turkey. These people defined Turkey as their own country and stated that they felt more comfortable here because they had family, friends and cultural ties. Some participants stated that they thought that people in Turkey were more helpful and had more cordial relations. The number of participants (2) who felt comfortable in both countries was limited. Some of these respondents stated that they were born and raised in Turkey and that they had family and friends in Turkey, but that they took into consideration factors such as the fact that life in the USA was comfortable and economic opportunities were better.

Table 4. Differences between Turkish and US Culture

Theme	Category	Subcategory Distribution According to Participants	Kişi Sayısı
Turkish Culture	Intense influence of customs and traditions	K9, K14, K18, K22, K25, K27, K30	7
	Collective life	K6, K7, K12, K20, K23, K27, K30	7
	Conservative lifestyle	K3, K5, K10, K17, K24, K35	6
	False westernization	K15, K16, K19, K23, K26	5
	Strong family ties	K12, K23, K27, K38	4
	Abuse of authority	K22	1
	Cultural richness	K8, K36	2
	Benevolence	K34, K42	2
	Lack of respect and love between people	K39	1
	Sincerity	K4	1
	Nationalism	K6	1
	Selfishness	K20	1
American Culture	Liberal lifestyle	K5, K6, K14, K17, K18, K24, K29, K30, K35	9
	High individuality	K5, K7, K12, K20, K30, K31, K39, K41	8
	Ethnic diversity	K3, K19, K21, K25, K26, K29	6
	Everyday life	K27, K31, K38, K40, K41	5
	The low influence of religion in social life	K1, K3, K10, K24, K29	5
	High level of education	K2, K6, K37, K39	4
	Fastfood diet	K29, K30, K41	3
	Excess of respect and love between people	K28, K39	2
	Lack of neighborhood relations	K27	1
	Free clothing style	K41	1
	High interpersonal reliability	K37	1
	Good social relations	K37	1

While examining the differences between the American and Turkish cultures in Table 4, it is seen that both cultures have their own unique characteristics and values. These differences reflect cultural diversity and richness and emphasize the importance of intercultural interaction and mutual understanding. Differences between US culture and Turkish culture;

- American Culture: The American culture emphasizes liberal values, individual freedoms and diversity of lifestyles. America's culture is characterized by an emphasis on the individual's own goals and achievements. The United States has a diverse ethnic society. American culture is characterized by daily routines and short-term plans. American culture emphasizes daily routines and short-term plans. In American society, religious beliefs are based on individual preferences and have less influence on social life. The American education system has high quality and is more comprehensible than Turkish education system. Fast and convenient food consumption is common. The American culture emphasizes respect and love among people.

- Turkish Culture: Traditional customs and traditions are of great importance in Turkish culture. Turkish society has a collective way of life that cares about the family and the general interests of society. It means that traditional moral values, religious beliefs and social norms are important in Turkish culture. The concern about false westernization expressed by some participants reflects the concern about the change of Turkish culture and the loss of traditional values and cultural characteristics. Family is an important value in Turkish culture and family ties are generally strong. Turkish culture has a rich historical and cultural background. Benevolence and neighborly relations are important in Turkish culture.

Participants' reasons for migrating to the USA were analyzed in four categories as follows: Economic, family, educational and social.

- Economic reasons: The majority of respondents (23) cited factors such as better economic opportunities, job opportunities, increased income and higher living standards.
- Family reasons: In second place (15 respondents), respondents mentioned that factors such as family reunification, family members living in the USA, strengthening family relations and maintaining social ties while being together with family members were effective in their decision to migrate.
- Education: Some of the respondents (3) were influenced by factors such as access to better educational opportunities, higher education or academic career goals.
- Social reasons: 1 respondent stated that they migrated due to factors such as cultural experiences, improving social relations, joining social networks or living a life more in line with social norms.

Participants were asked where they felt themselves to be from and it was observed that almost half of them (20 people) felt themselves to be from Turkey. These participants emphasized that they belong to Turkey and feel connected to Turkish culture, language and people. Factors such as working with Turks, speaking Turkish, interacting with the Turkish community and attachment to Turkey influence their feeling of being from Turkey. Another group of participants (18 respondents) felt themselves to be from the USA. These respondents stated that they feel American because they were born and raised in the US or because they are more connected to the American society. In addition, a sense of authenticity and comfort were also factors that reinforced their American identity. Some participants (4) stated that they felt both Turkish and American at the same time. This suggests that these participants felt a connection between the two countries and internalized both cultures. It may also depend on factors such as bicultural or dual citizenship. It shows that individuals may identify themselves in different ways depending on their origins, life experiences and cultural interactions.

The participants were asked whether they felt foreign in Turkey and some of them (15 people) stated that they felt foreign, the majority (24 people) stated that they did not feel foreign and 3 people stated that they sometimes felt foreign. Some of the participant opinions are as follows;

" My old neighbors have left. Foreigners have moved in. The houses and streets abandoned by my neighbors have been invaded by documented and undocumented migrants from Turkey's worn torn neighbor countries." (K13).

" Yes, I feel like a foreigner in Turkey because the society's attitude towards me is different." (K5).

" Yes. I feel alienated because I don't have a circle of friends from Turkey. The society is helpful, but our ways of life are different. " (K35).

" No, I don't. Turkey is my homeland. But, people in Turkey treat me as a foreigner as if I were an American." (K39).

Participants were asked whether they felt obliged to visit Turkey and the majority (25 respondents) stated that they felt obliged, some (15 respondents) stated that they did not feel obliged and 2 respondents stated that they sometimes felt obliged. Respondents who want to visit their relatives or family members feel obliged to visit Turkey. These respondents see it as a necessity to visit Turkey in order to maintain family ties, see their loved ones and spend time with them. Some respondents feel compelled to visit Turkey out of a desire to see and support their aging family members. This indicates that they consider it a necessity to visit in order to maintain family ties and to help their elderly relatives. Homesickness is a factor that leads some respondents to feel obliged to visit Turkey. These respondents feel that visiting Turkey is a necessity due to the emotional connection and longing for the land where they were born and raised. Some participants feel obliged to visit Turkey because they love its beauties and feel comfortable in Turkey. These respondents think that visiting Turkey is a necessity to see its cultural values and attractions. On the other hand, others stated that they did not like to visit and that traveling was difficult, so they did not feel any obligation. Participants' motivations for visiting Turkey are largely based on family and emotional ties.

Table 5. Reasons for Visiting Turkey

Category	Category Breakdown by Participants	Kişi Sayısı
Family Longing	K1, K2, K3, K8, K9, K10, K11, K14, K17, K21, K27, K29, K31, K37, K38, K39, K40, K41	18
Relative Visit	K3, K5, K6, K10, K12, K13, K14, K15, K19, K21, K22, K23, K24, K27, K28, K32, K33, K34	18
Homesickness/Homeland	K1, K4, K9, K12, K13, K16, K27, K30, K31, K37, K40	11
For Touristic Purposes	K6, K8, K13, K14, K18, K20, K25, K36, K42	9
Friend Visit	K2, K8, K10, K12, K22, K27, K28, K38	8
Education	K7	1
Work	K26	1
Food	K28	1

Table 5 shows the respondents' reasons for visiting Turkey. The motivations for visiting Turkey are based on various reasons and are detailed as follows. Eighteen of the participants stated that the reason for visiting Turkey was to see their families and get together with them. Strong family ties and longing for family are seen as an important factor in visits to Turkey. Similarly, 18 respondents stated that they traveled to Turkey to visit their relatives. Visits to maintain ties with relatives, strengthen relationships and preserve family ties are widely preferred. 11 respondents stated that they traveled to Turkey because of homesickness or homesickness. This may reflect a motivation based on factors such as the need for repatriation among Turkish citizens or the perception of Turkey as a place of longing. 9 respondents stated that they visited Turkey for touristic purposes. Turkey's historical and cultural richness, natural beauties and touristic places attract the attention of visitors. 8 participants stated that they visited Turkey to visit their friends. These visits are made to meet friends, strengthen social ties and relive shared memories. Some other reasons are also included in the table, but are represented by lower percentages. These include factors such as education, work and food. It shows that the reasons for visiting Turkey are mainly related to family and relative ties, homesickness and touristic purposes. These reasons indicate that people travel to strengthen emotional, social and cultural ties, to have personal experiences and to discover the richness that Turkey has to offer. The findings also suggest that belonging, emotional ties, cultural experience and close relationships play an important role in

motivation to visit.

The participants were asked whether they preferred to visit Turkey more than other countries and it was observed that the majority of them (27 people) preferred to travel to Turkey more than other countries. Factors such as emotional and family ties, love for homeland, homesickness, touristic attraction of Turkey, past experiences and having acquaintances in Yaglidere are generally behind this preference. It was stated that Turkey makes them feel comfortable and peaceful, that it is a suitable place for a vacation and that there are many places to visit. Another group of participants (15 people) stated that they did not prefer Turkey more than other countries. These participants stated that they generally prefer to see different places and that they do not prefer to travel to Turkey except for family and friends. It is seen that Turkey is preferred due to factors such as personal and emotional ties, love of homeland, presence of acquaintances, family and vacation opportunities. However, some participants prefer to explore different places and travel outside Turkey.

The majority of the participants (32) stated that they do not see themselves as tourists when they come to Turkey. These participants stated that they did not feel like tourists due to their Turkish origin or frequent visits to Turkey. In addition, their desire to share a similar experience with locals and participate in local activities also influenced their rejection of their tourist identity. Some participants (8 people) stated that they considered themselves as tourists. These participants stated that when they traveled to Turkey, they entered a new environment, participated in touristic activities, had a different experience from the locals and were sometimes welcomed as foreigners by the locals. Factors such as visiting touristic areas, utilizing tour guides and participating in touristic activities were effective in their adoption of tourist identities. It also shows that they travel for the purpose of exploring Turkey and having a vacation. Some participants (2 people) stated that in some cases they participated in tourist activities and felt like tourists. This may be due to variable factors such as the duration of their travel or location.

Table 6. What they liked and disliked during their visit to Turkey

Theme	Category	Subcategory Distribution According to Participants	Kişi Sayısı
What they like	Meals	K7, K24, K27, K29, K30, K37, K38, K39, K40, K42	10
	Visiting relatives	K16, K21, K23, K31, K32, K33, K35	7
	Holiday	K2, K18, K19, K24, K25, K29	6
	Hospitality	K3, K4, K6, K20	4
	Spending time with family	K5, K11, K22	3
	Friendship relationships	K4	1
	Visiting your memories	K9	1
	Benevolence	K34	1
	Turkish culture	K1	1
What they don't like	Failure to comply with the rules	K3, K6, K14, K20, K24, K33, K34, K42, K41	9
	Bad behavior of society	K1, K2, K4, K7, K18, K22, K25, K28, K41	9
	People are narrow-minded	K21, K38	2
	Slowness of public institutions	K23, K26	2
	Increasing number of different nationalities	K28, K40	2
	Expensiveness	K27, K41	2
	Visiting the same places	K17	1
	Family pressure	K17	1
	People are self-interested	K37	1
	Long travel time	K9	1
	Weather change	K9	1
	Time difference	K9	1
	Traffic congestion	K28	1

Table 6 shows that visitors to Turkey generally liked Turkish food, visiting relatives and vacationing. However, some negative experiences were also mentioned, such as not following the rules, bad behavior of the society and people being narrow-minded. While there is a shared appreciation for positive issues such as food and visiting relatives, there is a shared dissatisfaction with negative issues such as non-compliance with rules and bad behavior of the community.

Participants were asked whether their experience of the visit was in line with their expectations and the majority (23) stated that they had a different experience. A few participants stated that people's behavior had changed, the refugee issue had attracted attention and the corruption in society was disappointing. Some participants stated that what they expected during their visits to Turkey did not materialize and that they were disappointed. In particular, they said that the local people looked at them as expatriates or foreigners and that they felt that cultural values had been lost. Some of the participants stated that the recurring experiences did not differ and that they experienced the same things every year. A few participants stated that when they come to Turkey, people go backwards and show rudeness. They also mentioned that there were a lot of people from Arab countries and they did not like this. In general, the participants mentioned factors such as the changes in Turkey, the degeneration of society, the increase in the refugee population and the negative change in people's behavior. This shows that pre-visit expectations were not met and some disappointments were experienced. Another group of participants (19 people) stated that there was no difference between what they saw and experienced during the visit and what they thought before the visit. These respondents stated that they did not notice any major changes as they visit Turkey every year. However, some of them expressed their discomfort with the increase in the foreign population and that they observed demographic changes and felt uncomfortable.

Participants were asked how the visit to Turkey affected the way they felt about themselves and their families. It is seen that the majority of the participants who visited Turkey (31 people) felt that the visit had a positive impact on them and their families. These participants stated that the visit was exciting and that they longed for their homeland, the place where they were born. It was also emphasized that the time spent with their families refreshed memories, strengthened ties and relieved longing. However, some participants (7) stated that the visit to Turkey had a negative impact on them and their families. In particular, they expressed disappointment due to factors such as the coldness they experienced with their relatives or the failure to meet expectations. For these participants, the visit is perceived as an obligation, which prevents them from feeling good about themselves. Furthermore, a group of participants (4 people) stated that the visit to Turkey did not have any impact on them and their families. They stated that they did not feel any emotional or practical impact of the visit.

Participants were asked how the visit to Turkey affected them. The majority of them (23) stated that the visit had a positive impact on them. These participants stated that the visit was an opportunity to have a great time and that it was a pleasure to be with their families and close friends. They also emphasized that the visit was an overall positive experience and it was enjoyable to discover new places. However, some participants (3) stated that the visit to Turkey had a negative impact on them. They expressed their disappointment due to factors such as fake and materialistic attitudes, corruption in society and the increase in self-interested behavior. In addition, a group of participants (10) stated that the visit to Turkey had both a positive and a negative impact. They stated that there were some positive aspects of the visit, such as fulfilling family and homesickness, but they were also aware of the negative changes in

the society. Some participants (6) stated that the visit to Turkey did not have any impact on them or their families.

Participants were asked about the impact of their visits to Turkey on their sense of belonging and attachment to Turkish culture. The majority (36 respondents) stated that there was no change in their feelings of belonging and attachment to Turkish culture when they visited Turkey. These participants stated that they had always embraced Turkish culture and felt a sense of belonging, and that their visits had strengthened these feelings. These participants emphasized that Turkish culture has always been important to them and that they have never lost this cultural background. However, some participants (6 people) stated that they felt a change in their sense of belonging and attachment to Turkish culture during their visits to Turkey. These changes are often associated with their perception that Turkish society has changed, degenerated and undergone various transformations. At the same time, some participants expressed a decrease in their sense of attachment due to the behavior of people in Turkey, the level of education, the refugee problem and the perception of self-interest.

Respondents were asked where the most memorable place was during their visit to Turkey. Istanbul ranked first. Giresun ranked second, followed by Ankara, Antalya, Izmir, Kuşadası, Doğubayazıt in limited numbers. Istanbul attracts many tourists as it is a city famous for its historical and cultural richness. With its unique historical buildings, impressive landscapes, diverse shopping opportunities, delicious food and energetic atmosphere, Istanbul offers visitors a unique experience. Therefore, it is understandable that Istanbul stands out as the most memorable destination. On the other hand, it reflects the reasons for visitors' interest in Giresun, both for visiting their hometowns and family, relatives and friends, and for exploring natural beauties and spending time in a tranquil environment. Ankara ranks third in terms of being the capital of Turkey and home to important historical and cultural sites. Antalya, Izmir, Kusadasi and Dogubeyazit, the other mentioned destinations, are attractive for their touristic attractions and different experiences.

After the visit, the participants were asked whether they would recommend their relatives or friends in the USA to visit Turkey. The majority of the participants (37) would recommend their friends, relatives or relatives in the USA to visit Turkey. These respondents would like to share the beauty and richness of Turkey, enable them to experience Turkish hospitality and food, and contribute economically to the country. They think that Turkey is a country that should be visited by many people. Some participants stated that they recommend Turkey in general, but some specific places (e.g. Yaglidere) they would not recommend to their foreign friends.

Conclusion and Recommendations

According to the findings of the study, it was determined that the homeland attachment of immigrants from Yaglidere is not symbolic. Considering the number of trips and length of stay of the participants to their homeland, it would be possible to say that the attachment of Turkish immigrants to their homeland is functional. Both the length of stay and frequent visits are characteristics that can affect migrants' ties with their homeland (Huang et al., 2013). Moreover, the fact that they are a group that visits Turkey frequently and that the majority of them stay in Turkey for a long period of time indicates that they tend to spend money. However, diaspora tourists create a loyal customer base thanks to their emotional ties with their homeland as well as their characteristics such as spending more and vacationing for longer periods compared to other tourists (Unur et al., 2015). Considering the frequency of travel of immigrants from Yaglidere and the fact that the majority of them prefer to come to Turkey rather than visiting any tourist destination in other countries, it can be said that they are a potential niche market for the tourism industry

(travel agencies, hotels, restaurants, airline companies, etc.). Therefore, efforts can be made by tourism stakeholders to identify marketing programs for diaspora communities and strengthen their actions. Diasporas contribute to economic development through trade, investment and entrepreneurial activities. According to another finding, the majority of the participants stayed in their own homes during the visit. This shows that immigrants from Yaglidere keep their properties in Turkey as well as investing in Turkey.

It was observed that the participants both adopted the lifestyle in the US and felt connected to Turkish culture. Participants who identify themselves as from Turkey show that they are attached to their Turkish roots and attach importance to maintaining Turkish culture. This points to the preservation of Turkish identity through language, traditions, food, religion and other cultural elements. Studies showing that individuals' gastonomy image perceptions of their own cuisines affect local food consumption intention support the results obtained (Çırak ve Gümüş, 2021). In conclusion, the existence of cultural bridges and individuals with dual identities/cultures can successfully balance integration and cohesion. This shows that cultural diversity, identity, complexity and cultural ties can co-exist. Preservation and transmission of Turkish identity through language, traditions, food, religion and other cultural elements should be encouraged to strengthen the sense of belonging to Turkish culture and strengthen cultural bridges. At the same time, dual-identity individuals should be encouraged by family and community to actively engage with and feel connected to both US and Turkish culture. This will make individuals feel accepted and supported and encourage pride in their identity.

In this study, factors such as family and homesickness, and visiting relatives are among the top reasons why migrants from Yaglidere visit Turkey. In addition, when asked what they liked the most during their visits to Turkey, the food ranked first. The diversity and flavors of Turkish cuisine stand out as an important attraction factor for visitors to Turkey. According to this data, it is important to offer opportunities to migrants from Yaglidere not only for family and hometown visits, but also for cultural experiences. In addition to historical and cultural sites, promoting Turkish cuisine is thought to enable tourism to diversify. Emphasizing Turkey's rich and diverse culinary culture more will benefit the development of gastronomy tourism. Promoting local food, supporting restaurants and street vendors, food tours and tasting events can encourage migrants to discover Turkish food.

The motivations of the majority of migrants from Yaglidere to visit Turkey are family ties, personal preferences and fulfillment of longing. Holiday visits are preferred by a small number of migrants and they organize their holiday plans themselves. Iorio and Corsale (2012) found that most migrants organize their visits to their homeland by themselves, that is, they do not prefer travel agencies. This point is similar to the findings of Iorio and Corsale (2012). This information can provide guidance on promoting diaspora tourism, developing marketing strategies for the target group and diversifying touristic experiences. Turkey's tourism sector can organize communication and promotional activities specific to diaspora communities. In particular, it can promote Turkey's touristic values and attractions through activities such as tourism events, festivals, exhibitions and cultural events for diaspora communities. Incentives such as travel packages, special discounts and advantages can be offered to diaspora communities through special communication channels.

Research shows that diaspora communities may develop cultural distances from their roots due to significant differences in personal identity, place attachment, values, beliefs, and cultural practices (Li et al., 2020). As can be understood from the findings of this study, it was observed that problems related to cultural appropriation arose due

to the fact that the cultural values of the diaspora community and the binding features in their relations with their relatives and friends in Yaglidere were not the same as they were when they migrated. In addition, the fact that they think that asylum-seeker movements have increased in Turkey and that the people living in their homeland are insincere, manipulative, self-interested and rude in their approach to them is another problem that is effective in not embracing cultural values.

The fact that the participants shop for souvenirs before traveling to Turkey shows that they care about social and cultural ties. This reflects their respect, love and sense of belonging to their loved ones. In addition, these purchases may contribute to the maintenance of cultural relations and ties between Turkey and the USA. The fact that some participants felt obliged to shop due to gift expectations shows that social pressure and expectations have an impact. Expectation-based gift exchanges can sometimes lead to the artificialization of relationships or the prominence of material value, leading to a decrease in commitment in relationships. In this context, some suggestions can be made to replace the negative feelings created by the gift expectations of family, relatives and friends with meaningful and sustainable relationships. For example, it may be suggested to convey the message that the gift expectations of family, relatives and friends can make relationships artificial and that emotional ties are more valuable than the importance of material value, that mutual gifting will contribute to the formation of good feelings, and that relationships deepen and become meaningful by emphasizing the importance of the memories accumulated during the visit and the time spent together.

It can be thought that the low rate of immigrants from Yaglidere who live in the USA who feel like tourists when they come to Turkey is due to the feeling of belonging to a place and traveling to Turkey compulsorily. In addition, it was concluded that while most of the participants felt comfortable and belonging in Turkey, some of them felt a sense of foreignness. In particular, participants who felt a sense of alienation may have had negative experiences stemming from the general attitudes of the society, the approach to diversity or individual lifestyle choices. This may reflect the difficulties migrants face in the social integration process and the complexity of the adaptation process. However, the majority of participants who felt comfortable and belonged to Turkey had positive experiences based on good relations with the society, tolerance and acceptance. This suggests that Turkish society in general has a positive attitude towards migrants and that social integration can be successful. In conclusion, these findings show that there are individual differences in the migrant experience and that social factors have an impact on whether migrants feel alienated or have a sense of belonging. At this point, taking measures to promote greater tolerance, acceptance and social integration in society can help migrants to feel more belonging. At the same time, social awareness-raising efforts can be made to change negative perceptions of migrants. Collaboration between stakeholders such as the media, public opinion agencies and civil society organizations can help spread messages highlighting the contributions of migrants and the value of diversity.

Historically, different communities have migrated from Turkey for compulsory reasons in various periods. Greeks, Assyrians and Jews are some of those who had to emigrate from Turkey. There may be many members of these diasporas living in various countries who wish to remain connected to their roots in Turkey and maintain their relations with Turkey. Encouraging diasporas to visit Turkey, which used to be their homeland, and conducting studies in this direction is important for the development of diaspora tourism and contributing to the national economy.

In the history of the world, countries have experienced forced migration due to war and conflict, political factors, human rights violations, economic, ethnic, religious or cultural reasons. Some of these forced migrations are migrations to Turkey. Bulgarian Turks and Syrian migrations can be given as examples of these migrations. The Turkish minority living in this region was subjected to oppression and assimilation policies between 1944-1989, which covers the Bulgarian socialist regime period (Atasoy, 2010). During this period, Turkey provided refuge to Bulgarian Turks and accepted them. In this context, since Bulgarian Turks have their roots in Bulgaria, cultural tours can be organized by travel agencies within the scope of diaspora tourism. In addition, studies can be conducted on issues such as diaspora tourism experiences, travel habits, cultural interactions or economic contributions within the scope of diaspora tourism related to Bulgarian Turks. In addition, after the start of the civil war in Syria, Turkey, as a neighboring country, has been exposed to a large influx of refugees. Turkey has been hosting approximately 3.6 million Syrian refugees since the start of the Syrian war in 2011(UNCHR, 2023) . As many Syrians wait for conditions in their country to improve, they are turning to support their country of origin rather than opting for diaspora tourism. With the end of the civil war, the travel and touristic activities of the Syrian diaspora towards Syria can be analyzed in the future.

Various initiatives can be taken to strengthen cultural, economic and touristic relations between these diasporas and Turkey. Projects can be developed for the sustainable preservation of historical and cultural heritage in Turkey, the creation of museums, and the restoration of historical buildings. Participation in local events (traditional festivals, weddings, concerts, etc.) associated with migrating diasporas can be encouraged. If families or distant relatives of diasporas still live in Turkey, family visits can be organized within the scope of diaspora tourism. Touristic tours can be organized emphasizing the historical settlements, churches, monasteries and cultural heritage of the diasporas. Special packages, events and promotions can be developed for diaspora tourism through cooperation between local organizations, tourism sector representatives, travel agencies and other stakeholders related to diasporas who migrated from Turkey and live in other countries. Events, seminars, workshops or exhibitions of diaspora stories and experiences can be organized, such as exhibitions of diasporas' own memories. There could also be training programs or digital platforms that focus on these issues. Such initiatives would help strengthen the ties of migrant diasporas with Turkey and increase its tourism potential. In addition, research on the travel motivations and touristic activities of diaspora individuals visiting the homeland can be conducted and analyzed. Scientific studies to be conducted on these issues will be guiding for both the public, non-governmental organizations and related businesses.

Declaration

All authors of the article contributed equally to the article process. The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare. The study was ethically approved by Giresun University Social Sciences, Science and Engineering Sciences Research Ethics Committee with the decision dated December 1, 2021 and numbered 17/12.

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Appendix 1. Ethics Committee Permission

T.C.
GİRESUN ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Sosyal Bilimler Fen ve Mühendislik Bilimleri Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu

Sayı   :E-50288587-050.01.04-63585   21.12.2021
Konu   :01 Aralık 2021 tarih ve 17/12 sayılı
        Etik Kurul Kararı

Sayın Bayram KANCA

İlgi   : Bayram KANCA'nın 10.12.2021 tarihli başvurusu.

Sosyal Bilimler Fen ve Mühendislik Bilimleri Araştırmaları Etik Kurulumuza sunmuş olduğunuz ″Diaspora Turizm Kapsamında ABD' deki Yağlıdereliler Üzerine Bir Araştırma″ başlıklı çalışmanız 01 Aralık 2021 tarih ve 17/12 sayılı Etik Kurulumuzca değerlendirilmiş olup; etik açıdan uygun bulunmuştur.
Bilgilerize sunulur.

Prof.Dr. Yusuf ŞAHİN
Kurul Başkanı

Bu belge, güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.
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