



Opinions of Local Tourists Visiting Göreme Open Air Museum

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine domestic tourists' perceptions of the carrying capacity of the Göreme Open Air Museum. The research emphasizes the importance of understanding tourist perceptions and behaviors, particularly in protected areas such as Göreme, which attracts a high volume of visitors and is inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Within this scope, a survey was conducted with 400 domestic tourists visiting the Göreme Open Air Museum. The questionnaire measured visitors' perceptions regarding service capacity, the environmental impacts of tourism, and their level of environmental sensitivity. Findings indicate that domestic visitors perceive service capacity to be high, perceive the environmental impacts of tourism to be low, and report a high level of environmental sensitivity. Furthermore, participants identified the factors most detrimental to the Göreme Open-Air Museum as, respectively, deterioration, lack of maintenance, and road construction activities in the museum's vicinity. In conclusion, the study highlights the need for continuous monitoring of tourism activities in line with sustainability principles and for strengthening measures to preserve the carrying capacity of the Göreme Open Air Museum, based on the issues identified through this investigation. Moreover, identifying the positive and negative experiences of tourists visiting the region will contribute to a more comprehensive assessment of the impacts of tourism on the area.

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