



Accessible Tourism: Alanya Example Effects of Disabled Tourists’ Perceptions of the Destination on their Satisfaction, Revisit and Recommendation Intention ^a

Pınar KARAKUŞ *, Saliha OZPINAR **

* Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat University, Graduate School of Education, Alanya, Türkiye, ORCID: 0000-0003-2947-2768

** Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat University, Faculty of Medicine, Department of Public Health, Alanya, Türkiye, ORCID: 0000-0002-9860-996X

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Abstract

Aim: The present study was aimed at determining the perspectives of tourists with disabilities visiting the destination of Alanya regarding concepts such as disabled tourist perception, customer satisfaction and revisit intention, and determinants of such concepts.

Method: The sample of this cross-sectional study consists of disabled tourists staying in 4 and 5 star hotels in Alanya district of Antalya in 2023. The data were collected through face-to-face interviews

^a This study was derived from Pınar Karakuş's PhD thesis titled “Accessible Tourism: The Case of Alanya, The Effect of Destination Perceptions of Disabled Tourists on Satisfaction, Revisit and Recommendation Intentions

Corresponding author: Pınar Karakuş, e-mail: pinaar_oruc@hotmail.com

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between January 1 and August 31, 2023 using the “drop-and-collect” method. Data collection tools: Personal Information Form, Disabled Tourist Perception Scale, Customer Satisfaction Scale and Revisit & Recommendation Intention Scale. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation and multiple regression methods were used in the analysis.

Results: Of the participants, 56.2% were men and 35.1% were in the age group of 60-69 years. In the study, it was determined that customer satisfaction was negatively affected by education level and smoking, and positively affected by the perceptions of tourists with disabilities ($p < 0.05$), and that revisit and recommendation intentions were negatively affected by education level, social class, smoking, and positively affected by the perceptions of tourists with disabilities ($p < 0.05$). It was also determined that there was a strong positive relationship between “revisit and recommendation intentions”, and “customer satisfaction and perceptions of tourists with disabilities”.

Conclusion: The study found that a positive increase in the perceptions of disabled tourists increases customer satisfaction and revisit intention. It was also found that socioeconomic level affects customer satisfaction and revisit intention; satisfaction and intention of individuals with higher socioeconomic level were lower than the others.

Keywords: Accessible tourism, disability, satisfaction, revisit, recommendation

INTRODUCTION

According to the World Health Organization, health means not only the absence of disease and disability but also a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being. Disability is the inability of an individual to perform normal life functions due to permanent loss of function, or organ dysfunction in performing his or her physical, mental or emotional activities (WHO, 2023). In the Declaration on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, individuals with disabilities are defined as individuals who are unable to perform personal or social tasks required in daily life due to congenital or acquired deficiencies in their physical or mental abilities (Burnett & Baker, 2001).

Accessible tourism is a type of tourism designed to ensure that individuals with physical disabilities, those with hearing or visual impairments, and even those with special needs can participate in touristic activities equally and independently (Toker & Kaçmaz, 2015). Accessible tourism refers to the process of having no barriers which prevent individuals from having a thorough tourist experience. This type of tourism requires strategic cooperation between interested parties. A range of interested parties, including tourist destinations, accommodation businesses,

transportation providers, tour operators, local governments, non-governmental organizations, and individuals with disabilities, should come together to support and promote accessible tourism (Akıncı et al., 2021; Şen et al., 2014).

The ratio of individuals with disabilities to other people in the total population in the world has increased significantly. People with disabilities experience many problems in their social lives and thus they want to isolate themselves from such life. Therefore, appropriate arrangements should be made for individuals with disabilities so that they do not have difficulties in their daily lives. Such arrangements should also be made in tourism activities. Tourism is a social activity that meets people's needs for vacation, rest, discovery and being acquainted with different cultures (Bayih& Singh, 2020).

The tourism sector has the obligation to provide a service from which everyone can benefit equally; thus, it is important to provide accessible services for individuals with disability participate in tourism activities (Öktem & Akdu, 2022; Wang et al., 2021). In order for individuals with disability participate in tourism activities actively, their needs must be met. If barriers that prevent individuals with disabilities from participating in tourism activities are eliminated or minimized, they will be able to participate in tourism activities more (Akdu&Akdu, 2018). Minimizing of such barriers will also make them happier. Having had a happy experience will encourage individuals with disabilities to revisit the destinations they have visited and to recommend others to visit these destinations. In addition, individuals with disabilities constitute an important potential market in travel and tourism when their needs are met. Thus, accessible tourism has recently become popular in the tourism sector with names such as inclusive tourism, accessible tourism, disabled-friendly tourism and tourism for everyone (Bulgan & Çarıkçı, 2016; Toker & Kaçmaz, 2015). In Turkey, Alanya is one of the leading destinations where tourism activities are carried out (Bayih& Singh, 2020; Toker & Kaçmaz, 2015). Alanya has come to the forefront by making significant investments in tourism activities, especially for individuals with disabilities, since the early 2000s. In 2003, Alanya Municipality started working on the “Alanya for All (Tourism for all)” project so that individuals with disabilities residing in Alanya or coming to Alanya for tourism activities can participate in tourism activities. With this project, it was aimed to make the necessary arrangements to facilitate the lives of not only individuals with disabilities but also children, older adults and pregnant women, and to increase the accessibility of individuals

with disabilities by identifying and eliminating existing deficiencies (Tourismforall, 2020). In order to implement this project, which was started in 2003 to change the infrastructure and to carry out international marketing and promotion activities, Alanya Municipality signed the “Accessible Tourism City Alanya” protocol on December 02, 2011 with the participation of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey, the Ministry of Family and Social Policies-General Directorate of Services for the Disabled and the Elderly, Alanya Tourism Operators Association and Alanya Chamber of Commerce and Industry. In addition to these efforts, Alanya became the first member of European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT) in Turkey, which carries out activities on accessibility for people with disabilities supported by the European Commission (ENAT, 2007). Thus, Alanya municipality aims to make Alanya a preferred tourism destination not only for individuals without disabilities but also for people with disabilities. Considering these factors, in the present study the immediate aim was to determine the perspectives of tourists with disability visiting Alanya regarding concepts such as disabled tourist perception, customer satisfaction and revisit intention, and determinants of such concepts. The distant aim was to provide resources for the policies and literature to be developed within the scope of accessible tourism in Alanya district.

1. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.1. Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the research consisted of tourists with disabilities who visited Alanya district at least once and stayed in 4- and 5-star hotels (97 4-star hotels and 85 5-star hotels). However, since it was not possible to reach the whole population, it was aimed to reach at least 300 participants (Hair et al., 2010; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The number of the people reached was 396.

1.2. Data Collection Tools

The following four forms were used to collect the study data: Personal Information Form, Disabled Tourist Perception Scale, Customer Satisfaction Scale, and Revisit and Recommendation Intention Scale. Data collection was conducted through face-to-face interviews using the drop-and-collect method. The interviewers spoke to the interviewees in Turkish or English.

Personal Information Form: The 23-item form was created by the researchers to determine the socio-demographic characteristics of the participating tourists with disabilities.

Disabled Tourist Perception Scale: The scale was obtained from the study titled “Disabled individuals’ perceptions of accommodation business-oriented tourism and suggestions regarding the disabled tourism market: The example of Antalya province” conducted by Öndül (2015). The scale consists of the following sub-dimensions: perception of travel agency service, perception of suitability of accommodation enterprises, perception of suitability of regions, and expectations and recommendations. The scale consists of 30 items whose responses are rated on a five-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). No items are reverse scored. The higher the score obtained from an item is, the higher the level of the perceptions of tourists with disabilities about that item is. The Cronbach's alpha value of the scale was 0.896 in Öndül's study (2015) and 0.966 in the present study.

Customer Satisfaction Scale: The scale developed by Han and Ryu (2009) to measure customer satisfaction consists of three items whose responses are rated on a five-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) and one dimension. No items are reverse scored. High scores indicate that the level of customer satisfaction is high (Han & Ryu, 2009; Keskin et al., 2020). In the present study, the Cronbach's alpha value of the scale was 0.916.

Revisit and Recommendation Intention Scale: The scale adapted to the present study based on the scale developed by Artuğer (2015) to measure revisit intention and the scale developed by Hosany et al. (2015) to measure recommendation intention consists of five items whose responses are rated on a five-point Likert type scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). No items are reverse scored. High scale scores indicate that the person's level of intention to revisit and to recommend is high (Artuğer, 2015; Hosany et al., 2015). In the present study, the Cronbach's alpha value of the scale was 0.967.

1.3. Data Analysis

The data collected from the study was analyzed using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) 25 program. In the first step of the analysis, the normality test was performed. The skewness and kurtosis values of the scales used in the study were determined. The skewness and kurtosis values ranging between -1.5 and +1.5 indicate normal distribution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). In the analysis, the skewness and kurtosis values were between -1.5 and +1.5 and it was assumed that the data were normally distributed. Therefore, percentage, frequency, arithmetic mean, correlation and multiple regression analysis were used in the analysis of the data.

1.4. Ethical Approval

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee of the Health Sciences Department at Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat University on 22 December 2022, decision number 04.

2. ANALYSIS

Of the participants, 56.2% were men, 35.1% were in the age group of 60-69 years, 35.9% were high school graduates, 55.9% had nuclear families, 39.7% had an income more than their expenses, 55.4% had children, and 42.3% had orthopedic disabilities (Table 1).

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the participants (n: 390)

Variables	N	%
Sex		
Men	219	56.2
Women	171	43.8
Age (years)		
20-29	2	0.5
30-39	34	8.7
40-49	81	20.8
50-59	82	21.0
60-69	137	35.1
≥70	54	13.8
Marital status		
Married	220	56.4
Single	170	43.6
Education		
Primary school	89	22.8
High school	140	35.9
Associate degree	59	15.1
Bachelor's degree	86	22.1
Master's degree	16	4.1
Family type		
Extended family	87	22.3
Nuclear family	218	55.9

Single parent family	85	21.8
Socialstatus		
High social status	212	54.4
Low social status	178	45.6
Income status		
Income equal to expenses	87	22.3
Income more than expenses	155	39.7
Income less than expenses	148	37.9
Having children		
Yes	216	55.4
No	174	44.6
Type of disability		
Orthopedic	165	42.3
Hearing	41	10.5
Speaking	56	14.4
Chronic disease	128	32.8
Smoking status		
Smoker	156	40.0
Non-smoker	166	42.6
Ex-smoker	68	17.4
Alcohol use		
Never	261	66.9
Occasionally	97	24.9
Once or a few times a month	15	3.8
Once or a few times a week	9	2.3
Every day	8	2.1
TOTAL	390	100

Of the participants, 65.9% came to Alanya in their own vehicles, 29.7% preferred Alanya because of accessibility (cost, distance, time), 34.6% preferred it because of activities (social activities, recreational activities etc.), 25.6% preferred it because of attractions (cultural, natural), 10% preferred it because of tourism establishments (hotel, travel agency), 92.1% intended to recommend the tourism service they received to others and 98.5% would like to revisit Alanya to receive tourism service. The countries where the participants came from were Turkey (61.8%),

England (14.1%), Russia (4.4%), Finland (3.8%), France (3.6%) and other countries (12.3%) (Table 2).

Table 2. Participants' tourism experience-related characteristics

	n	%
Mode of transport		
Own vehicle	257	65.9
Via ravel agency	88	22.6
Via tourism service broker	45	11.5
What factors affected your choice of Alanya?		
Accessibility (Cost, distance., time)	116	29.7
Activities (social activities, recreation etc.)	135	34.6
Attractions (cultural, natural)	100	25.6
Tourism enterprises (hotels, travel agencies)	39	10.0
Would you recommend the healthcare services you received here to others?		
Yes	359	92.1
No	31	7.9
Have you been to Turkey before?		
Yes	378	96.9
No	12	3.1
Would you visit Turkey again?		
Yes	384	98.5
No	6	1.5
Have you been to Alanya before?		
Anxiety	319	81.8
Depression	71	18.2
Have you experienced any negativity in Alanya?		
Yes	36	9.2
No	354	90.8
If so, what is the negativity you experienced?		
Bathrooms are small	2	5.5
Lack of path for people with disabilities	6	16.6
Lack of facilities for people with disabilities (no access to the sea, and beach, Insufficient means of transportation in the center, Environment)	19	52.7
Inappropriate sidewalks	7	19.7

Meals	2	5.5
Who do you stay with on your holiday?		
Alone	41	10.5
Family	286	73.3
Friend	63	16.2
How would you describe your holiday experience?		
I had a new experience.	62	15.9
I really enjoyed it.	151	38.7
It was exciting.	119	30.5
It was different from my previous experiences.	38	9.7
It was terrible.	20	5.1
What country do you come from?		
Turkey	241	61.8
England	55	14.1
Russia	17	4.4
Finland	15	3.8
France	14	3.6
Others	48	12.3
What is your nationality?		
Turkish	275	70.5
British	55	14.1
German	12	3.1
Ukrainian	10	2.6
Finn	5	1.3
Others	33	8.4

According to the results of the analysis, the mean scores the participants obtained from the scales were as follow: Disabled Tourist Perception Scale(\bar{x} = 3.31), Customer Satisfaction Scale(\bar{x} = 3.34) and Revisit and Recommendation Intention Scale(\bar{x} = 3.87). According to the results of the correlation analysis, there was a high-level positive relationship between the Disabled Tourist Perception Scale and Customer Satisfaction Scale, a high-level positive relationship between the Disabled Tourist Perception Scale and Revisit and Recommendation Intention Scale and a high-level positive relationship between the Customer Satisfaction Scale and Revisit, and Revisit and Recommendation Intention Scale($p<0.01$) (Table 3).

Table 3. Mean scores the participants obtained from the scales, and the results of correlation analysis

Scales	Min-Max	\bar{X}	SD	1	2	3
1. Disabled Tourist Perception Scale	1.-5	3.31	0.72	1	0.734 0.000*	0.762 0.000*
2. Customer Satisfaction Scale	1.-5	3.74	0.95		1	0.885 0.000*
3. Revisit and Recommendation Intention Scale	1.-5	3.87	1.16			1

Factors affecting customer satisfaction were examined with the multiple regression model. The results of the analysis demonstrated that the regression model was statistically significant ($F(12,378) = 40.367$, $p < 0.001$), and the independent variables explained 54% of the change in the customer satisfaction scale. According to the results of this analysis, customer satisfaction was explained by education status, smoking and disabled tourist perception, while other variables did not have a significant contribution to customer satisfaction (Table 4).

Table 4. Multiple regression analysis for the customer satisfaction and factors affecting the customer satisfaction

Variables	B	SE	β	T	p
Constant	1.743	0.980		1.780	0.000
Sex	0.011	0.066	0.006	0.167	0.867
Age	-0.255	0.461	-0.019	-0.553	0.580
Marital Status	0.110	0.103	0.057	1.059	0.290
Educational Status	-0.259	0.092	-0.115	-2.823	0.005
Family Type	-0.041	0.061	-0.029	-0.675	0.500
Social Class	-0.074	0.070	-0.039	-1.056	0.292
Income Status	-0.046	0.044	-0.037	-1.036	0.301
Having Children	-0.006	0.105	-0.003	-0.059	0.953
Smoking	-0.133	0.048	-0.101	-2.757	0.006
Alcohol Use	0.071	0.064	0.039	1.106	0.269
Disability Type	-0.006	0.015	-0.014	-0.404	0.686
Disabled Tourist Perception	0.984	0.048	0.742	20.696	0.000
Adjusted R²=0.543		F=40.367		p=0.000	
Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction					

Variables included in the model: Sex (ref: Male), Age (ref: 31 years and above), Education level (ref: primary school and above), Family type (ref: extended family), Income level (ref: income more than expenses), Disability type (ref: Hearing impairment), Marital status (ref: Married), Alcohol status (ref: Rarely/once a week/once a month), Smoking (ref: Yes)

The factors affecting Revisit and Recommendation Intention were examined with the multiple regression analysis. According to the results of the analysis, the regression model was statistically significant ($F(12,378) = 50.041$, $p < 0.001$), and the independent variables explained 60% of the variance in the Revisit and Recommendation Intention Scale. According to the results of this analysis Revisit and Recommendation Intentions were explained by social class, smoking and disabled tourist perception, while other variables did not have a significant contribution to Revisit and Recommendation Intentions (Table 5).

Table 5. Multiple regression analysis for Revisit and Recommendation Intention, and factors influencing Revisit and Recommendation Intention

Variables	B	SE	β	t	p
Constant	0.434	1.126		0.385	0.001
Sex	0.011	0.076	0.005	0.142	0.887
Age	0.357	0.529	0.022	0.675	0.500
Marital Status	0.052	0.119	0.022	0.437	0.662
Educational Status	-0.204	0.105	-0.074	-1.935	0.064
Family Type	-0.084	0.070	-0.048	-1.202	0.230
Social Class	-0.166	0.080	-0.071	-2.077	0.039
Income Status	-0.093	0.051	-0.061	-1.828	0.068
Having Children	-0.144	0.120	-0.062	-1.194	0.233
Smoking	-0.123	0.055	-0.077	-2.224	0.027
Alcohol Use	-0.017	0.074	-0.008	-0.233	0.816
Disability Type	0.003	0.017	0.005	0.164	0.870
Disabled Tourist Perception	1.225	0.055	0.754	22.425	0.000
Adjusted R ² =0.602	F=50.041	p=0.000			

Dependent Variable: Revisit and Recommendation Intention

Variables included in the model: Sex (ref: Male), Age (ref: 31 years and above), Education level (ref: above primary school), Family type (ref: extended family), Income level (ref: income more than expenses), Disability type (ref: Hearing impairment), Marital status (ref: Married), Alcohol use (ref: Rarely/once a week/once a month), Smoking (ref: Yes)

3. DISCUSSION

The concept of “Tourism for All”, which emerged in 2003, represents an approach that evaluates tourism as a sector not limited to commercial concerns, and emphasizes that tourism should be accessible to all segments of society. The main target audience of this approach includes different groups such as young people, families, older people and people with disabilities. The aim is to

make tourism more accessible not only to a certain segment but also to the whole society. However, it is not possible to say that the regulations and practices in this area in Turkey are adequate yet. More effort and investment may be required to encourage a greater number of people with disabilities to participate in tourism activities. More efforts may be required in areas such as improving accessibility standards, offering special tourism packages to people with disabilities and creating more awareness to facilitate the travel experiences of individuals with disabilities.

In the present study, of the tourists with disabilities visiting Alanya, 56.2% were men, 43.8% were women and 56.4% were married. In Öndül's study titled "Disabled individuals' perceptions of accommodation business-oriented tourism and suggestions regarding the disabled tourism market: The example of Antalya province" (2015), of the participants 66.1% were men and 33.9% were women (Öndül, 2015). In Toker and Kaçmaz's study conducted in Alanya (2015), of the participating tourists with disabilities, 43.8% were women, 56.2% were men and 59.3% were married (Toker & Kaçmaz, 2015).

Of the participants in the present study, 42.3% had orthopedic disabilities. In a study conducted by Öndül (2015) titled "Disabled individuals' perceptions of accommodation business-oriented tourism and suggestions regarding the disabled tourism market: The example of Antalya province", of the participants, 63.3% were physically disabled (Öndül, 2015). In Toker and Kaçmaz's study titled "A Research on Tourism Experiences of Individuals with Disabilities: Alanya Example" (2015), 60.8% of the participants had physical disabilities (Toker & Kaçmaz, 2015). The results of the present study are consistent with those of the aforementioned studies.

In the present study, the countries where the participants came from were Turkey (61.8%), England (14.1%), Russia (4.4%), Finland (3.8%), France (3.6%) and other countries (12.3%). As for the nationality of the participants, 70.5% were Turkish, 14.1% were British, 3.1% Germans, 2.6% were Ukrainians, 1.3% were Finns and 8.4% were from other countries. In Bulgan and Çarıkçı's study (2016), the majority of the participants were in the middle age group and most of them were German, Russian and Turkish (Bulgan & Çarıkçı, 2016). In Toker and Kaçmaz's study titled "A Research on Tourism Experiences of Individuals with Disabilities: Alanya Example" (2015), the participants were from Germany, Norway and Russia (Toker & Kaçmaz, 2015). The results of the present study are consistent with those of the aforementioned studies. These results indicate that Alanya hosts visitors with disabilities from various countries and that there is diversity

among these visitors in terms of variables such as sex, marital status, type of disability, country and nationality. Such data can provide significant information for destination managers and tourism enterprises in planning and developing services for tourists with disabilities.

According to the results of the regression analysis conducted in the present study, the participants' satisfaction with tourism was affected by variables such as educational status, smoking and disabled tourist perception whereas their revisit and recommendation intention was affected by variables such as social class, smoking and disabled tourist perception. According to the results of the correlation analysis, there was a relationship between disabled tourist perception, tourist satisfaction, and revisit and recommendation intention. In Keskin et al.'s study (2020), a positive relationship was determined between satisfaction, revisit and recommendation intention, and revisit and recommendation intentions were affected by satisfaction (Keskin et al., 2020). In Mancı's study (2022), customer satisfaction positively affected the participants' revisit and recommendation intentions (Mancı, 2022). In Öktem and Akdu's study (2022), customer satisfaction positively affected revisit and recommendation intentions (Öktem & Akdu, 2022). In several studies conducted in the international literature, a positive relationship was determined between tourist satisfaction, and revisit and recommendation intentions; in other words, tourist satisfaction affected revisit and recommendation intentions (Kanwel et al., 2019; Marques et al., 2021; Shi et al., 2022; Zeng et al., 2021). The results of the present study are consistent with those of the aforementioned studies. Studies in the literature indicate that destination image is the most important factor affecting tourist satisfaction and revisit intention (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020; Jeong & Kim, 2019; Lam et al., 2020; Saçlı et al., 2019; Türkeri & Akyürek, 2021; Uner et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2021). According to this result, destinations aimed at being a destination for disabled tourism and adopt the "Tourism for All" approach should make their new destinations suitable for tourists with disabilities in order to attract them.

The perception that a destination is disabled-friendly can affect tourists' intentions to visit that destination. Tourists with disabilities want to feel comfortable and safe in the places they travel to. Accessibility means that facilities and services are easily accessible for individuals with disabilities. When tourists with disabilities have positive holiday experiences, their intention to revisit increases and they are more likely to recommend the destination. Therefore, destinations

should make efforts to improve the perceptions of tourists with disabilities and raise their accessibility standards (Devile & Kastenholz, 2020; Lim, 2020; Załuska et al., 2022).

4. CONCLUSIONS

A destination's image can be built through promotion and communication. When a destination promotes its accessibility and services for tourists with disabilities, and communicates with them, it can build a positive image. To be knowledgeable about reputation of a destination from the perspective of customers, tourists with disabilities mostly review previous visitors' view and feedback. Customers' positive views about a destination and the good reputation of the destination can gain the trust of tourists with disabilities.

A significant result of the study is that as the perceptions of tourists with disabilities improve, and that their customer satisfaction and revisit intention increase. Another significant result is that socioeconomic level is a determinant of customer satisfaction, and revisit and recommendation intentions, and those with better socioeconomic levels have worse customer satisfaction and revisit and recommendation intentions than do others.

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