

VFR TOURISM MOTIVATION: A CASE STUDY OF YOUNG ACADEMICS

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ABSTRACT

Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) tourism takes great attention from scholars in recent years. Due to its consisting a large part of the tourism market, understanding the motivations of VFR travelers is essential. Several reasons determine the motivations of VFR travelers. The duration of the trip, the attractions of the destination, the frequency of visits are some of these reasons.

Although it is a subject that has been studied extensively in international literature in recent years, it is possible to say that it is a new subject especially in Turkey. Therefore, it is anticipated that this study may offer an insight into other studies to be conducted. Academicians are an important sample of visiting friends and relatives in terms of income. In this study, the motivation of visiting friends or relatives was tried to be revealed by interviewing 10 academicians with similar income and education levels. As a result of the interviews, it was revealed that traditions mostly affect VFR travels. In Turkish traditions, it is especially important to visit family elders and other relatives on holidays. Therefore, the duration of stay can take a few days. Another important factor is the budget. VFR travels are preferred to lodgings because they are more affordable. Participants stated that they preferred to stay with their friends rather than with their relatives.

Keywords: Tourism, Travel, Motivation, Visiting Friends, Visiting Relatives, Hosting Friends, Hosting Relatives.

VFR TURİZM MOTİVASYONU: GENÇ AKADEMİSYENLERE YÖNELİK BİR VAKA ÇALIŞMASI

ÖZ

Aile ve Akraba Ziyareti (VFR) turizmi son yıllarda turizm literatürü tarafından büyük ilgi görmektedir. Turizm pazarının büyük bir bölümünü oluşturması nedeniyle, VFR gezginlerinin motivasyonlarını anlamak büyük önem taşımaktadır. VFR gezginlerinin motivasyonlarını birkaç neden belirlemektedir. Gezinin süresi, destinasyonun çekicilikleri, ziyaretlerin sıklığı bu nedenlerden bazılarıdır.

Son yıllarda, uluslararası literatürde çokça çalışılan bir konu olmasına rağmen, özellikle Türkiye'de yeni bir konu olduğunu söylemek mümkündür. Bu nedenle bu çalışmanın, yapılacak diğer çalışmalara ışık tutabileceği öngörülmektedir. Akademisyenler gelirleri itibarıyla arkadaş ve akraba ziyaretinin önemli bir örneğidir. Bu çalışmada, benzer gelir ve eğitim düzeyine sahip akademisyenlerle görüşülerek, arkadaş veya akraba ziyaretinin motivasyonu ortaya konulmaya çalışılmıştır. Görüşmeler sonucunda, en çok geleneklerin VFR seyahatlerini etkilediği ortaya çıkmıştır. Türk geleneklerinde tatillerde aile büyüklerini ve diğer akrabaları ziyaret etmek özellikle önemlidir. Bu nedenle kalış süresi birkaç gün sürebilir. Bir diğer önemli faktör ise bütçedir. VFR seyahatleri daha ekonomik olduğu için konaklama işletmelerine alternatif olarak tercih edilmektedir. Katılımcılar, akrabaları yerine arkadaşları ile kalmayı tercih ettiklerini belirtmişlerdir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Turizm, Seyahat, Motivasyon, Arkadaş Ziyareti, Akraba Ziyareti, Arkadaş Ağırılama, Akraba Ağırılama.

INTRODUCTION

Visiting Friends and Relatives (in short VFR) tourism is not a new phenomenon, but it is a subject that doesn't take great attention from scholars (Backer, 2012). Until the 90s, this phenomenon has been a neglected and underestimated subject in tourism research (Shani & Uriely, 2012). But VFR is reputed to be one of the oldest types of tourism. It also has a significant effect on the magnitude and duration of the travel, and repetition of the relationship between visitors and hosts (Damián & Ramirez, 2020).

VFR visitors, whether they have friends and/or relatives there, or even originally were born there, might have some priority about social and/or experiential connection to the place where they visit (Tran et al., 2018). Therefore, it is essential to understand the motivations of VFR travelers. Some of them do not have tourist motivation during their travel. As an example, visiting the local tourist attractions may not be a priority. Several reasons such as the purpose of the trip, time limit, high frequency of the visit, the inadequacy of the tourist attractions, etc. can determine the motivation of the travel (Zátori et al., 2019). In addition, there is still more to learn about how cultural norms may influence the behaviors of, and interactions between, hosts and guests in different societies (Taheri et al, 2017).

In Turkey VFR is not just a simple journey, it is mostly related to traditions. In some cases, the VFR is even more of a necessity than voluntary. In this study, young academicians were interviewed to measure VFR motivation, hosting, and visiting friends separately. In the first part of the paper, the literature review is provided for understanding better the concept of VFR. In the second part of the paper, interviews were analyzed. The results obtained according to the statements of the participants were evaluated in three categories: motivation for VFR, visiting family and relatives, and hosting friends and relatives.

1. VISITING FRIENDS AND RELATIVES

VFR is an important type of tourism all over the world. Despite its importance, it is a subject which receive little attention from tourism scholars (Griffin, 2013a). Scientific research on VFR started in the early 90s (Yousuf and Backer, 2015). Backer (2009) stated that VFR is just a cursory mention in core tourism teaching textbooks, and does not even make it to the index of other tourism textbooks. VFR tourists have sometimes been taken for granted or intentionally disregarded in favor of focusing on the relatively higher value, more genuine, and holiday-making tourists (Scheyvens, 2007). In part, this is related to a lack of exact data and research on this segment of the travel market (Morrison et al., 2000a). Briefly, VFR tourism is not as valuable as other kinds of tourism, that it does not require special attention. It cannot be stimulated by tourism planners because it is not subject to the influence of tourism marketing efforts. Even if it could be stimulated it would be influenced by the same marketing efforts as those promoting mainstream recreational tourism (Lee et al., 2005). Furthermore, VFR tourism was first asserted as a permanent classification for movements that could not be classified into the main categories of tourism and since there was no strong lobbying group, little marketing efforts were made to target this segment (Hay, 2008).

A VFR travel/tourism is a "trip to stay temporarily with a friend or relative away from the guest's normal place of residence, that is, in another settlement or, for travel within a continuous settlement, over 15 km one-way from the guests' home" (Boyne et al, 2002). According to Ma et al. (2015) VFR tourists can be described as "the first and second-generation immigrants, most commonly ethnically different from the majority population of the country of residence who return to their countries to visit their friends and relatives". Yuan et al. (1995) also stated a VFR as one "who reported visiting friends and relatives as the major purpose for the trip". In line with these definitions VFRs include refugees, immigrants, students, asylum seekers, or displaced people for any kind of reason (Behrens & Leder, 2019). This type of visitors generally travels with other people and usually stays at homes of relatives or friends (Altmark et al., 2019).

VFR is one of the important components of tourism economies (Rogerson, 2015). Although VFR is a very important phenomenon in terms of economics, it is a neglected area in tourism research as stated before (Backer, 2007). Largely due to a lack of accurate data and research on this segment,

the economic contribution of the VFR market to host destinations has been underestimated. This underestimation may be related to the non-commercial accommodation usage and assumed within-group homogeneity of VFR travelers (Lee et al., 2005). A more stable demand, greater dispersal of spending, and engagement of residents as consumers are the economic indications of VFR tourism (Griffin, 2013b). Although researchers have found that VFR travelers tend to spend more money on meals and catering, this could not be confirmed. But, all of the VFR travelers do not stay with their friends and relatives. According to the study of Backer (2010a), 26% of the VFRs stayed in commercial accommodation. Also in their study, Müri and Sägesser (2003) found that about one-third of the Swiss VFR travelers use commercial accommodation. In fact, these types of tourists rank high among the most overnight stays (Yap & Allen, 2011). In the study conducted by Lehto et al. (2001), which analyzed international VFR travelers to the United States, VFRs for whom VFR was the main travel purpose differed in their spending patterns from those for whom it was a secondary purpose. VFRs who used commercial accommodation had different expenditures from those who stayed in friends' or relatives' homes.

2. METHODOLOGY

VFR travel has become an important issue especially for countries like Turkey that give importance to their traditions. In countries where relatives and friends travel flowing is being occurred intensely, it is important to take the view of the individuals concerned about this issue. It is vital to ensure to meet the increasing demands of travelers, who are the new generation of tourists, for the sustainability of tourism businesses (Schänzel & Yeoman, 2014). In addition to its market potential and economic contribution to destinations, VFR tourism consists of a unique guest–host interaction and a particular connection between tourists and destinations (Huang et al., 2017). As the geographic distribution of the family and friendship network increases, along with disposable income and leisure time and the potential for growth in the tourism sector, nationally and internationally, is getting stronger (Boyne, 2003).

VFR travel contains overnight stays. Hence there is a potential for encouraging VFRs to prolong their stay by combining their travel with visiting restaurants, local attractions, shops, or a night out (Bischoff & Koenig-Lewis, 2007). The scheduling of VFR travels can be seen as an important seasonal resource in balancing the high and low seasons of tourism (Seaton & Palmer, 1997). Briefly, VFR travel has the potential to be transformed into VFR tourism. If they are aware of this potential, businesses can regard using VFR travelers to increase sales into the local market (Dutt & Ninov, 2017).

In this study, phenomenological analysis, one of the qualitative research methods, was used. Phenomenological analysis is used to describe the essence of the experience of the people who participated in the research on a phenomenon (Creswell, 2003). Phenomenological research focuses on the perception and speaking of objects and events rather than describing events according to a predetermined categorical system, conceptual and scientific criteria (Pietkiewicz and Smith, 2014). There is no definite criterion for the size of the universe in qualitative research (Bengtsson, 2016). Here, it is more important whether the individuals interviewed are suitable for the purpose of the research. The large number of participants who are the subject of the sampling may cause difficulties in the analysis of the data obtained through observation and interview. Therefore, in qualitative studies, it is aimed to obtain a whole that will represent all the elements such as diversity, richness and difference that may exist in the universe, without worrying about generalizing (Karataş, 2015). In the research of Bischoff and Koenig-Lewis (2007), it is asserted that universities represent largely, frequently underestimated, drivers of VFR tourism and that important differences exist between the friends and the relatives' components. Academicians are an important sample of visiting friends and relatives in terms of income. According to Creswell (2014), the sample size should be between 3 and 10 in phenomenological studies. Although this number varies according to the quality of the participants and the study, it can be said that the saturation level can be reached at a level that can repeat the study or that each new data added does not create an extra theme (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Saunders et al., 2017; O'Reilly & Parker, 2013; Guest et al., 2006).

In accordance with this purpose in this study, face-to-face interviews were conducted with 10 young academics that have similar ages and budgets, to determine their views and preferences about VFR travel/tourism (Creswell, 2014). The samples were randomly selected from academics who had previously been involved in VFR tourism activities. The interviews were recorded with a voice recorder. Beforehand, permission was requested to have their voices recorded in order to be comfortable in this regard. It has been specifically stated that the names of individuals will not be included in the study. Interviews lasting 65 minutes on average were conducted with the participants (Williams, 2007). Afterwards, the interviews were deciphered by listening and all the words were transferred to the paper. With this method, which is also called manifesto analysis, all words are written exactly (Bengtsson, 2016). In order to make the analysis more effective, the interviews were listened to three times (Ritchie et al., 2003).

This study was conducted between April and August in 2019. The participants' ages ranged from 26 to 32 years. Three of them are married (P1, P4, P6). All of the participants indicated that they stay with their friends rather than relatives. All of them said that they prefer to stay in a hotel rather than staying with relatives. Participants were interviewed with questions such as;

- how do you feel like staying in someone's home,
- whether you want to stay with your friends in your friends,
- how to behave when your guests arrive at your home,
- which factors affect your holiday decision.

3. FINDINGS

Three outcomes have emerged according to the participants' expressions. The first one is the motivation VFR for travel. These are Traditional motives (visiting elders, seeing holidays as an opportunity to visit relatives and friends), Family situations (being married or single, having children), budget, etc. The second is the effects of visiting someone. These are: Feeling like a burden, traditional thoughts, the choice between relatives and friends, etc. The last one is the effects of being a host. The duration of the stay and the budget are important at this point. Other influences are the desires of the guests, the manner of the guest's behavior, the Turkish traditions, and the differences of opinions between host and visitor.

Table 1: Results of Participants Approach to the VFR Tourism

Motivations	Visiting Friends/Relatives	Hosting Friends/Relatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turkish Traditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visiting elders - Feel obliged • Residence of host in a popular destination • Chance for staying longer • Entertainment purposes • Being parents • Budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cheaper alternative of lodgings - Spending less money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling like a burden <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helping for the housework - Buying gifts - Not to try using as a hotel • The choice between of staying friends or relatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget constraints (Increasing daily spending) • Duration of accommodation • Turkish traditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desires of the guests - Making guests comfortable • Differences between hosting friends or relatives

a. Motivation for VFR

Although there are many reasons to participate in VFR travel, it can be said that participants seem to be traveling with more traditional motives. Visiting relatives is an important concept in

Turkish traditions, almost like a necessity. The participants say when they do not visit their relatives they would be sorry. Especially family elders want to spend more time with their grandkids so they want to be visited (Schänzel & Yeoman, 2015). As an example, P1 mentioned that *“Our families expect from us to visit them. They can take an attitude if we do not go. My husband considers staying at the hotel during the holidays as disrespectful”*. Likewise, P4 indicated that *“I prefer to spend long holidays with my relatives. They also expect me to visit them. If I stay in a hotel to spend my holiday (like religious holidays), they would be disappointed”*. P8 also commented that *“Staying in your relatives’ house is like an obligation. It may be a shame to stay at the hotel in a destination where your relatives live during your trip. Up to two or three days, staying in someone’s home is a normal time. I prefer to stay in the hotel if this time extends”*. Briefly visiting relatives is based on visiting elders of the family by younger family members (Lockyer & Ryan, 2007). Specifically, long holidays are seen as an opportunity to visit relatives who have not been in interaction for a long time (Schänzel & Smith, 2011). P1 stated that *“My husband sees the holidays as an opportunity to visit relatives”*, P5 added *“I prefer to spend my long holidays with my family and relatives. They also expect me to come. I feel close myself to my family. My relationship with my relatives is also very good”*.

The nature of the trip can vary when visiting friends or relatives residing in more popular tourist destinations. The duration of the stay ceases to be "necessary" and typical holiday activities such as visiting attractions, going to the beach, visiting food and beverage venues become part of the visit (Backer, 2008). Unlike the motivation of visiting relatives, visiting friends is fulfilled for more entertainment purposes. The participants stated that they visit their friends for the purpose of having fun and spending time together. Visiting friend trips have shorter duration and activities such as going bars, nightclubs, restaurants, discos during the trip (Lockyer & Ryan, 2007). According to Backer et al., (2017) those who visit relatives spent more time at the destination than those visiting friends. P5 declared that *“When I go to a destination, I want to tour the city with someone I know. So, he/she can guide me during a short time, he/she can introduce me to that region”*. P7 also stated that *“I do not prefer to spend my holiday with my family. I might go somewhere with my brother. I do not like to make plans afore time. The holiday decision spontaneously evolves”* and P8 commented as *“I have no close relationship with my relatives. They live in different cities. That’s why our relationship is a little bit broken. My sister lives abroad. When I visit her I do my holiday at the same time. I can stay at my sister’s house for a long time”*.

Participants with little children give priority to the comfort of their children when making holiday decisions. According to Schänzel, (2012), families with little children represent a significant proportion of the population. Therefore, it is important to understand their needs. As an example, P6 quoted that *“I try to choose places where my child can be comfortable when giving a holiday decision. I prefer not staying at someone else’s house. I feel like it’s being an extra burden for the host when you have a child. When you have a child, you have to make your plans according to your child. If the host has a child, I can feel more comfortable”*.

Budget is another factor in VFR travel/tourism. Participants stated that they prefer to stay at the hotel as long as the budgets are available. Moscardo et al. (2000) mentioned that travelers who visit their relatives and friends spend at least one night in lodgings. Domestic tourism is largely associated with an increase in VFR, especially during periods of severe recession. But people prefer to go to a relative or friend’s second/vacation home to avoid spending money on tourism accommodation and restaurants (Papatheodorou & Arvanitis, 2014). Also, VFR travelers spent less money when they stay in their friends or relatives’ houses (Jang et al., 2003). In the study of Morrison et al. (2000b), in contrast to the other tourists, VFR travelers spend less money on food and less time visiting tourist attractions because of staying with friends and relatives. P1 stated that *“It makes sense to spend our holiday with our relatives or friends because of our debt”*; P3 declared that *“My holiday decisions depend on the budget. I can stay with my friends if my budget does not allow me to stay in lodgings. Nonetheless, staying at the hotel is my top priority”*. P4 said that he/she would rather stay at the hotel if his/her budget is available, adding that *“I don’t want to disturb both my friends and my relatives”*. In a similar manner, P5 mentioned that *“I prefer to stay with my friends and relatives*

because the budget is limited". P6 also supported this by saying that *"The budget is important to me. I set my accommodation plans according to my budget. I prefer not to stay in someone's home as much as possible. I'd rather not go on a holiday"*. P8 also stated that *"Age and budget status affect staying with family or friends. When you are young and your budget is limited, staying in a hotel can be a luxury. It makes more sense to stay in someone's home"*.

Unlike family ties, friendship associations are less institutional and the moral framework is weaker. Therefore, binding obligations are largely based on voluntary practices (Gaftar & Tchetchik, 2017). This is closely related to the relationship level with relatives. Participants indicate that if they were close to their relatives they would prefer to stay with them (Ying-xue et al., 2013). As an example, P3 stated that *"The closeness to relatives is important. My friends are always come first because my relationship with my relatives is not as good as with my friends"*; P5 indicated that, *"My feelings, about staying with friends or relatives depend on my relationship with the person that I stay. It does not matter whom I stay with, the important thing is our closeness"*. P7 also said that *"It is not a problem for me to stay in the home of a relative or a friend. Our relationship degree is important. I would rather stay at the hotel if he/she is not close to me. Almost all of the participants stated that they prefer to stay with friends rather than their relatives. Stepchenkova et al. (2015) also found in their research that there are more visiting friends travelers/tourists in the international and domestic groups. P1 stated that "We cannot choose our relatives but we can choose our friends. Being with my friend makes me feel more comfortable. I can stay with them because my friends have the same ideas as me. But tolerance from kinship ties feels like necessity"*; P2 also mentioned *"I prefer to spend time with my friends, rather than my relatives. I have to be very close to them so that I can stay with my relatives"*.

b. Implications of Visiting Friends and Relatives

Participants indicated that they feel like a burden when visiting friends or relatives. Most of them said they try to make easier hosts' lives by buying gifts, helping housework, etc. Generally, a person who visits someone feels obligated to pay the debt at some point by buying gifts. But participants also expect the same manner when they are visited too (Capistrano & Weaver, 2017). According to Turkish customs and religious teachings, the duration of the guests' visit should not be too long. It is best if a guest can stay up to three days (Altunbay, 2016). P1 said *"Not to be a burden for hosts during my stay, I help with housekeeping, shop for the house, clean the room that I stay"*; similarly, P2 *"I try not to stay too long not to be a burden. I would help financially during my stay"*. P7 also indicated that *"I prefer to buy gifts if I go to someone's house. I certainly ask if my friend or relative is available. I would rather stay in the hotel if I am going to stay for more than a day or two"*. P4 mentioned as *"I help to tidy the house to avoid being a burden at home. I try to be careful to keep everything organized"*. P6 similarly *"When I stay at someone else's home, I try to create an advantage of being a visitor. I try not to ruin their plans. I try to spend time together. If I have a 10-day vacation, I have to spend at least three days with my host. I feel the need to balance"*. When P9 said that *"I don't have any expectation from the host. He/she just should be glamorous and sincere"*; P10 indicated that *"When I visit someone I want to host continue to her/his normal life. I don't have much expectation. So, I do not want from the host to do something special for me"*.

There is a behavioral difference between VFR and non-VFR travelers (Backer & Lynch, 2017). If a visitor's first aim is to visit a destination, he/she prefers to be a non-VFR traveler. Many VFR travelers who stay with friends or relatives clearly do not consider VFR as their main aim of travel; and similarly, many travelers who see themselves VFR as their main purpose do not stay with their hosts (Munoz et al., 2017). For example, P9 said that *"If my purpose of travel is to visit a destination I would definitely not stay with friends or relatives. I do not use their house as a hotel. I am against this situation"*.

Participants generally said they would prefer to stay in the hotel if they had the chance that they would not be able to be comfortable in someone else's home. In very difficult circumstances they have stated that they will stay with friends instead of relatives. P1 said *"I feel uncomfortable*

when I go to someone else's house. I want a bedroom of my own because I am married or I want to wash my clothes easily. But when you go to another house, you have to comply with the rules of those who live there". Similarly, P2 indicated "It feels comfortable to stay at my friend's home. However, if my friend lives with his/her family, there could be some conflicts. That's why I prefer to visit a friend who lives alone". P3 stated "In general, staying in someone else's home always disturbs me. It restricts my freedom. I cannot get out easily. However, I would prefer to stay at my friend's home when necessary". With a similar idea, P4 commented "I do not choose to stay in someone else's house. It's not for me to use someone else's sheets. Even if I stay in a five-star hotel, I bring my bedsheets from my own house". P9 also said "I always prefer hotels first. I don't want to disturb my friends. I do not think anyone can host people at home for a long time. Now there are hotels everywhere. We have more possibilities. People live in smaller houses. The possibilities of accommodating guests have diminished"; lastly P10 said "I feel more comfortable when staying with my friends. When I go to my relatives' houses, I feel that I have to be more formal. Mealtime is certain. Bedtime is certain. But I am more comfortable when I stay with my friends. We can decide together for anything".

c. *Implications of Hosting Friends and Relatives*

The main factors that homeowners consider when hosting VFR tourists are the duration of accommodation and budget constraints (Min-En, 2006). Most of the hosts (91%) have additional costs when they are visited by their friends and relatives (McKercher, 1996). Moreover, they incur direct incremental expenses that are estimated to be about 25% of the expenses incurred by their guests (McKercher, 1995). P2 stated that "When guests come, I increase my daily spending. I like to eat and drink with my friends. This means more spending. But, I also expect this thoughtful behavior from them". P4 similarly commented "Visitors coming home can affect me, especially if I have to study at home. In this case, for example, if the guest has a child, it may discomfort me. Hosting can also enforce the budget because of shopping more". P3 as not caring about the budget said that "The guests should eat what I eat; their expectation should not be too high".

In the research conducted by McKercher (1996) the hosts stated that most of the visitors (% 95) stay with them instead of staying in lodgings. P5 supported this by saying "Staying at the hotel always bothers me. I would like to explore different places that I haven't been to before. It is my pleasure to do this with a friend or relative". P7 also stated "It does not bother me that my friend or relative come to the city that I live and stay in the hotel. I offer him/her to stay at my house, but if they don't I wouldn't be disappointed". Staying at home provides a cheaper alternative to paid accommodations (McLeod & Busser, 2014). P9 made a comparison between staying at hotel or friend's/relative's house by saying that "The budget is also important at this point. It is necessary to consider the budget because staying with friends or relatives could create a financial advantage compared to staying in the hotel".

Participants regard it as a necessity to make their guests comfortable especially when relatives arrive (Young et al., 2007). They feel an obligation to find answers to their questions, to make activities with them, to determine what they can be satisfied with, and to explore places that they to go (Dutt et al., 2016). Participants added that it is an important issue in Turkish traditions to make guests comfortable. In the sense of Turkish hospitality, there is no expectation from the guest who comes to the house, on the contrary, everybody in the housework together to make the guest comfortable (Altunbay, 2016). In Turkish traditions, guests are important people. The phrase "guests should not to be flawed when treating" is the most important sentence explaining the hospitality of the Turks (Güler, 2010). Repeated hospitality is offered to people that also have "open doors", with systems of hospitality involving reciprocity. Therefore, obligations of hosting can be a trying experience (Larsen et al., 2007). P9 said that "There is a definition of hosting in Turkey. The hosts have embarrassment towards their guests. So you have the same feeling which is mutual. When you get a gift, you feel you have to buy a gift either. This embarrassment separates us from other countries". P4 also indicated that "It is important to welcome guests in accordance with the Turkish family structure. The guests should be comfortable, the best food should be sipped, and the most

comfortable beds should be prepared". P5, *"I feel an obligation to do everything great when a guest comes to my house. I want them to treat me the same way. I think it originates from the traditional lifestyle"*. Likewise, P7 stated *"It is very important that my guests feel comfortable. If necessary, I'd give my own bed. I can do anything to make them happy"*.

Participants stated that there may have differences in their ideas and tastes in the cultural context with their relatives, thus this situation making it difficult to host their relatives. Participants noted that their friends are as important as their relatives and they have the advantage of having common interests and pleasures (Yousuf & Backer, 2017). As an example, P1 indicated that *"Friendship is more intimate. They can see my house as theirs. But when it comes to relatives, the house must be clean and the food must be made. P10 supported this idea "It is harder for me to spend time in the same house with my relatives rather than friends. you can discuss with your friend when necessary, and solve problems. But the communication style with relatives is very different.*

4. CONCLUSION

VFR tourism attracts more and more researchers in recent years. It is possible to see that the researches on this subject have increased in the literature. While analyzing Backer (2010b) this topic in her thesis; Asiedu (2008) reviews the socioeconomic and travel characteristics of the VFRs and examines the economic contribution of VFR tourism to the destination. Since it is a new topic, most of the researchers like Backer (2012), Seaton (1997) and Ramachandran (2006) approach to this subject by conceptualisation. Some of them have focused on hosting side of VFR like Shani and Uriely (2012), McKercher (1995) and Young et. al (2007).

When studies on VFR are reviewed in recent years, it can be seen that different results have been obtained. For example Petry et al. (2021) reveal the hosts' spending is related with the budget of visitors. Hosts' direct and indirect spending increases when visitors come. Furthermore, two different hosting styles revealed in the study: functional hosting, which is more traditional, guest-oriented, about exceptional hospitality, and integrative hosting, based on a more modern, host-oriented hospitality. According to Miah and King (2021) these kind of mobilities are acts of belonging with unwritten rules of mutual obligations and choreographed itineraries to the houses of relatives and friends and to tourist sites. According to Dutt and Ninov (2017), there are many factors for VFR travel such as the type of visitors, the age of visitors, education of visitors, choice of accommodation, the reason for visiting. Their study indicates that the younger and more educated the visitor, who stayed with the host, traveled to see the host and was closer to their friends than relatives. Backer and King (2017) stated as VFRs usually tend to belong to lower household income groups who have lower education levels and older than non-VFR travelers. Thus, VFR may be a good opportunity for socio-economically disadvantaged individuals to engage in tourism. Also, Boyne et al. (2002) divide young travelers into five categories as:

- Friends or relatives move
- You move
- Relatives whose antecedents have migrated
- Friendships made at a distance or away from home (possibly through work or through holiday trips)
- Long-lost relatives (separated at birth, adopted children, etc.)

In the study conducted by Seaton and Palmer (1997), the following results were obtained:

- Although VFR visitors generally spend less than other tourists; their expenditure is high in some segments as travel, services and retail considering per trip and nightly basis.
- VFR movements often consist of short breaks.
- VFR tourism has a feature that spans the whole year. It may remain at high levels during periods of decline in other types of tourism.
- VFR destinations are separated from recreational areas as highly populated urban areas.

- Young people aged 15-34; single people and couples with children aged under 15, and people in upper social grades are the main socio-demographic segments for VFR.

In this study it is explored that young academics give priority to the Turkish tradition which is a part of motivation for VFR. They stated that this is almost like an obligation. Because elders wait from them to visit. The participants also prefer to visit friends or relatives who reside in popular destinations. And one of the most important motivation for participants is budget. Staying with friends and relatives is a cheaper alternative of lodgings.

The participants feel like burden when they visit their friends or relatives. Therefore, they help for the houseworks, buy gifts or not to try using as a hotel. Most of the participants mentioned that they prefer stay with their friends rather than relatives.

When participants look from the perspective of being host, they indicated that daily spending is increasing because of the guests. They consider the duration of accommodation. They also discourse on Turkish traditions which are also important when hosting guests.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Amaç

Akraba ve arkadaş ziyareti (Visiting Friends and Relatives) kavramı yeni bir kavram olmamasına rağmen, araştırmacıların yeni yeni ilgisini çekmektedir. Özellikle doksanlı yıllara kadar oldukça ihmal edilen bir konu olan bu kavram bilinen en eski seyahat türünü temsil etmektedir. Akraba ve arkadaş seyahatinden doğan bu turizm türünde ziyaretçiler, orada doğmuş olsun olmasın, ziyaret ettikleri yerle sosyal ve deneyimsel bağlantı kurma konusunda birtakım önceliklere sahip olabilmektedirler. Bu noktada bu turistlerin motivasyonlarını anlayabilmek önemlidir. Akraba ve arkadaş ziyareti özellikle Türkiye gibi geleneksel ülkeler için önemli bir konu haline gelmiştir. Türkiye’de bu turizm türü sadece basit bir yolculuk değil, çoğunlukla geleneklerle ilgilidir. Hatta bazı durumlarda gönüllü olmaktan çok bir zorunluluktur. Dolayısıyla akraba ve arkadaş seyahat akışının yoğun olarak yaşandığı Türkiye gibi ülkelerde, bu konuda ilgili kişilerin görüşlerinin alınması önemlidir. Bu turizm türü, pazar potansiyeline ve destinasyonlara ekonomik katkısına ek olarak, benzersiz bir misafir-ev sahibi etkileşimi ve turistler ile destinasyonlar arasında özel bir bağlantıdan oluşmaktadır. Aile ve arkadaşlık ağının coğrafi dağılımı arttıkça, harcanabilir gelir ve boş zaman ile birlikte turizm sektöründe ulusal ve uluslararası büyüme potansiyeli güçlenmektedir.

Metodoloji

Bu çalışmada nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden biri olan fenomenolojik analiz kullanılmıştır. Fenomenolojik analiz, bir fenomenle ilgili araştırmaya katılan kişilerin deneyimlerinin özünü tanımlamak için kullanılır. Bunu ölçmek adına, benzer yaş ve bütçeye sahip 10 genç akademisyen ile VFR seyahat/turizm hakkındaki görüş ve tercihlerini belirlemek amacıyla yüz yüze görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Örnekler, daha önce VFR turizm faaliyetlerinde bulunmuş akademisyenlerden rastgele seçilmiştir. Görüşmeler ses kayıt cihazı ile kayıt altına alınmıştır. Katılımcılarla ortalama 65 dakika süren görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Daha sonra görüşmeler dinlenerek deşifre edilmiş ve tüm sözler kâğıda aktarılmıştır.

Bu çalışma 2019 yılında Nisan-Ağustos ayları arasında yapılmıştır. Katılımcıların yaşları 26 ile 32 arasında değişmektedir. Üç tanesi evlidir. Katılımcıların tamamı akraba yerine arkadaşlarının yanında kaldıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Hepsi akrabalarıyla kalmaktansa otelde kalmayı tercih ettiklerini söylemiştir.

Bulgular

Akraba ve Arkadaş Ziyareti Motivasyonu

Akraba ve arkadaş ziyaretine katılmak için pek çok neden olsa da, katılımcıların daha geleneksel motiflerle seyahat ediyor gibi görüldükleri söylenebilir. Akraba ziyareti Türk geleneklerinde adeta bir ihtiyaçtır. Özellikle aile büyükleri torunlarıyla daha çok vakit geçirmek ve ziyaret edilmek istemektedirler. Akraba ziyareti, ailenin büyüklerinin genç aile üyeleri tarafından ziyaret edilmesine dayanmaktadır. Özellikle uzun tatiller, uzun süredir etkileşimde olmayan akrabaları ziyaret etmek için bir fırsat olarak görülmektedir. Gezinin doğası, daha popüler turistik yerlerde yaşayan arkadaş veya akrabaları ziyaret ederken değişebilir. Kalış süresi “gerekli” olmaktan çıkar ve turistik yerleri ziyaret etmek, sahile gitmek, yiyecek ve içecek mekanlarını ziyaret etmek gibi tipik tatil aktiviteleri ziyaretin bir parçası haline gelebilir. Akraba ziyareti motivasyonunun aksine, arkadaş ziyareti daha çok eğlence amacıyla yerine getirilmektedir.

Bütçe, bu seyahat türünde başka bir faktördür. Katılımcılar bütçeleri elverdiği sürece otelde kalmayı tercih ettiklerini belirtmişlerdir. İç turizm, özellikle şiddetli durgunluk dönemlerinde, VFR'deki artışla büyük ölçüde ilişkilidir. Ancak insanlar turistik konaklama ve restoranlara para harcamamak için bir akraba veya arkadaşının ikinci/tatil evine gitmeyi tercih etmektedirler.

Arkadaş ve Akraba Ziyaretinin Etkileri

Katılımcılar arkadaşlarını veya akrabalarını ziyaret ederken kendilerini bir yük gibi hissettiklerini belirtmişlerdir. Çoğu, hediye alarak, ev işlerine yardım ederek vb. ev sahiplerinin hayatını kolaylaştırmaya çalıştıklarını söylemiştir. Genellikle birini ziyaret eden kişi, bir noktada hediye alarak borcunu ödemek zorunda hissetmektedir. Ancak katılımcılar ziyaret edildiklerinde de aynı şekilde beklemektedirler. Türk âdetlerine ve dini öğretilerine göre misafirlerin ziyaret süresi çok

uzun olmamalıdır. Bir misafirin üç güne kadar kalabilmesi en iyisidir. Arkadaşları veya akrabalarıyla kalan birçok ziyaretçi, akraba ve arkadaş ziyaretini seyahatlerinin ana amacı olarak görmez ve benzer şekilde, bu turizm türünü asıl amaçları olarak gören birçok gezginde, ev sahipleriyle birlikte kalmamayı tercih etmektedir. Katılımcılar genel olarak, bir başkasının evinde rahat olamadıklarını ve şansları olsa otelde kalmayı tercih edeceklerini söylemişlerdir. Çok zor durumlarda akraba yerine arkadaşlarının yanında kalacaklarını belirtmişlerdir.

Arkadaş ve Akraba Ağırmanın Etkileri

Ev sahiplerinin bu turistleri ağırlarken dikkate aldıkları ana faktörler, konaklama süresi ve bütçe kısıtlamalarıdır. Ev sahiplerinin çoğu, arkadaşları ve akrabaları tarafından ziyaret edildiğinde ek maliyetlere katlanmak durumunda kalmaktadır. Ayrıca, misafirleri tarafından yapılan harcamaların yaklaşık %25'i olduğu tahmin edilen doğrudan artan harcamalara maruz kalmaktadırlar. Katılımcılar, misafirlerini rahat ettirmek adına, sorularına cevap bulma, onlarla etkinlik yapma, nelerden memnun olabileceklerini belirleme ve gidecekleri yerleri keşfetme konusunda kendilerini zorunlu hissetmektedirler. Ayrıca Türk geleneklerinde misafirleri rahat ettirmenin önemli bir konu olduğunu eklemişlerdir. Bu nedenle, ağırlama yükümlülükleri zorlu bir deneyim olabilir. Katılımcılar akrabalarıyla kültürel bağlamda fikir ve zevklerinde farklılıklar olabileceğini, bu durumun akrabalarını ağırlamayı zorlaştırdığını belirtmişlerdir. Akrabaları kadar arkadaşlarının da önemli olduğunu ve ortak ilgi ve zevklere sahip olma avantajının olduğunu belirtmişlerdir.

Sonuç

Bu çalışmada, genç akademisyenlerin akraba ve arkadaş ziyareti motivasyonunun bir parçası olan Türk geleneğine öncelik verdikleri görülmüştür. Bunun adeta bir zorunluluk gibi olduğunu ifade etmişlerdir. Bunun nedeni aile büyüklerinin ziyaret beklentisi içinde olmalarıdır. Katılımcılar ayrıca popüler destinasyonlarda ikamet eden arkadaşlarını veya akrabalarını ziyaret etmeyi tercih ettiklerini belirtmişlerdir. Katılımcılar için en önemli motivasyonlardan biri de bütçedir. Arkadaşlarla ve akrabalarla kalmak, konaklama işletmelerine göre daha ucuz bir alternatiftir.

Katılımcılar arkadaşlarını veya akrabalarını ziyaret ettiklerinde kendilerini bir yük gibi hissetmektedirler. Bu nedenle ev işlerine yardımcı olarak, hediye olarak bu yükü hafifletmeye çalışmaktadırlar. Katılımcıların çoğu akrabaları yerine arkadaşlarıyla kalmayı tercih ettiklerini belirtmişlerdir.

Katılımcılar ev sahibi olma açısından bakıldığında, misafirler nedeniyle günlük harcamaların arttığını belirtmişlerdir. Konaklama süresini dikkate almaktadırlar. Misafir ağırlarken de önemli olan yine Türk geleneklerine uymaktır.