

# Analysis of Cultural Tourism Motivation: The Case of Turkish Students<sup>\*</sup>

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The objective of this study is to understand the underlying dimensions of motivation for attending the cultural tourism among the students, and if motivation will show variation with respect to the socio-demographic composition of the students. Data were collected by the way of a self-administered questionnaire with the study sample comprising students from bachelor degree programs. The results of the study offer an important view regarding the motivation for attending cultural tourism among Turkish students. The paper ends with both practical implications for the cultural tourism organizers and some theoretical contribution to the research of cultural tourism.

*Keywords:* cultural tourism, motivation, students, Turkey

## Introduction

Cultural tourism became a big business which market share in the total tourism increased from 8% to 20% in the last decade, although relatively few tourists view themselves as “cultural tourists”. Cultural tourism is the subset of tourism concerned with a country or region’s culture, and is considered to be the oldest kind of tourism. The range of cultural tourism activities includes the use of cultural heritage assets such as archaeological sites, museums, castles, palaces, historical buildings, famous buildings, ruins, art, sculpture, crafts, galleries, ethnic communities, religious buildings and other things that represent people and their cultures (Miller, 1997). In a broad sense, cultural tourism also includes activities with a cultural content as parts of trips and visits with a combination of pursuits (Medlik, 1996).

From the cultural tourism point of view, it is important to know why tourists choose a destination, an event or a cultural asset for visiting, how the tourist feels about his/her experience. First of all, it is important to make a clear difference between two groups of tourists: one group includes tourists motivated in general by cultural attractions and the other group formed from specific cultural tourists which had an occupation linked to

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culture and play an important role in stimulating cultural consumption (Richards, 1996) and influence trends in cultural production. But destinations that want to develop a high market share for cultural tourism should strive to reach both groups and attract all types of tourists who have the potential to participate in cultural activities along with other travel-related offerings (Lord, 1999). Thus, in order to promote cultural tourism country-wide, it is important to understand what motivates people to attend cultural tourism.

Although there is abundant research on travel motivations, preferences and behaviors, until very recently research on students has been a neglected area (Grant, 2008). In this sense, this study aims to explore motives of students attending cultural events, heritage exhibits, rural places, or historical sites, collectively termed cultural tourism. For the purpose of the study, the paper starts with a review of literature on cultural tourism and motivation.

### **Literature Review**

The number of international tourist arrivals is increasing gradually despite concerns about climate change, terrorist attacks, rising oil prices and global financial crisis. Cultural attractions have become particularly important and play a vital role in tourism at all levels. However, it is extremely difficult to make a distinction between those people visiting specifically for cultural purposes and those who are incidentally taking in culture on their travels.

Culture tourism is defined as “visits by persons from outside the host community motivated wholly or in part by interest in the historical, artistic, and scientific or lifestyle/heritage offerings of a community, region, group or institution” (Silberberg, 1995, p. 361). According to Richards (2001) cultural tourism does not simply represent passive consumption of the current cultural assets but also represent participation in cultural activities such as painting, cooking, dancing etc.. By considering Richards’ argument, Smith (2009, p. 17) defined cultural tourism as “passive, active and interactive engagement with culture(s) and communities, whereby the visitor gains new experiences of an educational, creative and/or entertaining nature”. Further, Smith offers a fairly comprehensive typology of cultural tourism, including the following: heritage sites, performing art venues, visual arts, festivals and special events, religious sites, rural environments, indigenous communities and traditions, modern popular culture, and creative activities such as painting, photography and dance. In the light of these definitions of cultural tourism, a cultural tourist can be defined as the one who gains new experiences of an educational and/or entertaining nature by passive, active and interactive engagement with culture(s) and communities. However, not all cultural tourists are the same (McKercher, Ho, du Cros, & So-Ming, 2002). Though, it is important for the destination developers and managers to understand the motivations of cultural tourists in order to better manage and market their cultural assets and values in their destination.

Motivation is the initiator of the decision process in individuals. Moutinho (1987, p. 16) defined motivation as a “state of need, a condition that exerts a push on the individual towards certain types of action that are seen as likely to bring satisfaction”. Motivation is composed of psychological/biological needs and wants that arouse, direct, and integrate a person’s behavior and activity (Dann, 1981; Iso-Ahola, 1980). Therefore, understanding what the tourist desires, needs and looks for from the process of consuming a tourism experience involves an investment of time and money (Page, 2003). Effective marketing and management is impossible unless the consumers’ motivations are identified, understood, and prioritized.

Regarding the cultural tourist motivations the studies are limited. McKercher and du Cros (2002) suggested five types of cultural tourists. They are:

- The purposeful cultural tourist, for whom culture is a primary motivator and who seeks a deep cultural experience;
- The sightseeing cultural tourist, who travels for cultural reasons but seeks a shallower experience;
- The serendipitous cultural tourist, who is not primarily motivated by culture, but who gets into a deep cultural experience by chance;
- The casual cultural tourist, for whom culture is a weak motivating factor and who seeks a shallow experience;
- The incidental cultural tourist, for whom culture is not a stated motive, but who does visit cultural attractions.

Given the ease of access to subjects that researchers have, research on student motivation is limited. According to Richards and Wilson's (2003) report, around one-fifth of all tourism journeys in the world are made by young people aged 15-25 years among which students account for a big percentage. They found that for students the main motivation is to explore other cultures (83%) followed by excitement (76%) and increasing knowledge (69%). In a study on students' motivation for visiting museums, Cetinel and Yolal (2008) found that the primary reason is for preparing homework and assignment. Personal interest is also found to be an important motivator for museum visitors. In a cross-cultural study comparing British and Chinese students' travel behavior, it is found that both groups enjoyed beach holidays, and placed importance on having fun and relaxing after their studies (Xu, Morgan, & Song, 2009). There are also differences between students from different cultures. Chinese students thought it is more important to see the famous sights and learn about cultures and history, while the British were more concerned to have fun, to socialize and enjoy the challenges of outdoor adventure. The authors explain this difference with the high power-distance dimension in Chinese culture and their being not experienced of travel. Min-En (2006) employed a focus group for investigating the tourism demand stimulated by international students in Australia. The results illustrate that international students are significant contributors to tourism by visiting places of interest, purchasing souvenirs, casual work in hospitality and visits by friends and relatives. Yolal, Cetinel, and Uysal (2009) identified four dimensions of motivations in a festival survey where most of the participants were students (53.2%), namely: socialization, escape and excitement, family togetherness, and event novelty. University students' holiday motivations encompass a desire to engage in a combination of passive, social and hedonistic activities (Ritchie, Carr, & Cooper, 2003). Due to limited studies on students, the main objective of the paper is to examine students' motivations for attending cultural tourism.

### **Method**

For the objective of the study, a quantitative study was developed and used a survey research design. A structured questionnaire was designed to obtain information regarding students' motivations and perceptions toward attending cultural tourism, including their demographic characteristics. The first section had a motivation scale. The current study adopted the motivation scales from previous travel motivation studies (Uysal, Gahan, & Martin, 1993; Prentice, Davies, & Beeho, 1997; Poria, Butler, & Airey, 2006; Cetinel &

Yolal, 2008). Based on significant literature review it can be said that these motives come into seven dimensions: learning reasons, cultural motives, experience something new, pleasure-seeking and entertainment, physical reasons, relaxation-based motives and indirect motives. Thirty-three items were measured on a 5-point scale ranging from “1 = not important at all” to “5 = very important”. The last section of the questionnaire included such demographic variables as age, gender, class, monthly budget and participants’ monthly budget spent on cultural tourism activities. This study was conducted in Anadolu University during February, 2010 and included a sample of 234 students from bachelor degree programs. Using the SPSS 14.0 program, various statistical techniques were conducted to analyze the data. First, reliability analysis (Cronbach’s alpha) was calculated to test the reliability and internal consistency of the survey instrument and found to be 0.818. Further, factor analysis was used to identify the underlying dimensions of motivation and to create some major factor labels.

### Results and Discussion

The descriptive analysis of the demographic characteristics of the students is presented in Table 1. The majority of the respondents surveyed were male students (60.7%). The age categories of the students represent the class distribution of the students. Slightly over 16% of the students are under 20 years old, and the most frequently they are between 21 and 22. Almost 23% of the students are in their first year at the university, 35.9% in the second year, 18.4% in the third year, and finally 22.6% in the fourth year. The students were also asked about whether they were part-time or full-time employed, and it was found that 92.7% were not engaged to any earning activities.

Table 1

*Demographic Profile of Respondents*

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	142	60.7
Female	92	39.3
Age category		
< 20	39	16.7
21-22	92	39.3
23-24	75	32.1
> 25	28	12.0
Class		
1st year	54	23.1
2nd year	84	35.9
3rd year	43	18.4
4th year	53	22.6
Income		
Less than 250 Euro	118	50.4
Between 250-500 Euro	101	43.2
More than 500 Euro	15	6.4
Total	234	100

Monthly budgets of the students were also questioned in the study. The high unemployed rate of the students (92.7%) influenced their revenue availability, thus half of the sample (50.4%) indicated that their monthly budget for spending is less than 250 Euros, and 43.2% of the respondents indicated a budget between 250-500 Euros. The minority of the students have a budget of more than 500 Euros (6.4%). Consequently the monthly spending for cultural tourism activities is about the average of 25 Euros (SD = 22.8), representing 10%-12% of their budget. Another important finding refers to the fact that almost 10 percent of the sample declared that they did not make any spending for these types of activities.

Table 2 depicts the descriptive statistics results for the 17 motivation items and the four composite factors. The motivation factor “culture” received the highest mean score (4.11), followed by “entertainment” factor (3.71) and “social interaction” (3.59). In this vein, “education” factor received the lowest mean score (3.00). Among the items “broadening the persons’ general knowledge” has the highest mean score (4.38), followed by “to learn about the culture” (4.35). “It is important to visit cultural places” is also an important item for the students (4.12).

Table 2

*Descriptive Statistics for Four Factors (n = 234)*

Factors	Mean	SD
<b>Culture</b>		
It is important to visit cultural places	4.12	0.868
I want to learn about culture	4.35	0.806
It is part of my culture	4.09	0.908
To broaden my general knowledge	4.38	0.738
Its historic background	4.00	0.936
I want to feel emotionally involved	3.82	1.085
To contribute preserving the attraction for future generation	4.05	0.850
The physical nature of the cultural place or event	4.11	0.813
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.11</b>	
<b>Entertainment</b>		
I want to have a day out	3.41	1.109
I want to have some entertainment	3.70	0.962
I want to relax	4.03	0.947
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.71</b>	
<b>Education</b>		
To attend a trip organized by school	3.44	1.100
To tell friends about it	2.70	1.228
To accompany a friend/teacher	2.88	1.130
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.00</b>	
<b>Social interaction</b>		
To be with people who enjoy the same things I do	3.67	1.052
To be with people of similar interests	3.66	1.025
For a chance to be with people who are enjoying themselves	3.45	1.131
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.59</b>	

The level of education is an important determinant for both culture and tourism demand. The events such as festivals, exhibitions, performances were considered to be important for the development and attractiveness

of cultural tourism. In this regard, cultural motivation factor composed of eight items obtained important scores which placed it in the first position. Students' interest for these types of activities has a strong intrinsic motivation which generates a stable tourist segment for the long-term (high scores for "to broaden general knowledge" and "I want to learn about culture").

Unexpectedly education factor received the lowest mean scores compared to other factors (3.00), and "telling friends" and "to accompany friends and teacher" received the lowest mean scores among the variables (2.70 and 2.88 respectively). This comes in accordance with the idea that young generation are more likely interested to have an exploratory vacation to give them the opportunities to discover cultural attractions unless it is not connected with formal educational process. Participating in cultural tourism is desired when it is voluntary.

The exploratory factor analysis of 33 items of motivation resulted in four factors: cultural, entertainment, education and social interaction, and explained almost 58.74% of the variance in motivation. Sixteen items, which were removed from further analysis, had loading values of less than 0.55. The total Cronbach's alpha value indicated that the model was internally reliable ( $\alpha = 0.818$ ). The appropriateness of factor analysis for cultural tourism motivations was determined by Barlett's test of sphericity = 1,294,879,  $p < 0.001$  and the test  $KMO = 0.820$ ,  $p = 0.000$ . The reliability coefficients for the four factors were 0.843 for cultural, 0.750 for entertainment, 0.696 for social interaction and 0.637 for education confirming that the individual items under each factor were internally consistent (see Table 3).

Table 3

*Factor Analysis of Cultural Tourism Motivation*

Factors	Eigenvalues	Factor loading	Variance explained	Cronbach's alpha
Culture	4.659		27.405	0.843
It is important to visit cultural places		0.782		
I want to learn about culture		0.781		
It is part of my culture		0.752		
To broaden my general knowledge		0.712		
Its historic background		0.674		
I want to feel emotionally involved		0.615		
To contribute preserving the attraction for future generation		0.587		
The physical nature of the cultural place or event		0.570		
Entertainment	2.568		15.109	0.750
I want to have a day out		0.810		
I want to have some entertainment		0.778		
I want to relax		0.734		
Education	1.601		9.420	0.637
To attend a trip organized by school		0.730		
To tell friends about it		0.708		
To accompany a friend/teacher		0.676		
Social interaction	1.157		6.804	0.696
To be with people who enjoy the same things I do		0.851		
To be with people of similar interests		0.725		
For a chance to be with people who are enjoying themselves		0.672		
Total variance explained			58.737	

The study used independent  $t$  test to examine whether students' motivations differ significantly by gender (see Table 4). It is seen that female students placed significantly more importance on "cultural" ( $t(232) = 3.04$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), "entertainment" ( $t(232) = 2.02$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and "education" ( $t(232) = 2.33$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) compared to male students, and the difference is significant. However, both groups ranked "social interaction" as an important motivation factor, and the difference is insignificant ( $t(232) = 0.657$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ).

Table 4

*Differences of Motivations by Gender*

Factors		No.	Mean	SD	df	$t$	Sig.
Culture	Female	92	4.26	0.604	232	3.04	0.003*
	Male	142	4.02	0.593			
Entertainment	Female	92	3.85	0.777	232	2.02	0.045*
	Male	142	3.63	0.844			
Education	Female	92	3.17	0.859	232	2.33	0.051**
	Male	142	2.90	0.877			
Social interaction	Female	92	3.64	0.854	232	0.657	0.512
	Male	142	3.56	0.657			

Notes. \* at 0.05 significant level; \*\* at 0.10 significant level.

The study used one-way ANOVA to examine if the delineated factor groupings of cultural tourism motivation would vary across the demographic variables of age, class and monthly budget of the students. According to the results, there is no significant difference among the groups according to age groups. Similarly no difference was recorded according to the class levels of the students. When the mean values of the four factors are compared with the students' monthly budget using one-way ANOVA, it is found that there is a significant difference in education factor ( $F = 5,967$ ,  $p = 0.003$ ). In order to determine the basic reason for the difference, post-hoc Tukey test was conducted, and it is seen that the students with less than 250 Euro monthly budget spend much on cultural activities ( $p = 0.002 < 0.05$ ). When the relation between personal budgets of the students and their cultural spending is analyzed with chi-square, it is seen that cultural spending diminishes as the budgets increase (since 4 cells have expected count less than 5 Monte Carlo Exact test was run and the significant level was found to be 0.000).

### Conclusion

Cultural tourism brings together personal motivation with travel motivators and determines a specific behavior toward cultural resources as in the case of other forms of tourism. Also we took in consideration the link between personal motivation and travel motivators, and we concluded that strong personal or intrinsic motivations will generate a greater motivation for cultural tourism. The results of this study offer an important view regarding the motivation for attending cultural tourism among Turkish students. The evidences suggest that for cultural tourism products, young and high educated people are an important target segment. The students' foremost motivations for participating in different cultural tourism activities are cultural and entertainment reasons. Students consider cultural tourism as a way which facilitates personal development through accumulating knowledge or experience, forming opinions and ideas, understanding better the historical background and roots of different customs and traditions.

This information is important for creating a cultural tourism destination. In general, the strategic planning process should start from the idea that there are different types of consumer motivation for culture, and most people are looking for a variety of things to do when they travel. Knowing this, in order to attract the market segment of students, the marketing strategies and policies should be more oriented to the benefits of cultural tourism activities to general education and learning process. In order to enhance the attractiveness of cultural resources for the student market, it is essential to emphasize some important characteristics like novelty and cultural significance of the attraction both at national and international levels. In this context, it is also crucial to develop skilled human resources in order to provide well guidance and facilitate the cultural experience. Innovative programs and information networks for providing guidance and information about cultural resources may also be beneficial for the organizers and the students alike.

Due to the fact that students' interest in cultural tourism is determined by intrinsic motivations, it may be suggested that they represent a stable segment which is not influenced by personal budget. Further, they could represent a growing market in the future for cultural products, and it is important to get students continuously involved in cultural tourism and cultural products. This may guarantee future success of cultural products and destinations.

A special interest for knowing and experiencing national cultural attractions and events is apparent. In accordance with the other evidence, it may be concluded that integration between push factors like: "I want to learn about culture" and "to broaden my general knowledge" and pull factors like: "it is a part of my culture" and "its historical background" would contribute to the promotion of such activities. In this context festivals and local events provide the opportunity for the communities to develop and share their culture and help the tourists to interact with the host community. Also these types of activities assure the social interaction which is another important issue requested by young people from cultural tourism activities.

In this study the differences in motivations of students according to their demographics characteristics such as: gender, university degree and monthly budget were also investigated. The results of this study revealed that the gender has an influence on cultural reasons; female students' motivations being more influenced by culture and entertainment factors. For the students, the experience related to have a good time and a sense of pleasure about the things they discover or learn in these cultural tourism activities are also important. In this sense, underlying the entertaining opportunities of the cultural products or combining them with the pleasure and entertainment will also contribute to the success of the destinations.

This study has some limitations. First, it is limited to the students of the School of Tourism and Hotel Management, at Anadolu University, Eskisehir, Turkey, and the results cannot be generalized unless supported by further research in different student groups and nationalities. Second, motivational studies should also be incorporated with the perceived impacts of cultural tourism. Such information would be of great help in understanding the demand for cultural tourism.

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