

The Impact of Overtourism on Urban Life Satisfaction: A Case Study of Antalya Province

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the perceptions and thoughts of the local population in the Antalya region regarding overtourism, and its effects on their satisfaction with city life. Overtourism, which has become a key issue in recent years, refers to the overcrowding and negative impacts tourism can have on local communities and environments. Despite the increasing frequency of this term in the literature, overtourism has been a subject of scholarly discussion for over four decades. The study aims to analyze how environmental, cultural, economic, social, and racial perceptions of overtourism influence the overall satisfaction of local residents with their city life. A quantitative research approach using an online survey was employed to collect data, allowing for efficient and widespread distribution of the survey. The findings will provide valuable insights into the local population's experience with overtourism and its implications for urban life satisfaction in tourist destinations.

Keywords: Overtourism, Urban Life Satisfaction, Local Residents, Environmental Perceptions, Cultural Perceptions, Economic Perceptions, Social Perceptions, Racial Perceptions, Antalya, Online Survey, Quantitative Research.

1. INTRODUCTION

The growth of tourism, the concentration of tourist flows in specific regions, overcrowding, and issues related to carrying capacity have led to environmental sustainability concerns, such as the excessive use of natural resources, waste generation, water shortages, and air pollution. (Koens, K.; Postma, A.; Papp, B 2018). The term "overtourism" refers to the overburdening of a region's carrying capacity. When carrying capacity is exceeded, the perceptions of the local population regarding the quality of urban life and the sustainability of the area can be negatively affected. In such cases, the quality of life for both the local residents and the environment can be severely damaged (Avcı, 2007; Yumuk & Altıntaş, 2019). These changes have led to more critical perspectives on the desirability and quality of tourism growth, particularly among destination stakeholders, businesses, and the local population (Gutiérrez-Taño, D.; Garau-Vadell, J.B.; Díaz-Armas, R.J 2018). In this context, overtourism can be closely associated with the issue of mass tourism saturation present in many destinations. This situation represents a scenario that reduces the quality of life for the local population and creates negative experiences for tourists. Therefore, it is argued that over-tourism has become a significant topic in the media, particularly due to protests driven by critiques and social movements in European cities over the last decade (Milano, C. 2017; Novy, J.; Colomb, C. 2016). Furthermore, the phenomenon of overtourism is theorized to arise from the combination of three key factors—large cruise ships, low-cost airlines, and tourist rental platforms, such as Airbnb—particularly in attractive yet limited urban areas (Postma, A.; Schmuecker, D. 2017). Croce suggests that in the context of tourism, it may be important to implement a new approach that places the preservation and protection of cultures or the environment at the center of economic development. According to this claim, natural and cultural resources are vital components of tourism, and tourism can contribute to the preservation of a destination's natural and cultural heritage, at least in terms of its value, visibility, and profitability. However, tourism can also become one of the main problems for this heritage. From this perspective, sustainability, which includes social and environmental pillars, may be one of the most apparent paradoxes of this global sector, as it is called upon to transform the negative effects of tourism into new opportunities and respond to challenges. (Croce, V. 2018).

2. Subject, Scope, and Purpose

Tourism is a significant industry for cities, providing economic growth, cultural exchange, and global recognition. Today, the tourism sector has become an essential industry for many cities, contributing to economic growth and income increases. Cities have become attractive destinations for tourists to visit various attractions and cultural assets. The positive effects of tourism cannot be ignored; however, the rapid growth of tourism and the influx of tourists into cities have raised the issue of "overtourism" (Sheivachman, 2016; Duyar & Bayram, 2019). Overtourism can lead to problems such as increased tourist density, environmental sustainability issues, decreased quality of life for the local population, and the loss of cultural identity in many cities. Urban life is closely linked to the quality of life of its residents, environmental conditions, social interactions, and daily routines. Under the influence of overtourism, these aspects of urban life can be negatively affected. Additionally, issues such as the "mimicry effect," where new economies replicate the tourist behaviors of Western economies, governance issues related to the resources of destination countries, relationships with airline companies (especially low-cost carriers), and environmental problems, including increased waste production, water issues, and air pollution, are also part of the challenge (Koens, K.; Postma, A.; Papp, B 2018, 10, 4384). Another problem is the traffic and parking issues, local resentment toward tourists due to their behavior, increased living costs alongside visitor dissatisfaction, and the erosion of cultural values (Netus & Nijkamb 2012; Cheung & Li 2019; Karahan & Öztürk 2020).

The primary problem of this research is to understand how overtourism affects urban life satisfaction and to identify these negative impacts. When examining the literature, it is observed that this topic has not been extensively researched in Turkey, making it difficult to distinguish the intensity of destination problems at the provincial and district levels. The impact of Overtourism on Urban Life Satisfaction: The Example of Odunpazarı, Eskişehir (Demirci, Yılmaz, OĞUZ 2020). By replicating this study in every province and district with high tourist density in Turkey, we could potentially change the country's internal policies in a positive direction and better understand the problems faced by local residents. This research aims to include the general population of Antalya province, aiming to convey the problems they face due to excessive tourism.

3. Causes of Overtourism

Tourism is an important industry that supports economic growth worldwide and promotes intercultural interaction. However, in recent years, the phenomenon of "overtourism," which represents the darker side of tourism, has led to serious issues in certain regions (Guttentag, D. *Issues Tour.* 2015, 18, 1192–1217).

Economic Return: Tourism provides economic returns for many regions. Tourists spend money on local businesses, restaurants, hotels, and service providers. As a result, tourism serves as an attractive source of income for local economies. This economic return can encourage the widespread expansion of tourism and its growth at an unsustainable rate.

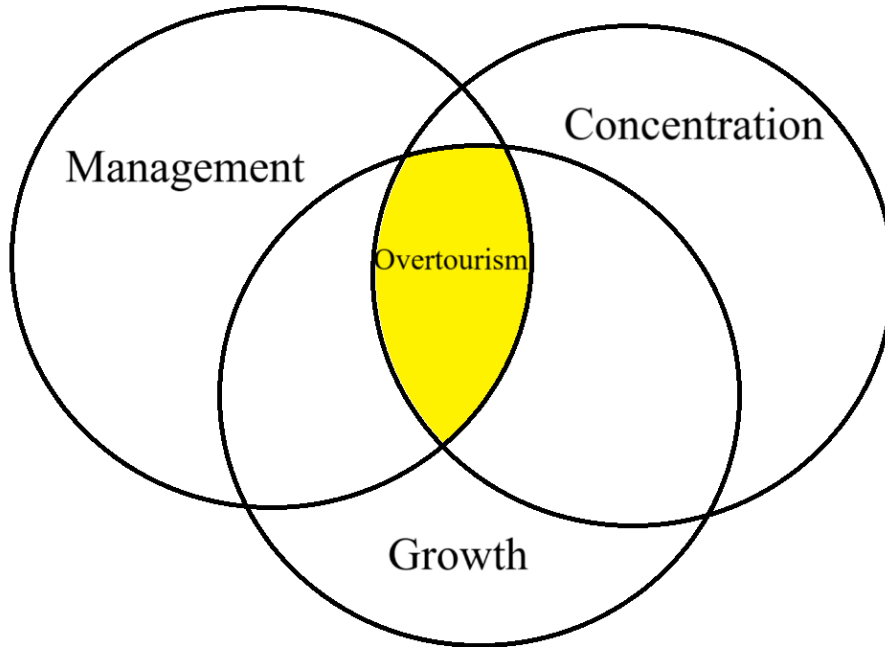
Promotional Efforts: Many countries and regions engage in intensive promotional efforts to attract tourists. Visual and digital media, travel agencies, and marketing campaigns encourage people to visit these areas. These promotional activities can increase demand for the region and lead to overtourism.

Accessible Transportation: Advanced transportation technology allows people to travel to more distant regions more quickly and cheaply. Affordable flights, highways, and sea routes make it easier for tourists to explore more destinations. This can lead to increased demand for tourist destinations.

Impact of Social Media: Social media platforms facilitate the sharing of travel experiences and recommendations. Platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and TripAdvisor contribute to the rapid recognition and viral spread of popular places. This can result in an influx of tourists.

Cultural and Natural Attractions: Some regions have unique cultural and natural attractions. Historical sites, beaches, mountains, festivals, and other tourist attractions can cause an influx of tourists to these areas.

Table 2.

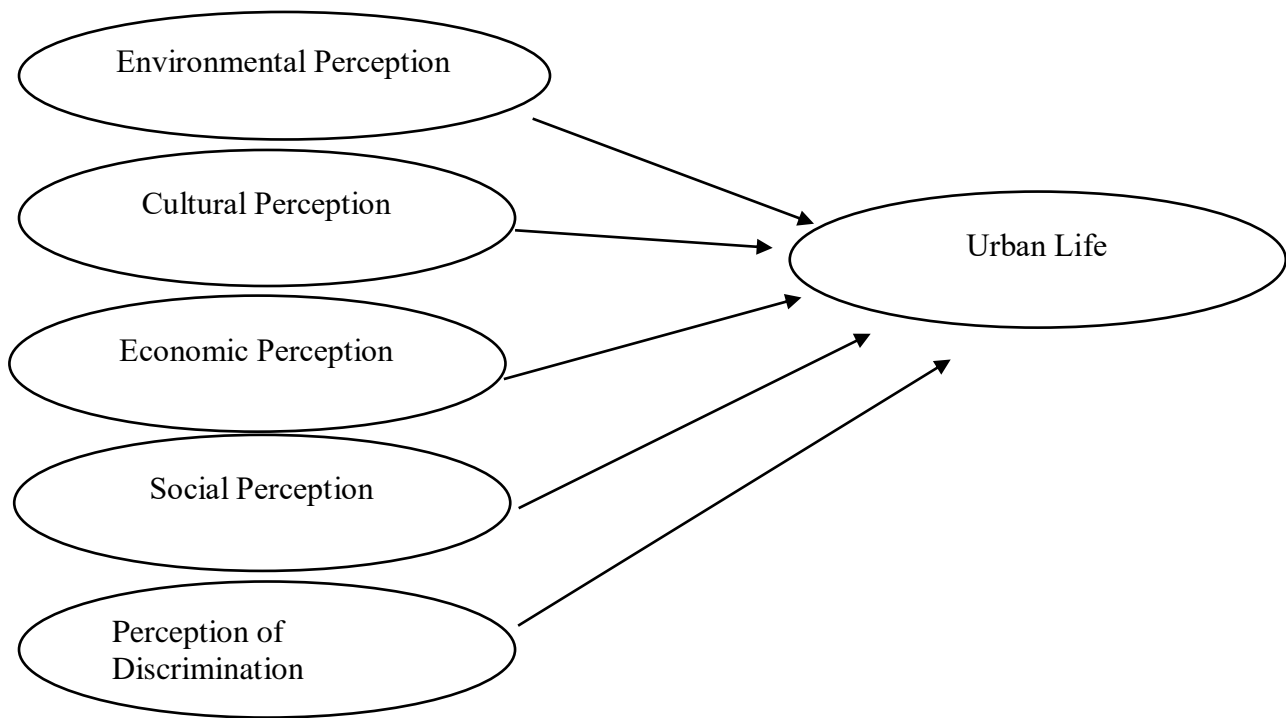


Additionally, the term "overtourism" has been associated with increased problems between marginalized and displaced residents due to congestion and deteriorating infrastructures. It can be linked to the relationships between tourists and local residents, as well as the themes of new technologies. In fact, new technologies are expected to have a positive effect on the relationship between tourism and the focal region. The concept of overtourism is described as a situation in which a place is excessively visited, resulting in a change in its character, a loss of authenticity (especially for tourists), and causing discomfort and disturbance (primarily for local residents) (Goodwin, H. S.4, October 2017).

4. Research Model and Hypotheses

This research examines the relationships between overtourism and life satisfaction among the residents of the province. To test these relationships, hypotheses and a research model have been developed (Figure 1).

The research model and hypotheses are adapted from the article *The Effect of Overtourism on Urban Life Satisfaction: The Example of Odunpazarı, Eskişehir* (Barış D. İlayda Y., Yasin Emre O.).



H1: The demographic structure of the local population has a statistically significant effect on their urban life satisfaction.

H2: The environmental perceptions of the local population regarding overtourism have a statistically significant effect on their urban life satisfaction.

H3: The cultural perceptions of the local population regarding overtourism have a statistically significant effect on their urban life satisfaction.

H4: The economic perceptions of the local population regarding overtourism have a statistically significant effect on their urban life satisfaction.

H5: The social perceptions of the local population regarding overtourism have a statistically significant effect on their urban life satisfaction.

H6: The racial perceptions of the local population regarding overtourism have a statistically significant effect on their urban life satisfaction.

5. Method

According to Perkumiene and Pranskuniene, the analysis of the existing literature reveals that the term overtourism does not represent a new phenomenon, but rather signifies an emerging theme in the ongoing discussions about tourism development models in the literature. Despite the term being used intensively in less than three years, the issue has been a subject of debate among scholars for the past 40 years, with many global tourist destinations grappling with this challenging phenomenon for a long time (Perkumiene, D.; Pranskuniene, R 2019). Furthermore, the term overtourism does not refer to a single phenomenon, but rather to a collection of phenomena, collectively indicating a new trend.

In this study, the perceptions and thoughts of local residents in the Antalya region about overtourism, and its effects on their satisfaction with city life, will be measured using quantitative research methods. The relationship between the local population's environmental, cultural, economic, social perceptions, and racial perceptions regarding overtourism and their city life satisfaction will be assessed through an online survey.

The online survey method involves placing appropriate questions and answers on survey forms over the internet and then submitting the form, allowing for the automatic recording of data. Compared to traditional surveys, it has become more popular due to its ability to reach a larger audience and its cost-effectiveness (Couper, 2000).

5.1. Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study consists of local residents living in the Antalya region and surrounding neighborhoods.

In a known population, with a 86% confidence interval and a 14% margin of error, it was determined that at least 390 participants should be surveyed (Çingil, 2009). Based on this, a total of 402 individuals were surveyed using the face-to-face survey technique as the research sample.

5.2. Data Collection Tool

In the data collection process of the study, the survey technique, which is a quantitative research method, was used. The survey form used in the study was developed based on the studies of Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin (1985), Kim, Gursoy, and Lee (2006), and Kim, Uysal, and Sirgy (2013).

The survey form consists of two sections. The first section contains statements aimed at identifying the demographic characteristics of the participants. The second section contains 36 statements rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "1 = Strongly Disagree" to "5 = Strongly Agree," to measure the participants' perceptions of overtourism.

6. Findings

In the findings phase of the research, the results related to the demographic characteristics of the participants were tabulated and interpreted. In the following analysis, the validity and reliability of the scale were also examined.

Findings Related to the Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

In the first phase of the analysis, the findings related to the demographic characteristics of the 401 participants, such as gender, age, education, and length of residence, were tabulated and interpreted (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographic Findings of the Participants

Demographic Characteristic	Category	Count	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	187	46.6
Gender	Female	214	53.4
Age	18-29 Years	165	41.1
Age	30-39 Years	104	25.9
Age	40-49 Years	67	16.7
Age	50-59 Years	38	9.5
Age	60 and Above	27	6.7
Education	Primary School	24	6
Education	Middle School	17	4.2
Education	High School	93	23.2
Education	Associate Degree	105	26.2
Education	Bachelor's Degree	132	32.9
Education	Graduate Degree	30	7.5

Residence Duration	1-5 Years	89	22.2
Residence Duration	6-10 Years	52	13
Residence Duration	11-15 Years	74	18.5
Residence Duration	16-20 Years	69	17.2
Residence Duration	21 Years and Above	117	29.2

TOTAL

According to Table 1, it is observed that 46.6% of the participants are male (187), while 53.4% are female (214). Additionally, 41.1% of the participants are between the ages of 18-29 (165), 25.9% are between 30-39 years old (104), 16.7% are between 40-49 years old (67), 9.5% are between 50-59 years old (38), and 6.7% are 60 years old or older (27). Regarding education, 6% of the participants have completed primary school (24), 4.2% have completed middle school (17), 23.2% have completed high school (93), 26.2% have completed associate degree (105), 32.9% have completed undergraduate education (132), and 7.5% have completed graduate studies (30).

In the first section of the survey, participants were also asked about their length of residence in the Antalya region. According to this, 22.2% of the participants have lived in the region for 1-5 years (89), 13% for 6-10 years (52), 18.5% for 11-15 years (74), 17.2% for 16-20 years (69), and 29.2% have lived in the region for 21 years or more (117).

Validity and Reliability Findings

After examining the findings related to the demographic characteristics, validity and reliability analysis of the collected data was conducted. The findings related to the reliability analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Reliability Analysis Findings

Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation	Item- Deleted Analysis
I believe overtourism causes environmental pollution.	3.9401	1.22532	0.854
I believe overtourism causes noise pollution.	4.1172	1.15919	0.854
I believe overtourism leads to excessive waste production.	4.0224	1.1606	0.854
I believe overtourism damages the aesthetic beauty of the region's landscape.	3.8229	1.26731	0.854
I believe overtourism harms the region's vegetation.	3.9501	1.27574	0.854
I believe overtourism harms the region's green areas.	4.0175	1.25785	0.854
I believe overtourism causes traffic congestion.	4.1397	1.16209	0.855
I believe overtourism damages the local cultural identity.	3.7805	1.2813	0.853
I believe the local population changes their behavior and actions by imitating tourists.	3.7282	1.2878	0.857
I believe the commercial demand caused by overtourism harms local handicrafts.	3.4289	1.38945	0.856
I believe overtourism increases real estate prices in the region.	4.5087	0.8459	0.859
I believe overtourism benefits multinational and international businesses more than local businesses.	3.98	1.11562	0.859

I believe overtourism increases the prices of products sold in the region.	4.4813	0.81257	0.86
I believe overtourism increases the cost of living in the region.	4.4913	0.83699	0.859
I believe overtourism leads to higher investment costs for local authorities.	4.0574	1.00708	0.858
I believe overtourism increases crime rates.	3.5661	1.31767	0.856
I believe overtourism increases immigration to the region and Antalya.	3.9077	1.25258	0.857
I believe overtourism makes it harder to find parking spaces in the region.	4.182	1.02434	0.858
I am satisfied with the place I live.	3.9327	1.09679	0.862
I believe everything is going well in my life where I live.	3.5586	1.19255	0.862
I think I have reached my goals in the life I live.	3.6559	1.29084	0.863
I interact with foreign tourists.	3.404	1.23951	0.863
I socialize with foreign tourists.	2.9451	1.31605	0.864
I engage with foreign tourists.	3.2494	1.30486	0.864
I approach foreign tourists with tolerance.	3.9202	1.14395	0.863
I form lasting friendships with foreign tourists.	2.4663	1.38184	0.866
I greet foreign tourists with pleasure.	3.7805	1.23358	0.862
I act hostile towards foreign tourists.	1.5162	1.16205	0.864
I make fun of foreign tourists.	1.4564	1.06005	0.865
I exhibit threatening behavior towards foreign tourists.	1.394	1.03892	0.864
I help foreign tourists.	3.6733	1.11378	0.864
I help foreign tourists unwillingly.	2.0723	1.16501	0.867
I do not help foreign tourists.	1.6584	1.14695	0.866

Outdoor activities of mine decrease because of foreign tourists.	2.3865	1.40809	0.865
I think foreign tourists look down on the local population.	2.6559	1.3879	0.866
I think foreign tourists carry and spread diseases that are not common in our country.	3.7332	1.34578	0.864

Table 2 shows that the reliability of the scale was found to be 0.868. Since the Cronbach Alpha value is above 0.70, there is no problem with the validity and reliability of the scale used in this research.

CorrelationAnalysis

Pearson Correlation Analysis was used to determine the relationship between environmental and cultural perceptions. The obtained findings are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Relationship Between Environmental Perception and Cultural Perception

		Cultural Perceptio
Environmental Perception	Pearson r	0,772*
	p	0,001
	n	401

Correlation Analysis

The correlation between environmental perception and cultural perception is significant at the 0.01 level. A strong positive and significant relationship has been found between these two perceptions ($r=$). In other words, the environmental and cultural perceptions of the participants increase significantly together, demonstrating a robust positive correlation.

7. Conclusion

The study examined the effects of the local population's perceptions of overtourism on urban life satisfaction in the Antalya region. The results indicated that the local population's perceptions of overtourism in terms of environmental, social, cultural, and economic aspects negatively affected their urban life satisfaction, while their perceptions of discrimination had a positive effect.

Environmental impacts resulting from overtourism, such as noise pollution, environmental pollution, excessive waste, landscape degradation, damage to green spaces and plants, and traffic congestion, were found to be factors that reduce the participants' satisfaction with urban life. Cultural impacts, such as the loss of identity due to imitation of tourists and the sale of handicraft products that are not linked to the historical fabric, were also identified as factors decreasing satisfaction with urban life. Economically, the rise in property prices, the increase in the cost of goods, the increase in living expenses, and the need for greater investment by local authorities due to overtourism were found to cause dissatisfaction. It was also determined that both local and multinational international businesses benefit economically. Additionally, social events affecting people's daily lives, such as migrations to the region, increased crime rates, and traffic congestion, negatively affect urban life satisfaction.

The findings and results obtained so far align with existing literature and support previous studies (Türker, Selçuk & Özyıldırım, 2016; Boz & Özkan, 2019; Duyar & Bayram, 2019; Yumuk & Altıntaş, 2019).

In this study, it was found that the local population in the Antalya region perceives that no lasting friendships are formed with foreign tourists, and that foreign tourists carry diseases that are not common in the region. However, it was also understood that the locals communicate with foreign tourists, interact with them, show tolerance, help them, and that there is no decline in outdoor activities. Therefore, it was found that the satisfaction levels of the local population, according to their perceptions of discrimination, were high. It is believed that future studies that use the scale employed in this research and compare the results with this study will contribute to the literature.

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