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Overtourism: Blessing or Burden?*

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Abstract

Overtourism is relatively new concept and/or phenomenon in tourism literature and getting more importance as tourism is growing in especially traditional tourism destinations such as Amsterdam (Netherlands), Paris (France), Antalya (Turkey), Venice (Italy), London (UK) etc. The most prominent outcomes of overtourism are seasonally rising prices, decreases in service quality, longer queues, heavy pressure on carrying capacity, congestion, intensive traffic jam and so forth. Due to these undesired consequences of overtourism, most public authorities are trying to find solutions for their destinations such as limiting the number of visitor or even prohibiting the visits temporarily. Therefore, in order to overcome negative effects, potential reasons of overtourism should be better understood by all the parties involved. For this reason, the basic objective of this study was to identify if there is a consensus about the definition of overtourism among the different social groups of population and to find out the potential negative and positive effects of this phenomenon in the participants' point of view. A qualitative research was designed and a semi-structured interview was conducted as the data collection instrument consisting of 13 open-ended questions. The target groups were identified as previously selected from different occupations or professions. Interviews were conducted with a total of 54 people through face to face appointments or filling internet based questionnaires. A content analysis of the statements on the questionnaires was performed and the data were transformed into the codes. The major findings of the research revealed that there is a great consensus about what overtourism is and how important it is specifically in terms of its negative impacts on the society and environment. It is expected that this consensus among the participants will eventually contribute to public authorities to find effective solutions for overtourism.

Keywords: Overtourism, Sustainability, Content Analysis, Carrying Capacity.

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INTRODUCTION

On the contrary to the concept of “responsible tourism” which means to develop tourism in any destination in order to create better environment to live in and to visit, “overtourism” as an undesired consequence of tourism, describes the overcrowding destinations where the number of visitors is so high that the quality of life in the area or the quality of visitor experience has been intolerably deteriorated by very high numbers of visitors. The degregation is often experienced simultaneously by both tourists and local residents, and they may easily revolt against it. Due to the these growing undesired effects of overtourism all over the world, the UNWTO’s Summit of Ministers is tackled this problem at the World Travel Market in order to find effective solutions for this new circumstance (UNWTO, 2017).

The definition of overtourism is acceptably vague, this term was began to use by the several authors as a consequence of the increasing number of destinations where the unlimited growth in the number of visitors are welcomed. As known, tourism is often defined as a kind of visitor market, and as people’s living standards up, they purchase travel and tourism services more, and therefore the consumption for tourism worldwide accounts for 7 % of global export revenues (UNWTO, 2019). This figure explains the economic significance of international tourism for global economy and individual countries. As a consequence of rising living standards worldwide, the number of international tourists and their expenditures have also substantially growing. The Chinese and the Indians visitors are the most obvious examples of increasing middle-classes whose purchasing power is still escalating. On the other hand, the propensity to travel among those people who have high level of monetary income and sufficient quantity of discretionary time in the world have changed their spending patterns from traditional consumption of manufactured goods towards tourism services and more people begun to seek self-actualization in accordance with Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1970: 80). Many authors have kept their relevance in the traditional argument about the effects of tourism for the past decades, some have initiated new conceptualizations, while some others have converged with the narrative of social movements questioning the antecedent of tourism development. The words “overtourism” and “tourismphobia” were started to use by the authors more widely as a consequence of these developments (Milano 2019b). Saارينen & Nikula (2013) stated that there is “a need for alternative and more environment and host-friendly practices in development, planning, and policies”. They also emphasize “stronger governmental and intergovernmental policies and regulations are most

likely needed to set the limits for tourism growth in a local-global context with less tourism-centric evaluation criteria” (Saارينen & Nikula, 2013). Therefore, destinations should be aware of the undesired effects of overtourism in spite of its remarkable economic benefits.

Many authors have defined the term “overtourism” variously. As one the pioneers of this idea, Milano et al. (2018) call attentions to this issue by their publications and their following volume titled as “Overtourism: Travel and Tourism Excesses, Discontent and Measures”. Milano et al. (2019b) also define it as “the excessive growth of visitors leading to overcrowding in areas where residents suffer the effects of transient and seasonal tourism peaks which have caused permanent lifestyle changes, denied access to amenities and harmed their general well-being”. Overtourism, also called overcrowding (UNWTO, 2017), has become a problem for locals as well as visitors in the destinations as diverse as *New York City*, *Copenhagen*, *Reykavik*, *Skye Island*, *Koh Phi Phi*, *Thailand*, *Palawan*, and *Philippines* as a result of a disproportionately huge flow of tourists. Comparing local people to overnight visitors per year in order to display crowding pressures, the World Economic Forum (2017) suggests that destinations should gradually turn to acceptable level of visitor numbers, giving the most well-known examples of *Barcelona (Spain)*, *Cinque Terre*, *Venice (Italy)*, *Dubrovnik (Croatia)*, *Santorini (Greece)*, and *Amsterdam (Netherlands)* (Trafalgar, 2020). As a reaction to crowding problems, the UNWTO called for destinations to manage tourism better, albeit without questioning the principle theory of a continuity in their development strategy. As a direct response to the growing number of tourists for the destinations, and the equally increasing costs of waiting times across some of the most favorable visitor attractions resulting in people spending more time outside than they enjoy their time interior the attraction (UNWTO, 2017).

Urban and city tourism is a main loser of overtourism and the challenge for urban tourism is much more complicated than is frequently acknowledged. There is an urgent requirement to establish a sustainable and well-planned itinerary for hotspot and city tourism and for that reason tourism requires the desire for a more balanced environment in order to overcome the harmful consequences of this phenomenon.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overtourism is a relatively new concept studied by the researchers in the recent decade and most of the authors emphasized the negative effects of this experience on the destinations and host populations. For a long time, tourism has been considered as a beneficial

activity for both visitors and local communities in terms of its economic and socio-cultural contributions to the area visited. However, latest observations demonstrate that overtourism is a truth and it has a great potential to create many problems for both visitors and local community. According to the authors, overtourism is mostly caused by unplanned tourism growth, growth in visitor numbers and wider societal changes and increased sharing of city space by different groups such as tourist, resident, day visitor, commuter, shopper and suburban (Koens, 2019). Overtourism is also discussed in relation to other local issues that cities and destinations dealing with (Boom et al., 2021).

In the literature, it was observed that, authors identified and discussed many different aspects of overtourism. Coldwell (2017) and Tapper (2017), for example, argued that overtourism indicators were significantly severe in Italy and Spain, and present in Croatia and UK at a lower level. The comments stated by the authors on the increase in overtourism are diverse and they include a large number of tourists who potentially threaten the UNESCO World Heritage status in some regions, and they alleged that visitors may easily damage the quality of life of residents, the environmental sustainability of destination might be at risk, and so forth (Leadbeater, 2017; Paris, 2017; Buckley, 2017). The growth of overtourism in Europe indicates that if tourism is not properly managed, it may have a potential to create much more damage and demolition (Coldwell, 2017). This campaign is symptomatic of a paradigm shift too and authors claim that locals are now more interested in their quality of life than the tourism industry's profits (Croes et al., 2017). Due to the multi-faceted characteristic of tourism and travel industry, a customized management philosophy should be developed in order to cope with the present status at every single destination. There were very limited number of publications about overtourism by 2015, but considerable amount of journal articles and number of edited books on the subject have been published in the past few years (Cappochi et al. 2019; Wendorf 2019; Pechlaner et al. 2019; Dodds & Butler, 2019a; Milano et al. 2021). The popularity of this term seems to be partly reasonable for its entry into academia, rather than its intrinsic value, such as paper recently published (Gonzalez et al., 2018) that uses this term in its heading but never mentioned it at all in the text. More troubling is the fact that the word can be called "fuzzy" in that its incomprehensibility. Therefore, it may be used as a tool to recycle existing ideas or to mask agency and responsibility (Markusen, 2007). It also often influences both visitors and guests witnessing the degradation and start rebelling against it. Overtourism has developed quickly all over the world especially in Europe and in a few places, there

have been demonstrations and some of them have involved low levels of risk in a few extraordinary cases violence (Goodwin, 2017). This circumstance shows how important it is to regard a destination's identity in terms of its capacity to draw tourists, and how difficult it is for a destination to recover its image once it has been damaged (Scheyvens, 2009). However, the concept of overtourism refers to the phenomenon of overcrowded tourism destinations where the carrying capacity is exceeded that celebrates rapid and seemingly endless growth in tourism entries. This is confirmed by an article from "*responsible tourism*" (Goodwin, 2017) that describes destinations overtourism in which hosts or tourists, residents or visitors believe that there are disproportionate numbers of visitors and that the standard of living in the area or the nature of the experience has been unsatisfactorily disintegrated.

More importantly, this situation throughout Europe provides evidence that tourism sustainability is something that has yet to be achieved, with the industry not fully understanding how it is actually to be achieved. Due to the janus-faced character of tourism industry, a tailor-made management strategy needs to be developed to cope with the current situation at each specific destination. An "*ambidextrous management*" approach to managing tourism destinations is proposed as a potential solution within this Local Spotlight Overnight has become popular in science, too, overtourism. While it was largely non-existent before 2017, in 2018 and 2019 no less than 4 special issues from academic journals and 3 edited books on the subject have been published. The marketability and popularity of the term overtourism seem to be at least partly accountable for its entry into academia, rather than its explanatory value, as exemplified by a recent paper that uses the term overtourism in its title but does not mention it at all in the main text (Gonzalez et al., 2018). More troubling is the fact that the word can be called "fuzzy" in that it is vague, lacks consistency and is extremely difficult to operate (Markusen, 2007). As such, it may be used as a tool to recycle existing ideas or to mask agency and responsibility (Markusen, 2007). It also often influences both visitors and guests witnessing the degradation and start rebelling against it. Overtourism has developed quickly all over the country especially in Europe and in a few places, there have been demonstrations and some of them have involved low levels of risk in a few extraordinary cases violence (Goodwin, 2017). This situation shows how important it is to regard a destination's identity in terms of its capacity to draw tourists, and how difficult it is for a destination to recover its image once it has been damaged (Scheyvens, 2009). However, the concept of overtourism refers to the phenomenon of overcrowded tourism destinations where the carrying capacity is

exceeded that celebrates rapid and seemingly endless growth in tourism entries. This is confirmed by an article from “*responsible tourism*” (Goodwin, 2017) that describes destinations over-tourism in which hosts or tourists, locals or visitors believe that there are disproportionate numbers of visitors and that the standard of living in the area or the nature of the experience has been unsatisfactorily disintegrated.

In the literature, there are studies within different aspects on overtourism that can be summarized as follows. Gonzalez et al. (2018) investigates the impact of tourism addiction using some socio-demographic variables. Smith et al. (2019), find out the resident resistance to overtourism in Budapest, Hungary. The research tries to show that tourism is often marginal rather than central to the discontent and resistance of the residents to developments. Adie et al. (2019) surveyed of 26,000 residents in order to explore the influences of overtourism on host population who are living around historical sites, monuments or festivals and results show that local residents consider overtourism as a threat for cultural heritage. Seraphin et al. (2019) study overtourism from the viewpoint of the local residents. The research identified 4 local prototypes concerning their attitudes toward foreign visitors; victims, peaceful activists, vandals and resilient locals.

Dodds & Butler (2019b) examined the emergence of overtourism, outline the issues and contributing factors, as it relates to cities, and to suggest possible mitigation measures that might be taken by policy maker. Nepal & Nepal (2019), on the other hand, studied to investigate the types of economic taxation that are used to manage overtourism. Their findings show that the tourist taxes and entrance fees were determined as effective solutions in order to handle overtourism. Oklevik et al (2019) have identified various disagreements in destinations and started discussions in their paper as to how to overcome the negative effects of overtourism. Panayiotopoulou and Pisano (2019) integrated research by design methodology and rapid ethnography in order to make into a question overtourism in a Croatian city, Dubrovnik. Jacobsen et al. (2019) developed a genuine model capturing pioneers of place attractiveness in tourism hotspot crowding contexts. Anuar et al. (2019) studied the impact of overtourism on the local community in heritage city Bandar Hilir, Malacca, Malaysia. Their objectives was to determine the changes of local community’ self-efficacy from the impacts of overtourism.

Milano et al (2019a) studied the developments of the researches and studies on tourism de-growth in Barcelona as one of the most popular Spanish tourism destination. Cheung et al. (2019) studied overtourism

as a concept recently used to demonstrate this potential danger to many popular tourist destinations worldwide. As a more recent study, Diaz-Parra & Jover (2020) explained that uncontrolled visitor growth and foreign lifestyle could potentially reduce or even harm the city of a social right. Other noticeable studies about overtourism are listed as, Seraphin et al. (2018), Martin et al. (2018), Pinke-Sziva (2019) Gutierrez-Tano et al. (2019), Nepal and Nepal (2019) and Perkumiene & Pranskuniene (2019).

Depending on the above-mentioned developments in the literature, this study is designed to investigate the perceptions of different layers of population in Turkey about overtourism and in this way to contribute to the related literature. Based on this reasoning, the basic objective of this study was to identify if there is a consensus about the definition of overtourism among the different social groups of population and to find out the potential negative and positive effects of this phenomenon in the participants’ point of view. Thence, it will be possible to find solutions in the short run and long run as tourism develops in the destinations for future balanced and sustainable developments.

METHOD

In this study, the interview technique as a research instrument of qualitative research method was used to collect data from the representative groups of population about their thoughts for the matter involved. The data collection tool consists of a 13 semi-structured questionnaire organized as open-ended questions. Since there were no earlier detailed studies about overtourism and the scales used by researchers, the semi-structured questions were developed by authors based on the expert opinions and the existing literature. The basic reason for using qualitative research was to observe the participants’ point of view in more detail and to understand how they perceive the matter of overtourism as the main concept of this study. The feature of semi-structured interview is to answer the open-ended questions. Based on this principle, interviews have been conducted by 54 participants from various professions or occupations of society in İzmir. According to the experts, 40 or 50 participants will be sufficient to collect data for the interview based research as a qualitative method (Yağar & Dökme, 2018). A random sampling technique was used to determine potential participants/respondents of questionnaire.

The 54 deciphered texts of the responded questionnaire were analyzed using the text encoding method. In qualitative research, “code” is defined as a word or short phrase that symbolically represents

a reminder characteristic, some verbal or visual sequence summarizer. The purpose of coding analysis is to question the data carefully. Thus, all the responses were analyzed through above-mentioned process and the results were reported in the following section of the paper. The data collection process in this study was carried out between November 10 and December 5 2019, and the Council of Higher Education Ethics Committee criteria were announced on January 1, 2020.

FINDINGS

Demographic profiles and propensity to travel abroad of the participants

Table 1 displays the demographic distribution of the participants and according to this table, the majority of the participants were male, and likewise the majority of the participants are between 41 - 45 and 51 - 55 age bracket. Participants who have an undergraduate degree are more than the other graduates/bachelors. The largest group of the participants declared their professions as hoteliers and tour guides who know tourism very well. The dominant professional experiences of the participants are those who have been working 0 - 5 years and 6 - 10 years (35 % together). Finally, results show that 78 per cent of the participants have travelled abroad at least one time for the past 5 years. These results explain that, majority of the participants have a good knowledge about tourism.

Table 1. Demographics of the Respondents

Demographics	Frequency	Percent (%)	
Gender	Female	22	40,7
	Male	32	59,3
	Total	54	100
Age distribution	20-25	4	7,4
	26-30	6	11,1
	31-35	6	11,1
	36-40	3	5,6
	41-45	11	20,4
	46-50	4	7,4
	51-55	11	20,4
	56-60	2	3,7
Education	61+	7	13
	Total	54	100
	High School	3	5,6
	Undergraduate	38	70,4
	Graduate	7	13
	PhD	6	11,1
Occupation/ Profession	Total	54	100,0
	Academics	6	11,1
	PhD Candidate	6	11,1
	Public Servant	4	7,4
	Hotel	15	27,8
	Tourist Guide	14	25,9
	Others	9	16,7
	Total	54	100
Job experience	0-5	10	18,5
	6-10	9	16,7
	11-15	7	13,0
	16-20	4	7,4
	21-25	5	9,3
	26-30	6	11,1
	31-35	4	7,4
	36-40	3	5,6
Traveled abroad during past 5 years	41+	6	11,1
	Total	54	100
	Yes	42	77,8
	No	12	22,2
	Total	54	100

Table 2 shows that the most popular countries for the respondents are Germany and Greece with the frequency of 14 (times), and following by Italy (13), France (12), USA (10), Austria (8) and UK (7) respectively. These figures also show that participants have travelled to the places where overtourism could be seen obviously and they are supposed to be experienced by overtourism.

Table 2. Countries Visited by the Respondents

Country	Travel Frequency	Country	Travel Frequency
Germany	14	Macedonia	2
Greece	14	Portugal	2
Italy	13	Tunisia	2
France	12	Argentina	1
USA	10	Bahrain	1
Austria	8	Belarus	1
UK	7	Bolivia	1
Holland	6	Algeria	1
Spain	6	China	1
UAE	5	Morocco	1
Bulgaria	5	South Africa	1
Czechia	4	Croatia	1
Iran	3	India	1
Switzerland	3	Qatar	1
Canada	3	Colombia	1
Montenegro	3	Kosovo	1
Poland	3	Cuba	1
Romania	3	Latvia	1
Serbia	3	Lithuania	1
Thailand	3	Norway	1
Australia	2	Uzbekistan	1
Azerbaijan	2	Peru	1
Belgium	2	Russia	1
Bosnia Herzegovina	2	Singapore	1
Brazil	2	Sri Lanka	1
Indonesia	2	Saudi Arabia	1
Georgia	2	Ukraine	1
Hong Kong	2	Uruguay	1
Ireland	2	Vietnam	1
Hungary	2	Lebanon	1

Responses of participant to the questions about overtourism

In this section of the study, the content analyses of the responses of interview questions is summarized. As previously explained, the data collection tool was designed as semi-structured questionnaire consisting of 13 open-ended questions. For each questions, most frequently and commonly used terms and expressions were tried to determine in order to reach a consensus among the respondents by coding.

Q1. Describing overtourism

The answers given by the participants to the question about the definition of overtourism show that the codes of “(Forcing) the Carrying Capacity”, “Overcrowding” and “the Fall in Quality of Life” were

obtained as the most common expressions in their definitions. The results shows that participants are well aware of overtourism and its negative consequences. They also describe it correctly.

Q2. Negative or Positive Insights for overtourism

The results explains that the great majority of the respondents (44) consider about overtourism as a negative and undesired phenomenon, while 8 respondents had a positive image for overtourism. The most common expressions for these questions were “*Losing Repeat Guest*” and “*Environmental Problems*” among the respondent who had a negative image, while “*Promotion of Country*” and “*Regional Development*” were the major reasons for the respondents who had a positive image about overtourism. Among the respondents, 1 public servant, 1 hotel employee, 2 tourist guides and 4 others (not declared) had a positive image on overtourism.

Q3. The destinations which suffer from overtourism and negative outcomes

Related to 3rd question, most of the responses are concentrated on the terms “*Price increases*” and “*Environmental pollution*”. In addition to these terms, “*the decrease in human quality*” was another outcome that emphasized by the respondents. Participants expressed the most known overcrowded destinations as *Venice, Barcelona, New York, Paris and Santorini*.

Q4. Potential causes for overtourism

According to the answers of the participants to the question, the codes “*Unplanned*”, “*Seasonality*” and “*Popular Culture*” were the most frequently mentioned expressions. “*Seasonality*” is seen as the most effective factor creating overtourism and “*de-seasonality*” might be the best solution to overcome the effects of overtourism. “*Popular culture*” means the classical “*demonstration effect*” of tourism as indicated in the literature.

Q5. Disgruntled of overtourism

Related to question about the disgruntled of overtourism, the codes of “*Local People*” and “*Tourists*” were mentioned as the most important social groups. Local people are suffering from overcrowding due to lessening livability of their regions and their broken routines, while tourists are complaining from their destroyed holiday experiences due to undesired quantity of visitors in the areas they visited.

Q6. The beneficiaries of overtourism and who they are

52 respondents considers that there are beneficiaries of overtourism, but only 2 of them do not agree.

The beneficiaries were coded as “Governments” and “Tourism Enterprises”. According to them, the major benefits of government are increasing tax revenues and tourism operations gains more money from great amount of visitor expenditures.

Q7. Remedy for overtourism

In order to find a solution to negative effects of overtourism, respondents emphasized the importance of “Spreading tourism to a year around” and “Spreading tourism to different destinations”. These suggestions are also known as implementations of “de-seasonality” and “de-centralisation” of tourism.

Q8. How long has overtourism been on the Agenda

The codes “Newly Learned” and “For the Last 5 Years” were identified as the most frequently mentioned concepts from the statements. These responses show that overtourism is relatively new phenomenon and less people knew about it and not earlier than a decade ago. Especially “others” category in the group heard about overtourism for the first time.

Q9. Accompanying concepts to overtourism

The codes named “Sustainability” and “Carrying capacity” were identified as the most frequently announced terms from the texts. According to the respondents, “sustainability” is the most meaningful concept that can be used together with overtourism. Heavy pressure on the “carrying capacity” of destinations is a well-known consequence of high number of visitors

Q10. Major responsible parties for overtourism

For the related questions, the answer statements mostly concentrate on the codes of “Tourism Managements/Businesses”, “Insensitive Tourists” and “Social Media” were found to be responsible for overtourism. Interestingly, no respondent blamed the official bodies or multinational companies for this uncontrolled development of tourism. Under the “tourism management/business” code, majority of participants blamed the tour operators which are the dominant suppliers of mass tourism and some took attentions to social media platforms where travelers instantly effect each other when they visit to major hotspots.

Q11. Solutions and recovery of overtourism

In this category, there is a question about the future of overtourism and possible solutions. According to the responses, 8 optimistic participants consider that there will be no problem with overtourism in the following years, however 36 of them were pessimistic about it

and the term “Long term planning” was found to be the most significant and urgent solution to overcome the problems caused by overtourism. Pessimistic respondents consider that there will be no solution in the near future because of the rise of “need for holiday” among the societies and uncontrolled “population growth” in developing countries.

Q12. Emerging economies and overtourism

In this section, participants were asked for their ideas about newly emerging economies like India and China and their potential effects on the development of overtourism worldwide. Great amount of the respondents (N=36 and 66 %) consider that these economies have a significant effect on the growth of overtourism and this will continue for a long time. Out of 36 respondents, 6 academics, 6 graduate students, 14 tourists guides, 7 hoteliers, 2 public servants and 1 others (unidentified) believed that China and India have a significant effect on overtourism. On the other hand, interestingly, 18 participants do not agree with them, due to the low level of per capita income in these countries that limits the number of visitors abroad. Out of 18 respondents, 8 hoteliers, 7 others and 3 public servants do not agree with the idea of others about the effects of China and India.

Q13. Overtourism in Turkey

The final question was about the overtourism and Turkey. Almost all the participants (N=49 and 91 %) consider that Turkey has the same problem. It is believed that the Aegean, Mediterranean and Black Sea regions have long being affected from this phenomenon. The major reasons were expressed as the popularity of these destinations, heavy dominance of city tourism in Istanbul, and the seasonality problem of Turkish tourism. However, 4 hoteliers and 1 academics expressed that they do not agree with this idea.

CONCLUSION

In recent years, overtourism has gained an important place in tourism literature. Different topics have been addressed in the field of overtourism. In this study, it was aimed to find out the opinions of people about overtourism and the study conducted on 54 people from different layers of the society. The major findings explained that the term “overtourism” is well known by all of the 54 participants and there was no significant discrepancies between the definitions about overtourism. This may be considered as an expected result, because of the high level of awareness of the respondents to tourism related issues. In the definitions of overtourism, the terms “carrying capacity” and “decrease in quality of life” stand out and were more

emphasized than other concepts. Another interesting result was obtained on the insights about positive and negative consequences of overtourism. Although great majority consider that overtourism is a significant problem for destinations as expected, however there are some participants who consider that overtourism may not be a problem, instead it has a potential to create more revenues to destination economy, government and local communities.

Findings also show that the occurrence of overtourism ensures that the tourists may not come to the region once again and this causes to fall in repeat visits and destination loyalty. Likewise, the cost living of local people due to the rising prices and increasing environmental problems are shown as the major negative consequences caused by overtourism. The factors that cause overtourism are explained as “unplanned developments”, the effects of “popular culture” and “seasonality” characteristic of tourism. Especially “popular culture” seems to be most effective factor causing overtourism.

The participants consider that local people and tourists have noteworthy complaints about overtourism. On the other hand, it has been determined that tourism enterprises (tourism businesses) and governments were found to be the most prominent beneficiaries of overtourism. In their opinions, the most effective solutions to decrease the negative outcomes of overtourism are breaking the seasonality or de-seasonality of tourism and spreading tourism spatially to other destinations and temporally to other seasons.

As another interesting finding, the concept of overtourism has been known or heard by the participants for only the past 5 years, and even some participants explained that this concept was learned first time through this study. This result clearly states that overtourism is a new concept and less people know something about it for the past decade. Therefore, this study area is obviously open to new approaches and researches.

The participants stated that overtourism can be used with the concepts of “sustainability” and “carrying capacity”. In this study, social media, unconscious tourists and tourism businesses were found to be the main offenders for overtourism. The majority of the participants unbelieve that there will be no short-term solution for overtourism due to the population increase in the world and the rising need for vacation. Few participants stated that the overtourism problem will be solved by only regular planning.

As a final consequence, participants pessimistic

about the future of overtourism due to the fast growing economies with large populations like China, Brasil and India that will trigger overtourism more than ever.

Recommendations for further studies

As explained in the text, overtourism is relatively new phenomenon and less studied by researchers and academics so far. Therefore, this topic as a study area is very open to researchers with its different aspects. The first step could be working on the development a scale to measure the effects of overtourism and overcrowding on both local people and visitors. It is well known that there have been many studies on carrying capacity in tourism since 1990s and anyone can easily find a number of publications in literature. Overtourism is also considered as one of the possible reasons for carrying capacity problems. Therefore, there may be some studies investigating the relationship between classical theories on carrying capacity and overtourism. Finally, some of the further studies can be aimed at searching the issues of the effects of digital technology on overtourism. Other study areas might also be recommended as, regional planning and overtourism, visitor segmentation and overtourism, the role of local and central government policies on overtourism, the economic effects and consequences of overtourism, the effects of overtourism on existing infrastructure, and the ways spreading visitors around the destinations and beyond as a solution to overtourism.

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