

THEME PARKS AND CHILD FRIENDLY TOURISM

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Abstract

Tourism is a phenomenon that is constantly evolving along with human history. In particular, tourism, which has begun to accelerate on a global scale as the developments that took place in the period after World War II (beginning of the use of aircraft in civil transportation, the development of mass communication means, the increase of education levels of people, the right of paid leave, the increase of free time etc.), show diversity in individual and mass style. In addition to sea-sand-sun tourism, which first comes to mind when it comes to tourism, There are many kinds of tourism such as ecology tourism, nature tourism, highland tourism, rural tourism, sports tourism, health tourism, culture tourism, congress tourism, faith tourism, youth tourism, third age tourism and gastronomy tourism (Akođlan Kozak, 2012; Albayrak, 2013 : 1-5, Haberal, 2015; Spring & Drive, 2016). In tourism, there are also a large number of variety; After the 1980s, various reasons such as the start of the adoption of sustainable tourism, the necessity of protecting natural and historical and cultural values and transfer to future generations, the desire of people to actively take part in production and creativity in tourism and the search for diversity in recreational activities have been influential.

Based on the above-mentioned factors, recreational areas where tourism, fun, and natural, historical and cultural resources can be used in a cost-effective manner have begun to be needed. Many destination parks have been built to meet this need and respond to the expectations of especially the children's families. The theme parks are areas with high quality of the environment, which increase the quality of the city's surroundings and also contain recreational activities are entertainment areas built inside and outdoors to accommodate families and have fun with their different concepts. The theme parks are museums that deal with scientific, cultural, natural, entertainment, adventure, education and historical issues (Gök & Bingöl, 2017: 133).

The origins of the theme parks extend back to the joyful gardens of medieval European cities. These gardens are; are the first examples of today's theme parks with live entertainment, fire games, dancing, various games, and even the presence of fear trains. Bakken in Copenhagen was founded in 1583 and has grown up to date as the oldest amusement park in the world. By the end of the 1800s, entertainment parks began to be dominated by the domi-

nance of the industry in the cities of the United States. The World's Columbian Exhibition, opened in Chicago in 1893, is the starting point for later established examples. When the Second World War ended, the amusement parks for children came to the agenda when it came to the 1950s. Disneyland, which opened in Los Angeles in 1955, is the first theme park in the United States. Created with a budget of 17 million US dollars, Disneyland is the largest investment in this sector ever made. Such a new approach was viewed with suspicion, but with a great success, 3.8 million people visited during the first season. SixFlags Park was opened in 1961 and 1.5 million visitors were collected during the first season. Walt Disney World, which opened in 1971, was made with a budget of 250 million US dollars with the largest investment in amusement parks until that time. Disney repeated the success of Southern California in Florida in the 1970s. Disneyland and Disneyworld are among the most important entertainment centers of the 20th century. Combining technology and entertainment; contributed to the country's economy and pioneered the development of the global scale of theme parks (Arslan, 2016). The first theme parks in Turkey 'is Vialand. Located on the Eyüp Sultan and Gaziosmanpaşa districts of Istanbul, the park was opened on May 26, 2013. After the operation of Vialand, it started to be regarded as one of the best theme parks in Europe.

In addition to the patriarchal and matriarchal structures being influential in the purchasing decisions within the family, child-building structures are now forceful. When the world of 2.5 billion and the number of children taken into account that the number of children in Turkey 25 million, it is understood that they may be effective in children's consumption decisions (Thibert, 2018). The parents act according to the wishes of the children in their purchasing decisions and tend to activities in which their children develop and enjoy together. If the film industry is to be explored in this perspective, animation films (Cars, Ice Age, Lost Fish Nemo, Toy Story etc.) prepared by Pixar, Walt Disney, DreamWork Animation and other similar companies are often preferred by children. In addition, films like this are very popular among children and young people and parents.

When the effects on the purchasing and consumption decisions of the children in the tourism sector are examined, tourism enterprises for children and child friendly tourism concepts are encountered. The development of service standards for children in the tourism sector has been influential with the emergence of the expressed concepts that the role of children in the tourism economy is greater than in other areas (Türmen, 2018). Child friendly tourism; it can be expressed as a type of tourism that children can play in a healthy way and can spend their time, develop their self-respect, respect, love, adopt the behaviors they promise, increase their creativity and create trustful tourism environments and meet the demands of their children's families. With that in mind, child-friendly tourism businesses can also be described as tourism businesses that have the necessary knowledge and equipment to enable them to respond to the needs of their children and their families and attract the relevant tourist demand to them. In addition, the fact that tourism enterprises are oriented towards children facilitates the marketing activities of tourism enterprises. People will be

able to direct their touristic needs to the tourism enterprises by believing that they value themselves and their children and by feeling them (Özel, 2015: 194-195). The fact that children have such an influence on their consumption preferences has made it possible to develop new attractiveness in tourism. One of the methods used to develop products in tourism is to adapt the products and services in different fields and in accordance with the definition of tourism to the tourism sector. In this context, it will be possible to create the desired effect in terms of initiatives aiming at creating new trends in both children's families and tourism, by evaluating themed parks in child friendly tourism. Themed parks; friendly tourism concept when considering that there are effective areas for preserving the values of tourism, entertainment, education, natural, cultural and historical values, and that such habits allow children to be brought to life at a young age. The fact that there are areas suitable for the theme park format in and around the tourism enterprises can affect the tourism marketing activities positively. Our country has important values in the field of tourism. With such practices, diversity can be created in the tourist values that our country has, and therefore a remarkable increase in the income it can obtain from tourism will be achieved. Moreover, it is considered that our competition power in the tourism market will increase with the implementation of projects that show that children are valued in this way in the field of tourism.