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Tour guides’ roles and responsibilities in a community-based tourism approach

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TOUR GUIDES’ ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN A COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM APPROACH

Gül Erkol Bayram

18.1 Introduction

Along with the economic, social and technological developments in the world over the last 50 years, consumer expectations and wishes have also changed. Especially with the uncontrolled and rapidly progressing urbanization and industrialization processes, tourists have moved away from mass tourism movements and now have a tendency to visit destinations that are calmer and have cultural elements. The countries that recognized this shift have tried to develop alternative tourism approaches for those tourists who want to spend their holidays in a quiet, calm, peaceful and natural environment, in order to get a bigger share of the tourism cake. One of these alternative tourism approaches is community-based tourism. Community-based tourism is an approach that includes stakeholders such as local people, businesses, suppliers and government organizations as well as non-governmental organizations and tourist guides. It is the local people who have the most important place in this approach, which gives democratic participation and power of speech to all stakeholders within its structure (Tasci et al., 2013). The biggest reason for this is the aim of holistic development by keeping communication and interaction between stakeholders at the maximum level (Aref, 2011). Community-based tourism aims to continue tourist development. Within this framework, the goal is to focus on the host community, to keep the local people at the center of tourism activities and for them to obtain the most benefit from these movements on their own land (Kazoğlu, 2018).

There are certain responsibilities of various stakeholders in implementing a community-based tourism approach, as in other tourism activities. One of these stakeholders is tourist guides. The great responsibility that tourist guides have is also emerging at this point. The role of acting as a bridge between local people and tourists depends on tourist guides. In the traditional sense, the tourist guide is the person who travels with visitors from the beginning to the end of their trip and helps them by providing for their needs (Tetik, 2006). In community-based tourism activities, mentors have a great role to play in the establishment of the bridge they need in the interaction of tourists with local people. This bridge will vary depending on the demographic characteristics of the tourists visiting the region. For example, the fact that foreign tourists arriving to the region are unfamiliar with the language and need interpretation services. For local tourist groups, this bridge will be a cultural brokering
rather than a translation. Tourist guides are in an important position to minimize the cultural differences between individuals belonging to different cultures or to transfer these differences and reasons to tourists. Although there is research about tourism enterprises, there are no studies on tourist guides that play a key role in the relationship between tourists and local people. The role of bridges, mediation, assistance and guiding by tourist guides in this approach reveals the importance of this study once again. Evaluating the perspectives of the guides who have been present in many regions, who have conveyed their knowledge about these regions to accompanying tourists and who continue to transmit them, and determining their views on this issue are other factors that make the study important (cited by Kazoğlu, 2018). This research focuses on the perception of community guides by the tourist guides. Considering the limited number of studies on this subject in our country, it can be said that this study can guide academic research and can be utilized by tourism planners. In this chapter, qualitative research methods and the literature review technique was used.

18.2 Concept, characteristics and benefits of community-based tourism

Tourism has some different purposes. One of them is economic gain, a common concern in almost all areas of the tourism industry. The economic development of generating and sustaining more income means sustainable development. Today, it is seen that economic development adversely affects the environment as a result of technology and fast consumption. Reducing these negative effects and increasing awareness guide individuals to different searches. These trends are aimed at tourism movements that focus on the protection of nature and have minimum negative effects, and tourism types that protect and respect the environment, culture and social structure. Community-based tourism, which is one of the kinds of tourism realized through responsibility awareness, has emerged as one way to reduce the negative effects of mass tourism.

The concepts of society and community are very different. The concept of community is defined as a cluster of people who have a common purpose of living on the same piece of land in order to survive and achieve their goals. The Community includes people living on the same land and refers to a portion of the people living on the same piece of land (Kongar, 1971).

Communication and interaction are the main issues in defining the word ‘community’ (Yazıcı, 2016, p. 2). When resident life gathers in a common culture, formed for the purpose of living together, with constant communication and interaction between them, it is called ‘society’ (Cemal, 2005). As it is known, tourism is a concept that has a direct relationship with society. It is possible to state that tourism has a close connection with society both because it is the host of tourism and also because of the direct and indirect effects of tourism on society. Tourism is largely effective in the socio-cultural structure of a region whose main source of income is tourism. For example: tourism; society; family structures, morals, craft activities, traditions and customs in some cases influence, direct or even change. Community-based tourism, in general, is a type of tourism that emerges as a solution to the negative effects of mass tourism in undeveloped or developing regions and countries (Güdü Demirbulat & Aydemir, 2015). Community-based tourism is based on involving local people in the planning of tourist services, sustainable tourism-oriented development and preserving the cultural and ethnic structure of local people. Community-based tourism is a tourism approach that meets the needs and desires of the host people; aims for sustainable development, in contrast to the development-oriented approach in economic activities and facilitates their lives without harming the culture of local people in the process (Nguyen, 2007).
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Mann (2000) defined community-based tourism as a type of tourism that considers the benefits of small local communities in management and decision-making processes. Hatton (2002), on the other hand, defined it as a type of sustainable tourism and emphasized that tourism activities are developed and directed by individuals in the society and that each activity is realized with the idea and participation of the society. Kibicho (2008) states that community-based tourism aims to increase the income of local people by providing employment opportunities and to improve their qualifications and institutions. Salazar (2006) emphasizes the goals of community-based tourism and providing a more sustainable tourism sector by focusing on the communities that accept visitors in order to sustain planning and tourism development.

It first emerged as a new perspective of the concept of development that emerged in the 1970s. This concept began as a paradigm in underdeveloped and developing countries, with the aim of not meeting the expectations of mass tourism, to protect the benefits and the environment for the local societies. It also works with some tourism types as with sustainable tourism; responsible tourism, green tourism, agricultural tourism, eco-tourism, poor-sided tourism, social tourism, voluntary tourism, community-based tourism. Community-based tourism, which is referred to with these types of tourism aimed at the development of sustainable tourism and it has some principles such as poverty, environmental protection, democracy, good governance has such principles (Zapata et al., 2011; Tasci et al., 2013).

Environmental protection, proper use of local resources, improvement of the regional economy and rural development are among the important objectives of sustainable tourism. This philosophy is also present in the understanding of community-based tourism. However, it differs from some sustainable tourism types in terms of the benefits it provides to communities. For example, the most striking difference between community-based tourism and ecotourism is ownership. In social tourism, ownership belongs to the community and the community is competent and decisive. It empowers local communities by providing them with economic benefits, strengthens them, gives them confidence and provides sustainability in destinations.

Some of the benefits of community-based tourism are that it is an economically viable and sustainable form of tourism; it adopts the participation and tourism of local people; it encourages social participation; it supports local employment and development; it uses local resources to improve the quality of life of the community; it helps protect and develop natural resources, and cultural resources; and it values traditional culture and social contributions.

The prominent features of community-based tourism are: adopting the economic development of local people, supporting local employment, improving the quality of life, preserving natural and cultural resources and contributing to its sustainability, developing responsible tourism approaches, providing equal and fair participation, cooperating with different stakeholders, developing understanding of social property to create a common learning process, contribute to the learning of different cultures, provide awareness, the environment, tourism, culture-related rules and controls is part of the social and economic development (Rozemeijer, 2001; Suansri, 2003; cited by Karacaoğlu, 2017).

Community-based tourism aims to realize tourism activities by considering the host community in the planning and management of tourism development (Beeton, 2006). Plans and projects in different types of tourism take place from top to bottom, while advocating a bottom-up approach for the protection and development of communities in community-based tourism. It argues that the community-based approach to tourism, which is expected to contribute to tourism, needs to give importance to the needs and the physical and social environments of the local people. This approach has two important objectives: giving
importance to local control and participation among the common socio-economic benefits in tourism studies and protecting local identity, culture, heritage and sustainability (Arslan, 2016; Sarı Gök & Ünüvar, 2019).

Dixey (2005) conducted a study and a SWOT analysis of community-based tourism in Zambia. According to this research, the strengths of the project included the support of existing NGOs, examples of good practice, village life, ecotourism, arts and crafts, government and international funding agencies. Weaknesses include poor financial management, insufficient knowledge and coordination, purposelessness, lack of qualified personnel, tourism stakeholders and infrastructure problems. The opportunities were increasing tourism demand, diversification of tourism and improving natural and cultural heritage. The threats included an inadequate legal framework, changes in tourism demand and loss of cultural traditions.

Another important research was done by Kwangseh (2014), where interviews with officials were used. According to an important research the biggest obstacles for community-based tourism is a lack of coordination with mass tourism enterprises, conducting the routes. The author pointed out that the society has shown great interest in participating in these projects but remains passive in assuming leadership.

In Hatton’s (1999) research, Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) member countries were examined, and the best examples of community-based tourism practices and some common themes were seen. The first of these is the request of community-based tourism development and the driving force resulting from this request. This request is typically derived from the expectation of the economic gain of the community. Another common theme is leadership. Community-based tourism development usually starts with the leadership of the group. In some cases, this leadership can be from the central government or local governments. Cultural heritage is one of the most important common points in community-based tourism practices. The cultures and cultural heritage of local communities are attractive elements for tourists. The natural environment is also an important key theme. In many community-based tourism activities, increasing employment opportunities for disadvantaged groups such as women and young people is another important theme that supports its development.

18.3 Stakeholders and importance of stakeholders in community-based tourism

The tourism industry achieves success through the harmonious unity of many parts such as different institutions, organizations, individuals, associations and non-governmental organizations. It is one of the most important income-generating industries in the world, consisting of different stakeholders such as tourism accommodation enterprises; travel agencies and tour operators such as travel enterprises; food and beverage enterprises; recreation enterprises; public institutions; non-governmental organizations; large and small souvenir shops and transportation businesses (Swarbrooke, 1999).

Although different types of tourism give rise to different stakeholder relationships, since one of the most important objectives of enterprises is to generate revenue, there may be occasional discrepancies or conflicts of interest between tourism enterprises that provide income-oriented services and non-governmental organizations established to provide benefit to society and the public institutions that control the industry. Although sustainable tourism adopts a community-oriented tourism approach, effective control of enterprises in this process is required. In sustainable tourism, stakeholders should be effectively coordinated
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and actively involved in the process. In addition, stakeholder compliance is essential for sustainable development, which is one of the basic characteristics of sustainable tourism.

Due to its structure, community-based tourism incorporates many different tourism stakeholders. In community-based tourism, which aims to inform and encourage stakeholders to communicate their own wishes and needs, to make decisions and to involve them in the process, stakeholders are examined in two different ways, directly and indirectly as participatory. Usually it is possible to classify these persons and groups as public or non-public institutions. In this context, local people, central and local units, private sector, universities, NGOs, donors and tourists will be examined (Tolkach & King, 2015).

These stakeholders are interconnected, have common goals, act together and solve problems together. Together, problems are solved faster. Moreover, the increase in the level of social participation is possible through the cooperation of all stakeholders. In this context, seamless cooperation with all stakeholders will contribute to the increase of knowledge, skills and capacity at the local level (Byrd, 2007). The roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders in community-based tourism are as follows (Karacăğlu, 2017).

18.3.1 Local people

These are one of the stakeholders who know the problems of the region and are most affected by the negative effects of tourism. In order for the region to develop in community-based tourism, it is necessary for local people to participate in tourism development, planning and management in at a high level and in an active manner and to preserve and transfer natural and cultural historical heritage to future generations. Healthy development of tourism development is possible with the support of local people. Community-based tourism activities without the support of local people are expected to have ineffective, low sustainability.

Blackstock (2005) said that community-based tourism cannot be successful and will sustain inequality in the community if unfair social structures haven’t been broken and the barriers to participatory decision-making are not removed. High-level community participation allows for more socio-economic benefits for the majority of the community’s residents. All stages of the planning process in community-based tourism, including ownership, provides meaningful opportunities for local community participation (Ataman, 2010).

18.3.2 Central and local authorities

Local units contribute to all tourism activities in the region. These institutions are units that provide some basic services such as health, education, infrastructure and superstructure services, landscaping, security, cleaning, arts, sports and tourism. It can be said that these services are driving and attractive factors in the development of destinations. Central and local governments; cooperation with stakeholders; creates information and consultancy networks; prepares educational programs, seminars and conferences; conducts promotional and marketing activities; by ensuring the sustainability of the activities and protecting the rights of the local people working in the region, contributing to the sustainability of the environment and the ecosystem (Long & Nuckolls, 1994). In today’s conditions, local and central administrations undertake responsibilities in the development of their regions and strengthen their cooperation and communication by taking an intermediary position among stakeholders. In this respect, it is possible to state that central and local governments play a facilitating and accelerating role (Göymen & Kaya, 2004).
Young (2009) emphasized the role of government in promoting community-based tourism, in terms of their importance in determining policies and principles, financial support for tourism infrastructure activities and providing grants to local entrepreneurs.

### 18.3.3 Private sector

In the process of community-based tourism, the cooperation and coordination of the private sector and society contributes to sustainable development and alleviates the burdens of different units. Collaborations in the early stages of community-based tourism will ensure development with tourism and reduce potential risks. The contribution of the private sector to the local community will develop and progress over time. The relationship between local people and private sector develops in different ways. For example, private sector owners can receive or offer support to local people on issues such as labour, land use or sharing of values, marketing management, etc. (Asker et al., 2010). However, the point that needs to be emphasized is that the private sector must employ local people. Some of the incentives and rights provided by public institutions to the private sector can make things easier and allow local people to integrate into the private sector. The level of local public acceptance of the private sector will ensure the success of cooperation.

According to Choi (2003), multi-stakeholder engagement that brings together governments, non-governmental organizations, industry and professionals is needed for decision-making and development processes of community-based tourism, right from planning to policymaking.

### 18.3.4 Universities

Universities are known for their academic support for private institutions. It is important for academicians to present their ideas in community-based tourism projects, to provide training, consultancy, use of technology to local people and follow projects (Aydın & Selvi, 2012).

According to Halstead (2003), strengthening partnerships between universities, the public, NGOs, the private sector and communities will support the community-based tourism process. At the same time, strengthening the capacity to provide policy implementation and support within the public and NGOs is also important.

### 18.3.5 Non-governmental organizations

One of the important stakeholders who contribute to community-based tourism projects in regions where tourism is the main source of income are non-profit organizations. Non-governmental organizations are an important stakeholder of community-based tourism as they provide technical, legal and educational support to local people and play a dominant role in social, economic and political change by affecting the region’s attitudes, policies and practices. However, a civilian who cannot communicate with the society and does not represent the society sufficiently has not achieved real success (Mohan, 2002).

### 18.3.6 Donation institutions

Community-based tourism projects are supported by various institutions. Community-based tourism projects are supported by various institutions. These institutions will provide
financial and technical support to community-based tourism, contribute to the economic development of developing regions, eliminate regional poverty, and ensure the development of the region by preserving its cultural structure (Dixey, 2005).

18.3.7 Tourists

Tourists who have a significant share in the sustainability of community-based tourism will provide the host region with economic, sociological and cultural contributions. The perfect harmony of local people and tourists is of considerable importance in eliminating the negative effects of tourism. In this respect, it is possible to say that one of the important stakeholders of community-based tourism is tourists.

In their study, López-Guzmán et al. (2011) tried to determine the satisfaction level of tourists visiting the island of São Vicente in Cape Verde in regard to accommodation, food, drinking, flora and fauna, security, environmental cleanliness, transportation, cultural activities, etc. within community-based tourism. The results of the study determined that the tourists coming to the island prefer restaurants that are owned by families, but prefer big hotels rather than family businesses when choosing accommodation. In addition, it was found that the entertainment was the primary purpose of the trip and other tourism services (crafts, guidance services, etc.) on the island did not receive much attention.

18.3.8 Tourist guides

As with other tourism activities, various stakeholders have certain responsibilities in the implementation of a community-based tourism approach. One of these stakeholders is tourist guides. Tourist guides, who have an intense relationship with tourists and spend time with them day and night, can be effective in their perception. At this point, the relationship of local people with tourist guidance is very important in community-based tourism. Tour guides are known to be among the most effective stakeholders in community-based tourism with their rich knowledge, experience in human relations and relations with different identities.

18.4 The concept of tourist guidance, characteristics of the profession, roles

A tourist guide is the person who communicates with tourists during their travels, facilitates organization from the beginning to the end of travels, introduces the visited region to the tourists in all aspects, helps them have a pleasant time in the region, helps them in extraordinary situations and protects their rights during the travels (Yıldız et al., 1997). According to another definition, the tourist guide is a person who guides local or foreign tourists in a certain programme, provides accurate information about the places of visit in the programme, promotes the country or region and helps tourists receive accurate socio-economic and cultural impressions (Ahipaşaoğlu, 2006). The European Standardization Committee (CEN), adopted and shared by the World Federation of Tourist Guides Association (WFTGA) and the Association of European Tourist Guides (FEG), defines the job ‘Tourist Services - Travel Agencies and Tour Operators Terminology’ as language guiding and describing/ translating the cultural and natural heritage of the region; the tour guide is the person with the equipment and competence generally approved/ accepted by the relevant authorities (cited by Ak et al., 2018).
Considering that tourist guidance is a career that requires professional expression, the point to be considered is determining the scope of the professional. In this context, professionalism in guidance includes the following items (Yarcan, 2007):

- Helping the tourist have a nice travel and holiday experience
- Contributing to the formation of a positive and good image about the country
- Meeting the expectations of the tourist, in line with the services of the travel enterprise
- Presenting his knowledge in an accurate, prompt and interesting manner
- Transferring information in a comprehensible way by commenting
- Getting to know the country, the product offered to the tourist, the tour and the characteristics of the service
- Acting according to the characteristics of the tourist and the service provided
- Being competent in interpersonal communication skills
- Constantly renewing himself/herself, to increase knowledge, culture and experience
- Not sharing professional secrets with others
- Being honest, correct, fair and consistent
- Being responsible and disciplined
- Carrying leadership qualities.

However, it is possible to classify the qualities that the tourist guide should have as knowledge, skills and qualifications and physical appearance. The tourist guide should have knowledge of foreign languages, general culture, first aid, other cultures and the region; should have the ability to express, communicate, interpret, coordinate, deal with questions and be competent in issues such as leadership, hospitality, extraversion, business ethics, and presentation. Knowledge, skills, qualifications and physical appearance are seen as complementary elements.

The roles of tourist guides are defined as mediators, actors, ambassadors, balance elements, integrators, cultural transmitters, informants, interpreters, translators and teachers. The functions of tourist guides are explained as communication, management, promotion, information, entertainment, coping with extraordinary situations and providing equity (Güzel & Köroğlu, 2015).

The quality of the tourist guidance profession is influenced by its interdisciplinary nature. In this context, first of all, a tourist guide should take on some roles. In this context, a tourist guide is:

- A leader who can take responsibility
- An educator who helps tourists understand the places they visit
- A hospitality ambassador
- A host who can create a comfortable environment for the guest and
- A guide who knows how and when to perform the four roles (Pond, 1993; Ap & Wong, 2001).

They preferred a mission to highlight the importance of the places that they visited. The task of tourist guidance has a role beyond welcoming and guiding; the aim to express the cultural and natural heritage and the environment in an interpretive and entertaining way (Şenol & Aliyev, 2015).

In order to be successful in the tourist guiding profession, it is important to be understanding of different types of customers, to have knowledge about the culture of people from
different backgrounds and act accordingly, to manage the tour patiently, to be able to make quick decisions and be solution-oriented, despite any problems experienced in the group. Only people with a strong character and open to development can handle such things as preventing their motivation from falling and entertaining tourists. When such characteristics are considered, guides may be a doctor, student, teacher, lawyer or leader when appropriate (Tangüler, 2002). In addition to the roles tourist guides play in providing a tourism experience, there are also responsibilities for meeting the needs of visitors, tourism businesses and host communities (Weiler & Ham, 2002). A guide in the eyes of tourists is the person representing the country in which he or she is traveling; they are role models and even ambassadors. The tourist guide must be equipped to provide these characteristics.

18.5 Current position, impact of tourist guides in community-based tourism, things to do

Community-based tourism includes different tourism stakeholders such as public institutions, non-governmental organizations, universities, donors and tourists, but one of the most important stakeholders is the local people. The main reason for the development of community-based tourism is the close relationship and sustainability of local people with stakeholders. The relationship between tourists, the source of tourism and local people is the key point of community-based tourism. Close dialogue with local people, the tourists who visit the destination, their contribution to each other and learning and knowing each other’s culture is a very important issue in community-based tourism. Tourist guides, on the other hand, serve as a bridge between local people and tourists. For example; if a tourist guide visits a region with a group of different cultures, he or she transfers the culture of that region and minimizes cultural differences (Kazoğlu, 2018).

Mediation is an important issue in the integration of local people with tourism, one of the key points in the development of community-based tourism. Tourist guides will have an educational and instructive role here. They will also have to remember that they represent their own country and territory. The mediation activities of tourist guides take place between local people, visitors, tour operators, travel agencies, hotels, food and beverage enterprises, recreation enterprises and tourists (Dahles, 2002). Tourist guides are instructor mediators in community-based tourism; they transmit information to both local people and tourists and teach them how to interpret. The knowledge and experience of tourist guides in the conservation of natural resources, cultural structures, foreign language knowledge, and extensive knowledge of communication levels will provide tourists with a rich perspective on community-based tourism, which will treat the local community as respectfully and responsible as possible. At this point, one of the important issues to keep in mind is that guides should have a deep knowledge of the nature, history and cultural heritage of the region where the community-based tourism project is taking place. In order to defend and promote sustainable tourism, the tourist guide must first believe in the fact that the region is an important tourist attraction and make the tourists believe it also.

One of the main objectives of community-based tourism is the development of local people through tourism. Tourists visit the region; some souvenir shops, boutique restaurants. In this respect, it is possible to state that tourist guides make a great economic contribution to the region. In cultural tours, tourists prefer to buy souvenirs and benefit from various touristic services. However, tourist guides will contribute to community-based tourism if they suggest the businesses established and run by local people. A new term has emerged in recent years: responsible tourism. This type of tourism means that individuals are responsible for
the society they live in, the historical places they visit, the resources they use and for transferring these elements to future generations. If tourists visit the region from this perspective, they will be more sensitive. If the tourist guides who accompany these groups act with this awareness, it will make tourists more sensitive to the local people and their cultures and will make their travels more sustainable (Kazoğlu, 2018).

Tourist guides have an important mission in controlling natural resources and create a sense of responsibility on tourists. Tourist guides, who are effective in reducing effects on nature, encourage the accompanying group to believe that they have a great mission to protect the region and transfer it to future generations. This attitude is mainly based on the principle of using resources without disturbing the cultural and natural structure of the region (Howard et al., 2001). The guides, who are exemplary in almost all their behaviours, should act with the attitude, behaviour, posture and style of nature protection that suits their group and most assists the accompanying people.

Jensen (2010) emphasized that tourist guides occupy an important position between the locals and tourists. He emphasized the importance of tourist guides especially in destination management and portrayed the tourist guide as an indispensable part of community-based tourism. In the delicate structure of the tourism sector, tourist guides are often involved as consultants, mentors and mediators. The tourist guide is defined as the person who directs the group, not only by carrying a sign in his hand, but also by leading the group and conveying the meanings and outputs of what the tourists see. Tourist guides are not only related to the geographical characteristics or historical and natural beauties of the group they guide, but also to the cultural and ethnic structure of the region, what the group likes and likes and how the group and local people can communicate in the most effective way (Cohen et al., 2002).

It has been seen that tourist guides play an effective role in creating a positive attitude towards the environment and transforming that into behaviour in their activities in community-based tourism types (Haig & McIntyre, 2002). They also can transfer cultures from different nationality (Ormsby & Mannle, 2006). In addition, it can be said that leadership, mediation and destinations have a role in resource management (Köroğlu et al., 2012).

Community-based tourism is an approach that sees local people as priority tourism stakeholders, unlike other types of tourism. One of the stakeholders is tourist guides, who are in a position to stimulate tourism. At this point, tourist guides endeavour to develop undeveloped regions, with tourism, which is the aim of community-based tourism. Generally, community-based tourism projects are implemented in underdeveloped or underdeveloped regions, where local residents do not have the necessary knowledge and experience in tourism. The tourist guide minimizes the negative effects of this inexperience and acts as mediator, interpreter and cultural broker between local people and tourists. In his study, Salazar (2012) emphasized that tourist guides are the most qualified experienced locals and stated that they are effective in creating local trips and positive images of that region. In addition, guides play an important role in the development of small and large tourism enterprises in that region.

18.6 Conclusion and suggestions

According to the literature review, tour guides are important in many types of tourism, one of which is community-based tourism. This research is focussed on the importance of tourist guides in a community-based tourism approach. Given that studies on this subject are
limited, this study contributes to the literature on this subject, and it is hoped that this study will lead to further academic research and that tourism planners can benefit from it.

Tourism is a service-based sector and part of this system is the tourist guide. Although tourist guides generally represent the travel agency, it is possible to say that they represent many stakeholders of both the country and the tourism system. Tourist guides are one of the most important distributors of word of mouth marketing, one of the most important tools of marketing in recent years. Tourist guides are one of the most important distributors of word of mouth marketing, one of the most important tools of marketing in recent years. The tourist guide is one of the main reasons for the next trip in international tourism movements. He is one of the main reasons why a tourist chooses the destination. Tourist guides, who convey the culture, history and natural beauties of destinations, have a significant importance in national and regional development.

Tourist guides have an irreplaceable importance in the tourism sector, as they have many roles. They are the ones who are interested in tourists’ different problems and needs from the moment they come to the country or region until the end of their tours; they promote the country and the region, and enable tourists to experience different cultures and civilizations. It is one of the branches of the tourism sector where the most intense human relations are seen, what with the different occupational groups tourist guides communicate with. Tourist guides, especially, are in an intense relationship with tourists throughout the tour. Patience, understanding, smiling and being tolerant of tourists’ wishes and expectations are among the most important behaviours that increase the satisfaction of the guests, who add value to tourist guides.

Community-based tourism is a sustainability-focused type of tourism development based on local people. It is well known that the tourist guide contributes to the development of the local people with the dozens of roles they play and qualities they possess, and that they help preserve the cultural and ethnic identity of the local people and economically improve the region. In this process, the tourist guide has a very important position in making life easier without harming the local culture. In a tourism approach shaped by the views of stakeholders such as community-based tourism, it would be beneficial for the region to obtain the views and experiences of its tourist guides. Also, it should be one of the duties of the tourist guide to bring this new approach of tourism to the masses.

References


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