

# A Case Study of Ethnic Minorities as Tourism Entrepreneurs: Their Involvement in Sustainable Tourism Development

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## Abstract

*Most tourism activities excluding the e-tourism activities as matter of their nature (service taker and provider) take place face to face between people. In addition tourism activities encourage bonding people both for tourists and the tourism services providers. Tourism creates cohesion for many different cultural groups. One of the cities in Turkey, Izmir is a good example with including too many culturally oriented groups such as Levantines, Greek, Jewish, rarely Armenians.*

*In this paper there are two research questions are hold; how is being the other (ethnic minority) as tourism entrepreneurs in tourism industry in Izmir and their involvement in sustainable tourism development is investigated and if tourism activities help connecting different cultural groups together and closer is investigated. So regarding these research questions, the research methodology in this paper is qualitative. For that reason, semi structured interview technique is applied to people are belong to different cultural groups and identities whom entrepreneurs in tourism industry. Semi structured interview technique is a commonly used an interview method depending on providing deep understanding of participants' perceptions, thoughts and behaviors.*

*In general, understanding of the other brings feeling respect to others' cultural beliefs and lifestyle and this will make peace and harmony to where they live together. As a result, with the light of these research questions being the other entrepreneurship in sustainable tourism development in Izmir is evaluated. Furthermore, in this research is tried to indicate the advantageous and disadvantageous and importance of different cultural groups for sustainable tourism development.*

**Keywords:** *Tourism Entrepreneurship, Ethnic Entrepreneurs, Ethnicity, Ethnic Identity, Sustainable Tourism Development*

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## Introduction

Tourism has a multicultural environment. Multicultural environment brings various different cultures, languages and life styles together. Hence, Turkey is a country that covering people belong to several different cultures in the same and wide geography. As well as in the West coast of the Turkey in Aegean Region, different cultural groups of people or people having different ethnic origins have been living together for too many years. Izmir and near cities in the Aegean Region are the homes of mostly Levantines, Greeks, Jewish and rarely Armenians.

In addition to bonding several cultural groups together also Izmir is a vital tourism destination for Turkey. In 2012, 1 billion 369 thousands international tourists arrived to Izmir (Kultur ve Turizm Bakanligi, 2013). Tourism industry in Izmir includes wide variety of enterprises from multinational hotel chains to locally-owned tour operators.

## Literature Review

Ethnicity is considered as whole of social relationships and processes that are constructed by cultural differences reframing and maintaining common discourses. Identity should be understood as a relationship between agent and structure that is invoked through intentional agency (Hitchcock, 2010). Ethnic identity is considered as recapitulating to notions of common origin, history, culture and race. According to essentialist way of view, cultural and historical patrimony of apparent populations is taken into account in case emphasizing the idiosyncratic features of that populations and where the “other” is situated. The constructivist approach is mainly accentuated on the social interactions between the groups and their shared cultural, social, economic and historical characteristics (Grünewald, 2006).

The main challenge for tourism in that regard how it will situate and relate itself with ethnicity? Is it just that case that is it a form ethnic relations pointing out the tourists from different nations seeking out the exotic and foreign cultures? Or tourism will situate itself as a part of social and global construction of cultures by historical, cultural and economic connections. Being other as a tourism entrepreneur in a country can be considered as a dramatic example by being a part of this social and global construction process bilaterally. İzmir is a good example for that case as being a tourism destination comprising of different cultures and tourism participants as service provider or taker from different cultural, national and ideological identities as well.

A tourism entrepreneur can be defined as the tourism entrepreneur may be defined as ‘a creator of a touristic enterprise motivated by monetary and/or non-monetary reasons to pursue a perceived market opportunity legally, marginally, or illegally’ (Khun et al., 2002). Entrepreneurship can be defined as creating and building something of value from practically nothing (Timmons, 1994). Therefore, entrepreneurship is a process related with inventing something and locally owned. The research on regions where different ethnic origin people lived together a new concept of entrepreneurship has created the ethnic entrepreneurship. There are some studies in literature about ethnic entrepreneurship (Yang, Wall, 2009; Yang et al., 2008; Li, 2007; Hitchcock, 2000; Min, Bozorgmehr, 2000). In some regions ethnic entrepreneurs create organizations to help each other and improve regional development.

Tourism enterprises in developing countries include multinational corporations, medium-sized enterprises and locally owned small-scale businesses that are entrepreneurs (Ech-

tner 1995). Entrepreneurs play a significant role in tourism development in regions where multinational and international firms may not enter tourism market (Chang, 2011). Thus tourism entrepreneurs especially rural and ethnic communities are push motivator for the development tourism and responsible for the sustainable tourism development. Their involvement in sustainable tourism development helps using natural resources more efficiently in the region.

The concept of sustainability has been effective in all sectors as well as in tourism industry. The tourism industry owes its existence to natural, cultural and historical resources. Therefore, one can not mention about a touristic attractiveness in a destroyed natural, cultural and historical resources. In this respect, the concept of sustainability is vital importance for the industry (Akşit, 2007). Sustainable tourism, which benefits from tourism while reducing costs and increasing losses, is arose from the need without destroying the natural and human resources development within the boundaries of sustainability (Jackson ve Morpeth, 2000). Thus, both to avoid the effects of mass tourism and to impress the tourists that interested in the environment, sustainability practices have emerged in this context (Aoki, 2002).

For all these reasons, in the last century the concept of tourism has been a focus of increasing interest by theorists and practitioners and businesses world have developed various plans and identify a number of principles on sustainable tourism (Sharpley, 2000, 1). Sustainable tourism is defined as using tourism resources without consuming, destroying and contaminating for the future of generations benefits' (Greenwood, 2006, 18; Avcıkurt, 2009, 145). According Bramwell ve Lane sustainable tourism works to reduce tensions and conflicts in a positive attitude which is due to the interactions arising from the complex between tourism industry, environment and the local community.

Nowadays because of growing and developing progresses in tourism industry, the tourists expectations are also rapidly changing. Tourists wants to see countries' historical and cultural remains, the local culture and way of life, untouched natural environment, the original form of the plant and animal species at their habitats. So they demand the responsible tourism approach that based on nature, culture and society. This new approach to tourism chose to attract more individual and smaller tourists groups to mass tourist groups and to extend touristic activities in a wider space longer time and to develop different touristic activities.

Sustainability as being quite complex structure is becoming increasingly with tourism in different ways. Long-term tourism sustainability depends on several factors (Avcıkurt, 2009):

- Continuously provide high quality products
- Ensure that tourists get to high-quality experience
- Protect the local values and workers

## The Purpose of the Study

Izmir is one of the most tourist hosting destinations in Turkey. Izmir is received 1 billion 369 thousands international tourists in 2012 (Kultur ve Turizm Bakanligi, 2013). Also Izmir is candidate country for EXPO 2020. Promotion campaigns of Izmir in international arena for the EXPO 2020 candidate process make an increase in international flows to Izmir. Related to these campaigns 1 billion 500 thousands of international tourists are expected to visit Izmir. If Izmir hosts EXPO 2020 there will be a huge increase in the number of interna-

tional visitors ([www.buyuyenturkiye.com](http://www.buyuyenturkiye.com), 31.05.2013). In consequence sustainable tourism development issue becomes crucial depending on development of Izmir's recognition in the world and increase in tourists flows. So tourism activities have to be carried on concerning this sustainability issue. Also in recent years tourists have started to consider environmental and cultural issues. A new trend in tourism has been rising. Parallel with trends in tourism structure of tourism demand have been changing. Since sustainable tourism development is an qualitative factor effecting destination's competitive advantage (Bahar, Kozak, 2005: 138) sustainable tourism development in Izmir needs to be supported.

Izmir is not only full of natural beauty but also city's history depends on ancient times. Izmir is a destination hosting many cultures and civilizations. For very long years different cultures live together in peace and harmony. While Izmir has these kinds of characteristics different ethnicities' participation in sustainable tourism development as stakeholders is not researched. So this study aims to examine ethnic entrepreneurs' participation in sustainable tourism development in Izmir.

## Methodology

In this paper there are two research questions are hold. First how is being the other (ethnic minority) as tourism entrepreneurs in tourism industry in Izmir and then their involvement in sustainable tourism development is investigated. These research questions and the subject of this research is suitable for qualitative research method and research design is flexible. Also the number of participants who involve this research is limited. So regarding these reasons the research methodology in this paper is qualitative. The methodological approach in this paper is case study. Case study can be defined as "a holistic empirical inquiry used to gain an in-depth understanding of a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life context, using multiple sources of evidence" (Beeton, 2005). Case studies are central to most research in social sciences as well as in tourism. An advantage of the case study method is taking insider's perspective which is related to applied disciplines such as tourism as well as to areas of policy development and examination. On the other hand, according to Pizam (1994) researchers should be cautious about generalizing case study findings. Case studies are singular instances that may cause misleading evidence when generalized as well as multiple cases. According to Cousin (2005) in intrinsic case study research, the researcher's interest is simply in understanding the case in hand. For example, what happens on this geography field trip, at this time and place and in these circumstances. Cousin (2005) insists that this kind of case study research is often fit for the purpose of evaluation research because it can be about assigning worth to a particular set of activities and experiences.

Thus the study is qualitative sampling method is purposive or judgmental sampling method. When developing a purposive sample, researchers use their special knowledge or expertise about some group to select subjects who represent this population (Berg, 2000: 32). For that reason, the data is gathered by semi-structured interview technique. Semi-structured interview technique is applied to people belonging to different cultural groups and identities whom entrepreneurs in tourism industry. Semi-structured interview technique is a commonly used an interview method depending on providing deep understanding of participants' perceptions, thoughts and behaviours. The purpose of semi-structured interview technique is to identify similarities, parallels and differences between the information given by participants (Brannigan, 1985 cited in Mil, 2007). In this semi-structured inter-

view technique questions are prepared before the interview process and questions may be both/or open ended and closed ended (Mil, 2007). The researchers have asked participants to answer with their own words these both open ended and closed ended questions formerly prepared by researchers.

The interview technique motives are :

- High response rate,
- Create an effective communication between researchers and participants
- Allow participants to express their ideas freely
- Non-verbal behaviours like body gestures and/or mimics may be observed in interview process

Semi-structured interview technique is followed. Interview form provides flexibility in some ways (Yazıcıoğlu ve Erdoğan, 2011: 156). Questions in the interview form had created based on the literature review. After creating question form and identifying participants whom interviewed then interview request was send by email, telephone to them in the January 2013. In those requests objective and significance of the study was mentioned. Interviews were followed through months between February and March in participants' offices based on their time schedule. Concerning their time schedule the researchers had arrived 15 minutes before the interview time.

In the interview process first of all subject of the research was introduced to the participants. Interviews took place one by one. In the interview process to provide confidentiality participants were told their name and surname and business administrations' name would be kept private and answers would be used just for academic research purposes. Moreover, to prevent conflict questions were followed by a written form and asked to participants. Although, order of questions were changed in order to be flexible related to the interview process. As a result of participants' behaviours and responses questions were asked again by several ways. First questions were grouped before and after interviews then those groups were compared and formed a new question group which is followed below. Last this question group was analyzed involving with participants' responses.

In this study 3 ethnic entrepreneurs are chosen that born and live in Izmir whom are professional in their business and have wide knowledge about research subject. There are 5 questions are asked to participants. First 3 questions are belonging to ethnic origin and tourism entrepreneurship group. In this group researchers tried to investigate if ethnic origin created any difference as a tourism entrepreneur in tourism industry in Izmir considering local people, tourists and people working in tourism industry. These questions are;

1. The Reasons of Becoming An Entrepreneur in Tourism Industry
2. As an entrepreneur in tourism industry if feel or observe any difference or indifference about behaviours related to different ethnicity
3. Tourists' and local people's behaviour and manners regarding different ethnicity
4. The other 2 questions are belonging to sustainable tourism development group. In this group of the questions ethnic entrepreneurs' involvement in sustainable tourism development is investigated. These are;
5. Thoughts on Environmental and Socio-Cultural Effects of Tourism
6. Participations and Contributions to Sustainable Tourism Development ( past, current and future implications)

## Findings and Discussion

In this part of the study first demographic information of participants is given and then answers given to interview questions are analyzed with relevant literature.

The table on the below indicates demographic information of participants. According to the table, participant 1 is Armenian and an entrepreneur in hospitality sector in tourism industry. He was born in Istanbul in 1956. Participant 2 is Israel origin and an entrepreneur in food and beverage sector in tourism industry. He was born in Izmir in 1956. Participant 3 is Italian Levantine and an entrepreneur in travel agency and tour operators sector in tourism industry. He was born in Izmir in 1936.

**Table 1.** Demographic Information

Participants	Ethnic Origin	Type of Tourism Industry	Birth of place and year	Year of lived in Izmir	Sex
Participant 1	Armenian	Hospitality	Istanbul,1956	15 years	Male
Participant 2	Israel origin	Food and Beverage	Izmir, 1956	55 years	Male
Participant 3	Italian Levantine	Travel Agency and Tour Operations	Izmir, 1936	Since born	Male

Q1: One participant told us his all family was entrepreneur in several sectors although he was the only tourism entrepreneur. He revealed that the reason he involved with tourism was very personal. As he was in love with Izmir and had passion for making Izmir more beautiful and better place and promoting Izmir as a lovely place. The others had chosen to be an entrepreneur in Tourism for business purposes.

Q2, Q3: Three participants stated that they did not experience neither negative nor positive situation related to their ethnicity. They stressed that their ethnicity did not create any difference in Izmir.

*Participant 2: 'I haven't experienced any neither negative nor positive situation related to my ethnic origin. Actually I have not faced with anything about my ethnicity and religion.. so my ethnicity does not create any difference in Izmir or in Turkey.'*

Tourism has a multicultural environment. Multicultural environment brings various different cultures, languages and life styles together. Hence, Turkey is a country that covering people belong to several different cultures in the same and wide geography. As well as in the West coast of the Turkey in Aegean Region, different cultural groups of people or people having different ethnic origins have been living together for too many years. Izmir and near cities in the Aegean Region are the homes of mostly Levantines, Greeks, Jewish people and rarely Armenians. All people live in harmony and peace.

Besides one participant added his ethnic origin supported him to be an entrepreneur and created an advantage for him compared to other rivals in the tourism industry. Participant 2: *'I am the owner and manager of the first café in Izmir and one of the first cafes in Turkey. After I completed a cake and bakery course in Israel I opened a café in Izmir. I think that I was aware of the opportunities, alternatives and conflicts of this sector better than others related to my ethnicity and education in Israel. As an entrepreneur in food and beverage industry I try to improve the system better.'*

*The second part of the questions indicates that all participants involve in sustainable tourism development either by currently applying sustainable tourism activities and / or by sustainable tourism development projects become reality in the future.*

Q5: Thoughts on Environmental and Socio-Cultural Effects of Tourism

Participant 1: *'... they desire for the journey to the past and escape from the real world that they have troubles with. The tourism as a sector brings modern world's ugliness, customs but also its both visual and structural disturbing features in an aggressive and precipitous manner into the beautiful world in the people's dreams. Tourism sector brings the ugly architecture as a first step in Turkey. Tourists would like to be taken with the emotion of discovery like Indiana Jones. Our real concern was not to disturb the architectural texture while we build rest areas. We usually tried to fix these concerns in the basic level. Our formula: We repair the existing houses and protect its historic features and re-build them. For example, I built ruins. This is the price for protecting the texture. I had a project in Van to build a old village I aim to build a village as it was hundreds ago and they were all experiments... the sustainable tourism.. Sustainable tourism development should be integrated with the local government model. The strong local authority seems like real solution. The villagers who are shareholders of this tourism market should have the right and authority to govern this market..'*

Participant 2: *'....This is not tourism.. Nowadays everywhere is full of buildings.. Tourism is need to be served by experiencing, living it.. it has to be alive.. Tourism experience is something with culture so cultural elements have to be harmonized with tourism... Tourists do not look for foreign, they look for local and something authentic..'*

Participant 3: *'... Tourism in Izmir has to include people who know Izmir and world with well education and knowledge.. For example I have been living in Izmir all my life, my family came to Izmir in 1700's.. we may speak many foreign languages. Like a world citizen I use several foreign languages in a sentence... Tourism harms natural environment.. Everywhere is damaged by tourism activities. Nothing preserves its original; sea, forests etc. destructed... Tourism activities have to concern natural environment.. There are many examples in the world considers this issue. For example, in safari tours in Africa hunting is forbidden only camera is allowed.. Also tourists need to understand their damage on natural environment..'*

Tour operators may affect sustainable tourism development by protecting cultural resources and environmental resources. UNWTO (2011) published a sustainable report including how tour operators can contribute to sustainable tourism development. The report's tour operators part focuses on environmental issues in protected areas. According to the report tour operators can contribute to the sustainable development of tourism in protected areas in many different ways. Some of these are; tour guides may give customers information about the natural and cultural features of visited sites and their roles in the conservation of local ecosystems, they may limit the size of their groups when visiting protected areas, they may integrate sustainability principles while selecting their suppliers and choose locally owned and operated suppliers, they may provide customers guidelines on how to reduce negative impacts when visiting sensitive areas by maintaining appropriate for example keeping water and energy use down to avoid related impacts on the environment (UWTO, 2011).

Q6: Participations and Contributions to Sustainable Tourism Development (past, current and future implications)

Participant 1: *'...We take as a goal to be very conscientious on architecture. The whole picture of the village has to be compatible with its ancient times. The people who have susceptibility on the architecture of the village should be the advisors or the people who can have decisions and veto. The architectures should be more sensitive about the architectural and historical structure of the construction during the restorations. We built the electric cables under the village and we used bagasse instead of coal firing. We tried to protect the balance of the green and the structure...We try to reduce total energy consumption by using eco-friendly lights, total water consumption...'*

According to some studies in the literature to gain competitive advantage is the reason adopting sustainable tourism practices in tourism industry (Stabler, Goodall, 1997; For-

syth, 1995; Middleton, Hawkins, 1993). Furthermore eco-labels, environmental practices (EMs), environmental performance indicators are best environmental practices (WTTC et al., 2002) and save costs in hotel business. Improvement and optimization of operational efficiency of hotel facilities like control and reduction of resource consumption (energy, water, products and materials), allowing minimization of costs and securing of short-term profits will be an effective environmental strategy for hotels. Moreover today several hotels including chain hotels such as Four Seasons, Hilton, InterContinental, Marriott, Starwood Hotels & Resorts implement eco-friendly and sustainability measures and try to become sustainable or eco-hotels like Marriot Hawaii Hotel, Proximity Hotel in North Carolina, Hilton Patagonia (Živadinov, Blazevic, 2010). As well as it is very essential for developed countries for countries like Ghana sustainable tourism practices like environmental management system is considered important and tried to apply in hotels (Mensah, 2007).

Although it is very difficult to measure intangible benefits of environmental applications and hard for a hotel to confirm a sales increase after the implementation of an environmental instrument (Ayuso 2006) Participant 1 states that *'In the long term, this sensitivity makes me richer because the tourists who have money are sensitive on these environmental issues. The hotels who rent their rooms for 50 dollars I rent my rooms for 200 dollars in the village with stove during the tourism crisis. The ferro-concreted hotels who have rooms like prisons rent their rooms for 10 liras and these rooms remain empty. However, I rent my rooms for 150 liras but my hotels are full..'*

As sustainable tourism implications increase competitiveness of hotels also it supports destinations about competitiveness. Sustainable tourism development is a qualitative factor to identify destination competitiveness (Bahar, Kozak, 2005: 138). In the future destinations with clean air and water, preserving historical, cultural and socio-economic texture, untouched flora and fauna, clean, green, healthy and ecological nature and environment will have advantage in competitive advantage (Priestley et al., 1996: 6 cited in Bahar and Kozak, 2005: 138). Moreover maintaining sustainable tourism in a destination helps to protect and develop regional, local, cultural and natural values that comprise tourism resources and thus tourism attractiveness will survive.

*Participant 2: 'When I think of sustainable tourism development I always concern about cultural sustainability.. I'm opening a chef and cook training school to teach Turkish traditional foods which are belong to Aegean Region such as herbs cooked with olive oils, fresh herb salads with olive oil and yogurt, vegetables cooked with olive oil served better cold preferably hot, fresh sea fish, melon, traditional white cheese and traditional Turkish drink raki (Turkish alcohol made of grape and anise) trilogy combination. So my concern is about Turkish food culture to help to survive in the future and to be known..'*

Travel experiences are accompanied by a search for difference, variety seeking, pleasure and play with the exotic other. Food consumption during travel may involve experience and play practices. Sometimes food consumption in travel can be conservative. On the other hand, tourists usually search for playful and diverse experiences while consuming foreign foods (Bardhi et al., 2010). Food consumption is an important everyday consumption activity for tourists and defines who we are (Lupton, 1996). Not only gastronomy tourists but also other tourists like to try local food and tastes. Consuming food is an experience in culture of the local. Thus culture is defined as a way of life style transferred through generations (Keegan, Green, 2003) food is an element helping culture generate from past to future and one to another. So opening a school about *Turkish traditional foods belongs to Aegean Region will help Aegean culture's sustainability.*

In addition to searching for difference tourists want to be local and prefer to eat local foods in visited destinations. These local products give them an insight into the nature of a



place and its people (Sims, 2009). Also with raising of sustainability issues in recent years tourists want to be a good traveler and do what is better for the environment, integrate with local culture and support local economy (Allen et al., 2007; Boniface, 2003). Promoting high quality and distinctive local cuisine helps to distinguish relevant destination from others, attract more tourists and positively affect competitiveness of the destination (Woodland et al., Hashimoto et al., 2006).

*'About sustainable tourism wide range of involvement is needed. It is not about one or two people, all local people workers etc... All community including tourism entrepreneurs like us have to contribute and involve any part of the sustainable tourism process.. Also sustainable tourism can be achieved by projects that managing by government-local government and private sector and community. There has to be a checking and controlling mechanism to sustain and improve the sustainable tourism projects. Without tourists' involvement no such sustainable tourism project is succeed.'*

The tourism industry depends on local resident involvement, through their role as employees or local entrepreneurs as stakeholders and on resident kindness towards tourists (Blackstock, 2005). As well as tourism industry needs stakeholders participation sustainable tourism development requires local involvement too.

According to Simpson (2001) sustainable tourism development is goal oriented, need to respond to environmental and policy changes; include social, cultural, environmental, economic, political implications and community involvement. Community involvement in sustainable tourism has been investigated by many researchers (Eshliki, Kaboudi, 2012; Salazar, 2012; Sutawa, 2012; Simpson, 2007; Dola, Milan, 2006; Blackstock, 2005; Simpson, 2001). A successful sustainable tourism development can be achieved by community leader and all community participation (Beeton, 2006). Furthermore, in destinations where government and community is integrated, community naturally participate on decision making process about tourism development.

Usually in developing countries community involvement in sustainable tourism development (Eshliki, Kaboudi, 2012) and decision making process (Dola, Mijan, 2006) is not considered as important as in developed countries. Turkey is a developing country identified by World Bank with Gross National Income (GNI) of US \$ 11,905 and less per capita in a year (ISI, 2013). Tourism development issues need to be taken seriously by all stake holders to maintain tourism sustainability to be enjoyed by next generations. Government with its regulation needs to control or check and balance including community participation in order to achieve the goal of sustainability. (Sutawa, 2012).

*'In sustainable tourism projects local people and tourists' involvement is necessary. I think about Efes living museum, Kemeralti a live example of Turkish culture.. In Kemeralti tourism project tourists will learn how to make a wine, olive oil etc. Tourist will engage actively in this tourism experience.. these are sustainable tourism project examples for Izmir'*

A cultural tourism example living museum Efes combine history and today together. Tourists live past times today by involving historical tourism activities. In addition to living museum Efes example also Kemeralti project maintenance sustainable tourism development in Izmir. Creative tourism involves not just 'being there' but also creative experience with an intensive interaction on the part of tourists. In creative tourism, tourists actively learn about their surroundings and apply that knowledge in order to develop their own skills (Richards, Wilson, 2006).

A project serving tourists a creative tourism experience like making wine, olive oil in Kemeralti will make them engage in history and culture of the Izmir and improve their knowledge and skills. Thus these kinds of projects supporting cultural sustainability create

a positive effect on sustainable tourism development. Some examples in the world tourists involve in Perfume-making in Grasse, Provence, France, tourists make traditional crafts and handcrafts, learn languages and have knowledge on New Zealand gastronomy in Nelson, New Zealand and tourists join Gastronomy and cooking courses in Barcelona, Catalunya.

*Participant 3: '...Our tourism company emphasis on education and knowledge of tour guides. We choose our tour guides with superior knowledge about Izmir destination and it's culture, local people, gastronomy, history etc. ... and one of the main issues is he/she has to love Izmir.'*

Salazar (2012) highlights that achieving sustainable tourism tour guides have to be well trained and local. For a tour guide being local is important due to engaging culture closely and knowing what the cultural sensibilities are. There is an example in Exodus which is an original and adventure holiday company in UK specializing in walking, cycling, winter activities, photographic and wildlife holidays has a Responsible Tourism policy. Relevant with this policy the company hires more local guides to provide better experiences and support to local communities; purchases local products and services, where appropriate; works with local operators to implement the responsible tourism policy (UNWTO, 2011).

Tourism literature and sector are parallel about tour operators' involvement in sustainable tourism development. Hence it is better for tour guides to be local and well educated to achieve sustainable tourism involvement. Tour guides need to understand that their job is not only to show and explain visited destinations to tourists. Tour guides play a crucial role in gain a strong and accurate interaction between local people and tourists. Therefore a tour guide is a bridge transfers host culture to tourists and ensure cultural sustainability.

### **Main Points, Similarities and Differences Between Case Study Participants**

All of the three participants stated that they did not experience neither negative nor positive situation related to their ethnicity. They stressed that their ethnicity did not create any difference in Izmir.

Besides one participant added his ethnic origin supported him to be an entrepreneur and created an advantage for him compared to other rivals in the tourism industry. Participant 2: *I am the owner and manager of the first café in Izmir and one of the first cafes in Izmir. After I completed a cake and bakery course in Israel I opened a café in Izmir. I think that I was aware of the opportunities, alternatives and conflicts of this sector better than others related to my ethnicity and education in Israel. As an entrepreneur in food and beverage industry I try to improve the system better.'*

Both Participant 1 and Participant 2 stated that a successful tourism development needs tourism entrepreneurs, workers, community and tourists' involvement and contribution. Also they stated that *government-local government and private sector and community should manage sustainable tourism projects.*

Parallel with findings Blackstock (2005) indicated that the tourism industry depends on local resident involvement through their roles as employees or local entrepreneurs as stakeholders and on resident kindness towards tourists. As well as tourism industry needs stakeholders participation sustainable tourism development requires local involvement too.

Community involvement in sustainable tourism has been investigated by many researchers (Eshliki, Kaboudi, 2012; Salazar, 2012; Simpson, 2007; Sutawa, 2012; Dola, Milan, 2006; Blackstock, 2005; Simpson, 2001). A successful sustainable tourism development can be achieved by community leader and all community participation (Beeton, 2006).

Participant 1 states that they imply eco-friendly implementations in the hotel and concern on protecting environment and *preserving architectural and historical structure of the construction during the restorations.*

### Contributions to Izmir Destination

Participant 1: Since in his hotel there are eco-friendly applications he shows the region how hospitality is done by protecting environment. He aims to serve tourists an authentic experience with preserving characteristics of the region. He renovates buildings with protecting natural environment and preserving historical characteristics.

Participant 2: He is one of the initiators in food and beverage sector in Izmir. He is the entrepreneur who introduces Izmir with 'café' concept. He has practices on sustainable tourism development such as frozen food etc. and chef and cook training school project. He is sensitive on price and he wants to serve to middle class too. He insists that everyone has to involve and experience advantages of tourism. His project about educating chef and cooks on Traditional Aegean foods may generate many advantages for Izmir destination such as;

- Educating chefs and cooks help cooking and serving these foods better and increase quality. An increase in quality supports customer satisfaction therefore revisit intentions and new tourists are developed,
- Since the aim of the education in this school is promoting and transferring these served food and cultural values, these food and culture may not be forgotten and sustained,
- New employment opportunities In Izmir in this field may be created
- By supporting sustainable tourism development in Izmir Izmir's competitive advantage increases as a tourism destination.

Participant 3: He expands tourism season to 12 months by supporting tourism product diversification. He leads in cruise, fair and exhibition tourism in Izmir. He organizes a tour to Izmir's different locations. As a result, Izmir is promoted and tourism's advantages grow and distribute to other places. He stresses that Izmir has to be well known by people from tour guide to driver working in tourism sector in order to promote Izmir efficiently.

### Conclusion

In this study ethnic minorities as tourism involvement in sustainable tourism development are investigated. As study is suitable for qualitative research the methodology is the case study. The data is gathered by semi-structured interview technique. Questions are prepared and developed by researchers including two parts; one explores if ethnic origin created any difference as a tourism entrepreneur in tourism industry in Izmir considering local people, tourists and people working in tourism industry. All of the participants agreed that ethnicity do not create any difference in Izmir. The other 2 questions belong to sustainable tourism development group. In this group of the questions ethnic entrepreneurs' involvement in sustainable tourism development is investigated. The second part of the questions indicates that all participants involve in sustainable tourism development either by currently applying sustainable tourism activities and / or by sustainable tourism development projects become reality in the future. As a successful sustainable tourism development require com-

munity and stakeholder participation in the process. The tourism industry depends on local resident involvement, through their role as employees or local entrepreneurs as stakeholders and on resident kindness towards tourists (Blackstock, 2005). As well as tourism industry needs stakeholders participation sustainable tourism development requires local involvement too. Tourism entrepreneurs' projects such as living museum Efes, Kemeralti project, training school for chef and cooks need to be evaluated by local government of Izmir. Government and tourism stakeholders have to act together for a sustainable tourism development in Izmir. Moreover sustainable tourism development is a qualitative factor to identify destination competitiveness. Maintaining sustainable tourism in a destination helps to protect and develop regional, local, cultural and natural values that comprise tourism resources and thus tourism attractiveness will survive.

### Limitations

The research is a case study thus it is not possible to generalize findings. The case study considers only present people and current situations and issues. This study is carried out only in Izmir and findings are associated with this condition. Three different ethnic entrepreneurs from three different sub-sectors of tourism are seemed eligible for the case study in Izmir.

### Further Research

Further research might investigate several professional tourism entrepreneurs excluding ethnicity issue who are with adequate knowledge about sustainable tourism development in Izmir. A background for a comprehensive sustainable tourism development plan could be generated. Also some solutions and practical implications may be given in the further study.

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