

Chapter 13

Sustaining Tourism and Branding: The Core Responsibilities of Stakeholders in Destination Development

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ABSTRACT

Branding with local dynamics is crucial to sustain tourism for a destination's existence and future. In this case, many stakeholder groups are responsible for the participation, social cohesion, economy, and environment. Thus, the authors conducted face-to-face interviews with seven key persons related to regional tourism development in the research area, Adiyaman. Research results show that in Adiyaman, a strong partnership, cooperation, and cohesion for sustainable tourism and branding is needed. The use of local dynamics—such as values, natural resources, education, and manpower—is an important variable of sustainable tourism and branding process.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism-driven mobility of people throughout the world creates natural, social, cultural, and economic impacts on different geographical places. In this regard, the discourse of sustainable tourism focuses on sustaining the tourism through fundamental principles, such as environmental protection, social welfare, and economic development (Neto, 2003; Budeanu, 2003) and equilibration among them (Clarke, 1997). One of the approaches to successful sustainable tourism, especially in developing regions, is branding with the help of local dynamics, such as cultural values, natural resources, and local manpower.

Branding through local dynamics plays a key role in ensuring sustainable tourism and creating a final brand. Within this context, a collective action including each stakeholder group in every region is required to be able to have more significant results and acquisitions from the tourism development. If a common ground could be established among the different stakeholder groups, tourism could develop using the local resources and sustain the locality in the region (Woodland & Acott, 2007). To ensure the sustainability of the existing tourism activities and adapt them to the local features of the region, common tasks and responsibilities at each hierarchical level should be determined, defined, analyzed, and performed. From this point of view, the present study focused on Adıyaman, which is one of the important historical and cultural cities in Turkey, and how to promote sustainable tourism with the help of local dynamics and how to brand the city in this way were discussed within the framework of stakeholder participation. Located in the Southeastern Anatolia Region and famous for its National Park of Mountain Nemrut included in the World Cultural Heritage list, Adıyaman is one of the cities with an important tourism potential with its natural resources (Çalışkan, 2014). Despite its important tourism potential, Adıyaman needs a sustainable tourism perspective and significant efforts during the branding process, and the problems faced in stakeholder collaboration and participation are observed to hinder its development (Yılmaz & Çalışkan, 2015).

BACKGROUND

Sustainable Tourism as a Driving Force of Destination

The facts discovered because of tourism activities since the late 19th century have brought along particular changes on the paradigms related to tourism development. In the late periods of the past century, especially because of the increases in income levels and the technological advancement in the Western world, a mass tourism model, where the resources are generally utilized in an unplanned way, has emerged in a

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