Social Representations of Sustainable Tourism Development in Mass Tourism Destinations: The Case of Antalya, Türkiye[*]

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Abstract

In the context of social representation theory, the purpose of this study is to explore the social representations of sustainable tourism development in Antalya, a mass tourism destination, specifically focusing on hotel owners. In line with the research purpose, a qualitative research method was chosen. As a data collection technique, the free association method, which is considered an important technique, was used to uncover the constituent elements of the representation content. Interviews were conducted with 15 individuals who are hotel owners of four- or five-star establishments in Antalya. Five basic categories were identified: environmental, economic, cultural, social, and managerial. It is observed that the representations primarily revolve around environmental concerns, with recurring themes including recreational activities, employment, and urban planning. Furthermore, through multiple correspondence analysis, the proximity of participants to social representations within their respective generation and education level was determined. Lastly, this study stands out as one of the few endeavors to ascertain the social representations of sustainable tourism development in mass tourism cities.

Key words: Sustainable Tourism Development, Social Representation Theory, Free Association Method, Multiple Correspondence Analysis

JEL Code: L83, Q01, Z32

1. Introduction

Social psychology, a field present in every aspect of human existence, finds itself at a junction between social sciences and other branches of psychology (Bilgin, 2014a). In this regard, Allport (1968: 3) defined social psychology as "an

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attempt to understand and explain how the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of others." Conversely, Moscovici (1988) viewed social psychology as a fundamental scientific discipline, aiming to shed light on religious, political, and cultural phenomena. He highlighted social representations to comprehend and make sense of the world. These social representations, which arise to fulfill individuals' need for understanding the world (Cirhinlioğlu et al., 2006), are related to the processes of creating shared meanings that unite communities, organizations, and groups, fostering social bonds and leading to widespread cognitions (Höijer, 2011).

Social representation theory emerged as a novel concept in social psychology and eventually became an integral part of cognitive psychology, extending its influence on other disciplines (Moscovici, 1988). Although the existence of social representations in societies was acknowledged, prior to Moscovici, the internal structure and dynamics of these representations were not extensively examined. Moscovici (2000) played a pivotal role in transforming social representations from a mere concept into a phenomenon. He believed that social psychology held the potential to address post-war political, economic, and industrial challenges (Marková, 2017). Since the 1960s, He has conducted extensive research on social representations, resulting in numerous articles, papers, and books. In addition, a review of the literature reveals that social representations, consisting of central and environmental elements, have increasingly gained attention in recent years within tourism research (e.g., Inversini et al., 2020; Wassler et al., 2019; Monterrubio, 2019; Zerva et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2018; Shakeela & Weaver, 2018).

When assessing the historical development of tourism, it becomes evident that technological advancements following the Second World War, regulations on working hours, the increasing availability of holidays, and the rise of package tours have collectively accelerated the growth of mass tourism activities (Smith, 1998; Weaver, 2001; Manera & Morey, 2016). As a result, touristic destinations have been showcased to visitors, highlighting their appeal and making tourism one of the world's largest economies. Despite the numerous positive impacts of mass tourism, it is an undeniable reality that negative effects have also emerged, including environmental destruction (Akis, 2011; Christou, 2012; Bahar, 2003), concretization, pollution (Akis, 2011; Yıldız & Kalağan, 2008), social repercussions (Choi & Murray, 2010; Altinay et al., 2007), and inadequate infrastructure. In response to these adverse effects and challenges, the concept of "sustainability" has gained prominence. Sustainable tourism development has been embraced by experts and the industry to fulfill the needs of the present generation and visitors while safeguarding opportunities for the future.

According to statistics provided by the Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Culture and Tourism (2023), Türkiye welcomed over 51 million international visitors in 2022. Out of this total, approximately 25% (13.5 million tourists) chose Antalya as their destination. Situated on the southern Mediterranean coastline of Türkiye, Antalya stands out with its rich historical, natural, and cultural attractions.

Additionally, Antalya boasts the highest number of beds in Türkiye, totaling 606,098 according to tourism statistics from the Mediterranean Touristic Hoteliers & Investors Association (n.d.). The most prevalent nationalities among visitors to Antalya are the Russian Federation, Germany, and England, respectively, highlighting Antalya's significance as a prominent destination within the country's tourism sector. Considering this, the objective of this research is to examine the social representations of sustainable tourism development in Antalya, considering its status as a popular mass tourism destination, from the perspective of hotel owners. Given Antalya's significant role in the international tourist flow and its prevalence as a mass tourism destination, investigating this aspect has generated considerable interest.

In this regard, the literature review reveals that there have been academic studies on the sustainable tourism development of Antalya. For instance, several studies have aimed to determine the attitudes of various stakeholders and provide recommendations for the sustainable tourism development of the city. While Yılmaz et al. (2019) focused on hotel managers in terms of sustainable tourism development, Cevirgen et al. (2012) and Akıncı and Öksüz (2022) emphasized the importance of residents. Güzel et al. (2021) focused on the role of tour guides, emphasizing the importance of tour guides in sustainable tourism development. It is also stated that sustainable tourism development can be contributed to by alternative tourism types such as rural tourism (Altun et al., 2007) or winter tourism and treatment tourism (Yıldız & Gürhan, 2020). Türkay (2024) examined the sustainability reports of hotels to determine the sustainability practices of environmentally friendly hotels. However, it is worth noting that none of these studies have specifically explored the topic within the framework of social representation theory. This research aims to fill this gap by examining how hotel owners in Antalya perceive and understand sustainable tourism development, using the lens of social representation theory. By uncovering the representations of sustainable tourism development in Antalya, this study aims to contribute valuable insights to existing literature. Understanding the knowledge and perceptions of hotel owners regarding sustainable tourism development is crucial for formulating effective strategies and taking appropriate measures.

2. Literature Review

Social Representation Theory

Theory of social representation is considered a valuable framework within social psychology for exploring new concepts and ideas pertaining to psychosocial issues (Wagner et al., 1999; Shen et al., 2016). This perspective arises from the understanding that social representations provide a theoretical framework that allows us to comprehend the social world we inhabit and foster shared perspectives. Dickinson and Robbins (2007) state that these shared perspectives emerge from the individual decisions and collectively form an extensive network of information that is widely accepted. While this theory is applied in various contexts, it specifically

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addresses the perception and representation of specific scientific concepts or specialized knowledge by society within the field of social psychology (Becken, 2016).

According to the prevailing view, social representations are a form of socially constructed knowledge that reflects people's perceptions of the world (Howarth, 2006; Pearce & Chen, 2012; Schliephack & Dickinson, 2017). It is important to note that representations cannot be considered in isolation from individuals. Moscovici (2000), the pioneer of this theory, emphasized the importance of understanding and explaining representations, noting that old representations may sometimes fade away as new ones are formed. Moscovici (1981: 181) defines social representations as follows: "A set of concepts, expressions and explanations arising from daily life during individual communications." Jodelet argues that social representations are "images that intensify various meanings that allow people to interpret experiences; She stated that there are categories that help classify facts, conditions and individuals, and theories that enable the construction of facts about them" (as cited in Howarth, 2006: 67). A similar definition of social representation is provided by Pearce et al. (1996: 39): "Social representation theory is concerned with identifying and understanding how and what people think in their daily lives and how these thoughts affect the wider social reality. They can be viewed as meta-systems that contain common sense explanations of values, benefits, and how the world works." Halfacree (1993: 29) stated that social representations are "organizational mental structures that direct what can be seen and need to be answered, relate appearance and reality, and even define reality". Based on all these definitions, social representations are formed by individuals, transmitted to others through social interactions, and are integral to everyday life.

According to Lebrun (2015), this theory encompasses a framework for interpreting reality that governs the relationships between the individual's physical and social environment. Moreover, the theory of social representation allows for the examination of individuals' behaviors, consumption patterns, and practices. Social representations, which facilitate individuals' interaction with their environment (Schliephack & Dickinson, 2017), hold promise in revealing the interconnections that unite human psychology with contemporary social and cultural issues (Howarth, 2006). Thus, the objective of social representations is to shed light on the unknown (Moscovici, 2000) and fulfill certain social needs. These needs encompass both intellectual or cognitive aspects and more general actions, including rituals (Moscovici, 1988). Abric (1993) argued that the cognitive elements comprising social representations can be classified as central or peripheral, based on the central core theory. While central elements are considered essential for the formation and preservation of the representation, peripheral elements are deemed significant but not obligatory for adapting the representation to specific situations or individuals.

Moscovici (2000) proposed that the formation of social representations involves two fundamental stages, "objectification" and "anchoring," which he

described as mechanisms. According to Moscovici (2000, 2011), these mechanisms complete the process of bringing something into an individual's mind, connecting it with their existing knowledge, categorizing it, and giving it an objective structure through naming. Objectification entails transforming abstract thoughts into concrete entities or creating the perception of existence for something that does not actually exist (Moscovici, 2000). Rateau et al. (2011) explained objectification as a way of rapidly simplifying, illustrating, and visualizing a new concept through communication. By concretizing the abstract, this process assigns new meanings to objects and facilitates their integration into common-sense reality (Shen et al., 2016). In social representation theory, the process of reducing diverse ideas to familiar categories and images and associating them with more recognizable concepts is referred to as anchoring (Moscovici, 2000). This stage can be seen as the process of making the unfamiliar meaningful (Shen et al., 2016). Through anchoring, foreign ideas become familiar and become part of a society's shared reference framework. This also applies to the transfer of new events to others within a society (Çetin & Eşiyok Sönmez, 2014). Moreover, this process involves naming and classifying new inventions, ideas, objects, or individuals (Bilgin, 2014a).

Sustainable Tourism Development

After World War II, various factors such as regulations in working hours, holidays, and technological advancements contributed to the resurgence of tourism activities. This, coupled with the increasing popularity of package tours and growing demand for travel, fueled the momentum of tourism investments. Consequently, tourism has evolved into one of the world's most significant economic industries (Lozano-Oyola et al., 2012; Soyak, 2013). Consequently, the tourism sector has sparked intense competition among countries. In 2024, global international tourist arrivals reached a staggering 1.445,07 million people (United Nations World Tourism Organization, n.d.). Türkiye, like many other countries, has made significant investments in the tourism industry. Since the 1980s, with state support, the tourism industry has experienced remarkable growth, particularly in mass tourism (Biçici, 2013). Tourist destinations have long been promoted by showcasing their natural, cultural, historical, traditional, and physical attributes to attract visitors. As a result, the tourism industry has thrived on mass tourism for years (Altanlar & Akıncı, 2011). However, it has become evident that this rapid development will also give rise to future challenges and inadequacies (Kaypak, 2010).

Mass tourism has been widely blamed for causing significant negative impacts of tourism, and it has been argued that mass tourism, by its very nature, cannot fulfill the requirements of sustainability (Budeanu, 2005). According to Saarinen (2006), the negative effects of mass tourism have been evident earlier in Mediterranean destinations where it has been extensively developed. The uncontrolled expansion of mass tourism leads to the excessive depletion of resources, resulting in a loss of attractiveness for destinations (Bošković et al., 2020). Naturally, when a destination loses its appeal, a decline in tourism activities

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becomes inevitable. As a response, the importance of sustainability has gained recognition in reducing the negative impacts of tourism and ensuring its long-term continuity (Liu, 2003). According to Sharpley (2002), who argues that all forms of tourism should strive for sustainability to remain viable in the long run, the protection of the environment, the balanced use of natural resources, and the development of local communities should be fundamental objectives of sustainable tourism.

Sustainability has gained significant attention as a key concept in tourism development. While there is no universally agreed-upon definition, there are various interpretations available (Cooper et al., 2005). However, the notion of sustainability was introduced in the World Conservation Strategy and Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987), emphasizing the responsible use of resources to meet the present needs while ensuring the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. According to the Brundtland Report, sustainability is defined as "meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." Building upon this definition, Cooper et al. (2005) identified key principles of sustainability, including planning and strategy, environmental considerations, ecological processes, local community involvement, continuity, and fair distribution.

Sustainable development is another important concept related to sustainability, encompassing a process rather than a static condition. It has gained significant attention and awareness in various international forums. Particularly in the field of tourism, where natural and cultural values play a prominent role, sustainability has become increasingly important, leading to the emergence of the concept of sustainable tourism since the 1990s. The World Tourism Organization (2005: 12) defines sustainable tourism as "Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts and addresses the needs of visitors, industry, the environment and host communities." Weaver & Oppermann (2000) further examined sustainable tourism indicators and identified five key dimensions: environmental, economic, social, cultural, and managerial. Moreover, ensuring sustainable development in tourism destinations often involves considering carrying capacity as a crucial factor (Krippendorf, 1987; Butler, 1999; Johnson, 2002; Saarinen, 2006; Aguiló et al., 2005; Cooper et al., 2005).

The Rio World Summit has significantly raised awareness among central and local governments, the tourism sector, and academics regarding the sustainability of tourism. As a result, research on sustainable tourism has gained momentum. Sharpley (2000) highlighted the distinction between sustainable development and sustainable tourism development, emphasizing that the principles and objectives of sustainable development cannot be directly applied to the specific context of tourism. However, Hall (2010) argued that achieving this is possible by emphasizing the commitment of all stakeholders to the principles of sustainable development. Ahn et al. (2002: 1) defined sustainable tourism development as "focusing on achieving a level of harmonization among stakeholder groups to develop a desired quality of life." Choi and Sirakaya (2006) suggested that

sustainable tourism development should be responsible, harmonious, appropriate, fair, supportive, and habitable.

Social Representation Studies in Tourism

As is well known, social representation theory seeks to bring the unknown into the realm of understanding, and research within the field of tourism, employing this theory, exhibits diversity. The exploration of social representations began in the 1980s and remains a prominent research area today (Rateau et al., 2011). In reviewing academic studies, it becomes evident that subjects such as tourism planning, tourism development, transportation, and sustainability are among the most extensively investigated topics. The focus of these studies often involves engaging with residents and tourists to ascertain their social representations. For instance, Yuksel et al. (1999) conducted interviews with stakeholders to gather their perspectives on the implementation of the Conservation and Development Plan in Pamukkale, a World Heritage Site. Moscardo (2011) examined the various stages of formal tourism planning through the lens of social representation theory. The findings revealed that residents held a diminished role in tourism planning, with tourist needs exerting greater influence.

There are numerous studies within the realm of social representation research that focus on the determination and evaluation of attitudes. For example, Andriotis and Vaughan (2003) investigated the attitudes of residents in Crete towards tourism, using social representation theory. The study identified three distinct clusters based on these attitudes: supporters (individuals who appreciate the benefits of tourism), socially and environmentally concerned individuals (those who are critical of the environmental and social costs associated with tourism expansion), and economic skeptics (individuals who value the economic benefits of tourism less than other aspects). In a similar study, Monterrubio and Andriotis (2014) surveyed 157 people in Acapulco, Mexico, to examine the attitudes of residents towards spring vacationers. The findings revealed that the people of Acapulco shared similar concerns regarding alcohol consumption, noise, and waste during the holiday season. However, despite these concerns, this tourism activity is supported due to its economic benefits.

Research conducted within the framework of social representation theory has also focused on the perceptions of local communities. For instance, Moyle et al. (2010) examined the perceptions of residents in Burny and Magnetic Islands regarding tourism development and its effects, drawing upon social change and social representation theories. Key factors identified on Magnetic Island included the development of holiday villages, changes in tourist profiles, and alterations in the social environment. Conversely, Burny Island revealed concerns about an overcrowded island structure. Another study by Gon et al. (2016) analyzed how local communities perceive the effects of recreational boat tourism in coastal areas. The research findings indicated that boat tourism was seen as a catalyst for tourism development and attracting international tourists, leading to the emergence of three

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distinct groups: supporters of this type of tourism, the cautious, and the skeptical. Social representation research has also been conducted to determine the perceptions of residents during major tourist events. For example, Zhou and Ap (2009) sought to determine the local community's perceptions of the Beijing 2008 Olympics and its impacts. Another example is the study conducted by Pearce and Chen (2012), which aimed to identify the perceived advantages or disadvantages of holiday periods known as "Golden Week" using social representation theory. Furthermore, social representation studies have been conducted in the context of gambling tourism. For instance, Zhou et al. (2014) surveyed 396 people in Macau, China, a booming destination for gambling tourism, and identified two social representation groups, namely the "indecisive" and the "rationalists," to investigate the perceived effects of gambling tourism on residents.

Studies exploring alternative tourism activities have also been examined within the framework of social representation theory. For instance, Lebrun (2015) investigated the perspectives of individuals who engage in cruise tourism and those who do not, using social representation theory. Another study by Dickinson and Robbins (2007) aimed to identify the social representations of transportation in rural tourist destinations. Trip logs were used to discover the transportation options and mobility of visitors in Purbeck. Shen et al. (2016) examined the tourism development of a historical destination in China from the perspective of social representation theory. In their research with indigenous communities (involving 26 participants), face-to-face interviews were conducted. The findings highlighted the negative effects of tourism development, such as housing inadequacies and the loss of traditional culture, being of particular concern. Cultural heritage has also been a subject of research within the context of social representation theory. Dryjanska (2015) reported that, based on interviews with 64 individuals from three historical regions of Rome, pollution and chaos were perceived in the streets of Rome, while the city itself represented elegance and aesthetics. Furthermore, the pre-visit and post-visit interviews of tourists visiting Warsaw were conducted to examine the transformation of existing representations after the visit, within the framework of social representation theory.

When examining the existing studies, it is evident that social representations are being investigated on global issues such as sustainability and climate change. For instance, Becken (2016) examined the perceptions of tourism experts regarding the concept of "peak oil" within the framework of social representation theory. The study involved 101 tourism professionals from around the world who were asked to provide five words and three mental images that describe feelings and thoughts about peak oil. This approach aimed to explore the fundamental elements and environmental aspects that shape the representations of peak oil. In another study, Becken (2017) explored similar issues by aiming to determine the social representations of tourism experts' views on topics such as tourism growth, peak oil, risks for tourism, and low-carbon tourism. The research involved conducting interviews with various tourism experts using the free association method.

3. Methodology

Applied Methods

While social representation theory has guided numerous studies in the field of social psychology, it has been observed that there is a lack of research on sustainable tourism development within the context of social representation theory. Therefore, the objective of this research is to investigate the social representations of sustainable tourism development in Antalya, a popular mass tourism destination, particularly from the perspective of hotel owners. Research in the field of social psychology, which lies at the intersection of sociology and psychology, encompasses various methods to understand and interpret communication processes among individuals (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). Social representation studies aim to comprehend people's knowledge about a specific phenomenon or situation. In this regard, Moscovici (2000) maintained methodological ambiguity in his studies on social representation and demonstrated that representations could be explored using qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods. Social representation studies in the field of tourism, researchers have employed qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods and are presented in Table 1. In this research, a qualitative research method has been selected to align with the research objective.

Table 1. Social Representation Studies in the Field of Tourism

Qualitative Methods	Quantitative Methods		Mixed Methods
Yuksel et al., 1999	Pritchard & Morgan, 2001	Andriotis & Vaughan, 2003	Moscardo & Pearce, 2007
Dickinson & Robbins, 2007	Dickinson et al., 2009	Zhou & Ap, 2009	Lebrun, 2014; 2015
Meliou & Maroudas, 2010	Moyle et al., 2010	Pearce & Chen, 2012	Schliephack & Dickinson, 2017
Moscardo, 2011	Çetin & Eşiyok Sönmez, 2014	Monterrubio & Andriotis, 2014	Shakeela & Weaver, 2018
Dryjanska, 2015	Pearce et al., 2015	Zhou et al., 2014	
Becken, 2016	Gavinho, 2016	Gon et al., 2016	
Lai et al., 2016	Shen et al., 2016	Suess & Mody, 2016	
Becken, 2017	Lai et al., 2017	De Rosa & Dryjanska, 2017	
Wang et al., 2018	Monterrubio, 2019		
Zerva et al., 2019	Inversini et al., 2020		

Source: Prepared by the authors.

As mentioned before, social representations are constructed by individuals and shared within social groups to familiarize the unfamiliar. As such, adopting an interpretive paradigm was considered suitable for conducting this research on social representations. Phenomenological pattern research, a qualitative research method, explores an individual's experiences and perspectives regarding a phenomenon or concept (Creswell, 2012). Moscovici also acknowledges that social representations provide a phenomenological perspective.

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This research on social representations is conducted using qualitative research methods. The target population for the study consists of four- and five-star hotel owners in Antalya. To select participants, snowball sampling was chosen as a purposive sampling method aligned with the qualitative approach and the objectives of the study. According to Patton (1987), the snowball sampling method involves asking interviewees, "Whom would you suggest I talk to about this issue?" This method allows the sample to expand like a snowball by continuously asking such questions. Through this sampling method, a total of 15 hotel owners were interviewed.

Data Collection

In this study, the free association method was employed as the preferred research technique. This method is considered effective for exploring unconscious content (Tsoukalas, 2006) and has been widely used in various research studies to investigate the constitutive elements of representational content. Compared to other methods, the free association method provides quicker and easier access to the elements that constitute social representations due to its projective nature (Abric, 1993). In summary, participants are presented with a phenomenon, situation, or concept and asked to list the first things that come to mind. To ensure the effective execution of the free association method, an interview was prepared with questions inspired by the ones posed by Becken (2016) in her research. The interview includes a section for demographic information, inquiring about gender, age, and educational status. The second part of the interview contains two questions aimed at determining social representations:

1. *Could you please list the first 10 words or phrases that come to mind when you hear the term "Sustainable Tourism Development of Antalya"?*
2. *Can you visualize a picture of Antalya's Sustainable Tourism Development? Please describe the elements that come to mind when you imagine this picture.*

To ensure that the questions were academically appropriate and understandable to the participants, a pilot study was conducted involving three academicians and two hotel owners.

As with any research involving human participants, ethical principles and guidelines were followed. A voluntary participant information and consent form was prepared and provided to the hotel owners involved in the study to inform them about the research's purpose, scope, data collection procedures, data usage, and reporting. Interviews were conducted with hotel owners who voluntarily agreed to participate in the research between 15/08/2021 and 30/12/2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, interviews were conducted either face-to-face or online using platforms such as Skype, Zoom, and Teams. As a result, face-to-face interviews were conducted with 10 hotel owners, while online interviews were conducted with 5 hotel owners to ensure safety and convenience. It is stated that in qualitative research, sample size is flexible, but data saturation should be monitored to determine whether the number of interviews is sufficient (Creswell, 2013). In this

regard, it was observed that data saturation was achieved when the 14th interview was conducted. When researchers see that new data is compatible with existing themes and categories, they may refrain from collecting more data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Morse, 1995; Cresswell, 2013). For this reason, the data collection process was concluded with the 15th interview.

Providing Validity and Reliability

It is acknowledged that the reliability of content analysis techniques primarily depends on the coding process (Bilgin, 2014b). Accordingly, two distinct Kappa (κ) forms were developed for coding conceptual associations (27 codes) and visual associations (22 codes), and these forms were distributed to three different experts. The forms contained participant expressions and corresponding codes presented in a random order, and the experts were instructed to match the participant expressions with the appropriate codes.

Table 2. Kappa (κ) Analysis Table

		Kappa Statistic Value (κ)	p value
Conceptual Association Codings	Expert 1	1,000	0,000
	Expert 2	1,000	0,000
	Expert 3	1,000	0,000
Visual Association Codings	Expert 1	0,905	0,000
	Expert 2	1,000	0,000
	Expert 3	1,000	0,000
Kappa (κ) statistic value ranges table		Kappa Statistic	Strength of Agreement
		<0.00	Poor
		0.00–0.20	Slight
		0.21–0.40	Fair
		0.41–0.60	Moderate
		0.61–0.80	Substantial
		0.81–1.00	Almost Perfect

Source: Landis & Koch (1977: 165)

The Kappa (κ) value is typically expected to fall between -1.0 and +1.0, with a value close to 1 indicating a high level of agreement between coders. A minimum intercoder reliability of 0.60 is considered indicative of a general agreement. Upon examining the Kappa values, it is evident that the experts demonstrate a significant level of agreement in both conceptual association and visual association coding.

4. Findings

Fifteen hotel owners were interviewed, with one female participant and fourteen male participants. The age range of the participants varied from 28 to 67

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years. Among the participants, there were four Baby Boomers, five from Generation X, and six from Generation Y. Two participants completed high school, while 10 had obtained a university degree. Three participants had completed their postgraduate education.

Findings on Content Analysis

The data collected through the free association method was initially analyzed using content analysis. Participants were asked, "*Please list the first 10 words or phrases that come to mind when you hear the term 'Sustainable Tourism Development of Antalya'?*" The findings of the content analysis, specifically the responses to the question, are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Codes and Categories Representing the Associations of Hotel Owners Regarding the Sustainable Tourism Development of Antalya

Category	Code	N	Free association examples by hotel owners
Environmental (N=55)	Environment	6	Environmental tourism, green environment, clean environment
	Sea	7	Sea, the benefits of the sea to the human body, clean sea
	Nature	5	Nature, the nature of Antalya
	Natural resources	2	Natural resources, sustainable natural resources
	Protecting nature	7	Destruction, respect for nature, nature-sensitive cleaning products
	Agriculture	2	Agro-supported tourism, good agricultural practices
	Accommodation service	7	Accommodation facility qualities, facilities that do not break their standards, service categories of facilities
	Seasonality	5	12 months of tourism, seasonality problem, climate

	Touristic attractiveness	6	Aspendos Theatre, theme parks, museum
	Renewable energy	8	Green energy, renewable energy sources
Economic (N=26)	Alternative tourism	8	Cultural tourism, health tourism, winter events
	Economy	4	Income, welfare, economy
	All inclusive	3	All-inclusive system, concept
	Employment	11	Educated employment priority, skilled staff, employment
Cultural (N=14)	Gastronomy	3	Gastronomy
	Keeping the culture alive	7	Yoruk culture, cultural values, Mediterranean music
	Keeping the history alive	4	Antalya's historical structure, to preserve history
Social (N=31)	Populationization	1	Immigration received
	Recreational activities	13	Skiing, camping, triathlon
	Social relations	4	Social benefit, tolerance
	Accessibility	5	Airport, transportation network, city transportation
	Local public relations	6	Perception of local people, harmony of public and tourism
	Visitors	2	Satisfaction, visitors
Administrative (N=24)	Safety	5	Safety
	City planning	10	Uncontrolled construction, planned urbanization
	Tourism planning	3	Not opening the protected areas to

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		tourism, planned tourism
Tourism policy	6	Control problem, political stability

The data were imported into qualitative data analysis software and initially coded. A total of 27 codes were identified, and these codes were grouped based on their relationships, resulting in the emergence of association categories: environmental, economic, social, cultural, and administrative. The analysis reveals that the associations of hotel owners predominantly fall within the environmental category. The most frequently mentioned codes in this category are "renewable energy" (N=8), "sea" (N=7), "protecting nature" (N=7), and "accommodation service" (N=7). The associations of hotel owners related to sustainable tourism development are least represented in the "cultural" category (N=14). The most frequently mentioned code in this category is "keeping the culture alive" (N=7), while the least frequent code is "gastronomy" (N=3). The code "recreational activities" (N=13) appears most frequently across all categories.

According to the content analysis results of the environmental category, which demonstrates the strong association of hotel owners with Antalya's sustainable tourism development, the most frequently mentioned code, "renewable energy," accounts for 14.5% of this category. Examples of participants' free associations include: "sustainable energy" (Participant 1), "green energy" (Participant 3), and "renewable energy sources" (Participant 8). The "accommodation service" code constitutes 12.7% of this category, and participant associations include: "quality service" (Participant 1), "accommodation facility qualifications" (Participant 5), "facilities that do not compromise their standards" (Participant 7), and "accommodations" (Participant 11). Under the "protecting nature" code, participant associations include: "not harming the environment" (Participant 2) and "nature-friendly cleaning products" (Participant 8). Associations related to "seasonality" include: "12 months of tourism" (Participant 8), "seasonality problem" (Participant 9), and "climate" (Participant 9). Finally, some associations accounting for 10.9% of the environmental category, coded as "tourist attractiveness," include: "Aspendos Theater" (Participant 2), "attractions" (Participant 5), "museum" (Participant 6), and "theme parks" (Participant 8).

The economic category comprises four codings, with "employment" accounting for 42% of this category. Some of the associations related to employment include: "educated employment priority" (Participant 1), "trained personnel" (Participant 3), "skilled staff" (Participant 7), "professional workforce" (Participant 10), and "employment" (Participant 13). Another coding in this category, "alternative tourism," represents 31% of the associations. Examples of associations include: "sports tourism" (Participant 4), "winter events" (Participant 6), and "tourism fairs" (Participant 6). The remaining associations in the economic category are coded as "economy," including: "economy" (Participant 12), "income" (Participant 13), and "welfare" (Participant 13).

Upon examining the content analysis findings of the cultural category, it is observed that there are three codes: "gastronomy," "keeping the culture alive," and "keeping the history alive." The most frequently occurring code is "keeping the culture alive," which accounts for 50% of this category. Participant associations related to this code include: "to keep the culture alive" (Participant 2), "the cultural structure of Antalya" (Participant 11), "region and culture" (Participant 11), and "cultural values" (Participant 15). The code "keeping the history alive" represents 29% of the category and participant associations include: "keeping the Lycia Way alive" (Participant 2), "preserving historical sites" (Participant 7), and "historical structure of Antalya" (Participant 11).

The coding of "recreational activities" constitutes 42% of the social category, and participant associations within this coding include: "marathon" (Participant 4), "bike" (Participant 4), "rowing" (Participant 4), "fun" (Participant 10), "sport" (Participant 10), "camp" (Participant 14), "triathlon" (Participant 14), "yoga" (Participant 14), and "skiing" (Participant 14). The associations coded as "local public relations" (N=6) are as follows: "the harmony of the people and tourism" (Participant 1), "perception of the local people" (Participant 5), "the desire of the city residents for tourism" (Participant 7), and "economic benefit to local people" (Participant 15). The associations related to the "accessibility" coding, which accounts for 16% of the current category, include: "transport network" (Participant 7), "transportation" (Participant 10), "airport" (Participant 11), and "city transport" (Participant 11).

Lastly, the analysis has led to the administrative category, and according to the content analysis findings within this category, 42% of the "administrative" category consists of associations coded as "city planning". Some examples of these associations are: "planned urbanization" (Participant 3), "urban landscape" (Participant 3), "lack of infrastructure" (Participant 9), and "uncontrolled construction" (Participant 15). The associations that account for 25% of this category and are coded as "tourism policy" include: "political stability" (Participant 3), "local government" (Participant 5), "control of local tradesmen" (Participant 9), and "control problem" (Participant 13).

Table 4. Codes and Categories for Images Evoked by Hotel Owners

Category	Code	N	Free association examples by hotel owners
Nature Image (N=23)	Natural resources	1 2	Tropical plants, butterflies, and birds unique to Antalya
	Image of nature	7	The beauty of nature, natural beauties
	Climate	2	Climate

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	Renewable	2	Renewable energy, self-sufficient tourism
Human Resources Image (N=3)	Employer	1	Employer who observes the rights of the personnel
	Skilled workforce	2	More educated personnel, employment
Urban Image (N=26)	City image	9	Being a clean city, Being a brand in Antalya, non-metropolitan tourism city
	Urban space	7	Kaleiçi, perfect old town
	Restoration	1	Restored by preserving history
	Social life	3	Village life, region, and culture
	Historical image	6	Antalya of the 1980s
Touristic Image (N=14)	Gastronomy	3	Cafes, gastronomy point
	Sport activities	5	Rafting, camping
	Touristic attraction	5	Theme parks, architecture sites
	Visitors	1	Travelers
Administrative Image (N=21)	Infrastructure	1	Protecting the infrastructure
	Concretion	4	Decreased concreting, destruction
	Economy	2	Economy
	Stakeholders	1	Stakeholders
	Policy	2	Political relations, incentives
	Tourism Planning	8	Long-term vision
	Accessibility	3	Accessibility, port

The second question of the free association interview was as follows: "*Can you visualize a picture of Antalya's Sustainable Tourism Development? Could you tell me what comes to mind when you think about that picture?*". The content analysis of the concepts expressed by hotel owners in response to this question is presented in Table 4. Initially, the visualized elements described by the participants were coded, and these codes were then categorized based on their compatibility. There are five main categories identified, which are as follows: "nature image" (N=23), "human resources image" (N=3), "urban image" (N=26), "touristic image" (N=14), and "administrative image" (N=21).

When examining the "nature image" category, which encompasses the associations related to the picture envisioned by the participants, several codings emerged, including "natural resources" (52%), "image of nature" (30%), "climate" (9%), and "renewable" (9%). Some of the associations coded as "natural resources" include: "tropical plants" (Participant 4), "Beydağları" (Participant 7), "Toros Mountains" (Participant 7), "nature" (Participant 8), "butterflies and birds unique to Antalya" (Participant 11), "endemic plants" (Participant 11), and "natural resources" (Participant 13). Examples of associations coded as the "image of nature" include: "the state of nature 100 years ago" (Participant 1), "the beauty of nature" (Participant 4), "natural beauties" (Participant 5), "a greener and cleaner nature" (Participant 6), and "cleaner sea" (Participant 10).

Upon examining the associations of the participants, it can be observed that they fall under the category of "human resources image." This category consists of "employer" (33%) and "skilled workforce" (67%) codes. An association coded as "employer" is "employer who observes the rights of the personnel" (Participant 1). Associations coded as "skilled workforce" include: "more educated personnel" (Participant 1), and "employment" (Participant 12).

In the category of "urban image," several codes emerged, including "city image," "urban space," "restoration," "social life," and "historical image". Some associations within the "city image" code, which constitutes 35% of this category, include: "being a clean city" (Participant 8), "being a brand in Antalya" (Participant 8), "a city more at peace with nature" (Participant 10), "non-metropolitan tourism city" (Participant 10), "a city with a protected sea" (Participant 15), "a city with a protected nature" (Participant 15), and "a city with protected green areas" (Participant 15). Associations coded as "urban space," accounting for 27% of the "urban image" category, include: "Kaleiçi" (Participant 2), "perfect old town" (Participant 14), "boutiques" (Participant 14), and "open-air shopping center" (Participant 14).

The fourth category is named "touristic image," and it includes the following codings: "gastronomy" (21%), "sports activities" (36%), "tourist attraction" (36%), and "visitors" (7%). The associations coded as "gastronomy" are as follows: "cafes" (Participant 11), "restaurants" (Participant 11), and "gastronomy point" (Participant 14). Some of the associations under the "sports activities" coding, which accounts for 36% of this category, are: "rafting" (Participant 4), "people walking" (Participant 11), and "camping" (Participant 14). The associations coded as "tourist attraction" include: "holiday place" (Participant 4), "theme parks" (Participant 8), "architecture sites" (Participant 8), and "open air museum" (Participant 14).

The category that includes "infrastructure," "concretion," "economy," "stakeholders," "policy," "tourism planning," and "accessibility" has been named "managerial image" (N=21). In the sustainable tourism development image of Antalya as envisioned by the participants, some of the associations coded as "tourism planning" (38%) are as follows: "to prioritize health tourism in winter" (Participant 16), "ensuring transportation and population growth is controlled" (Participant 10), "having a long-

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term vision" (Participant 13), and "keeping Antalya's population below one million" (Participant 15). Additionally, there are associations coded under "concretion," such as "no new hotel licenses being issued" (Participant 1), "reduced construction activity" (Participant 2), and "concerns about environmental destruction" (Participant 3).

Findings on Multiple Correspondence Analysis

The results of the correspondence analysis, which analyzes the evaluations of all participants based on their generation and education status, are presented in Graph 1. The identified generations include Generation Y, Generation X, and Baby Boomers, while their educational levels range from high school to university and postgraduate.

Graph 1. Correspondence Analysis Graph of Conceptual Associations on Generation and Educational Status
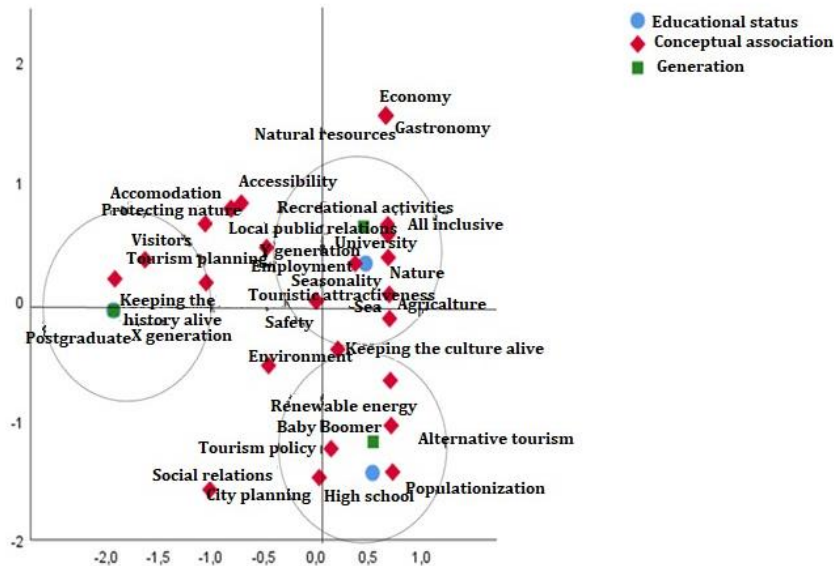
Based on the results of the multiple correspondence analysis, which examined the evaluations of all participants regarding conceptual associations in relation to their generation and educational status, several observations can be made. Participants with a postgraduate level of education and those from Generation X are found to be more closely associated with concepts such as "keeping the history alive," "tourism planning," "visitors," and "protecting nature". On the other hand, university-level participants and those from Generation Y are closer to associations such as "seasonality," "all-inclusive," "nature," "sea," "tourist attractiveness," "agriculture," and "safety". High school participants and Baby Boomer generation participants are more closely aligned with concepts such as "alternative tourism," "tourism policy," "social relations," and "city planning". The disclosure rate for the horizontal plane was 79.6%, while the disclosure rate for the vertical plane was 53.3%. The multiple correspondence analysis model established was found to be statistically significant (P=0.001).

Graph 2. Correspondence Analysis Graph of Visual Associations on Generation and Educational Status
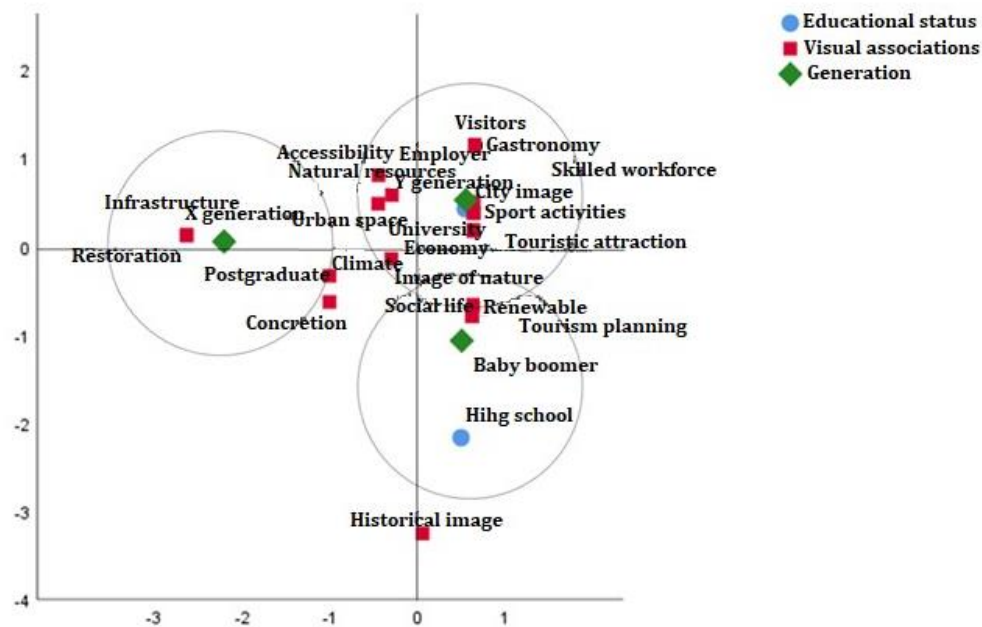
Based on the results of the multiple correspondence analysis, which examined the evaluations of all participants regarding their visual associations based on generation and educational status, are presented in Graph 2. Upon examining the graph, it becomes apparent that high school graduates and Baby Boomer participants are more closely associated with concepts such as "tourism planning," "renewable," and "social life". On the other hand, hotel owners from Generation X with postgraduate education show a closer connection to associations related to "infrastructure" and "restoration". The Generation Y and university graduates exhibit a closer alignment with associations including "city image," "sports activities," "tourist attraction," "skilled workforce," and "economy". Overall, when considering the graph, it can be observed that Generation Y and university-educated hotel owners have associations covering a wide range of subjects, including economy, human resources, culture, and sports. The analysis indicated an in-plane disclosure rate of 89.2% and a vertical plane disclosure rate of 60.8%. The average disclosure rate was calculated as 75%. The established multiple correspondence analysis model was found to be statistically significant (P=0.001).

5. Conclusion and Discussion

Upon examining the findings of the content analysis, it is evident that there are notable and meaningful results. The representations have been categorized based on

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their similarities and relationships, resulting in categories such as environmental, economic, cultural, social, and administrative. Remarkably, these categories align with the sustainable tourism indicators outlined by Weaver and Oppermann (2000) in the existing literature. In general, the representations of hotel owners regarding the sustainable tourism development of Antalya primarily focus on environmental issues. As noted by Dolnicar and Leisch (2008), most typical holiday activities rely directly on a destination's natural resources, making it imperative for tourism planners to consider these environmental factors. Given the inherent nature of tourism, where the appeal of a destination often stems from its natural surroundings (Mikaelli & Memlük, 2013), it is reasonable to expect a strong emphasis on environmental representations, both in line with the nature of tourism itself and supported by existing literature. In addition, it can be observed that the participating hotel owners place significant importance on environmental representations, indicating a commendable level of awareness. Furthermore, there are also representations concerning social, economic, and administrative issues, although they are not as prominent as the focus on the environment.

Based on the findings, the most frequently mentioned representations by hotel owners in the sustainable tourism development of Antalya revolve around recreational activities, employment, and city planning. Recreational activities such as skiing, camping, football, sports, and entertainment are considered crucial for the advancement of sustainable tourism. Particularly in Antalya, where mass tourism is highly prevalent, hotel owners emphasize the importance of recreational activities to sustain tourism beyond the summer months. They recognize the significance of a qualified, educated, and professional workforce as a key factor in achieving sustainable tourism development. Additionally, hotel owners express concerns and focus on urban planning issues such as carrying capacity (Aguiló et al., 2005; Cooper et al., 2005; Saarinen, 2006), urban landscape, and unregulated construction. These aspects are of particular interest to them. However, it should be noted that while hotel owners acknowledge the importance of managerial issues, their attention in this area appears to be insufficient. Furthermore, there are negative representations related to Antalya's sustainable tourism development, along with suggestions to address these concerns. For instance, alternative tourism activities like year-round tourism, health tourism, cultural tourism, and winter events that can counter the seasonal nature of tourism are proposed as potential solutions.

Social representations typically include both an image and visual component (Pearce, 2005). Accordingly, when analyzing the responses to the question aimed at uncovering the mental images held by hotel owners, five main categories were identified: nature image, human resources image, urban image, touristic image, and administrative image. Examining the sustainable tourism development image of Antalya as perceived by hotel owners, it becomes evident that the urban image is the focal point, followed by the nature image and the administrative image. This suggests that the city's overall image, its venues, social structure, and historical values hold significant importance for the interviewed hotel owners. Natural resources have emerged as recurring and prevalent representations, with landmarks such as the Toros Mountains and Beydağları featuring prominently in the mental images visualized by hotel owners.

Furthermore, the depiction of nature being greener and cleaner can be interpreted as a sign of inadequate environmental protection. While it is expected for visual representations to predominantly feature tangible objects, it is noteworthy that intangible elements like planning and politics also play a significant role. Hence, it can be concluded that managerial issues hold great importance for hotel owners in their understanding of sustainable tourism development.

The findings indicate that the most recurrent representations are related to natural resources, recreational activities, tourism planning, urban planning, tourist attraction, and employment. Among the Generation Y hotel owners, recreational activities stand out as the most frequent representation, reflecting their social orientation. Generation Y is characterized by their affinity for innovation and diversity, and it can be inferred that these characteristics are reflected in the representations of Generation Y hotel owners. On the other hand, Generation X hotel owners predominantly emphasize natural resources in their representations. This can be attributed to the fact that Generation X was actively involved in business during the period when sustainable tourism started gaining traction. In the Baby Boomer generation, city planning is the most repeated representation, with administrative representations being prominent. This aligns with the dominance of administrative issues during the era of mass tourism, a period when Baby Boomer generation hotel owners held significant influence. In general, it is possible to observe differences between generations in their representations. Social representations should be seen as dynamic structures that are responsive to changes in time, place, and culture, and are influenced by others (Pearce, 2005). These differences can be attributed to such dynamics and the unique characteristics of each generation.

The study employed multiple correspondence analysis to examine the proximity of participants to the social representations associated with their generation and education level. It was found that Baby Boomer participants and those with a high school education level were more closely aligned with connotations related to alternative tourism, tourism policy, population, and social relations. This generation has personally witnessed the development of tourism policies, the spread of mass tourism in Antalya and the increase in population density accordingly. It appears that these hotel owners are more interested in environmental, social and managerial issues from the sustainable tourism indicators created by Weaver and Oppermann (2000). In addition, Antalya's focus on alternative tourism types other than mass tourism will contribute to the sustainable tourism development of the city (Altun et al., 2007; Yıldız & Gürhan, 2020). Hotel owners from Generation X with graduate education showed a stronger association with the representation of keeping the history alive. Preserving the historical texture of a city is very important in sustainable tourism development (Kurak Açıcı et al., 2017). Especially in cultural tourism, which is one of the alternative tourism types, historical areas are seen as the main attraction element. Furthermore, university-level participants and those from Generation Y exhibited closer connections to connotations such as seasonality, all-inclusive services, nature, sea, tourist attraction, agriculture, and safety. It is understood that these participants are mostly closer to the associations in the environmental category. Environmental sustainability protects the environment,

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ensuring the long-term continuation of tourism and helping to preserve the resources necessary for life (Nicholas et al., 2009). Since tourism and nature are closely interrelated, the "environmental" component has a large place in sustainable tourism development (Butler, 1999; Weaver & Oppermann, 2000; Mikaeili & Memlük, 2013). As can be seen in detail in the findings section, the proximity of hotel owners to representations of sustainable tourism development in Antalya can vary across generations and educational levels. In summary, social representations, as a theory in social psychology, provide insight into the social world in which we interact, and form shared perspectives (Dickinson & Robbins, 2007). While social representations show both agreement and significant interindividual differences (Abric, 1993), it is expected that representations of hotel owners may differ based on their generation or educational background. At the same time, social representations are not solely formed by individuals but are also shared within groups through interaction. This helps to explain the similarities observed in the representations among hotel owners participating in the study on the sustainable tourism development of Antalya.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

Like any study, this research has certain limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the study focused on owners of four- and five-star hotels in Antalya, selected through a snowball sampling method. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting slowdown in tourism activities, it became challenging to engage with hotel owners. Some hotel owners were hesitant to participate in face-to-face meetings to protect themselves from the virus, while others faced technological limitations and declined online interviews. Consequently, a total of 15 hotel owners were interviewed, and their responses were analyzed within the framework of social representation theory.

The literature review revealed a lack of similar research, preventing direct comparisons of results. Nonetheless, this study aimed to contribute to the existing literature on the topic. It is worth noting that this research solely focused on hotel owners in Antalya, suggesting opportunities for future studies to explore other destinations of mass tourism. Additionally, the determination of social representations can be further enhanced by conducting interviews with a broader range of participants, including hotel managers, residents, and tourists. In future studies, employing focus group discussions could facilitate the examination of similarities and differences in representations more comprehensively.

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