

THE ROLE OF ECOTOURISM IN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THEORY-PRACTICE AXIS: THE CASE OF SAPANCA

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Abstract

Development theories are described as a comprehensive philosophy that underpins development policies. Tourism, which is used as a development tool for developing countries, is a field that is influenced by developmental theories and shaped by the perspectives of these theories. Therefore, understanding development theories is important for understanding the development process of tourism. This study was carried out in Turkey which is one of the countries where ecotourism is used as a development tool. In this context, Turkey's emerging ecotourism area of Sapanca, which is defined as the study of the universe and the new regionalism theory shaping tourism policy aimed to investigate the reflections of real life through ecotourism. In this regard, a questionnaire answered by 395 local people were matched for the reflection of regional development theories in the region base on the theory and practice. From the research results, it was concluded that ecotourism policies prepared under the new regionalism theories have a positive effect on the development of the region. Therefore, the answers of the questionnaire has proved that ecotourism has been successfully applied within the scope of the new regionalism theory in the regional development of Sapanca both in theory and practice.

Key words: Regional Development; Ecotourism; Regional Development Theory; Sapanca; Turkey.

O PAPEL DO ECOTURISMO NO DESENVOLVIMENTO REGIONAL EM PERSPECTIVA TEÓRICA-PRÁTICA: O CASO DE SAPANCA

Resumo

As teorias de desenvolvimento são descritas como uma filosofia abrangente que sustenta as políticas de desenvolvimento. O turismo, utilizado como ferramenta de desenvolvimento para os países em desenvolvimento, é um campo influenciado pelas teorias do desenvolvimento e moldado pelas perspectivas dessas teorias. Portanto, a compreensão das teorias do desenvolvimento é importante para a compreensão do processo de desenvolvimento do turismo. Este estudo tratou da Turquia, um dos países onde o ecoturismo como ferramenta de desenvolvimento está. Neste contexto, a emergente área de ecoturismo de Sapanca, que se define como o estudo do universo e a nova teoria do regionalismo que molda a política de turismo, teve como objetivo investigar os reflexos da vida real através do ecoturismo. Nesse sentido, foi aplicado um questionário a 395 pessoas da população local e a teoria e a prática foram combinadas para a reflexão das teorias do desenvolvimento regional da região. Como resultado da pesquisa, concluiu-se que as políticas de ecoturismo elaboradas com base nas novas teorias do regionalismo têm um efeito positivo no desenvolvimento da região. Portanto, as respostas dadas comprovam que o ecoturismo tem sido aplicado com sucesso no âmbito da nova teoria do regionalismo no desenvolvimento regional de Sapanca tanto na teoria quanto na prática.

Palavras-chave: Desenvolvimento Regional; Ecoturismo; Teoria do Desenvolvimento Regional; Sapanca; Turquia.

EL PAPEL DEL ECOTURISMO EN EL DESARROLLO REGIONAL EN EL EJE TEORÍA-PRÁCTICA: EL CASO DE SAPANCA

Resumen

Las teorías del desarrollo se describen como una filosofía integral que sustenta las políticas de desarrollo. El turismo, que se utiliza como herramienta de desarrollo para los países en desarrollo, es un campo que está influenciado por las teorías del desarrollo y moldeado por las perspectivas de estas teorías. Por lo tanto, comprender las teorías del desarrollo es importante para comprender el proceso de desarrollo del turismo. Este estudio se centró en Turquía, es uno de los países donde el ecoturismo como herramienta de desarrollo. En este contexto, el área de ecoturismo emergente de Turquía de Sapanca, que se define como el estudio del universo y la nueva teoría del regionalismo que configura la política turística, tiene como objetivo investigar los reflejos de la vida real a través del ecoturismo. En esta dirección, se aplicó un cuestionario a 395 personas de la población local y se emparejó la teoría y la práctica para la reflexión de las teorías del desarrollo regional en la región. Como resultado de la investigación se concluye que las políticas de ecoturismo elaboradas bajo las nuevas teorías del regionalismo tienen un efecto positivo en el desarrollo de la región. Por tanto, las respuestas dadas demuestran que el ecoturismo se ha aplicado con éxito en el ámbito de la nueva teoría del regionalismo en el desarrollo regional de Sapanca tanto en la teoría como en la práctica.

Palabras clave: Desarrollo Regional; Ecoturismo; Teoría del Desarrollo Regional; Sapanca; Turquia.



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1 INTRODUCTION

While proposing solutions to the problems of developed countries until the World War II, the problems of less developed countries were focused on in the post-war period. The emergence of development theories is based on advice from economists by newly independent countries to develop their natural resources.

Tourism, which is based on natural resources, has changed in similar times with development theories since the World War II and has similar focal points. When the literature is examined, it is seen that development and tourism undergo simultaneous transformations, but the relationship between development and tourism is examined in terms of the effects of tourism on the economy, and studies on theoretical structures in development theories are limited.

Interregional development disparities represent a common problem for both developed and developing countries that must be studied carefully over the years. This situation has revealed that the concept of regional development and each country has been included in this universal area with different approaches. This concept has become increasingly important for regions over time.

The concept of region, which is called only a physical area in a traditional understanding, has gained different meanings by expanding its content with the effect of globalization. During this transformation process, the concept of regional development has undergone a significant transformation through different theories.

Although the first approaches based on regional development date back to Von Thünen, Walter Christaller, Auguste Lösch and Alfred Weber, the real founder of regional science is called Walter Israd. The concept was first introduced in the United States, and then many scientists developed various theories and approaches on regional development (Tüyoğlu and Karakaş, 2006: 196-197).

Regional development policies, which emerged especially in order to repair the economic destruction caused by wars and to eliminate the differences between regions, have gained great importance all over the world. Regional development approaches until the second world war were called traditional regional development theories, while the theories that emerged after the second world war were called new regionalism theories.

Traditional regional development theories which was applied to minimize the inter-regional imbalance caused by problems such as inefficiency and insufficiency of resource use, geological features,

distance to the market, has been unsuccessful in Turkey and throughout the world. The need to adapt to the changing market conditions, the change in the understanding of competition, the technological developments experienced have made the transformation in regional development theories necessary.

These changes first started with regional development, then set the goals of regional development strategies and continued with the changes in regional development tools. Thus, regional development theories have also laid the groundwork for the development and change of the theoretical structures that make up the development plans.

As a result of these changes, the theoretical structure of regional development has evolved from top-down planning approach to bottom-up planning approach. In the globalizing world order, the importance of local dynamics has increased in terms of development, and sectors based on the use of local dynamics have gained more importance.

There is an important parallel between the changing regional development theories and the tourist motivations that exhibit a simultaneous transformation.

While the basic motivation of tourists in the period when the concept of development first emerged was to spend leisure time, nowadays, with the effect of new regionalism, tourist motivations are entertainment, recreation, business travel, religious reasons, friend visits and commercial reasons have undergone changes in this form (Carvalho, Márquez & Díaz-Méndez 2018: 22).

As a sector that encourages the use of local dynamics within the scope of regional development approaches that have changed in the globalization process, tourism has started to be used as an important regional development tool.

The reason why the tourism sector is used as a regional development tool is that the development of cities, regions and even nations as an economic and social activity is directly linked to the flow of visitors and it is one of the sectors that form a part of the economy. At the same time, tourism has an increasing effect on regional economies, and even the transactions made with financial flow make this regionalism an important part of the international economy (Santo, 2016: 57).

In this context, the effect of the transition to new regionalism has increased the tendency towards niche markets, especially ecotourism, rather than mass tourism (Shone & Memon, 2008: 298). The most important reasons why these types of tourism are preferred in regional development are that they encourage the use of the internal potential of the regions within the scope of sustainable development.

In this study, ecotourism, which is a driving force for the development of developing regions, is discussed within the scope of the new regionalism theory. In this context, the new regionalism development theory has been discussed in economic and social terms and it is aimed to reveal the effects of ecotourism developing under the new regionalism on regional development, and in this way, theory and practice are matched.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theories and Models of Regional Development

When the economic literature is examined, it is seen that there are many regional development theories that have emerged simultaneously and at different times for the development of underdeveloped regions. It is very difficult to compare these theories and models with each other in terms of development and time.

Because every theory and model are developed in order to find solutions to the problems of the time they emerged. For this reason, it is seen that many theories and models have been used in different countries of the world in the process until today. Due to the excessive number of regional development theories, in this study, the most used theories with different assumptions in the administration policies of countries until today are discussed.

2.1.1 Central Places Theory

The theory of central places was introduced by the German geographer Walter Christaller and turned into a theory in economic context by August Losch. According to Christaller's theory, the most important point of the central places theory is the center itself. This center can be a city, a town or a village. The most important feature of the central place that distinguishes it from other places is that it serves an area larger than its own. These services may be broad or limited, but the service function is common to all central locations (Wanmali, 1992, p.24).

The theory of central places, which is based on combining products and services that are not included in other regions, is an approach that requires people to go to the center in order to meet the needs of consumers. In the central places theory, the city hierarchy of the points that provide the center potential is also taken into account in determining these centers. The level of the area in the central point position is determined according to the functions it contains. Central locations with upper tier can provide products and services provided by central places located at lower tier than them. For this reason, the central places

in the lower tier fall into the domain of the central places that have a higher tier (Hottes, 1983, p.53).

The assumptions of this theory have been particularly important for regions aiming to develop through the sectors involved in the services. In this context, it has been observed that regions that envisioned development with tourism, which is a service sector, started to apply this theory through the tourism sector. It is based on the transformation of this theory into practice through the tourism sector, the regions being a tourism center with external support, so that people go to the region to evaluate their leisure needs.

In this way, it is predicted that the economic development of the region, which has become a tourism center, will grow rapidly. However, this approach, which adopts only a geographical distribution, ignoring the internal supply sources of the regions, has not been effective in regional development.

Christaller and Lösch's reviews are simplifying predictions that do not complement each other with the original world, such as homogeneous or ordinary space, some economists such as Walter Isard and Von Böventer have made studies in order to relate this theory with the real world. However, even though the establishment and settlements were handled in a hierarchical relationship, the Central Places Theory was also found to be insufficient to accurately reveal regional development as a static theory (İldırar, 2004, p.71).

2.1.2 Keynesian Regional Development Theory

The Keynesian theory of regional development was created by the British economist John Maynard Keynes as a solution to the economic crisis in the period of the Great Depression. The most important reason for the emergence of this theory is that the development theories until this period failed to overcome the Great Depression. Unlike the theories up to this time, Keynesian theory argues that state intervention is necessary for the development of a region (Jahan, Mahmud, & Papage, 2014, pp.53-54).

Almost all countries in the world were affected by the great depression between 1929-1939, albeit in different years. For example; The United States, when the Great Depression broke out, experienced severe economic crises in the early years of the depression, Britain and France in the early 1930s, Germany in 1929, and most countries in Latin America (Argentina and Brazil to a lesser extent) in late 1928 and early 1929. Most of these countries have followed Keynesian development policies to get rid of the effects of the great depression (Romer & Pells, 2020).

Since this period is a period of economic crisis, countries have started to attach importance to the development of sectors that will keep the economy dynamic. In these years, tourism could not find a place for itself in the development policies of the regions due to the low number of people participating in tourism movements due to the economic stagnation and the tourism sector having a structure that is easily affected by the conjunctural effects in the world.

This theory, which was created to eliminate economic imbalances, has been inadequate due to the social and other development needs of the countries and the effect of globalization. For this reason, the development policies created under this development theory for regions that have survived the crisis period have also been inadequate. However, after the crisis period, simultaneously with the changes in development policies, the tourism sector started to be used as a regional development tool, and with this, development theories revealing the internal potential of the regions gained importance (Vatansever, Deviren & Yıldız, 2014).

2.1.3 Neo-Classical Regional Development Theory

The theory of neo-classical regional development, developed under the leadership of Robert Solow in 1956, also adopted limited state intervention in regional development. (Kar & Ağır, 2006, p.53). In addition, the Neo-classical regional development theory is a theory that defends the idea that growth and development is a phenomenon that occurs without any external intervention and that there is no big difference between the two concepts (Yalman, 2010, p.28). According to this theory, regional development occurs depending on the capital stock, labor supply and technological progress. In addition, according to this approach, the increase in the capital stock will create specialization in the division of labor through technological progress and this will provide regional development by increasing the productivity of labor (Stimson, Stough, & Nijkamp, 2006, p. 4-6).

When the studies on the effects of neo-classical theory on tourism are examined (Hazari and Hoshmand, 2011; Zhang, 2015; Zang, 2016 ; Zhang, 2012); It has been observed that this theory emphasizes the effects of tourism on the inter-regional economic development with the interactions between the economic structure, inter-regional trade and tourism, with the assumptions of profit maximization, benefit maximization and perfect competition.

Although this theory draws the right path for the tourism industry developed after the Second World War, it was not preferred in the following years due to reasons such as technological developments and

globalization and left its place to internal development theories. Another reason for the failure of this theory to achieve the desired result is that the partial state intervention is insufficient for the development of tourism since tourism is a large global industry. Because tourism requires physical infrastructure investments such as road, water, electricity, sewerage, parking lot and communication (Çeken, 2008). Since these investments are holistic and costly investments, more government interventions are required from outside.

2.1.4 Endogenous (Endogenous) Regional Development Theory

Towards the end of the 1970s, exogenous regional development theories started to be used less on the grounds that they did not provide permanent development of the regions. For this reason, since these years, endogenous development models, which are a development approach that advocates the use of local resources and are realized with the use of local dynamics, have come to the fore (Çetin, 2005, p. 1). In this context, it is seen that the first assumptions of this theory were started with Paul M. Romer and Robert E. Lucas, and then shaped by names such as Robert Barro, Sergio Rebelo, Henryk Grossman and Elhanan Helpman (Kara, 2015, p.83).

The main purpose of Internal Regional Development Theory; to reveal the instruments that support regional welfare by using the regions' own resources, to enable the regions to be dominant in their development stages and to become the subjects of this process (Çakmak, Karaçay & Erden, 2004, p.82). In addition, internal development theory enables local and local actors and dynamics to actively participate in the initiation, planning, implementation and monitoring of development (Peker, 2016, p.232).

Within the scope of this theory, countries have attempted to form the goals of their development policies based on this theory in order to use it in the development of regions. Undoubtedly, the tourism sector is one of the sectors that are used most successfully to turn this theory into practice. Because the main attraction of tourism is the local resources of the regions.

Tourism mobilizes these resources in order to achieve regional development. The main attraction factors that are important for tourism; climate, natural beauty, accessibility, historical and architectural structures, festivals and images. In addition, urban systems, which are the basic dynamics of internal regional development, and the development of regional production systems are also included in the goals of tourism policies (Çetin, 2005: 11).

2.1.5 The Theory of Attraction Points

The origins of the theory of attractions go back to the 1960s. Within the scope of this theory, it is seen that states generally try to increase the state investments in some regions in order to develop regional structuring and turn it into an attraction center.

It is aimed to achieve a regional welfare increase through externalities such as job opportunities and increasing production capacity for the region, which is the purpose of these attraction centers created with the support of the state (Sertesene, 2008, p.1).

According to the Attraction Centers Theory, the state has to provide financial support and various investments to the regions that are the center of attraction (Işık, Maden & Yiğit, 2019, p.117).

According to this theory, it is not sufficient to compare the superiorities of the regions with other regions and to pursue development. In order to ensure regional development, besides this comparison, these advantages should be introduced to companies and prepared to attract investors to the region. Local actors have important roles in making this happen (Kuran, 2019, p.51).

The reflection of the theory of attraction centers on tourism is seen as the representation of a certain type of tourism in a region and the transformation of this region into a tourism attraction center. This theory, which is used by many countries today, aims to make the region a tourism center by using the internal potential of the regions and also predicts that a region can become a tourism center through investments made from outside.

In this context, South Africa, Costa Rica and Belize can be given as the best examples of countries that have turned into a tourism attraction center by using their internal resources. These countries derive the vast majority of their economies from ecotourism and constitute their ecotourism attraction centers (Weaver, 1999: 801). Las Vegas, which is located in a desert area but is the center of entertainment tourism, can be given as an example for the regions that are a tourism attraction center with externalities.

When the studies on the adaptation of this theory to tourism are examined, the biggest criticism is that tourism attraction centers, where tourism is the leading sector, made the region's economy dependent on tourism.

Since tourism is a sector that is affected by many conjunctural waves such as political, economic, social conflicts, natural disasters and epidemics, both global and national, it is possible that these regions, which become dependent on tourism, can seriously slow down the development.

2.1.6 New Regional Theory

The new concept of regionalism emerged as a result of the failure of large-scale public aid and state-implemented policies for the development of underdeveloped regions. Previous approaches aim at achieving regional development goals with practices such as large-scale infrastructure improvements in the region regarding the development of less developed regions and attracting investments to the region. Although these approaches are largely allocated by public funds, a new approach was needed as the underdeveloped regions could not catch up with other regions and were not successful in minimizing regional disparities (Keskin & Sungur, 2010, p.277).

Unlike other regional development theories and models, the new regionalism approach aims to offer a permanent solution for the use of local resources. In addition, it is seen that today, regional development policies based on the new regionalism approach have been adopted in many countries, primarily EU countries (Amin, 1999, p.375). Turkey is also monitoring this new approach in regional development policy and showing a trend toward creating regional development policies for the new regionalism approach. In this direction, it also implements regional policies focused on R&D, technological development, innovation, cooperation and using regional dynamics (Keskin & Sungur, 2010, p.278).

When the studies examining the relationship between new regionalism and tourism are evaluated (Erdem, 2009; Shone & Memon, 2008, Yıldırım & Akin, 2020), it is seen that tourism provides both economic and social development on regional development as a result of the application of the new regionalism theory.

Among the objectives of the new regionalism are increasing the employment rate of the regions, the development of tourism and other sectors, the development of the region's infrastructure and superstructure investments, and following a development model taking into account the internal potential of the regions, the economic objectives of the theory; Goals such as ensuring the planned development of the region, protecting internal resources, increasing intercultural interaction, developments in health, transportation and education are among the social goals of the theory.

In addition, when examining Turkey's recent development plan, it will be carried out via the new regionalism understanding of tourism policy is clearly stated. In order to provide a development through Turkey's tourism sector in this context, the basic philosophy of the new regionalism theory and tools aimed at socio-cultural and economic development on pioneering country's tourism policy (DPT, 2006: 91).

Therefore, in this study, the effect of ecotourism, which exhibits a development in accordance with the social and economic goals of the new regionalism theory, on regional development has been examined through the new regionalism theory.

2.2 Importance of Ecotourism in the Context of Regional Development Theories

Retrospectively, in the last sixty years, tourism in general has experienced a continuous growth and each time, together with various sectors, the world economies have grown even faster. However, within this general growth of tourism, the regional development pillar that would contribute to the current socio-economic structure was lacking.

In regional development theories, establishing a relationship between tourism and other economic sectors (such as aviation, gastronomy, civil construction, insurance) is one of the most positive aspects that allow dynamism to the regions, according to that theories. Thanks to these theories, tourism has started to come to the fore in the new period not only in the economic development of societies, but also in the socio-economic development and especially in the development of lower developed countries (Sperb & Serva, 2013).

Tourism, which is used as a development strategy for developing countries, has turned into a field that is influenced by development theories and has policies shaped by the perspectives of these theories (Harrison, 2015).

Today, for the regional development theories behind tourism policies, "six strategies" are considered important in the development of developing regions. The first is a national investment priority planning for local tourism and a significant increase in competitive power in regions with tourist attractions. The second is the diversification of local tourist offerings, ensuring a sustainable tourism development and making regional rankings. Third, the development of programs to increase quality and the strengthening of the regulatory framework for tourism services and customer satisfaction. Fourth, while strengthening existing markets in the tourism sector, new markets are created. The fifth is the creation of country tours and programs for new investment in new destinations to ensure a comprehensive tourist development. Sixth, with capacity, finally, updating legal frameworks for development and providing sustainable sector and standard competitive tourism services (García, Rodolfo, Chávez & Covarrubias, 2018, p.66).

Today in Turkey for the development of the region in the 2023 Tourism Strategy Action Plan includes

major tourism policies. In these tourism policies, the goals of the policies regarding the developing ecotourism regions attract attention. In this context, Turkey's Tourism Strategy 2023 (2007) according target of Turkey ecotourism policies include:

- ✓ Reducing regional imbalance,
- ✓ Increasing the competitiveness of the regions,
- ✓ Prevention of migration in rural areas,
- ✓ Contributing to the promotion and national values of the region,
- ✓ Ensuring economic stability in the regional economy through production diversity,
- ✓ Increasing (skilled and unqualified) employment opportunities for the labor force,
- ✓ Ensuring the development of SMEs in the region,
- ✓ Providing infrastructure investments that may affect industry and trade,
- ✓ Providing modernization with the education of the people in the region,
- ✓ Increasing recreational and touristic activities in the region,
- ✓ Increasing the income of the local people in the region,
- ✓ Developing the regional image and raising the environmental protection awareness of local people.

From the 1990s on the development of ecotourism showing today of positive socio-cultural and economic impacts in the development of less developed regions outside Turkey because in many countries are included in tourism policy and is used as a tool for development.

Since the 1990s, ecotourism is used as a tool in the international system in the tourism policies of many countries in order to ensure the development of the underdeveloped regions, due to its positive socio-cultural and economic effects on the regions. It has been used as an important development tool, especially in the development of rural areas that are less developed compared to urban areas. Therefore, it is seen that ecotourism is a type of tourism realized in many developing countries (Kenya, Botswana, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Belize, Dominican Republic, South Africa). (Weaver, 1999, p. 801).

The use of ecotourism in regional development has gained importance especially with the development of new regionalism theories that internalize growth, and ecotourism has also started to take place in the development policies of countries. In addition to ecotourism; It is seen that it has significant contributions to the internal regional development as it contributes to the protection of the natural resources of the region, provides economic fund assistance for

the protection of natural areas and local cultures, keeping human capital at the forefront, and following approaches that reveal the potential of the region. (Tetik, 2012: 94-95; Tisdell, 1996: 12-13; Ross and Wall, 1999).

What is essential in regional development theories is to determine the correct development theory for the region and to prepare tourism policies within the framework of this theory. Because not every theory is suitable for every region.

For example, Las Vegas, the capital of entertainment tourism in the world, is actually a region that does not have an inherent tourist attraction, built in a large desert. However, as a result of external interventions such as financial investments made by the state and adaptation to the requirements of the modern world, the region has become an important tourism destination.

However, in Tunisia, which has natural touristic attractions, 40% of the accommodation facilities were built between 1960 and 1965 with government resources, but many of these countries had to borrow from international credit institutions for extensive tourism projects. (Telfer, 2002: 54). For this reason, what is important is the reflection of the theories underlying the tourism policy of the regions to real life. In fact, a tourism policy under the same development theory has been tried to be followed in these two regions, but different results have been encountered.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Purpose of Research

Tourism, which is used as a development tool for developing countries, is a field that is influenced by development theories and shaped by the perspectives of these theories. In this research, the new regional development theory has been dealt with economically and socially and survey questions have been prepared in accordance with the predictions of this theory. In this context, it was aimed to reveal the effects of ecotourism, which developed under the new regionalism development theory, on regional development, and in this way, theory and practice were matched.

3.2 Method of research

In this study, the survey method, one of the quantitative data collection tools, was used as a data collection tool. 13 statements measuring the effects of ecotourism on economic development through the goals of the new regionalism development theory and 11 statements measuring the impact of ecotourism on

social development were determined, and a questionnaire was applied to the participants over 24 statements. First of all, a pilot study was conducted on 50 local people living in Sapanca in order to make sure that the expressions in the questionnaire can be understood correctly and clearly. Later, 395 usable questionnaires were obtained from local people living in Sapanca and the data obtained were analyzed through SPSS 23 program.

The statements within the scope of the questionnaire were tried to be measured using the five-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither Agree Neither Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree). Mann Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis tests were used for the analysis of the survey data, and the frequency method was used for summarizing the data.

There were limitations which were encountered during the data collection phase of the study. These constraints can be expressed as major time, cost and distance constraints. For this reason, the study was limited to the Sapanca district of Sakarya. The research sample was formed from the local people living in Sapanca and the survey method was used to reach a large number of participants.

4 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Study Area: Sapanca District

Sapanca is a district of Sakarya Province. Sapanca Lake is located in the north, Sakarya central district Adapazarı in the east, Samanlı Mountains, Geyve and Pamukova district in the south, and Izmit, the central district of Kocaeli, in the west. Sapanca is Sakarya's smallest district in terms of area and the highest population density, with a population of 42.416. Its climate is transitional between the Mediterranean climate and the Black Sea climate (Sapanca Belediyesi).

The winter months are rainy and less cold, while the summer months are drier and milder. The start of the winter months is generally from the second week of May, and the beginning of the spring months in November. In addition, it has a limited summer season due to rainfall during the summer months. Sapanca district is also rich in forestland and vegetation.

While the mountainous regions are covered with lush forests, other areas are also full of orchards. The district and its surroundings are among the greenest regions of Turkey. In addition, the tourism sector is the main source of income in the region due to the natural beauties of Sapanca Lake and its surroundings (T.R. East Marmara Development Agency, T.C. Ankara Development Agency).

Figure 1. Sapanca Lake



Source: <http://www.sakarya.gov.tr/sapanca-golu>.

Although the city is mainly referred to as ecotourism activities, there are also various tourism activities besides this tourism type. These tourism types are congress tourism, sport fishing, cultural and historical tourism, tableland tourism, camp and caravan tourism, trekking, botanical tourism, bird and butterfly watching, jeep and safari tourism, agriculture tourism, gastronomic tourism, festival tourism. According to 2019 Report, 114 713 people are stayed in the accommodation facilities that has tourism operation certificate in Sapanca (YİGM, 2019).

Since the emergence of the concept of regional development, the changes in the field of tourism have shown a change in parallel with the transformation of development theories. Therefore, in this study, it is aimed to examine the reflections of tourism policies, which show simultaneous changes in regional development theories, to the region. In addition, in this study, unlike other studies, the reflections of regional development theories on tourism policies and in this context, the reflections of regional development theories to the region through tourism policies were examined and the subject was discussed both theoretically and practically.

4.2 Object of Study and its Context

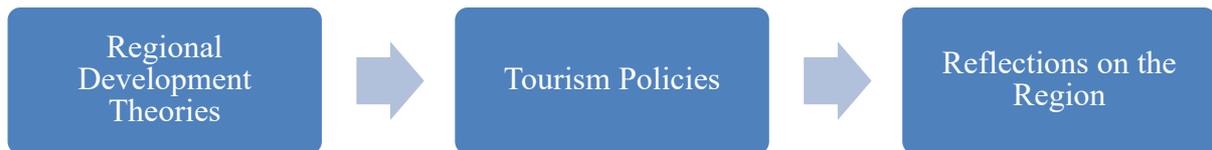


Figure 2: Research Model

Source: prepared by the authors.

4.3 Data Description

In this section, the analysis of the data obtained by the survey method is included. In this context, factor analysis was applied first for the analysis of the data obtained and it was determined on how many dimensions the expressions in the research scale distributed. After the factor analysis, Kruskal-Wallis and Mann-Whitney U tests were applied to reveal the effect of the new regionalism theory on the economy and socio-cultural development of ecotourism through the research factors.

In order to determine how many dimensions the statements in the research scale represent, factor analysis was first applied to the statements. As a result of the factor analysis, 13 statements among the expressions that were distributed over 2 dimensions were distributed to the effect of the new regionalism theory on the economic development factor of eco tourism, and 11 statements to the factor of the effect of the new regionalism theory on the socio-cultural development of eco tourism.

In addition, as a result of factor analysis, a total of 6 statements, 3 statements in both dimensions, were excluded from the analysis because they were

4.3.1 Factor Analysis

assigned to more than one factor. For this reason, data analysis was carried out on 24 statements. Below, in the rotated components matrix table, it is

shown to which factor the expressions in the scale are assigned.

Table 1: Rotated Components Matrix

	Component	
	1	2
1) The development of ecotourism in Sapanca positively affects the social development of the region by providing intercultural interaction in the region.	,271	,774
2) Development of eco-tourism in Sapanca increases the protection of natural areas.	,341	,746
3) The development of ecotourism in Sapanca increases the protection of the people of the region of historical and architectural structures.	,297	,805
4) The development of ecotourism in Sapanca provides an increase in environmental awareness and quality.	,340	,772
5) The development of ecotourism in Sapanca increases the increase and protection of parks and green areas.	,293	,754
6) The development of ecotourism in Sapanca provides the revival of arts, crafts and local culture.	,479	,639
7) The development of ecotourism in Sapanca provides planned development.	,419	,675
8) The development of ecotourism in Sapanca increases the education level of the public.	,456	,652
9) The development of ecotourism in Sapanca increases the health opportunities.	,470	,610
10) The development of ecotourism in Sapanca provides an increase in transportation possibilities.	,490	,593
11) The development of ecotourism in Sapanca ensures that cultural and artistic activities are increased.	,473	,578
12) The development of ecotourism in Sapanca positively affects the regional development by contributing to the development of the agriculture and industry sector.	,592	,426
13) Ecotourism in Sapanca increases the income of other sectors.	,639	,476
14) The development of ecotourism in Sapanca has a positive effect on employment.	,654	,490
15) The development of eco-tourism in Sapanca contributes to the increase of agricultural production.	,706	,281
16) The development of ecotourism in Sapanca contributes to the increase of investments made by local people.	,636	,462
17) I am satisfied with the income provided by local and foreign tourists coming to the district.	,522	,283
18) The development of ecotourism in Sapanca causes the agricultural areas to shrink.	,666	,282
19) The development of ecotourism in Sapanca causes young people to prefer to work in touristic enterprises.	,700	,175
20) The development of eco-tourism in Sapanca contributes to the increase of the local people's share of employment in the sector.	,683	,449
21) The development of eco-tourism in Sapanca contributes to the increase in the security of finding a job in the region.	,734	,381
22) The development of ecotourism in Sapanca contributes to the formation of different business areas.	,698	,423
23) The development of eco-tourism in Sapanca positively affects the regional development as it improves the infrastructure and superstructure possibilities of the region.	,659	,287
24) The development of eco-tourism in Sapanca contributes to the development of agriculture-based industry.	,646	,419

Source: prepared by the authors.

4.3.2 Demographic characteristics of the research participants and frequency analysis results of general questions on eco tourism in Sapanca

demographic characteristics of the participants participating in the study and the reflections of the new regionalism theory on ecotourism in Sapanca are given in the table below.

The frequency and percentage results of the answers given to the statements regarding the

Table 2. Frequency Analysis Results Regarding the Demographic Characteristics of the Participants.

VARIABLES	F	%	VARIABLES	F	%	VARIABLES	F	%
Age			Education Status			Income status		
18-24	83	21	Primary school	88	22,3	Less than 1000 TL	69	17,5
25-34	92	23,3	High school	147	37,2	Between 1000-2000 TL	18	4,6
35-44	97	24,6	University	118	29,9	Between 2001-3000 TL	109	27,6

45-55	61	15,4	Graduate and above	42	10,6	Between 3001-4000 TL	101	25,6
55 years and older	62	15,7	Being a native			4000 TL and above	98	24,8
			Yes	238	60,3			
Gender			No	157	39,7	Occupation		
Female	197	49,9	Life time in Sapanca			Student	62	15,7
Male	198	50,1	Between 1-5 years	73	18,5	Worker	90	22,8
			Between 6- 10 years	41	10,4	Artisan	56	14,2
Marital status			Between 11- 15 years	31	7,8	Officer	42	10,6
Single	194	49,1	Between 16-20 years	47	11,9	Retired	48	12,2
Married	201	50,9	21 years and above	203	51,4	Other	97	24,6
Earning money from ecotourism			Asking for more tourists to come to Sapanca			Asking for further development of ecotourism in Sapanca		
Yes	76	19,2	Yes	217	54,9	Yes	344	87,1
No	319	80,8	No	178	45,1	No	51	12,9

Source: prepared by the authors.

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that the responses of the participants in the study to the variables of marital status and gender are almost equal. In addition, the 35-44 age group has the highest participation rate with 24.6%. High school graduates make up 37.2%. When the professions of the participants are examined, it is seen that the majority of the participants belonging to other and worker occupational groups and the people with the highest participation are people with an income level between 2001-3000 TL. When the lifespan of the participants in Sapanca is examined, it is seen that the majority of the participants who have been living in Sapanca for 21 years or more and who are native to Sapanca are in the majority. In addition, 80.9% of the participants do not earn from eco tourism, 54.9% want more tourists to come to Sapanca and 87.1% want further development of ecotourism in Sapanca.

4.3.3 Results of the difference test of expressions to measure the impact of ecotourism on socio-cultural and economic development

4.3.3.1 Kruskal-Wallis Test

In this section, it is examined whether there is a meaningful relationship between the demographic characteristics of the participants and the answers given to the statements in the scale of the effects of the new regionalism theory on the effects of eco tourism on socio-cultural and economic development.

Kruskal-Wallis and Mann Whitney-U tests were applied to determine whether there is a significant relationship between these dimensions. With these tests, the effect of ecotourism on the development of the region within the scope of the new regionalism development theory was examined in line with the answers given by the local people.

Table 3: Kruskal-Wallis Test Results.

	The impact of ecotourism on socio-cultural development	The impact of ecotourism on economic development
Age		
Ki-kare	3,624	5,325
Sd	4	4
Level of meaning	,459	,256
Education Status		
Ki-kare	4,353	9,563
Sd	3	3
Level of meaning	,226	,023
Occupation		
Ki-kare	22,841	39,695
Sd	5	5
Level of meaning	,000	,000
Income		
Ki-kare	6,471	9,353

Sd	4	4
Level of meaning	,167	,053
Life Time		
Ki-kare	8,914	9,502
Sd	4	4
Level of meaning	,063	,050

Source: prepared by the authors.

As a result of the kruskal-wallis test, it was concluded that the job variable is a determining variable for both factors. In this context, it affects the responses of the occupational groups of the participants to the statements about the impact of ecotourism on socio-cultural and economic development within the scope of the new regionalism development theory.

As a result of the kruskal-wallis test conducted on the socio-cultural and economic factors of ecotourism within the scope of education variable and new regionalism development theory, it has been concluded that education variable is only a determining variable for the factor that affects economic development. No significant relationship was found between the education variable and the factors of the effects of ecotourism on socio-cultural development within the scope of the new regionalism development theory.

No significant relationship was found between the factors of age, earnings, life expectancy and the impact of ecotourism on socio-cultural development and economic development within the scope of new regionalism development theory. In this context, age, earning and life expectancy variables have no effect on the responses of the participants.

4.3.3.2 Mann-Whitney-U Test results

With the Mann-Whitney u test, it was tested whether there is a significant relationship between the variables that have two options and the effect of ecotourism on socio-cultural development and the factors of ecotourism on economic development within the scope of the new regionalism development theory.

Table 4: Mann-Whitney-U Test Results.

	The impact of ecotourism on socio-cultural development	The impact of eco-tourism on economic development
Gender		
Mann-Whitney U	18072,000	18006,000
Wilcoxon W	37575,000	37509,000
Z	-1,264	-1,321
Level of Meaning (2-way)	,206	,187
Marital status		
Mann-Whitney U	18195,000	18667,000
Wilcoxon W	37110,000	37582,000
Z	-1,150	-,732
Level of Meaning (2-way)	,250	,464
Are you a native of Sapanca?		
Mann-Whitney U	18333,500	17304,500
Wilcoxon W	30736,500	29707,500
Z	-,315	-1,243
Level of Meaning (2-way)	,752	,214
Do you earn your income from ecotourism?		
Mann-Whitney U	8143,500	7831,500
Wilcoxon W	59183,500	58871,500
Z	-4,457	-4,801
Level of Meaning (2-way)	,000	,000
Would you like more tourists to come to Sapanca?		
Mann-Whitney U	14302,000	14781,000
Wilcoxon W	30233,000	30712,000
Z	-4,447	-4,018
Level of Meaning (2-way)	,000	,000

Would you like further development of ecotourism in Sapanca?

Mann-Whitney U	2592,000	2721,000
Wilcoxon W	3918,000	4047,000
Z	-8,139	-7,960
Level of Meaning (2-way)	,000	,000

Source: prepared by the authors.

As a result of the Mann-Whitney U test, the variables of earning from ecotourism, demanding more tourists to come to Sapanca, demanding further development of ecotourism in Sapanca and the effect of ecotourism on socio-cultural development within the scope of the new regionalism development theory and the effect of economic development within the scope of the new regionalism theory are among the factors. A meaningful relationship has been found. In this context, whether the participants earn their income in ecotourism, whether they want more tourists to come to Sapanca and whether they want more ecotourism in Sapanca, affect their responses to the statements in both factors.

No significant relationship has been found between the factors of gender, marital status, the variables of being a native of Sapanca and the effect of ecotourism on socio-cultural development and economic development within the scope of the new regionalism development theory. In this context, it has not been found that the variables of gender, marital status, being a native of Sapanca have any effect on

the responses of the participants to the expressions of both factors.

4.4 Evaluation of Sapanca Region's Eco Tourism Potential within the Scope of Regional Development Theories

In this section, the arithmetic mean, standard deviation, frequency and frequency analysis of the answers given by the participants regarding the expressions about the effects of ecotourism developed within the scope of the new regionalism development theory in Sapanca on socio-cultural and economic development have been made. The results obtained after the analysis were interpreted within the scope of regional development theories and it was revealed in the light of which theories ecotourism developed in Sapanca. In this context, arithmetic mean, standard deviation and frequency-percentage values are given in tables 4 and 5.

Table 5. Frequency Analysis Results of Expressions Regarding the Effect of Eco Tourism on Socio-Cultural Development

Question	\bar{x}	Ss	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
			f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. Development of ecotourism in Sapanca positively affects the social development of the region by providing intercultural interaction in the region.	4,34	0,81	3	,8	10	2,5	37	9,4	143	36,2	202	51,1
2. Development of ecotourism in Sapanca increases the protection of natural areas.	4,41	0,84	2	,5	16	4,1	33	8,4	110	27,8	234	59,2
3. Development of eco-tourism in Sapanca increases the protection of the people of the region of historical and architectural structures.	4,36	0,83	3	,8	13	3,3	35	8,9	131	33,2	213	53,9
4. The development of ecotourism in Sapanca provides an increase in environmental awareness and quality.	4,37	0,84	2	,5	15	3,8	36	9,1	122	30,9	220	55,7

5. Development of ecotourism in Sapanca increases the increase and protection of parks and green areas.	4,34	0,89	7	1,8	15	3,8	27	6,8	133	33,7	213	53,9
6. The development of ecotourism in Sapanca provides the revival of arts, crafts and local culture.	4,27	0,85	2	,5	17	4,3	41	10,4	146	37,0	189	47,8
7. The development of ecotourism in Sapanca provides planned development.	4,10	0,90	3	,8	24	6,1	51	12,9	167	42,3	150	38,0
8. The development of ecotourism in Sapanca increases the education level of the public.	3,93	0,92	5	1,3	28	7,1	69	17,5	178	45,1	115	29,1
9. The development of ecotourism in Sapanca increases health opportunities.	3,86	0,89	3	,8	29	7,3	83	21,0	182	46,1	98	24,8
10. The development of ecotourism in Sapanca provides an increase in transportation facilities.	4,19	0,81	2	,5	11	2,8	53	13,4	170	43,0	159	40,3
11. The development of ecotourism in Sapanca provides an increase in cultural and artistic activities.	4,40	0,74	2	,5	7	1,8	30	7,6	147	37,2	209	52,9

Source: prepared by the authors.

When the participants were evaluated within the framework of the responses of Sapanca ecotourism on socio-cultural development within the scope of new regionalism development theory; The development of ecotourism in the district positively affects the interaction between cultures in the region and contributes to social development.

In addition, eco tourism in the district ensures the planned development of the region and the increase in health, education and transportation opportunities. In addition, it is concluded that ecotourism's impact on the development of cultural and artistic activities, the protection of natural areas, historical and architectural structures, green areas, and its effect on the increase of environmental awareness and quality, and its

contribution to the development of local arts and crafts are in harmony with the predictions of new regionalism theories.

The main reason why these expressions coincide with the predictions of the new regionalism development theory, which advocates development with the use of local resources, is that ecotourism is essentially a type of tourism made using local resources. In addition, the fact that ecotourism uses internal resources in the development of the region for both the development of the region and the benefit of the local people proves that it is in harmony with the predictions of the new regionalism development theory (Denman, 2001; Ross & Wall, 1999; Demir & Cevirgen, 2006).

Table 6. Frequency Analysis Results of Question Expressions Regarding the Economic Effects of Ecotourism

Questions	\bar{x}	Ss	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
			f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. Development of ecotourism in Sapanca positively affects regional development by contributing to the development of agriculture and industry sector.	4,00	0,93	4	1,0	27	6,8	69	17,5	160	40,5	135	34,2

2. Ecotourism in Sapanca increases the income of other sectors.	4,04	0,90	6	1,5	20	5,1	56	14,2	182	46,1	131	33,2
3. Development of ecotourism in Sapanca positively affects employment	4,23	0,82	2	,5	16	4,1	37	9,4	171	43,3	169	42,8
4. The development of ecotourism in Sapanca contributes to the increase of agricultural production.	4,80	0,93	6	1,5	27	6,8	103	26,1	162	41,0	97	24,6
5. The development of ecotourism in Sapanca contributes to the increase of investments made by local people.	4,16	0,96	6	1,5	27	6,8	38	9,6	150	38,0	174	44,1
6. I am satisfied with the income provided by local and foreign tourists coming to the district.	4,92	0,99	5	1,3	32	8,1	83	21,0	142	35,9	132	33,4
7. The development of ecotourism in Sapanca causes the agricultural areas to shrink.	2,03	1,08	159	40,3	117	29,6	73	18,5	35	8,9	10	2,5
8. Development of ecotourism in Sapanca causes young people to prefer to work in touristic enterprises.	3,89	1,04	8	2,0	37	9,4	77	19,5	137	34,7	135	34,2
9. The development of ecotourism in Sapanca contributes to the increase in the share of the people of the region in employment in the sector.	4,18	0,96	6	1,5	28	7,1	34	8,6	147	37,2	179	45,3
10. The development of ecotourism in Sapanca contributes to the increase in the security of finding a job in the region.	4,15	0,89	3	,8	20	5,1	53	13,4	155	39,2	163	41,3
11. The development of ecotourism in Sapanca contributes to the formation of different business areas.	4,06	0,85	2	,5	27	6,8	39	9,9	203	51,4	123	31,1
12. The development of ecotourism in Sapanca positively affects the regional development as it improves the infrastructure and superstructure possibilities of the region.	4,28	0,84	5	1,3	11	2,8	37	9,4	155	39,2	186	47,1
13. The development of ecotourism in Sapanca contributes to the development of agriculture-based industry.	3,97	1,00	8	2,0	33	8,4	58	14,7	158	40,0	138	34,9

Source: prepared by the authors.

When the responses of the participants on economic development in Sapanca within the scope of the new regionalism development theory were evaluated. With the development of ecotourism in the district, the development of the agriculture and industry sector and other sectors in the region has been triggered and the regional competitiveness has

increased with the formation of different business areas.

In addition, the effect of ecotourism on increasing employment opportunities in the region, increasing the opportunities of young people to find jobs in tourism and increasing the investments of the local people is seen to reach the goals of the new

regionalism development theory through ecotourism in the economic development of the region.

The effect of ecotourism on the increase of agricultural production in the region and the development of infrastructure and superstructure can also be related to the increase of the capacity of regional economies, which is one of the main objectives of the new regionalism theory. Because it is possible to create a development by using the region's own resources.

In addition, since the effect of ecotourism on the development of the agriculture-based industry in the region envisages a development by supporting the internal growth dynamics, the new regionalism is in harmony with the development and internal regional development theory.

Because the main purpose here is to reveal the instruments that will support regional development by using the region's own resources. It can be stated that eco tourism is in harmony with the predictions of the new regionalism development theory as it improves regional competitiveness and provides regional innovation with its effect on infrastructure and superstructure development in the region. (Denman, 2001; Ross & Wall, 1999; Demir & Cevirgen, 2006).

Within the scope of the new regionalism development theory, it has been observed that ecotourism has a positive effect on the development of the Sapanca region as a result of the tests conducted on both its socio-cultural and economic dimensions.

As a matter of fact, when the findings of similar studies were examined (Wood, 2002; Freire & Ferreira, 2015; Matheus & Raimundo, 2015; Cevallos & Burgos, 2015; Morales Gaitán, 2014; Weaver, 1999; Salvo & Giulio, 2003, Sperb & Serva, 2013), it was found that similar results were obtained with this study. For this reason, it is concluded that the new regional development theory is a successful theory used in the development of the region.

In addition, the findings of similar studies examining ecotourism within the new regionalism development theory proves that ecotourism is a successful tool in the development of regions (Freire & Ferreira, 2015; Morales Gaitán, 2014; Demir & Çevirgen, 2006; Wood, 2002; Dowling, 1993).

4.4 Data Discussion

It is seen that the regional development theories that have changed until today have caused a change in tourism policies. In this context, the development of new regionalism theory used today especially has an important place in the development of ecotourism in the region reflections of Turkey. Turkey in the development

of our research results Sapanca reflection of the new regionalism theory used in tourism policy has been shown to provide significant support.

As a result of the impact of new regionalism theories on tourism policies, similar studies have included the positive effects of ecotourism policies on regional development as Wood, Freire & Ferreira, Matheus & Raimundo, Cevallos & Burgos, Morales Gaitán, Weaver, Salvo & Giulio, Sperb & Serva (Wood, 2002; Freire & Ferreira, 2015; Matheus & Raimundo, 2015; Cevallos & Burgos, 2015; Morales Gaitán, 2014; Weaver, 1999; Salvo & Giulio, 2003, Sperb & Serva, 2013). On the other hand, the findings of this study support similar results with previous studies as Freire & Ferreira, Morales Gaitán, Demir & Çevirgen, Wood, Dowling (Freire & Ferreira, 2015; Morales Gaitán, 2014; Demir & Çevirgen, 2006; Wood, 2002; Dowling, 1993).

Although the results obtained in the study show that the ecotourism policies of the people of Sapanca region in general have a positive contribution to regional development, some participants are of the opinion that if ecotourism develops more in the region, it will harm the natural environment. Some studies on the relationship between ecotourism and environment planning also support this opposing view (Fernandes, 2012; Mcneely & Thorsell, 1989).

According to the results of the study conducted by Fernandes (2012) in the Cordiller region of Portugal, it draws attention to the existence of tourism policies in which environmental and tourism planning are generally ignored in tourism policies for the development of rural areas.

Boyd and Butler argue in their studies that the only positive issue regarding the environmental impacts of eco tourism is that the effects on the environment are smaller than other types of tourism, and that eco tourism is a less demanding form of tourism and tourist (Boyd & Butler, 1993).

5 CONCLUSIONS

In this study, the reflections of regional development theories on regional development were examined. Tourism development policies created under the new regionalism theory in Turkey to the conclusion that the development of Sapanca to act in a positive direction has been reached.

According to the answers given to the questionnaire prepared within the scope of the new regionalism development theory, it was seen that ecotourism was a driving force in the regional development of Sapanca and played an important role in the socio-cultural and economic development of Sapanca.

In addition, it was concluded that the use of local resources of the region was encouraged by the tourism policies implemented in the region and an attraction center was created. It was observed that the people of the region who participated in the survey perceive ecotourism policies more positively when their economic and social gains increase (Wood, 2002; Demir & Cevertgen, 2006; Dowling, 1993).

Moreover, as a result of the answers given by the participants, the variables of profession, earning from ecotourism, wanting more tourists to come to Sapanca and wanting further development of ecotourism in Sapanca were found to be a determining factor for the answers given to both dimensions.

Education variables, on the other hand, were found to be a determining factor only for the responses to the dimension of the impact of ecotourism on economic development. As a result of the data obtained, it was concluded that Sapanca adopted a development model by using its internal dynamics and in this context, new regional development theories played a role in regional development.

In order for ecotourism to play a more effective role as a development factor in the region, the following suggestions can be made:

- Regional branding can be achieved by promoting activities and opportunities that can be carried out under the name of ecotourism in the region.
- Follow-up of ecotourism practices and innovations applied in different countries should be ensured.
- Sustainable development plans can be prepared on a regional basis to ensure regional development through ecotourism.
- Necessary meetings can be held with the participation of all stakeholders on the environmental, economic and socio-cultural effects of ecotourism.
- Various accreditation and certification programs can be provided to ecotourism businesses.
- In order to increase the number of businesses serving in the field of ecotourism, various incentives can be provided to these businesses.
- The focus of ecotourism businesses on local rather than popular culture can help bring more ecotourists to the region.

As a result, with the analysis of the data obtained by the interview method, which is one of the methods used in converting the general theoretical assumptions into practice, it was observed that tourism policies in Sapanca reached the desired

goals. However, it can be understood from the responses of the interviewees that although the Sapanca region has made significant progress in the field of ecotourism, its potential is much higher. Therefore, it is important to focus more on Sapanca ecotourism with a regional nature, as the priority of both local people and national authorities together with local administrators.

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Processo Editorial / Editorial Process / Proceso Editorial

Editor Chefe / Editor-in-chief / Editor Jefe: PhD Thiago D. Pimentel (UFJF).

Recebido / Received / Recibido: 11.01.2021; Revisado / Revised / Revisado: 02.02.2021; 30.03.2021; 18.04.2021; Aprobado / Approved / Aprobado: 14.05.2021; Publicado / Published / Publicado: 27.05.2021.

Seção revisada às cegas por pares / Double-blind peer review section / Sessão revisada por pares ciegos.