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The Effect of Responsible Tourism Perception on Place Attachment and Support for Sustainable Tourism Development: The Moderator Role of Environmental Awareness

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Abstract: In this study, the effect of local people's perceptions regarding responsible tourism on place attachment and the moderator role of environmental awareness in the effect of place attachment on support for sustainable tourism development has been determined. The research was conducted on local people in a sample of Antalya Manavgat, one of the most important tourism destinations in Turkey. The data were obtained through convenience sampling method, and the analysis was carried out with 482 questionnaires. The AMOS program was used to test the hypothetical model developed within the context of the research, and the Process macro (model 1) was preferred to determine the moderator effect. As a result of the evaluation, it has been found that the sub-dimensions of economic, social, and environmental perception positively affect the place attachment of local people, while the cultural perception sub-dimension has no effect. The effect of place attachment on support for sustainable tourism development is another finding of the study. Moreover, the moderator role of environmental awareness in the effect of place attachment on support for sustainable tourism development has also been determined.

Keywords: responsible tourism perception; place attachment; support for sustainable tourism development; environmental awareness



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1. Introduction

Tourism is one of the world's fastest growing and developing industries, providing significant economic benefits for many countries. Furthermore, the sector is an important part of the global economic cycle, generating more than 10% of the global GDP and providing jobs for one in ten people worldwide [1]. However, the impact of tourism on local environments [2,3] and communities [4,5] is a growing concern. Tourism also brings with it a range of environmental and social effects, some of which can be negative [6,7]. The increase in tourism activity can lead to negative consequences such as overcrowding, pollution, and the degradation of natural and cultural resources [8,9]. Responsible tourism has emerged as a crucial approach to mitigate these effects and promote sustainable tourism practices [10,11].

Responsible tourism refers to the touristic activities that are economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable [12]. It involves considering the effects of tourism on local communities and the environment and making efforts to minimize negative effects while maximizing positive outcomes [13]. Responsible tourism emphasizes the importance of considering the social and environmental impacts of tourism and aims to ensure that benefits are shared equitably among all stakeholders, including local communities and the environment [10]. This type of tourism prioritizes the preservation of natural and cultural heritage and enhances the experiences of tourists [10,12].

As for place attachment, it refers to the emotional connection that individuals have with their living place [14]. It can influence the preservation of local environments [15,16], and is considered an important predictor of support for sustainable tourism development [17,18]. Environmental awareness, on the other hand, refers to individuals' concern and knowledge regarding environmental issues and their influence on behavior [19–22]. This study has explored the relationship between the perception of responsible tourism by local people and their attachment to their living place, as well as their support for sustainable tourism development. In addition, the study has examined the moderator role of environmental awareness in shaping perceptions of responsible tourism.

The interplay between responsible tourism perception, place attachment, and support for sustainable tourism development is critical to promoting sustainable tourism practices and preserving local environments for future generations [8]. The examination of these relationships will provide insights into the factors that drive local people's support for sustainable tourism development and the potential impact of environmental awareness. Moreover, the study is expected to contribute to the growing body of literature on responsible tourism [23] and provide important ideas for policymakers and practitioners working in the tourism industry [24]. Understanding the role of environmental awareness in shaping these relationships will inform the development of strategies to promote responsible tourism and support for sustainable tourism development.

When previous studies have been examined, there are many studies that analyze the effects of responsible tourism perception on sustainable tourism in terms of tourists [15,25–27] and local people [12,28,29]. Moreover, there are also a large number of studies on place attachment and sustainable tourism development [15,18,30–33]. However, no study has been found that examines the level of relationship between responsible tourism perception, place attachment, and support for sustainable tourism development, and this is considered to be the unique aspect of this study. Moreover, there are very few studies on the moderator effects of length of residency [31], perceived value [30], and attitudes to tourism [34] on the relationship between place attachment and sustainable tourism. The moderator role of environmental awareness in the relationship between place attachment and support for sustainable tourism development can be stated as the second unique aspect of the study. In parallel with this originality, within the context of the research purpose, the research has tried to find answers to questions such as, firstly, "What is the relationship level between the responsible tourism perception and place attachment of the people living in Manavgat?", secondly, "What is the relationship level between place attachment and support for sustainable tourism development?", and finally, "Does environmental awareness have a moderator role in the relationship between place attachment and support for sustainable tourism development?"

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between responsible tourism perception, place attachment, environmental awareness, and support for sustainable tourism development. In accordance with this purpose, the research has been carried out with a sample of local people living in Antalya/Manavgat district, which is one of the most important tourism destinations in Turkey. The study used a quantitative research design to collect data from the sample of local people residing in Manavgat. In the study, a broad literature review on the subject, the methodology of the research, findings, discussion, implications, limitations and future research directions, and finally conclusions have been presented, respectively.

2. Conceptual Model

2.1. *The Perception of Responsible Tourism and Place Attachment*

Responsible tourism is a concept that has gained significant attention in the tourism industry over the last few decades and encompasses various sustainable tourism practices, such as environmental protection, cultural sensitivity, and community involvement. The perception of responsible tourism among local people is an important aspect that can determine the success and sustainability of such initiatives. Responsible tourism practices have been shown to enhance local residents' experiences and improve their overall perception of tourists and destinations [10].

Studies have shown that local people's perceptions of responsible tourism can be influenced by a range of factors, including their level of involvement in tourism activities, the type of tourism activities, and the behavior of tourists [35,36]. For example, in their study, Trišić et al. [28] concluded that although it was found that local people did not have sufficient sustainable tourism information within the context of responsible tourism, the measures to protect and use the environment were important and there was a positive socio-cultural interaction between local people and tourists. In addition to this study, Mathew & Sreejesh [12] found that local people's having a high perception of responsible tourism and the tourism activities supporting sustainable tourism development might have positive economic effects such as employment, entrepreneurship, and income. Place attachment is a concept that refers to the emotional and psychological bond that individuals form with specific places, which can be influenced by a range of personal, cultural, and historical factors [37–39]. This concept has been widely studied in geography, psychology, and related fields and has important implications for various aspects of human life, including tourism [40,41]. A growing body of literature has shown that responsible tourism practices can positively affect the perception of local people concerning tourists and enhance their place attachment [42,43]. However, tourism can also have negative effects such as destruction of the environment, excess carrying capacity, and loss of cultural heritage [44,45]. Previous studies have shown that local people with strong place attachments often consider tourism as a threat to their sense of identity and cultural heritage [46]. They may feel that tourists do not respect local customs and traditions, or that the influx of visitors is changing the character of their communities [47].

The development of place attachment among the locals in tourism destinations is influenced by a variety of factors, including quality of life, cultural and historical significance of the area, and community involvement in tourism planning and management [47,48]. The characteristics of a community, such as a strong sense of identity, cultural heritage, and active involvement in tourism decision-making processes, can create residents with strong place attachments who are more supportive of tourism development [46].

The relationship between responsible tourism perception and place attachment among local people has been examined in several previous studies [30,32,49]. All in all, the literature suggests that responsible tourism perception and environmental awareness play a crucial role in shaping local people's place attachment. Responsible tourism practices can enhance their perceptions of tourists and destinations and lead to stronger place attachment.

In addition, the level of involvement of local residents in tourism development has been found to be a key factor in shaping their perception of responsible tourism [50]. When local residents are included in the planning and decision-making process, they are more likely to feel a sense of ownership and control over the industry and are therefore more likely to view it as responsible [51]. This can result in a stronger emotional connection with the local environment and increased support for the industry [14].

The equitable distribution of benefits from tourism is also important in shaping local people's perception of responsible tourism [50]. When local communities feel that they are receiving a fair return on their investment in the tourism industry, they are more likely to consider it as responsible and to support its continual development. For example, a study by Nunkoo and Ramkissoon [51] found that the locals in communities where tourism benefits were shared equitably were more likely to have a positive perception of the industry and to support its development. Therefore, the following hypotheses have been proposed.

Hypothesis 1 (H₁). *There is an effect of responsible tourism perception on place attachment.*

Hypothesis 1 (H_{1a}). *There is a positive and significant relationship between economic responsibility (ECR) and place attachment.*

Hypothesis 1 (H_{1b}). *There is a positive and significant relationship between social responsibility (SCR) and place attachment.*

Hypothesis 1 (H_{1c}). *There is a positive and significant relationship between cultural responsibility (CLR) and place attachment.*

Hypothesis 1 (H_{1d}). *There is a positive and significant relationship between environmental responsibility (ENR) and place attachment.*

2.2. Place Attachment and Support for Sustainable Tourism Development

Sustainable tourism development is a responsible and holistic approach to tourism that considers the economic, social, and environmental impacts of tourism on local communities [52,53]. The aim of sustainable tourism is to ensure that the benefits of tourism are shared by all stakeholders and that the negative impacts of tourism are minimized [1]. Supporting sustainable tourism development for local people is crucial for ensuring that the benefits of tourism are shared and sustained over time [54]. This can be achieved through a number of key strategies, including community involvement [55], support of local businesses [56], investing in infrastructure and services [57], and environmental protection [58]. Community involvement can help to ensure that the cultural and social values of local residents are respected and preserved, preventing the homogenization of tourist destinations [59]. Supporting local businesses can help to preserve local cultures and traditions, preventing the homogenization of tourist destinations [59]. Investment in sustainable tourism infrastructure and services can help to create a more attractive and livable environment for local people, improving the quality of life in tourist destinations [60]. Additionally, environmental protection can help to reduce the negative impacts of tourism, such as resource depletion and ecosystem degradation [43,61].

A growing body of research has shown that place attachment can significantly impact support for sustainable tourism development among local people [32,43,62,63]. Studies have indicated that local residents with a strong place attachment tend to have a more positive attitude towards sustainable tourism development compared to those with weaker attachments [64]. For example, a study conducted in Macao found that residents with strong place attachment were more likely to support sustainable tourism initiatives, such as eco-friendly tourism practices and cultural heritage preservation [65]. Similarly, research conducted in Australia found that residents with strong place attachment were more likely to support sustainable tourism development, as they valued the preservation of their local environment and culture [14]. This increased level of attachment can lead to a greater sense of ownership and identification with the local people, which in turn contributes to increased support for sustainable tourism practices [66]. This support can take the form of active participation in local environmental protection and sustainable tourism initiatives, as well as support for policies and regulations that promote sustainable tourism

practices [43]. In addition to community involvement, place attachment can also increase residents' environmental and cultural awareness. Residents with strong place attachment are more likely to understand and appreciate the unique environmental and cultural resources of their local community, and are therefore more likely to support initiatives that preserve and protect these resources [67].

In conclusion, place attachment plays a crucial role in determining local people's support for sustainable tourism development. A strong place attachment can increase support for sustainable tourism practices, which can help to ensure the long-term viability of tourism destinations. However, it is important to consider the multiple factors that can impact the relationship between place attachment and support for sustainable tourism development for local people. As a consequence of the literature review conducted above, the second hypothesis of the research has been developed as follows.

Hypothesis 2 (H₂). *Place attachment has a strong effect on support for sustainable tourism development.*

2.3. The Effect of Place Attachment on Support for Sustainable Tourism Development: The Moderator Role of Environmental Awareness

In order to support sustainable tourism, educational, informative and encouraging activities that will increase environmental awareness, especially in the context of local people, should be supported. Local people with high levels of environmental awareness and strong place attachment are more likely to support sustainable tourism practices and engage in behaviors that promote sustainability [32,68,69]. According to the study of Khan et al. [69], it was determined that environmental awareness has a positive effect on the satisfaction of local people and the relationship between sustainable tourism within the framework of the moderator role. The addition of the concepts of place attachment and responsible tourism perception will constitute the original part of our study and is expected to make an important contribution to the literature, along with the findings of this study. Conversely, those with strong place attachments but low levels of environmental awareness may prioritize economic benefits over environmental impact [68]. Individuals with high levels of environmental awareness but weak place attachments may not feel a sense of responsibility to support sustainable tourism practices in their living places [68]. There are theoretical reasons that environmental awareness will improve or strengthen the relationship between place attachment and sustainable tourism development. At the literature research stage, there are no studies on the moderator role of environmental awareness in the relationship between place attachment and sustainable tourism development. Based on the literature review, in order to fill the gap in the literature, it was decided to examine the moderator role of environmental awareness in the effect of place attachment on support for sustainable tourism development, and hypothesis 3 has been formed as follows.

Hypothesis 3 (H₃). *Environmental awareness has a moderator role in the effect of place attachment on support for sustainable tourism development.*

The research model, proposed in light of the above-mentioned literature review, conceptual basis, and hypotheses, is presented in Figure 1.

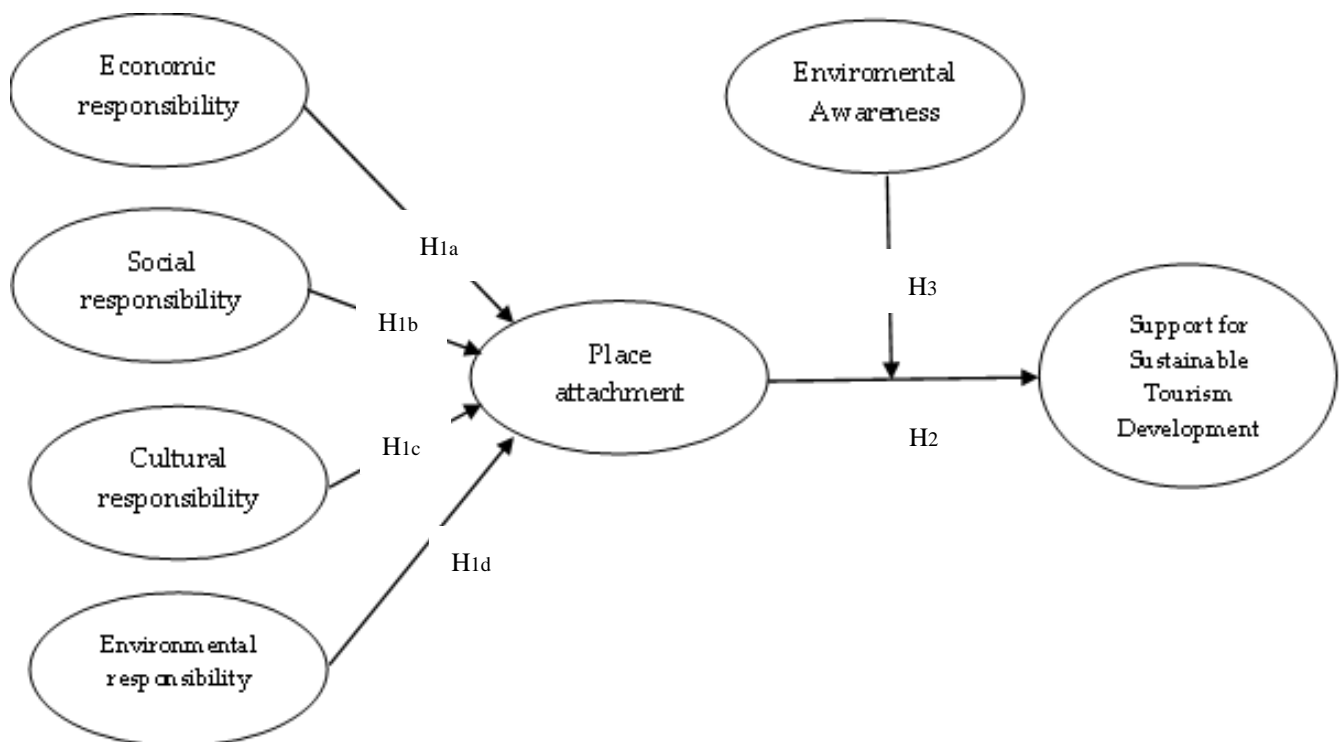


Figure 1. Proposed model.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Instrument

In the research, the survey technique was preferred as one of the quantitative methods. The survey technique was preferred because surveys can reach large masses, and in this way it is easier to reach the population from samples [70]. The questionnaire with 14 items about local people's perception of responsible tourism was adapted from the studies of Venu & Goodwin [71]. Place attachment was measured with four items adapted from studies in the literature [72,73]. In the measurement of the perception of supporting sustainable tourism development, a 6-item scale from the study of Nicholas, Thapa & Ko [56] was used. Finally, a 4-point scale developed by Ryan & Spash [74] was used to measure environmental awareness. In total, four different scales with 28 items were obtained. All scales used in the study were graded using a 5-point Likert scale.

3.2. Sampling and Data Collection

The research was carried out in the sample of Antalya Manavgat, one of the important touristic destinations of Turkey. In 2022, nearly four million foreign tourists visited Manavgat [75]. In fact, it can be stated that Manavgat is in the stagnation stage in Butler's [76] destination life cycle model [77]. According to the mentioned model, tourism development in destinations in the stagnation stage has some negative effects [76]. In this context, determining the local people's perceptions of responsible tourism and its possible consequences is important for tourism development. For these reasons, Manavgat is considered within the scope of the research.

As the core of the research, the number of people living in Manavgat according to the address-based population registration system in 2022 was determined as 245,740 [78]. Firstly, a face-to-face pilot study was conducted on 52 people on 12–13 December 2022. As a result of the pilot study, it was determined that the items included in the research were understandable. In addition, it was understood that the reliability of all constructs was at the desired level [79]. In light of the obtained results, the actual data collection phase was started.

The research data were obtained face-to-face between 14 and 31 December 2022 by means of convenience sampling method. Due to the high risk of common method bias in social science research [80], response enhancing techniques were applied. In this context, a cover page with information containing information such as “Any information collected during the research will be kept confidential”, “There are no right or wrong answers in this survey” was organized in each survey instrument [81]. Regarding statistical solutions, Harman’s single factor test was applied. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that the largest factor explained 22.4% of the variance. When the literature was examined, it was claimed that this ratio should be 50% and below [82]. To summarize, the value obtained is within the range recommended by the literature. As a result, a total of 495 questionnaires were obtained on the specified dates. After identifying and eliminating the incorrect and incomplete questionnaires, the research analyses were carried out with the remaining 482 questionnaires.

3.3. Data Analysis

At the first stage, the collected questionnaires were transferred to the SPSS program. Before proceeding to path analysis, Mahalanobis distance was examined to determine the extreme values. As a result of the examination, 21 questionnaire forms were excluded from the analysis because they contained outliers (Mahalanobis’ $D(28) > 0.001$). In addition, VIF and tolerance values were calculated to evaluate multicollinearity. Because the results obtained were below 5 for VIF value and above 0.10 for tolerance value, it was decided that there was no multicollinearity problem [83]. In the final stage, the kurtosis and skewness values of the items were examined, and it was decided that the data showed normal distribution because all values were between -1.5 and $+1.5$ [84].

Based on the results obtained, the AMOS program was used to test the hypothetical model developed over 461 questionnaires. In parallel, Process macro [85] (model 1) was preferred in order to determine the moderator effect.

3.4. Findings

3.4.1. Demographic Profile

In light of the obtained data, the demographic qualifications of the participants are given in Table 1. Of the participants, 53.6% are male. When the age ranges have been analyzed, 51.4% of the participants are within the age range of 26–34. Moreover, 59% of them have a bachelor’s degree. It was determined that 55.1% of the respondent’s earned income from the tourism sector. Finally, 47.9% of the respondents have been living in Manavgat destination for 11–15 years.

3.4.2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis Regarding the Structural Model

In the study, the first step, confirmatory factor analysis, was applied before proceeding to path analysis. The obtained results are presented in Table 2. In total, two items, one item in the place attachment scale (I get more satisfaction living in this village than living in any other place) and the other item in the scale of supporting sustainable tourism development (promotion of environmental education and conservation), were excluded from the analysis due to low factor loads [86]. The factor loads of the remaining 26 items were found to be 0.50 and above. In addition, the calculated t values of all items were significant at $p \leq 0.001$. When the goodness of fit values are examined, it can be said that the values obtained are satisfactory ($\chi^2 = 693.304$, $df = 278$, $\chi^2/df = 2.494$, $NFI = 0.929$, $IFI = 0.956$, $TLI = 0.948$, $RMSEA = 0.057$, $CFI = 0.956$). To sum up, the results obtained from the collected data support the structural model.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of The Participants.

		<i>n</i>	%
Gender	Male	247	53.6
	Female	214	46.4
Age	18–25	19	4.1
	26–34	237	51.4
	35–45	105	22.8
	46–54	72	15.6
	55 age and over	28	6.1
Education	High school and previous	80	17.4
	Associate Degree	83	18
	Bachelor’s degree	272	59.0
	Postgraduate	26	5.6
Income Status from Tourism	Yes	254	55.1
	No	207	44.9
How long have you been living in Manavgat?	1–5 years	150	32.5
	6–10 years	57	12.4
	11–15 years	221	47.9
	16–20 years	18	3.9
	21 years and over	15	3.3

Table 2. Structural Model Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results.

Factors/Items	Standard Loads	t-Value	<i>R</i> ²	CR	AVE	CA
Responsible Tourism						
Economic Responsibility (ECR)				0.921	0.787	0.937
Employment opportunities	0.870	26.06 *	0.75			
Purchasing of local produces.	0.887	27.09 *	0.78			
Skill development	0.913	28.18 *	0.83			
Local enterprise support	0.879		0.77			
Social Responsibility (SCR)				0.877	0.714	0.900
Employment opportunities for backward people	0.933		0.87			
Local community engagement.	0.922	34.40 *	0.85			
Supports enterprises by disadvantaged people	0.840	27.01 *	0.70			
Training for engagement	0.657	17.06 *	0.43			
Cultural Responsibility (CLR)				0.857	0.669	0.851
Enhancement of historical heritage	0.876	16.75 *	0.76			
Enhancement of culture	0.847	16.62 *	0.71			
Enhancement of traditions	0.724		0.52			
Environmental Responsibility (ENR)				0.792	0.560	0.785
Public awareness	0.759		0.57			
Environmental awareness	0.785	13.40 *	0.61			

Table 2. Cont.

Factors/Items	Standard Loads	t-Value	R ²	CR	AVE	CA
Responsible Tourism						
Waste management	0.699	12.86 *	0.48			
Place attachment (PLA)				0.792	0.568	0.748
Living in this village is meaningful to me	0.808		0.65			
I feel a strong sense of belonging to this village	0.870	17.99 *	0.75			
I identify strongly with living in this village	0.544	11.42 *	0.30			
Support for Sustainable Tourism Development (STD)				0.942	0.762	0.942
Development of community-based tourism initiatives	0.779		0.61			
Local participation in tourism planning and development	0.882	21.53 *	0.77			
Cultural exchanges between local residents and visitors	0.920	22.79 *	0.84			
Cooperation and unity in tourism planning and development	0.918	22.73 *	0.84			
Regulatory environmental standards to reduce the negative impacts of tourism	0.874	21.27 *	0.76			
Environmental awareness (EA)				0.912	0.771	0.929
The effects of pollution on public health are worse than we realize	0.835		0.69			
Over the next several decades, thousands of species will become extinct	0.921	26.22 *	0.84			
Current environmental pollution has caused the world's climate to change	0.947	27.30 *	0.89			
Environmental protection will provide a better world for me and my children	0.803	20.87 *	0.64			

* $p < 0.001$.

The Cronbach alpha values of each construct were evaluated concerning the reliability of the scales. At this point, the reliability value in each construct is above 0.70. These values have indicated that each construct in the research is reliable [79]. Moreover, the construct reliability (CR) and the average variance extracted (AVE) values have been analyzed within the context of the confirmatory factor analysis. It is understood that all of the seven constructs have exceeded the threshold values of 0.70 and 0.50 for both CR and AVE, respectively. In light of these findings, it has been decided that convergent validity and composite reliability values are provided [87].

In Table 3, the discriminant validity of the model has been analyzed. According to the results presented in the table, it has been determined that the square root of the AVE value of each construct is higher than all the values in the relevant row. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the discriminant validity of the construct has been ensured [88].

Table 3. Discriminant Validity Results.

Factor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. ECR	0.887 ^a						
2. SCR	0.511	0.844 ^a					
3. CLR	0.152	0.021	0.817 ^a				
4. ENR	0.153	0.032	0.341	0.748 ^a			
5. PLA	0.667	0.365	0.126	0.136	0.753 ^a		
6. STD	0.476	0.650	0.016	0.048	0.465	0.872 ^a	
7. EA	0.095	0.294	0.305	0.618	0.323	0.605	0.878 ^a

ECR: Economic responsibility, SCR: Social responsibility, CLR: Cultural responsibility, ENR: Environmental responsibility, PLA: Place attachment, STD: Support sustainable tourism development, EA: Environmental awareness. ^a Square root of the AVE.

4. Results

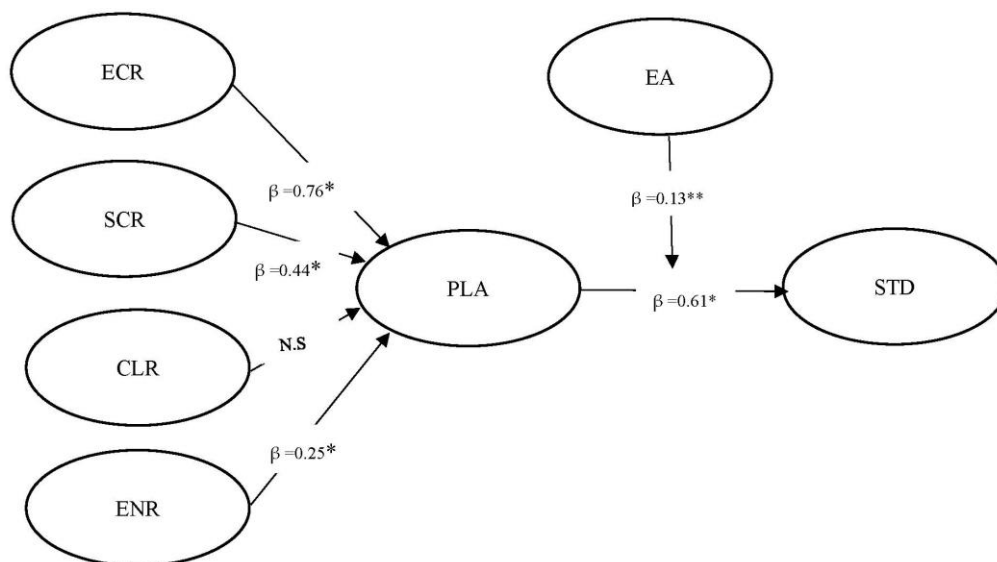
As a consequence of the acceptable results obtained from the first stage of the two-stage test recommended in the literature [89], the second stage, which is the path analysis, was started. In the path analysis, the results, similar to the table of confirmatory factor analysis, were obtained in terms of goodness of fit values ($\chi^2 = 633.864$, $df = 197$, $\chi^2/df = 3.218$, $NFI = 0.921$, $IFI = 0.944$, $TLI = 0.934$, $RMSEA = 0.069$, $CFI = 0.944$). Considering these results, the goodness-of-fit values obtained from the path analysis are at a satisfactory level. When the path coefficients have been evaluated, it can be observed that economic ($\beta = 0.76$, $t = 13.655$, $p < 0.001$), social ($\beta = 0.44$, $t = 10.432$, $p < 0.001$), and environmental ($\beta = 0.25$, $t = 7.334$, $p < 0.001$) responsibilities, which are the sub-dimensions of responsible tourism, positively and strongly affect the perceptions of place attachment of local people. On the other hand, it has been found that cultural responsibility does not have a statistically significant effect on place attachment. In this context, the H_{1a} , H_{1b} , and H_{1d} hypotheses have been accepted, while the H_{1c} hypothesis has been rejected.

Another hypothesis that has been subject to the research is to determine the effect of place attachment on support for sustainable tourism development. The results obtained have indicated that as the place attachment of the local people increases, their support for sustainable tourism development also increases strongly ($\beta = 0.61$, $t = 10.812$, $p < 0.001$). In the light of these results, H_2 is accepted.

The results of the regression model for the moderator effect depending on the research objective are presented in Table 4. The results of the table indicate that the moderating role of environmental awareness in the effect of place attachment on support for sustainable tourism development is significant ($\beta = 0.13$, 95% CI [0.010, 0.251], $p < 0.05$). Furthermore, the effects of the moderator effect at low, medium, and high levels were analyzed separately. When the results are evaluated, it can be seen that the perception of environmental awareness is significant as a moderator variable at all low, medium, and high levels. Furthermore, the effect of place attachment on support for sustainable tourism development is lower for people with low environmental awareness ($\beta = 0.42$, 95% CI [0.324, 0.516]) and higher for people with high environmental awareness ($\beta = 0.55$, 95% CI [0.442, 0.660]). In other words, as environmental awareness increases, the effect of place attachment on support for sustainable tourism development also increases. Accordingly, the H_3 hypothesis has been supported. In light of the research findings, the coefficients of the structural model are presented in Figure 2.

Table 4. Moderated Effect Results.

						Support for Sustainable Tourism Development	
						β	Confidence Interval
H3a							
							Min. Max.
Place attachment (X)						0.32 *	0.514 1.635
Environmental awareness (W)						0.36 *	0.164 0.789
X.W (Interaction)						0.13 **	0.010 0.251
R^2						0.23	
Environmental awareness	β	S.E.	t	LLCI	ULCI		
Low:	0.42 *	0.05	8.58	0.324	0.516		
Middle:	0.45 *	0.04	8.72	0.352	0.581		
High:	0.55 *	0.04	9.96	0.442	0.660		

* $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.05$.**Figure 2.** Structural Model Coefficients (ECR: Economic responsibility, SCR: Social responsibility, CLR: Cultural responsibility, ENR: Environmental responsibility, PLA: Place attachment, STD: Support for sustainable tourism development, EA: Environmental awareness). * $p < 0.001$ ** $p < 0.05$.

5. Discussion and Implications

Sustainable tourism development is of vital importance because it is seen as an integral part of overall sustainable development. In fact, the concept has emerged from the acceptance of the economic importance of tourism as well as its social, cultural, and environmental effects [90].

This study was aimed at establishing a sustainable destination management by identifying the tourism-related antecedents and consequences of local people's place attachment living in a touristic destination. In the model developed, in the scope of responsible tourism perception, four sub-dimensions, economic, social, cultural, and environmental, were obtained.

First of all, regarding the research model, to what extent the perception of responsible tourism affects the place attachment of local people has been examined. As a consequence of the analysis, it has been concluded that perception of the economic, social, and environmental sub-dimensions positively affects the place attachment of the local people.

Particularly in destinations where tourism has been developing, local people are negatively affected by tourism for reasons such as the increase in the cost of living, and the destruction in terms of cultural and environmental aspects [91]. For example, Tosun [92] claims that the development of tourism leads to an increase in crime rates in a region. Brunt & Courtney [93], on the other hand, found that with the development of tourism, the destination would become overcrowded and local people would behave reluctantly towards tourism development. At this point, the results of the research have shown that responsible tourism practices are an important antecedent in reducing the negative effects of tourism on a destination. Because the economic growth related to tourism significantly improves the quality of life of the locals with the income obtained [94], and with the environmental and social development of the destination, people's place attachment also increases [95].

It is obvious that tourism activities have various economic consequences for the locals, employees, and investors. The fact that these activities directly benefit the local community has the effect of increasing the sense of place attachment within the context of responsible tourism perception. As a consequence of this effect, the support of local people for sustainable tourism development will arise. In this respect, in order to create the desired effect on the local people, offering employment and/or entrepreneurship opportunities, encouraging procurement from local businesses, and increasing opportunities for newly established businesses are among the implications to be presented. The mentioned income-generating efforts should be conveyed to the local people, and these opportunities should be felt to be consistent and sustainable. For this reason, it can be stated that the use of local people by tourism enterprises in the process of personnel employment will increase the place attachment of local people. Furthermore, destination management organizations could sell the products that the local people produce by promoting and marketing them. In particular, the supply of raw material products by hotel businesses from the people of the region is important for strengthening the destination, from an economic perspective. It is believed that ensuring the participation of people living in the region in the activities that are organized by the destination or tourism enterprises will increase the place attachment of local people. Furthermore, building tourism enterprises in an environmentally sensitive way, and increasing their social responsibility activities concerning the environment, may also increase the loyalty of the local people to the destination.

The environmentally responsible behaviors of local people are more important for sustainability than tourists when considered in terms of environmental responsibility. This is because the interaction of local people with the environment is greater in terms of using both space and time [96]. Therefore, this research conducted on local people will make important contributions to the literature as a consequence of the relationships it puts forward.

Previous studies have shown that cultural impacts in tourism may lead to some positive changes in local people's quality of life [97]. For example, Khizindar [98] claims that the protection of cultural heritage sites in the destination along with the development of tourism increases the quality of life of the local people. The results of this study, on the other hand, have shown that the cultural impacts do not have an increasing effect on place attachment. This may be due to the fact that a considerable proportion of the people who participated in the research have lived in Manavgat for between 1 and 5 years, and their cultural belonging has not yet been developed. At the same time, there may be differences among the relationships regarding a chosen destination [30]. Turkey is a developing country, and this probably makes the people's perceptions of the cultural impact different from those of developed countries. Moreover, while evaluating tourism, local people attach more importance to economic development in their living conditions. In fact, it has been determined through the results of the study that local people associate destination belonging with the economic dimension of tourism the most.

Place attachment is among the topics that researchers have frequently studied in studies regarding the effects of tourism on local people [64,99]. The results of the study have indicated that as the place attachment of the people living in the region increases

as a result of the benefits they have obtained from tourism, their support for sustainable tourism development also increases. In this context, it can be stated that the findings of the study have also supported the SET theory [100]. This result is consistent with the findings of the other studies in the literature [34,43].

In this study, unlike other studies in the literature, the moderator role of environmental awareness in the effect of destination belonging on supporting sustainable tourism development has been analyzed. Determining the moderator role of environmental awareness in the relationship between the aforementioned variables makes this study original in terms of its results. The results of the research have shown that the increase in environmental awareness leads to an increase in the mentioned effect. In this regard, organizing trainings to increase environmental awareness of the local people by destination management organizations may help to ensure sustainable tourism development within the destination. Hotel enterprises can share their environmental policies with the local people and involve them in the policy-making process. At the same time, it is also thought that cooperating with local people in environmental social responsibility projects will increase the environmental awareness of the residents.

It is necessary to recognize and accept the perceptions and attitudes of local people towards tourism in order to ensure sustainable tourism development, because in tourism, service providers/employees, business owners, and suppliers are generally composed of local people. For this reason, the effects of tourism on host groups and residents' attitudes to tourism have become an important research topic [90]. A better understanding of the perceptions of local people concerning responsible tourism will contribute to the acceptance of tourism by the community. In turn, the acceptance will help managers and local authorities to manage the destinations more efficiently.

The efforts made for sustainable tourism development should protect the interests of all stakeholders, not only the host community. The stakeholders should be involved in the development of tourism plans and policies so as to ensure that local governments take ownership of tourism development and improve the perceptions of individuals and organizations about the sustainability of tourism. Moreover, local people must be actively involved in the various stages of the tourism planning process. This involvement will create a more positive and supportive attitude among local people than in a passively managed community. For instance, an infrastructure development plan has to be designed to meet the common needs of local people, not just tourists or businesses [12]. On the basis of its results, this study has presented a sustainable model for destination management within the context of responsible tourism. The findings are expected to provide insights to policymakers, tourism planners, and practitioners.

6. Limitations and Future Research Directions

The study has some limitations as well as its contributions to the literature. The first limitation of the study is that the sample has been obtained from a single destination. When Manavgat is evaluated according to the destination life cycle model put forward by Butler [76], it is a destination in the stagnation stage. Therefore, the results may differ in a destination where tourism is newly developed. At the same time, the tourists visiting Manavgat destination mostly travel for sea, sand, and sun tourism. In future studies, it is important to apply the current study in a cultural tourism-oriented destination and to compare the results with the findings of this study in order to eliminate the deficiency in the literature. Moreover, a similar study can be carried out in a different destination that is in the stagnation stage, and the results could be compared with the findings of this study.

In the study, the moderator role of environmental awareness has been examined by focusing on the impact of local people's perception of responsible tourism on place attachment and support for sustainable tourism development. In future studies, different antecedent and outcome variables of responsible tourism perception can be evaluated. For example, the relationship between the personality traits of the local people and the perception of responsible tourism can be examined. Similarly, the social responsibilities

of destination management organizations and hotel enterprises and the effects of local people on destination satisfaction and supporting sustainable tourism development can be investigated. Furthermore, this study has only aimed at measuring the perceptions of local people regarding responsible tourism. However, this condition reveals a unilateral perspective. Applying future studies with different sample groups such as tourism business owners may provide a different perspective concerning the model.

7. Conclusions

The study has been carried out in a sample of Manavgat, an important touristic destination, in order to determine the effects of local people's perceptions of responsible tourism on place attachment and support for sustainable tourism. According to the results of the study, it has been determined that the economic, social, and environmentally responsible tourism perceptions of the local people affect the place attachment positively. It has also been determined that a one-unit positive change in economic perception within the scope of responsible tourism creates a 76% positive change in the place attachment of the local people. While this effect has been found as 44% in social perception, it has been observed as 25% in environmental perception. In addition, in the cultural dimension of responsible tourism, no effect on place attachment has been detected.

A significant and positive effect of place attachment on support for sustainable tourism development has been identified within the context of the study. As a matter of fact, when the place attachment of the local people increases, there is a positive change of 49% in their support for sustainable tourism development. Moreover, unlike other studies conducted in the literature, this study has examined the moderator role of environmental awareness in the effect of place attachment on support for sustainable tourism development and has found that the intensity of this effect increases as environmental awareness increases.

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