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#### **RESEARCH ARTICLE**

# An Inquiry of Local's Perspectives on the Cittaslow Movement: The Case of Finike

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| ARTICLE INFO            | ABSTRACT  |
|-------------------------|---|
| Received: Apr 7, 2025   | The concept of Cittaslow (slow city) is a contemporary urban initiative   |
| Accepted: May 29, 2025  | designed to safeguard the distinctive cultural characteristics, historic tapestry, and natural framework of a given locale while imparting them to  |
| Keywords                | future generations and enabling locals to pursue their daily activities in a<br>manner that is both convenient and harmonious amidst a preserved<br>environment. This concept has also been gaining greater recognition and |
| Locals                  | interest over time in Turkey. The Cittaslow movement commenced in our   |
| Cittaslow               | country in 2009 when the Seferihisar district of Izmir became an affiliate  |
| Finike                  | of the network. The Finike district of Antalya is the most recent   |
| Sustainability          | municipality to become a member of this network that hosts a total of 22 cities of Turkey. The present study attempts to ascertain the perspectives   |
| *Corresponding Author:  | analysis of quantitative data and wrap up the paper with the  |
| alikocak@akdeniz.edu.tr | interpretations of findings and relevant recommendations.   |

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The advent of industrialization has led to a notable acceleration in the pace of life. People are perpetually engaged in a state of constant motion, striving to keep pace with the demands of their environment. The challenges associated with this fast-paced lifestyle include the pressures of an intense and stressful work environment, the demands of daily routines, and the mounting responsibilities that accompany modern living. The challenges of rapid urbanization, crowding, traffic congestion, noise, pollution, and rising crime rates have led many to seek respite from the stress of big cities in quieter, smaller places. In this modern lifestyle, individuals often come to perceive a decline in the quality of their lives and a sense of living merely to sustain their existence, leading them to seek out environments where life flows relatively slower (Güreşçi, 2010). The Cittaslow Turkey Network attributes this phenomenon to the fast-paced nature of urban environments, where individuals are compelled to work at a rapid pace, live at a similarly accelerated rhythm, prioritize consumption over production, and become increasingly dependent on external forces due to the influence of globalization. Furthermore, the network asserts that cities have deviated from their original purposes and have ceased to be secure and stable places to live (Cittaslow Turkey, 2024). Cittaslow is a movement that opposes the pursuit of unplanned and rapid development. Its goal is to prevent the homogenization of cities and towns as a result of globalization and, thus, to protect their unique local characteristics. The Cittaslow movement has emerged as an association of small towns and cities that aspire to retain their unique local identities against globalization (Cittaslow Turkey, 2024). The term Cittaslow, which is a combination of the Italian word "città" (city) and the English word "slow" (slow), is used in the meaning of "Slow City" or "Calm City." The movement, emerging subsequent to the Slow Food movement, can be defined as a collective of cities that have joined forces to prevent the standardization of the texture and lifestyle of urban areas that have become monotonous as a consequence of globalization (Numanoğlu & Göçer, 2018). It represents a new concept, defined in various sources (Radstrom, 2011; Semmens & Freeman, 2012; Presenza et al., 2015) as a style

of urban development that eschews the fast-paced, homogenizing forces of globalization in favor of a model that prioritizes local diversity, economic and cultural strengths, and a more measured, historically rooted approach to urbanization. Mayer and Knox (2006) propose that slow cities are those where locals appreciate their region and cultural values, relevant programs are implemented to preserve existing culture, and institutional support is sought to ensure sustainable development (Oliveira et al., 2023). Tayfun and Acuner (2014) posit that Cittaslow is a movement that attaches importance to human values.

Those seeking respite from the frenetic pace of contemporary urban life may find solace in the tranquil ambiance of slow cities (Öztürk et al., 2011). Individuals grappling with the noise, chaos, and pollutants of urban environments often gravitate toward these locales, drawn by the allure of a serene atmosphere. In addition to offering a tranquil environment, slow cities strive to achieve self-sufficiency through the generation of renewable energy resources, maintain traditional practices, and facilitate social interaction among individuals from diverse linguistic, religious, and ethnic backgrounds through coexistence (Üstün Topal et al., 2016; Šormaz & Ruoss, 2023). It should be noted, however, that the development of tourist activities can have either positive or negative consequences for the physical, social, and economic structures of the destinations in question. While the interest in Cittaslow cities, and their subsequent tourism development, can provide employment opportunities, attract infrastructure investments, and facilitate economic growth (Özdemir & Kervankıran, 2011), there is a potential downside to this phenomenon. An increase in visitor numbers can result in damage to historical and cultural heritage sites, noise pollution, and cultural deterioration in the destination (Özdemir & Kervankıran, 2011). In this regard, locals' attitudes toward the movement deserve to be elicited since while the positive aspects of tourism include improvements in living conditions, enhanced transportation, economic revitalization, and increased employment opportunities; however, these cities may confront over-tourism, overcrowding, and cultural degeneration in the future. Therefore, uncovering locals' perspectives on the Cittaslow movement represents the empirical basis for our research.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

# The Concept of Cittaslow

Cittaslow is regarded as a component of a famous cultural phenomenon, the slow movement (Keskin, 2012). The Cittaslow movement is closely aligned with the Slow Food movement, which originated in Italy in 1986 under the leadership of Carlo Petrini, an Italian gastronomist and author, and is based on a philosophy of good, clean, and fair food (Uslu & Avcı, 2020). It emerged as a reaction to the phenomenon of globalization and the increasing number of fast-food restaurants (Çakıcı et al., 2014). The movement was formalized on November 9, 1989, at the Opera Comique in Paris, where the manifesto was signed by representatives from Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States (Güven, 2011). Born and shaped as an improvisation, the movement has since become a widely recognized and influential phenomenon (Alkan, 2020).

The foundation of the Cittaslow Association was led by Paolo Saturnini in Italy, and it has since become a global organization, with 176 cities in 27 countries currently comprising its membership. Saturnini's vision was to preserve the values and characteristics of small settlements and to prevent the emergence of large, uniform cities that lack a connection to their local communities. He believed that such cities would eventually lose their local identities and souls. The logo, designed to represent the Cittaslow movement, depicts an orange snail encircled by a crown of contemporary and historical buildings (*Figure 1*). Only member cities are authorized to use the accompanying text that translates to Turkish as "Cittaslow Birliği: Yaşamın Kolay Olduğu Kentlerin Uluslararası Ağı" (Çerçi, 2013). The snail figure symbolizes slowness and rest, the fundamental principles of the Cittaslow movement (Keskin, 2012). The overarching objective of Cittaslow is to safeguard the quality of life, an intrinsic component of the sense of place in any urban environment, by making it ecologically sustainable (Radstrom, 2011). It strives to provide alternative approaches to urban living and governance, where the prevailing philosophy is fast-paced and consumption-oriented (Sırım, 2012).

The fundamental premise of the Cittaslow initiative is to recognize and endorse the indigenous cultural assets and modes of living that constitute the distinctive identity of a city in each region. According to the proponents of this movement, the long-term support, endorsement, and maintenance of these principles will ensure the protection of these distinctive areas from becoming mere examples of communities elsewhere. The creation and nurturing of a sense of belonging are also contingent upon the tangible environment and the local community, which have historically served as the bedrock of social interaction (Radstrom, 2011). Advocating the view that the development of cities can be achieved without causing any harm to the environment, slow cities have adopted the principle of utilizing harmless local architecture, historical texture, alternative and renewable energies and technologies (Zogal & Arslan, 2018). The Cittaslow concept is not only a conservation movement but also an alternative way for cities to develop without losing their unique identities and souls on the road to globalization and modernization (Türkseven & Dalgakıran, 2011). In addition to preserving the local, keeping history alive, and passing it on to future generations, this movement also encourages sustainable development by raising public awareness (Rosani et al., 2023). Pajo (2017) argues that this movement is particularly important for the welfare and sustainable development of small settlements. The Cittaslow association promotes sustainability and the preservation of local resources and historical character and aims to prevent the degradation of the economy caused by the decline in the population of small towns and to improve social activities (Semmens & Freeman, 2012).

### **Cittaslow Movement in Turkey**

The slow city movement has gained significant traction globally, spreading beyond Italy to different regions. A comparative analysis of the distribution of slow cities across the globe reveals that Italy, Poland, and Germany occupy the top three spots, followed by South Korea and Turkey. In other developed countries, the number of slow cities is relatively smaller (Vatansever, Deviren, & Yıldız, 2015).

The slow city movement in Turkey originated in 2009 with the recognition of the Seferhisar district of Izmir in the network. Thus, Seferihisar is the first in Turkey and the 129<sup>th</sup> worldwide designated as a slow city (Aydemir, 2021). Its affiliation with the Cittaslow network has resulted in tourism becoming increasingly vibrant and inspired numerous other districts to pursue the designation of Cittaslow (Olgun, 2016). A total of 22 cities in Turkey have joined the network, and numerous other cities are currently undergoing candidacy. The Cittaslow member cities in Turkey are Akyaka (Mugla), Ahlat (Bitlis), Arapgir (Malatya), Egirdir (Isparta), Finike (Antalya), Foca (Izmir), Koycegiz (Mugla), Gokceada (Canakkale), Gerze (Sinop), Goynuk (Bolu), Halfeti (Sanlıurfa), Mudurnu (Bolu), Persembe (Ordu), Savsat (Artvin), Seferihisar (Izmir), Tarakli (Sakarya), Uzundere (Erzurum), Vize (Kirklareli), Yalvac (Isparta), Yenipazar (Aydin), Gudul (Ankara), and Iznik (Bursa). Now, candidate cities first apply for membership to the Turkish National Network. Following necessary eligibility evaluations and inspections, documentation of applying cities found to satisfy all the criteria is forwarded to the headquarters of Cittaslow International, and their membership applications are accepted if they are deemed suitable to be accepted to the network as a result of higher-order evaluations and investigations (Cittaslow Türkiye, 2024). The expansion of the Cittaslow initiative in Turkey serves to safeguard the cultural and natural heritage of these cities for future generations. This goal, as outlined by Yıldırım and Karaahmet (2013), is accomplished through the promotion of local resource protection and sustainable development. The Cittaslow initiative is designed to enhance the meaning and quality of life by fostering an appreciation and protection of the unique characteristics of the local urban environment (Aksu & Görman, 2019).

# Slow City and Finike

A city designated Cittaslow is one that strives to enhance the quality of life for its inhabitants, promotes the adoption of sustainable technologies, and encourages the production and consumption of local agricultural products (Bilgi, 2013). The Finike district of Antalya has recently become the 22<sup>nd</sup> district in Turkey to join the ranks of Cittaslow communities, meeting the exclusive criteria of the network (*Figure 2*). The Finike district is located in the Teke Peninsula

region in South West Anatolia, in the province of Antalya, on the Mediterranean coast, about 114 km from Antalya by road (Cittaslow Turkey, 2024). Finike is surrounded by the Alakir Stream and the Kumluca district in the east, the Avlan waist and the Elmali district in the north, the Alacadag and Gülmez mountains and the Kale district in the west, and the Mediterranean Sea in the south. The downtown of Finike was established on an area of 2,458 acres on a favorable plain on the Mediterranean coast (Finike Kaymakamlığı, 2024). Its economy is mainly based on fruit-vegetable and citrus production and exports but also on agriculture, ecological tourism, and fishing (Cittaslow Turkey, 2024). The Finike district is an old settlement established in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC at the mouth of Aykiricay (Arykandos) with the name of Phoinikos and hosts many historical ruins, ancient cities, and natural beauties, such as Limyra, Arikanda, and Idebessos. Suluin Cave and the 5 km long Gokbuk Canyon are among the natural beauties with touristic value and potential (Finike Kaymakamlığı, 2024).

#### **Relationships between Slow Cities and Locals**

Cittaslow is an approach oriented to improve quality of life for locals, which cannot occur unless locals adopt a sense of "slowness" and act sensitively, as Ergüen (2011) notes. The movement works on specific issues, including transportation, infrastructure, environment, and communication, to improve locals' standard of living (Keskin, 2010). It also endeavors to enhance one's quality of life by adhering to the tenet of safeguarding nature, environment, and cultural heritage (Mayer & Knox, 2006). In this regard, the objective is to enhance the value of the target region through initiatives such as preserving historical and cultural assets, commercializing selected local products, introducing certification systems to distinguish local products, allocating culture-arts zones, promoting the consumption of local, organic foods (Altintaş, 2004).

Cittaslow cities are recognized for their emphasis on a sustainable lifestyle. These cities utilize technology solely to improve the quality and convenience of daily life while actively promoting conservation and production (Mayer & Knox, 2006). The quality of a residential environment directly impacts the well-being of its inhabitants. Moreover, issues plaguing the city itself can significantly affect residents' overall well-being regardless of one's quality of life (Çolakoğlu, 2005). Therefore, prioritizing improving the environment and surrounding areas is crucial to elevating locals' living standards. It is evident that the phenomenon of tourism can have both positive and negative consequences in Cittaslow cities, as it does in any urban setting. Among the positive effects of tourism may be the exchange between people from different communities and the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of culture of each other. Additionally, regions accepting visitors may also host highly-educated locals. Furthermore, locals would have increased desire to learn foreign languages to provide better services to tourists. Residents tend to recognize and preserve their cultural values to ensure sustainable tourism. Tourism also brings rapid urbanization to the tourist-attracting regions (Çakıcı et al., 2014). Conversely, the differentiation of values and beliefs, dress code, speech style, and music taste among locals, loss of aesthetic appearance of works of art, and the replacement of spiritual values (e.g., neighborhood, friendship, and hospitality) with economic interests, environmental pollution caused by tourist size exceeding the capacity of the region are among the adverse effects of prevalence of tourism in Cittaslow city (Gürbüz, 2002). In this concern, how locals evaluate these positive and negative effects is a crucial factor at this juncture.

A review of the relevant literature reveals how locals' perspectives of the Cittaslow movement are positively and negatively affected. Karaca (2021) found that locals in Yenipazar, a Cittaslow, welcome the effects of tourism. Similarly, Çokal and Demirel (2021) concluded that tourism would become a significant economic resource for Persembe, another Cittaslow. Kırmacı (2019) examined the perceptions of Mudurnu residents regarding the economic, sociocultural, and environmental effects of tourism and found that locals have an overall positive perception of tourism-induced consequences and advocate the growth of tourism in their community. However, Uslu and Avcı (2020) indicated a negative correlation between locals' perceptions of the overall economic outlook and their satisfaction with tourism in their Cittaslow. In their study of the views of tourism stakeholders on over-tourism in Akyaka, Yüksel et al. (2020) found that while tourism in Akyaka contributes to the local economy, locals adopt a negative perception of the environmental and sociocultural impacts of tourism. In a study in the Cittaslow of Persembe, Aydemir (2021) found that locals' perceptions of tourism vary by their demographics. Kement and Göral (2015) revealed significant differences in locals' attitudes toward the Cittaslow movement by educational attainment and income level except for gender, marital status, and age.

## Infrastructure Facilities

Infrastructure facilities are fundamental elements that directly influence the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of a city (Bulkeley & Betsill, 2005). These facilities include transportation networks, energy systems, water, and waste management, and they play a critical role in determining urban quality of life (Elkington, 1997). The concept of sustainability emphasizes minimizing the environmental impacts of these infrastructures while promoting the efficient use of resources. For example, the integration of renewable energy sources, the use of water-saving systems, and recycling practices in waste management are key components of sustainable infrastructure (Geels, 2002; Kibert, 2016).

The Cittaslow movement, which originated in Italy in 1999, is an international network aimed at enhancing quality of life by preserving the local identity of cities (Mayer & Knox, 2006). This movement encourages the alignment of infrastructure facilities with sustainability principles. Cittaslow criteria include environmental policies, infrastructure, urban quality of life, and the promotion of agricultural, tourism, and local trade activities (Radstrom, 2011). Particularly in the context of infrastructure, elements such as the expansion of pedestrian and cycling paths, improvements in public transportation, and the construction of energy-efficient buildings are prioritized (Nilsson et al., 2011). International literature features various studies examining the relationship between infrastructure facilities, sustainability, and the concept of Cittaslow. Mayer and Knox (2006) analyzed the impact of the Cittaslow movement on urban sustainability and discussed how infrastructure improvements support local economies. Radstrom (2011) questioned whether Cittaslow serves as a model for sustainable urban development, highlighting the role of infrastructure facilities in this process. Nilsson et al. (2011) evaluated the application of Cittaslow criteria and their social benefits, particularly focusing on the impact of infrastructure investments on local communities. Furthermore, Newman and Kenworthy (1999) examined the effects of urban density on infrastructure costs and environmental impacts, offering valuable insights for sustainable urban planning. There is a strong connection between infrastructure facilities, the perception of sustainability, and the principles of the Cittaslow movement. Sustainable infrastructure investments reduce the environmental impact of cities while enhancing local identity and quality of life in line with Cittaslow principles. In this context, the developed model aligns with existing literature and is expected to contribute significantly to urban sustainability goals.

# Method and Hypotheses

It is evident that tourism is a phenomenon influenced by a multitude of factors, including environment, economy, and social structure (Gürbüz, 2012). In this sense, the present study seeks to ascertain if a city designated as Cittaslow is similarly affected by these aforementioned factors and locals' approach toward such influences. Global recognition of the Cittaslow movement is thought to attract scholarly interest in the subject, and comparative inquiry of the pre- and post-Cittaslow periods at a given destination emerges as a prominent research topic (Uzan, 2018). The Finike district has become the most recent member of the Cittaslow network; therefore, this study is believed to add to the relevant literature on the topic, as it reveals hitherto unstudied aspects of locals' opinions of the Cittaslow movement. Ultimately, we carry out this study to examine the perspectives of locals in Finike toward the Cittaslow movement by some of their demographics.

As stated above, we ultimately seek to ascertain if Finike-residing locals' perceptions of the Cittaslow movement differ by their demographics. In this sense, we collected the data using the Cittaslow Movement Perspective Scale (CMPS) that was previously utilized in the research by Andarabi (2012) and Andarabi et al. (2014). With the exception of the demographic information form, all items on the instrument are rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). We analyzed participants' data by their age, gender, marital status, educational attainment, and monthly income and tested the following hypotheses:

H<sub>1</sub>: Locals' perceptions of the Cittaslow movement significantly differ by age.

H<sub>2</sub>: Locals' perceptions of the Cittaslow movement significantly differ by gender.

H<sub>3</sub>: Locals' perceptions of the Cittaslow movement significantly differ by marital status.

H<sub>4</sub> Locals' perceptions of the Cittaslow movement significantly differ by educational attainment.

H<sub>5</sub>: Locals' perceptions of the Cittaslow movement significantly differ by monthly income.

The target population of this study consists of a total of 49,720 people (locals) living in Finike (Finike Belediyesi Web Sitesi, 2024). As a rule of thumb, a sample size to represent the target population within the 95% confidence interval (CI) is 380 (Sekaran, 2003). Accordingly, we distributed survey forms to randomly selected voluntary locals and analyzed the data from 418 participants.

# RESULTS

We analyzed the data using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) 25.0. Descriptives are presented as numbers (n), percentages (%), means (*M*), and standard deviations (*SD*). We resorted to Q-Q plots and skewness and kurtosis values to check the normality of data distribution. Scores are considered normally distributed when skewness and kurtosis values fall between +3 and -3 (Chan, 2003; Shao, 2002). Then, we performed pairwise comparisons between independent groups using an independent samples *t*-test and compared the data of three or more independent groups with the help of a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). A *p*-value of < 0.05 is considered statistically significant. Participants' demographics are presented in *Table 1*.

While 26.7% of participants are aged 18-25 years, 3.8% are 66 years and older. Over half are males (58.8%) and married (55.4%), respectively. The majority hold high school (34.5%) and undergraduate (38.2%) degrees. Moreover, most of them generate a monthly income of TRY 0-11,500 (34.5%) and TRY 11,501-22,000 (38.2%).

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) yielded regression weights to vary between 0.486 - 0.697 on the infrastructure facilities subscale, 0.457 - 0.805 on the effect on cultural environment subscale, 0.501 - 0.737 on the effect on economic environment subscale, 0.778 - 0.903 on the effect on ecological environment, and 0.643 - 0.739 on the social cohesion subscale (*Table 2*). Thus, the regression weights of all CMPS items were above 0.40, and all correlations were significant (*Figure 3*).

CFA is employed to test the degree of fit between the hypothesized theoretical structure and the data or to identify if the data align with a pre-designed factorial structure (Henrica et al., 2005; Effendi et al., 2019). Our findings revealed that the 21 items comprising the five subscales of the CMPS are all related to the construct intended to be measured. Model-data fit indices and acceptable values are presented in *Table 3*.

Kayış (2014) postulates that Cronbach's alphas between 0.00-0.40 indicate poor reliability, between 0.40-0.60 indicate moderate reliability, between 0.60-0.80 indicate good reliability, and between 0.80-1.00 indicate excellent reliability. Moreover, Özdamar (2015) asserts that an instrument with acceptable internal consistency is suggested to demonstrate a Cronbach's alpha of greater than 0.50. In this study, we calculated these values to be 0.811 for the total CMPS score, 0.865 for the effect on ecological environment subscale, 0.807 for infrastructure facilities subscale, 0.774 for the effect on social cohesion subscale, 0.759 for the effect on cultural environment subscale, and 0.757 for the effect on economic environment subscale. The reliability analysis in this study exhibited that measurements with the CMPS and its components yielded good internal consistency (*Table 4*).

The data exhibited a normal distribution, as indicated by the skewness and kurtosis values falling within the ±3 range (*Table 5*).

*Table 6* presents the descriptives of measurements with the CMPS. Participants scored a mean of 3.71 on the infrastructure facilities subscale, 3.61 on the effect on cultural environment subscale,

3.46 on the effect on economic environment subscale, 2.66 on the effect on the ecological environment subscale, 2.66 on the effect on social cohesion subscale, and 3.29 on the CMPS.

The findings revealed no significant differences between the participants' scores on the infrastructure facilities subscale and the effect on economic environment by age. Nevertheless, we found a significant difference between their scores on the effect on cultural environment subscale by age (p < 0.05). We adopted Bonferroni correction to discover the source(s) of this significant difference and concluded that the effect on cultural environment scores of participants aged 26-35 years, 36-45 years, and 46-55 years were significantly higher than those of participants aged 56-65 years, respectively (*Table 7-8*).

The relevant analysis produced no significant differences between participants' scores on the infrastructure facilities, the effect on the cultural environment, and the effect on the economic environment subscales by gender, marital status, and monthly income. There were significant differences between their scores on the infrastructure facilities and the effect on cultural environment subscales by educational attainment (p < 0.05), but this was not the case for their scores on the effect on the economic environment subscale (p > 0.05). Further analysis showed that participants holding a postgraduate degree had significantly higher scores on the infrastructure facilities and the effect on cultural environment subscales compared to those with primary school education. Moreover, participants with an undergraduate degree scored significantly higher on the effect on cultural environment subscale than those with primary school education (*Table 7-8*).

Participants' scores on the effect on ecological environment and the effect on social cohesion subscales did not significantly differ by age, gender, marital status, and monthly income (p > 0.05). Yet, there were significant differences between their scores on the effect on ecological environment and the effect on social cohesion subscales by educational attainment (p < 0.05). Our results showed that participants with primary school, secondary school, and high school education had significantly higher scores on the effect on ecological environment subscale compared to those with a postgraduate degree. Furthermore, secondary school graduates scored significantly higher on the mentioned subscale than those with an undergraduate degree.

# DISSCUSSION

Increasing consumption on a day-to-day basis within a globalizing world has led people's lifestyles to transform, becoming increasingly fast-paced. The phenomenon of modernity has created a multitude of challenges in cities that directly affect social life through tourism, economy, culture, and environment, which underscores "slowness" and the concept of the "Cittaslow" in these cities. The Cittaslow movement, a reaction to globalization, has spread rapidly across the globe and is to safeguard local traditions, values, and cultural identities and to ensure individuals do not lose sight of their essential nature, values, and cultural and social heritage, and to transmit them to future generations, as well as respecting the positive aspects of globalization. Yet, it should be noted that the participation of local communities in the movement is crucial. In Turkey, the movement places a premium on conserving the cultural and natural heritage of cities.

In this study, while 26.7% of participants are aged 18-25 years, 3.8% are 66 years and older. More than half are males (58.8%) and married (55.4%), respectively. The majority (38.2%) hold an undergraduate degree and have a monthly income of TRY 11,501-22,000, respectively. Our findings showed a significant difference between participants' scores on the effect on cultural environment subscale by age, leading us to accept H<sub>1</sub>. However, their scores on the infrastructure facilities, the effect on cultural environment, and the effect on economic environment subscales did not significantly differ by gender, marital status, and monthly income. Thus, we rejected hypotheses H<sub>2</sub>, H<sub>3</sub>, and H<sub>5</sub>. Besides, we discovered significant differences between participants' scores on the infrastructure facilities and the effect on cultural environment subscales by educational attainment and accepted H<sub>4</sub>.

To sum up, the Cittaslow movement is an important catalyst for the local economy, increasing employment opportunities, safeguarding historical-cultural values, and maintaining cultural heritage. Locals' supportive attitudes toward the movement are essential for the sustainable development of their region. Moreover, proper adoption of the Cittaslow principles allows for minimizing the adverse consequences of tourism development and transforming the attitudes and perspectives of locals toward it. For the sake of the long-term benefits of the movement, locals should be engaged in collaborative decision-making processes and in the planning of initiatives that would impact their lives. Moreover, local governments have the capacity to improve locals' attitudes toward the Cittaslow movement by addressing issues of overcrowding, traffic congestion, environmental degradation, and social decline.

The findings of this study, which examined the perspectives of locals in Finike on the Cittaslow movement, align with existing literature in several respects. Firstly, the lack of significant influence of demographic factors (age, gender, marital status, and income level) on perceptions of the movement is consistent with some prior research. For example, Restroom (2011) highlights that demographic variables have limited effects on general attitudes toward the Cittaslow initiative.

However, the role of educational attainment as a significant determinant of perceptions, particularly regarding the impacts on infrastructure and the cultural environment, is well-supported in the literature. Mayer and Knox (2006) suggest that individuals with higher educational levels are more conscious of sustainability and local cultural values, which fosters a more favorable view of Cittaslow principles. Similarly, Semmens and Freeman (2012) demonstrate that education enhances individuals' capacity to understand and appreciate the benefits of the slow city movement.

This study contributes to the existing body of research by emphasizing the influence of education on perceptions of the Cittaslow movement. The findings underscore the critical role of education in enabling communities to adopt and appreciate the principles of Cittaslow. Educated individuals' greater recognition of the positive impacts on infrastructure and cultural preservation highlights the importance of fostering educational initiatives in promoting the movement.

#### **Practical Implications**

Practical implications of this study highlight several key actions to enhance the success and sustainability of the Cittaslow movement in Finike and similar communities. First, the findings underline the importance of educational programs that increase public awareness about the benefits of the Cittaslow initiative. Educating residents, particularly those with lower educational attainment, on sustainability, cultural preservation, and local development can foster stronger support and engagement with the movement. This aligns with Mayer and Knox's (2006) suggestion that education plays a critical role in promoting sustainable urban practices. Second, local governments should prioritize inclusive decision-making processes that actively involve residents in planning and implementing Cittaslow principles. Community engagement fosters a sense of ownership and encourages locals to contribute to sustainable practices, as highlighted by Semmens and Freeman (2012). Third, targeted infrastructure improvements, such as developing pedestrian zones, renewable energy systems, and eco-friendly public spaces, can reinforce the movement's principles while addressing practical concerns of residents. Radstrom (2011) emphasizes that such measures not only improve urban quality of life but also strengthen local identity. Lastly, balancing tourism development with cultural and environmental sustainability is essential. Over-tourism can lead to cultural erosion and environmental degradation, as noted by Uslu and Avcı (2020). Policies should focus on sustainable tourism practices that respect local heritage while providing economic benefits. Education, community involvement, sustainable infrastructure, and balanced tourism policies are crucial for fostering the long-term success of Cittaslow initiatives. By addressing these areas, local governments and stakeholders can ensure the preservation of cultural and environmental values while improving residents' quality of life.

#### **Theoretical Implications**

The theoretical implications of this study enrich the understanding of the Cittaslow movement's impact on local communities, offering avenues for future research and conceptual development.

Firstly, the study underscores education as a pivotal factor shaping residents' perceptions of sustainability and cultural preservation. This finding aligns with existing theories that highlight education's role in fostering pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors. Mayer and Knox (2006) emphasize that higher educational attainment correlates with increased awareness and support for sustainable urban practices. Future research could delve deeper into how various educational strategies influence public engagement with the Cittaslow movement. Secondly, the study reveals that demographic factors such as age, gender, marital status, and income exert limited influence on perceptions of the movement. This observation supports Radstrom's (2011) assertion that the appeal of Cittaslow principles transcends demographic boundaries, suggesting a universal resonance. Researchers might explore other mediating factors, such as community cohesion or cultural identity, to further understand what shapes attitudes toward the initiative. Thirdly, the research provides empirical evidence of the Cittaslow movement's multifaceted impacts—social, economic, cultural, environmental, and infrastructural. This comprehensive perspective aligns with Semmens and Freeman's (2012) argument that sustainability dimensions within slow city practices are interconnected (Kresic & Gjurasic, 2023). The study also resonates with the broader slow movement, which advocates for a reduction in the pace of life to enhance well-being and community engagement. Future theoretical work could benefit from integrating these dimensions into a holistic model for assessing the success of Cittaslow initiatives. Lastly, the findings highlight the significance of community engagement in ensuring the movement's longterm viability. This supports participatory governance theories, emphasizing the importance of involving locals in decision-making processes to foster sustainable urban development. The concept of "slow democracy," which advocates for inclusive and deliberative local governance, parallels the Cittaslow movement's emphasis on community involvement. Future research could explore the dynamics of participatory governance in different cultural and geographical contexts within the Cittaslow framework. This study contributes to the theoretical understanding of the Cittaslow movement by emphasizing the roles of education, community engagement, and multidimensional sustainability. It also provides a foundation for further research on the universal applicability and local adaptability of Cittaslow principles.

# Suggestions for Future Research and Limitations

This study provides a foundation for understanding local perceptions of the Cittaslow movement, but several limitations should be acknowledged. Firstly, the study is geographically limited to Finike, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other Cittaslow cities with differing socio-cultural or economic characteristics. Future research could address this by conducting comparative studies across multiple Cittaslow communities to identify broader trends and variations. Secondly, while the study emphasizes the role of educational attainment, it does not explore the specific mechanisms through which education influences perceptions. Future research could investigate how different educational programs or awareness campaigns impact community attitudes toward sustainability and cultural preservation. Additionally, the cross-sectional design of the study provides a snapshot of local perspectives at a single point in time. Longitudinal studies could offer valuable insights into how perceptions evolve over time, especially as the Cittaslow principles are implemented and adapted. Lastly, while this study primarily utilized quantitative methods, incorporating qualitative approaches such as interviews or focus groups could provide a more nuanced understanding of locals' attitudes and lived experiences. By addressing these areas, future studies can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the movement and its impacts.

# Author Contributions Statement:

All authors contributed equally to the conception, design, execution, and writing of this manuscript. Therefore, the authorship order reflects equal contribution.

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### APPENDIX

### **TABLES and FIGURES**

| Demographic Character  | ristics          | n   | %     |
|------------------------|------------------|-----|-------|
|                        | 18-25            | 135 | 26.7  |
|                        | 26-35            | 133 | 26.3  |
| Ago (yoorg)            | 36-45            | 101 | 20.0  |
| Age (years)            | 46-55            | 81  | 16.0  |
|                        | 56-65            | 36  | 7.1   |
|                        | 66 ≥             | 19  | 3.8   |
| Condon                 | Female           | 208 | 41.2  |
| Gender                 | Male             | 297 | 58.8  |
| Marital status         | Married          | 280 | 55.4  |
| Marital status         | Single           | 225 | 44.6  |
|                        | Primary School   | 51  | 10.1  |
|                        | Secondary School | 64  | 12.7  |
| Educational attainment | High school      | 174 | 34.5  |
|                        | Undergraduate    | 193 | 38.2  |
|                        | Postgraduate     | 23  | 4.6   |
|                        | 0-11,500         | 174 | 34.5  |
|                        | 11,501-22,000    | 193 | 38.2  |
| Monthly income (TRY)   | 22,001-33,500    | 86  | 17.0  |
|                        | 33,501-44,000    | 32  | 6.3   |
|                        | 44,001 ≥         | 20  | 4.0   |
| Total                  |                  | 505 | 100.0 |

#### Table 1. Participants' Demographics

#### Table 2. Results of the First-order Multi-factorial Confirmatory Factor Analysis

|                |     | Estimate | Standard<br>Error | t      | p   |
|----------------|-----|----------|-------------------|--------|-----|
|                | AY1 | 0.486    | -                 | -      | -   |
|                | AY2 | 0.529    | 0.082             | 12.794 | *** |
| Infrastructure | AY3 | 0.577    | 0.100             | 10.689 | *** |
| Facilities     | AY4 | 0.673    | 0.136             | 9.415  | *** |
|                | AY5 | 0.560    | 0.123             | 8.579  | *** |
|                | AY6 | 0.697    | 0.125             | 9.555  | *** |
|                | KÇ1 | 0.805    | -                 | -      | -   |
| Effect on      | KÇ2 | 0.769    | 0.064             | 15.965 | *** |
| Environment    | KÇ3 | 0.457    | 0.061             | 9.494  | *** |
|                | KÇ4 | 0.530    | 0.062             | 11.112 | *** |
|                | EÇ1 | 0.737    | -                 | -      | -   |
| Effect on      | EÇ2 | 0.501    | 0.072             | 9.184  | *** |
| Economy        | EÇ3 | 0.601    | 0.073             | 10.826 | *** |
|                | EÇ4 | 0.702    | 0.077             | 12.035 | *** |
| Effect on      | DÇ1 | 0.778    | -                 | -      | -   |
| Ecological     | DÇ2 | 0.903    | 0.059             | 19.723 | *** |
| Environment    | DÇ3 | 0.801    | 0.053             | 18.524 | *** |
|                | SU1 | 0.643    | -                 | -      | -   |
| Effect on      | SU2 | 0.739    | 0.095             | 12.189 | *** |
| Cohesion       | SU3 | 0.659    | 0.098             | 11.401 | *** |
|                | SU4 | 0.685    | 0.097             | 11.698 | *** |

\*\*\*p < 0.05

|         | Model Value | Recommended Value |
|---------|-------------|-------------------|
| CMIN/df | 4.896       | ≤5                |
| RMSEA   | 0.093       | ≤0.10             |
| GFI     | 0.846       | ≥0.80             |
| AGFI    | 0.804       | ≥0.80             |
| CFI     | 0.834       | ≥0.80             |
| TLI     | 0.804       | ≥0.80             |
| IFI     | 0.835       | ≥0.80             |
| RFI     | 0.816       | ≥0.80             |
| NFI     | 0.805       | ≥0.80             |
| SRMR    | 0.087       | ≤0.10             |

#### Table 3. Fit Indices of the Model Tested

#### Table 4. Reliability Analysis

| Measure                          | Cronbach's alpha |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Infrastructure Facilities        | 0.807            |
| Effect on Cultural Environment   | 0.759            |
| Effect on Economy                | 0.757            |
| Effect on Ecological Environment | 0.865            |
| Effect on Social Cohesion        | 0.774            |
| CMPS Total Score                 | 0.811            |

## Table 5. Distributions of the Research Data

| Measure                          | Skewness | Kurtosis | Decision |
|----------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Infrastructure Facilities        | -0.463   | -0.197   | Normal   |
| Effect on Cultural Environment   | -0.435   | -0.010   | Normal   |
| Effect on Economy                | -0.146   | -0.498   | Normal   |
| Effect on Ecological Environment | 0.316    | -0.855   | Normal   |
| Effect on Social Cohesion        | 0.316    | -0.299   | Normal   |
| CMPS Total Score                 | -0.042   | 0.796    | Normal   |

#### Table 6. Descriptive Statistics

| Measure                          | Minimum | Maximum | М    | SD   |
|----------------------------------|---------|---------|------|------|
| Infrastructure Facilities        | 1.17    | 5.00    | 3.71 | 0.81 |
| Effect on Cultural Environment   | 1.00    | 5.00    | 3.61 | 0.85 |
| Effect on Economy                | 1.00    | 5.00    | 3.46 | 0.89 |
| Effect on Ecological Environment | 1.00    | 5.00    | 2.66 | 1.10 |
| Effect on Social Cohesion        | 1.00    | 5.00    | 2.66 | 0.93 |
| CMPS Total Score                 | 1.14    | 5.00    | 3.29 | 0.53 |

#### Table 7. Participants' CMPS Scores by Their Demographics

| Variables   |                | Infrastructure<br>Facilities |      | Effect on<br>Cultural<br>Environment |          | Effect on<br>Economic<br>Environment |      |
|-------------|----------------|------------------------------|------|--------------------------------------|----------|--------------------------------------|------|
|             |                | М                            | SS   | М                                    | SS       | М                                    | SS   |
|             | 18-25 (1)      | 3.66                         | 0.83 | 3.55                                 | 0.85     | 3.41                                 | 0.89 |
|             | 26-35 (2)      | 3.74                         | 0.87 | 3.69                                 | 0.82     | 3.52                                 | 0.88 |
|             | 36-45 (3)      | 3.72                         | 0.74 | 3.72                                 | 0.82     | 3.45                                 | 0.81 |
|             | 46-55 (4)      | 3.81                         | 0.73 | 3.76                                 | 0.77     | 3.55                                 | 0.97 |
| Ago (yoarg) | 56-65 (5)      | 3.48                         | 0.83 | 3.19                                 | 0.87     | 3.34                                 | 0.90 |
| Age (years) | 66≥(6)         | 3.82                         | 0.78 | 3.11                                 | 1.15     | 3.20                                 | 0.91 |
|             | Test statistic | 1.088**                      | *    | 4.429**                              | **       | 0.819**                              | *    |
|             | p              | 0.366                        |      | 0.001*                               |          | 0.536                                |      |
|             | Bonformoni     |                              |      | 2>5, 3                               | >5, 4>5, |                                      |      |
|             | Domertom       |                              |      | 4>6                                  |          |                                      |      |
| Gender      | Female         | 3.71                         | 0.79 | 3.64                                 | 0.84     | 3.40                                 | 0.87 |

|             | Male                 | 3.71     | 0.83 | 3.59      | 0.86        | 3.49     | 0.90     |  |
|-------------|----------------------|----------|------|-----------|-------------|----------|----------|--|
|             | Test statistic       | -0.078** | *    | 0.603** - |             | -1.125*  | -1.125** |  |
|             | p                    | 0.938    |      | 0.547     | 0.547 0.261 |          | 51       |  |
|             | Married              | 3.76     | 0.81 | 3.63      | 0.86        | 3.48     | 0.90     |  |
| Marital     | Single               | 3.64     | 0.80 | 3.58      | 0.85        | 3.43     | 0.88     |  |
| status      | Test statistic       | 1.656**  |      | 0.704**   | ¢           | 0.636**  | ¢        |  |
|             | р                    | 0.098    |      | 0.482     |             | 0.525    |          |  |
|             | Primary school (1)   | 3.47     | 0.68 | 3.27      | 0.91        | 3.26     | 0.84     |  |
|             | Secondary school (2) | 3.65     | 0.86 | 3.58      | 0.89        | 3.46     | 0.80     |  |
|             | High school (3)      | 3.70     | 0.80 | 3.64      | 0.83        | 3.45     | 0.92     |  |
| Educational | Undergraduate (4)    | 3.76     | 0.82 | 3.65      | 0.79        | 3.51     | 0.88     |  |
| attainment  | Postgraduate (5)     | 4.07     | 0.80 | 3.90      | 1.09        | 3.51     | 1.08     |  |
|             | Test statistic       | 2.620**  | *    | 2.933**   | *           | 0.780**  | *        |  |
|             | p                    | 0.034*   |      | 0.020*    |             | 0.539    |          |  |
|             | Bonferroni           | 5>1      |      | 4>1, 5>   | >1          |          |          |  |
|             | 0-11,500             | 3.70     | 0.80 | 3.65      | 0.84        | 3.47     | 0.89     |  |
|             | 11,501-22,000        | 3.66     | 0.84 | 3.57      | 0.85        | 3.49     | 0.83     |  |
| Monthly     | 22,001-33,500        | 3.84     | 0.75 | 3.63      | 0.82        | 3.29     | 0.90     |  |
| incomo      | 33,501-44,000        | 3.64     | 0.83 | 3.66      | 0.83        | 3.55     | 0.96     |  |
| income      | 44,001 ≥             | 3.88     | 0.84 | 3.61      | 1.15        | 3.58     | 1.19     |  |
|             | Test statistic       | 1.036**  | *    | 0.231**   | *           | 1.031*** |          |  |
|             | p                    | 0.388    |      | 0.921     |             | 0.391    |          |  |

\**p* < 0.05, \*\*Independent samples *t*-test, \*\*\*One-way ANOVA

| Variables       |                      | Effect<br>Cultur<br>Enviro | Effect on<br>Cultural<br>Environment |          | Effect on<br>Social<br>Cohesion |          | CMPS Total<br>Score |  |
|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------|---------------------------------|----------|---------------------|--|
|                 |                      | М                          | SS                                   | М        | SS                              | М        | SS                  |  |
|                 | 18-25 (1)            | 2.60                       | 1.15                                 | 2.62     | 0.93                            | 3.24     | 0.53                |  |
|                 | 26-35 (2)            | 2.75                       | 1.08                                 | 2.57     | 0.91                            | 3.32     | 0.54                |  |
|                 | 36-45 (3)            | 2.69                       | 1.10                                 | 2.75     | 0.88                            | 3.34     | 0.54                |  |
| A == (++==+==)  | 46-55 (4)            | 2.55                       | 1.07                                 | 2.68     | 0.96                            | 3.36     | 0.50                |  |
| Age (years)     | 56-65 (5)            | 2.72                       | 1.08                                 | 2.94     | 1.05                            | 3.19     | 0.54                |  |
|                 | 66 ≥ (6)             | 2.60                       | 0.97                                 | 2.66     | 0.87                            | 3.17     | 0.57                |  |
|                 | Test statistic       | 0.492*                     | **                                   | 1.143    | ***                             | 1.191'   | ***                 |  |
|                 | р                    | 0.782                      |                                      | 0.337    |                                 | 0.312    |                     |  |
|                 | Female               | 2.66                       | 1.07                                 | 2.65     | 0.90                            | 3.29     | 0.52                |  |
|                 | Male                 | 2.66                       | 1.11                                 | 2.67     | 0.95                            | 3.30     | 0.54                |  |
| Gender          | Test statistic       | 0.026*                     | *                                    | -0.213** |                                 | -0.270** |                     |  |
|                 | p                    | 0.979                      | 0.979                                |          | 0.832                           |          | 0.787               |  |
|                 | Married              | 2.66                       | 1.07                                 | 2.65     | 0.90                            | 3.31     | 0.53                |  |
| Marital status  | Single               | 2.66                       | 1.13                                 | 2.69     | 0.96                            | 3.27     | 0.53                |  |
| Maritai status  | Test statistic       | -0.037*                    | -0.037**                             |          | <b>!</b> **                     | 0.962    | **                  |  |
|                 | p                    | 0.971                      |                                      | 0.629    |                                 | 0.336    |                     |  |
|                 | Primary school (1)   | 2.70                       | 1.10                                 | 2.77     | 0.84                            | 3.15     | 0.56                |  |
|                 | Secondary school (2) | 2.80                       | 0.98                                 | 2.97     | 0.88                            | 3.35     | 0.54                |  |
|                 | High school (3)      | 2.82                       | 1.17                                 | 2.62     | 0.99                            | 3.31     | 0.54                |  |
| Educational     | Undergraduate (4)    | 2.54                       | 1.03                                 | 2.59     | 0.88                            | 3.30     | 0.52                |  |
| attainment      | Postgraduate (5)     | 1.90                       | 0.97                                 | 2.53     | 0.97                            | 3.33     | 0.48                |  |
|                 | Test statistic       | 4.686**                    | **                                   | 2.500    | ***                             | 1.158'   | ***                 |  |
|                 | p                    | 0.001*                     | :                                    | 0.042    | *                               | 0.328    |                     |  |
|                 | Bonferroni           | 1>5, 2                     | >5, 3>5                              | 2>4      |                                 |          |                     |  |
|                 | 0-11.500             | 2.55                       | 1.08                                 | 2.61     | 0.90                            | 3.27     | 0.50                |  |
| Monthly in come | 11.501-22.000        | 2.77                       | 1.08                                 | 2.72     | 0.93                            | 3.30     | 0.53                |  |
| Monuny income   | 22.001-33.500        | 2.69                       | 1.04                                 | 2.63     | 0.90                            | 3.30     | 0.53                |  |
|                 | 33.501-44.000        | 2.73                       | 1.26                                 | 2.80     | 1.01                            | 3.34     | 0.53                |  |

| Table 6. Participants CMPS Scores by Their Demographics (continueu) |
|---|
|---|

| 44.001 ≥       | 2.35     | 1.24 | 2.58           | 1.19     | 3.30   | 0.84 |       |     |
|----------------|----------|------|----------------|----------|--------|------|-------|-----|
| Test statistic | 1.351*** |      | 1.351*** 0.568 |          | 0.568° | ***  | 0.146 | *** |
| р              | 0.250    |      | 0.686          | 586 0.96 |        |      |       |     |

\*p < 0.05, \*\*Independent samples *t*-test, \*\*\*One-way ANOVA



Figure 2: CittaslowFinike Symbol



Figure 3. First-order multi-factorial model of the CMPS