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### **TOURISM BEHAVIORS OF PARENTS WITH DISABLED CHILD**

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#### **EXTENSIVE SUMMARY**

As in most sectors, consumers in the tourism sector also vary in terms of their desires, needs, attitudes, attitudes and resources they have. Businesses operating in the tourism sector categorize their customers on this basis and develop appropriate strategies for each segment. Market segmentation is the separation of consumer groups that may need differentiated products or marketing mix elements according to different needs and characteristics (Meydan Uygur; 2007). One of these divisions is the market created by the disabled people, who have recently been called the largest minority group.

According to the World Health Organization's World Report on Disability published in 2011, about 15% of the world population is living with any type of disability. According to the information released by EUROSTAT, there are a total of 50 million disabled people in Europe (WHO, 2011). According to the Turkish Disability Research Survey conducted in 2002 in Turkey, 12.29% of the population is disabled ([www.tuik.gov.tr](http://www.tuik.gov.tr)). From the perspective of the tourism industry, it is seen how important it is for the tourism industry that the disabled are important markets, given that disabled people are not traveling alone, usually traveling with family and friends, and benefiting from tourism activities (Uygun, 2010).

Tourism is a tool that can be used for social development of participants as well as benefits for country economies. Tourism marketers need to understand the needs of participants in order to be able to achieve this potential market and learn how to find common solutions to both the tourism industry and the disability to increase their usefulness. Within the past few years, accessible tourism is gradually shaping up and is seen as an important requirement in the development of the tourism market. Disabled people are now seen as a potentially growing market for tourism (Asia-Pacific Conference, 2001).

This study is important in terms of putting on the tourism behaviors of the disabled individuals and their companions who have become an important market segment for the tourism sector. For this reason, the aim of the study is to analyze and evaluate the data related to the subject by revealing the tourism behaviors of parents with disabled children. This research, which was prepared for this purpose, was carried out between 01 May - 30 June 2016 with the voluntary participation of parents who bring their children with disabilities to educational and rehabilitation centers in Kırıkkale. It is understood that there are nine special education and rehabilitation centers in Kırıkkale in the direction of the data obtained from the related public institutions, but two of them are not operating. For this reason, the research was conducted with 256 questionnaires collected from parents who volunteered to participate in seven different training and rehabilitation centers. In the face-to-face questionnaire survey, a team of six interviewers was formed before the implementation and training was provided to

interviewers for the importance and sensitivity of the subject. The survey form used in the research consists of 15 questions. The 5 questions to determine participants' demographics, education and employment status consist of 7 questions aiming to determine their participation in tourism activities and 3 questions about the demographic characteristics of the disabled individual. The data obtained through 256 questionnaire forms applied to parents with disabled child were analyzed and evaluated by means of statistic tests.

The results and suggestions have been reached in the direction of the obtained data:

1. In terms of the tourism industry, it is seen how disabled people are an important market for the tourism industry when it is considered that disabled people usually travel with their family and friends accompanied by their tourism activities rather than alone.
2. Participants' reasons for not participating in tourism are stated as not having enough income, not enough time, having health problems, intensive work, no need to participate in tourism activities. It is also supported by the literature that the most important factor limiting the travels and tours of disabled individuals and families is economic.
3. The most preferred tourism activity for parents with disabled child is family and relatives visits.
4. Parents with disabled child have a very low frequency of participation in tourism activities. It is thought that tour programs to be organized in line with the needs and expectations of disabled people can contribute to increase the participation rates in tourism activities.