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Stakeholder-Based Conservation Assessment and Sustainable Development Strategies in Rural Tourism: A Case Study of Adatepe Village

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluates existing conservation strategies and proposes innovative approaches for the sustainable development of Adatepe Village, located on Mount Ida in Turkey. Adatepe boasts a rich cultural heritage, well-preserved traditional architecture, and a history rooted in olive cultivation. Since the 1980s, increased tourism and new settlers have transformed the village's economic and social structures, leading to challenges such as infrastructure deficiencies, environmental degradation, and a weakening traditional social fabric. The study uses qualitative research methods—including literature review; in-depth interviews with residents, new settlers, tourism entrepreneurs, and public officials; on-site observations; Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis; and the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP)—to identify the village's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The findings prioritise interventions in infrastructure improvements, preservation of cultural heritage, and sustainable tourism management. Recommendations are grounded in empirical data from stakeholder surveys, thematic interviews, and systematic SWOT and AHP analyses.

KEYWORDS

Sustainable tourism; rural tourism; rural architecture; adaptive reuse; heritage; rural policies

Introduction

This study aims to evaluate existing conservation strategies in Adatepe Village and propose innovative approaches through a detailed stakeholder analysis. Specifically, the research addresses key questions regarding the impacts of tourism on rural heritage, stakeholder perceptions on conservation priorities, and strategic interventions required to achieve sustainable rural development. To effectively address these aims, this study utilises mixed methods including Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis and the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), supported by surveys, in-depth interviews, thematic analysis, and descriptive statistical analysis. By integrating diverse stakeholder perspectives, the research makes a significant contribution to the field of rural conservation and sustainable tourism management.

Adatepe Village is in the northwestern part of Turkey, on the southern slopes of Mount Ida, in the Canakkale province. Mount Ida has been the subject of many myths throughout

history (Buxton 2004). For example, this mountain is known in ancient Greek mythology as the site where the fate of the Trojan War was decided (Kulahli 2022). Adatepe Village lies at the foot of this mythological mountain and bears traces of various civilisations for thousands of years. During the Ottoman period, Adatepe was a village sustained through olive cultivation and agriculture. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Greek and Turkish populations lived together in the village (Onder and Acarlioglu 2018; Onur and Zumrut 2024). The village's architecture and social life also reflect this multi-cultural past.

The geographical location and climate of Adatepe are highly favourable for olive farming. Olive groves are integral to Adatepe's natural landscape and have been the foundation of the village's economic activities throughout history. Olive farming is a traditional occupation in Adatepe, and olive oil production remains one of the main livelihoods of the villagers. The presence of olive trees in the village is considered an economic asset as well as a cultural heritage. Olive trees symbolise a deep-rooted and sustainable agricultural tradition that has shaped the identity of the village for centuries (Eskiyoruk 2016; Kocadagli 2009; Oguz 2015).

In the 1980s, Adatepe underwent a significant transformation as families living in Turkey's major cities began purchasing and restoring the village's old stone houses. Its economic and social structure drastically changed as new settlers started moving to the village from this period onwards (Bulut 2016). These new settlers, typically educated, professional, and economically well-off individuals, transformed Adatepe into an attraction centre for new settlers and tourists. With the arrival of new residents, tourism activities in the village increased, affecting the traditional lifestyle. Adatepe, with its tranquil nature, traditional stone houses, and olive groves, has since become a popular tourist destination for those looking to escape the stress of urban life (Bulut 2016). New settlers restored the stone houses, converting them into boutique hotels, guesthouses, and summer residences. The increase in tourism brought economic vitality to the village. This process shifted the village's economic structure from agriculture to tourism and service sectors, leading to significant changes in the village's social fabric.

The designation of Adatepe as an urban protected area in 1992 by the Balıkesir Cultural and Natural Heritage Preservation Board, operating under the authority of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Türkiye, accelerated the preservation and restoration of the village's historical buildings. This declaration aimed to control new construction in the village and preserve its traditional texture (Alyakut and Gencer 2018). However, bureaucratic challenges, high costs, and the local population's economic difficulties have slowed restoration projects, leaving some structures in disrepair. Nevertheless, the status of the urban protected area has contributed significantly to improving the quality of restoration works and preserving the village's architectural heritage.

Today, Adatepe has become one of the important centres of rural tourism in Turkey. The village attracts domestic and international tourists with its natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and unique architecture (Girard and Nijkamp 2009). However, if this tourism potential is not controlled, risks may arise that could threaten the village's traditional texture and way of life. The increasing pressure on infrastructure and environmental degradation particularly weaken Adatepe's social structure (Tang and Xu 2023). Therefore, local administrations and tourism actors must develop new strategies to ensure its preservation and sustainable development.

These changes have necessitated balancing preservation of Adatepe's cultural heritage with economic development. The conservation of Adatepe goes beyond physical structures, requiring preserving its social fabric and traditional ways of life. Rural tourism contributes to economic development and the preservation of the cultural heritage of villages like Adatepe (Alyakut and Gencer 2018). However, in this process, the negative impacts of tourism must be minimised through infrastructure improvements, environmental degradation prevention, and the local population's active participation in these processes (Baltaci 2020). Specific negative effects observed in Adatepe include rising property values leading to gentrification, disruption of traditional social structures, reduction in agricultural activities, and overcrowding during peak tourist seasons, causing stress on local resources (Alyakut and Gencer 2018; Bulut 2016). Environmental degradation includes issues such as water shortages due to increased consumption by tourists, inadequate waste management leading to pollution, damage to local biodiversity, and erosion problems exacerbated by increased foot traffic in natural areas (Altinkaya, Tekin, and Eren 2011; Uzumcu, Celik, and Karataş 2017).

The purpose of this study is to evaluate existing strategies for the preservation of Adatepe Village, analyse the effectiveness of these strategies, and develop new proposals and tactics for the sustainable development of the village. In this context, Adatepe's social, economic, cultural, and environmental dynamics will be examined in detail, and proposals for the preservation and development of the village will be developed using SWOT and AHP analyses. These strategies were empirically evaluated through stakeholder surveys, and prioritisation was systematically identified via the AHP, detailed in this study's results section.

These recommendations will focus on ensuring the quality of restoration works in the village, controlling new constructions, and preserving the traditional architecture of Adatepe to safeguard the village's historical and cultural values, maintain its unique identity, and pass on this heritage to future generations. Additionally, it is aimed to ensure the sustainability of the village's traditional crafts and integrate these cultural elements into tourism activities.

Materials and Methods

This study was conducted using comprehensive qualitative research methods to evaluate the strategies developed for the preservation and sustainable development of Adatepe Village. The main objective of the research was to collect data that would contribute to understanding the village's social, economic, and environmental dynamics and to evaluate this data using analytical methods. This section details the methods used in conducting the research, the data collection techniques, the analysis processes, and how these processes were carried out. In-depth interview protocols included semi-structured questions focused on residents' perceptions of tourism, conservation, and infrastructure issues. The SWOT criteria derived from literature and initial observations were validated through stakeholder workshops and expert consultations. AHP methodology involved pairwise comparisons of SWOT-derived criteria to systematically identify priority areas for intervention.

In the first phase of the research, academic studies, reports, and other relevant sources on Adatepe Village and similar rural settlements were reviewed (Altinkaya,

Tekin, and Eren 2011; Alyakut and Gencer 2018; Lokman, Yarmaci, and Gudul 2022). The literature review was conducted to understand the impact of rural tourism on rural development and the preservation of cultural heritage. Furthermore, studies on the conservation and sustainable development strategies of rural areas in Turkey and around the world also contributed to the theoretical framework of the research (Cetin, Uzumcu, and Icoz 2017; Duran 2012; Job, Becken, and Lane 2020; Kalogiannidis et al. 2023; Kan and Gulcubuk 2008; Ozcan and Akci 2016; Saputro, Hasim, and Beik 2023; Sun, Huang, and Wang 2020; Uzumcu, Celik, and Karataş 2017). In this process, special attention was given to studies focusing on the role of rural tourism in sustainable development, policies for preserving rural areas, and the management of these processes (Ariyani and Fauzi 2023; Chan 2023; Gevker and Koday 2024; Kaypak 2012; Pezikoglu 2012). Data obtained from these studies formed the basis for the analyses used to understand the current situation of Adatepe Village. The literature review enabled a broader perspective on issues such as rural development, biodiversity, and the preservation of cultural heritage. This comprehensive literature review provided the theoretical framework and comparative benchmarks essential for effectively conducting SWOT and AHP analyses. The archaeological heritage, particularly the Byzantine bath and Zeus Altar near Adatepe, was outside the scope of this particular study, which focused primarily on contemporary conservation strategies and socio-economic dimensions of tourism impacts. However, future research should integrate archaeological heritage into the broader framework of rural tourism and heritage management (Aznar and Hoefnagels 2019; García-Delgado, Martínez-Puche, and Lois-González 2020).

Another important data collection method in the study was in-depth interviews with residents, new settlers, tourism entrepreneurs, and public officials in Adatepe Village, conducted with a total of 107 participants. These interviews provided a better understanding of the social and economic changes in the village, the conservation efforts, and the impact of tourism. Each participant's experiences and perspectives were thoroughly analysed. Participants for the in-depth interviews were selected using purposive sampling, aiming for maximum diversity in stakeholder perspectives. Individuals, including long-term residents, tourism entrepreneurs, public officials, new settlers, and academics familiar with Adatepe Village, were selected based on their roles, experiences, and involvement in conservation and tourism-related activities.

Interview participants ranged from long-term residents to new settlers, tourism entrepreneurs, and public officials. The interviews focused on demographic changes in the village, agricultural activities, infrastructure problems, the impact of tourism on residents, and expectations for the village's future. The questions used in the interviews were designed in a semi-structured format, allowing participants to express their views freely on the issues discussed.

The data obtained from these interviews were used in the qualitative analysis process. Important findings were obtained regarding residents' attitudes towards tourism and conservation efforts, the state of social solidarity in the village, and the economic challenges. These findings played a critical role in shaping the strategies developed for the preservation and sustainable development of Adatepe Village. The findings from these interviews were analysed using thematic analysis, with major themes presented in the Results section, influencing SWOT and AHP evaluations.

As another data collection method, on-site observations were conducted in Adatepe Village. The author made field visits between 2022 and 2024 to gather information about restoration works in the village, the condition of existing infrastructure, the impact of tourism activities, and the village's social structure. Observations were conducted over a wide range of aspects, including the village's physical structures, environmental conditions, and social interactions.

These observations were made to better understand the situation and challenges faced by the village. During this process, Adatepe's streets, historical buildings, olive groves, tourist facilities, and public spaces were examined in detail. In addition, the daily lives of the people living in the village, their social interactions, and the social dynamics in the village were observed. These observations contributed to the development of strategies aimed at preserving Adatepe's social structure. The observations were documented through field notes, systematically analysed using descriptive analysis, and integrated into the Results and SWOT analysis sections.

SWOT analysis was used to assess the current situation of Adatepe Village. SWOT analysis is a systematic method used to identify an entity's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (Dalton 2019). This analysis played a key role in identifying the necessary interventions and determining the priority order of these interventions. The results of the SWOT analysis formed the basis for the strategies developed for the preservation and sustainable development of Adatepe. Multiple qualitative methods intentionally corroborated the SWOT analysis, including thematic analysis from in-depth interviews and descriptive analysis from observations, enhancing its rigour, reliability, and strategic relevance for practical intervention.

Another analytical method used in the research was the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) analysis, based on the SWOT analysis results. AHP is a decision-making method that systematically analyses complex problems (Saaty 1980). This method helps decision-makers compare intervention options and determine the most appropriate strategies. AHP analysis was used specifically to prioritise strategies for solving the problems in the village.

The data collected were analysed in detail using qualitative data analysis techniques. The data obtained from the interviews were analysed using thematic analysis. This method allows for identifying recurring themes among participants' views and relating these themes to broader theoretical frameworks (Naeem et al. 2023). The data obtained from observations were evaluated using descriptive analysis techniques. These analyses helped create a detailed picture of the situation in the village and formed the basis for the strategies developed.

The mixed methods approach integrated survey data and qualitative interview findings to understand stakeholder perceptions comprehensively. Survey data were collected from residents, tourists, public officials, tour organisers, and academics. In total, 128 people participated, of whom 107 completed the entire survey. The questionnaire consisted of two main parts: the first collected demographic data (gender, age, education, occupation), and the second asked participants to evaluate conservation and sustainable development criteria based on regional challenges and opportunities. Survey data were initially analysed using descriptive statistics in the statistical software SPSS to identify broad trends, while in-depth interviews underwent thematic analysis to explore deeper insights and contextual details.

Thematic analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) methodology, involving initial coding, code grouping, and subsequent theme development. Initial codes were systematically generated from interview transcripts, grouped based on conceptual similarity, and refined iteratively into broader themes such as infrastructure needs, social impacts, economic opportunities, and conservation challenges. This rigorous process ensured themes accurately represented stakeholder perceptions. Examples of codes include 'water shortage issues', 'tourism-driven gentrification', and 'economic shifts from agriculture to tourism'.

In conclusion, the qualitative research methods used in this study significantly contributed to developing and evaluating strategies for the preservation and sustainable development of Adatepe Village. The use of various methods, including literature review, interviews, on-site observations, SWOT analysis, AHP, and thematic analysis, allowed the research to be conducted in a comprehensive and holistic manner.

Theoretical Background

Rural Tourism and Conservation of Rural Areas

Rural tourism plays a critical role in the sustainable development of rural areas and the preservation of cultural heritage (Kalayci and Ozcatalbaş 2021). The primary advantage of rural tourism is that it revitalises economic activities in rural areas, encouraging the population to stay in these regions (Gunduz 2023). Moreover, rural tourism raises awareness among residents about preserving their cultural heritage and turning it into an economic asset. In this context, rural tourism is seen as a tool for economic and social development (Alyakut and Gencer 2018).

Rural tourism is associated with natural beauty, agricultural activities, local culture, and traditions (Ammirato et al. 2020). Villages like Adatepe embody all these elements. In such villages, the success of rural tourism depends on balancing the needs of both residents and visitors. However, rural tourism's increasing popularity also puts pressure on these areas. Issues such as inadequate infrastructure, environmental degradation, and cultural erosion are among the negative impacts of rural tourism (Kataya 2021). These problems underscore the need for sustainable management of rural tourism.

The sustainability of rural tourism depends on preserving the unique identity of rural areas and protecting them from the negative impacts of tourism activities. In this process, the participation of residents is of great importance in planning and managing tourism. Locals' participation in tourism's economic benefits and their active role in these processes enhances the sustainability of tourism (Abreu et al. 2024; Chan 2023). Moreover, rural tourism activities should be designed in a way that contributes to the preservation of local culture. This necessitates planning rural tourism to provide economic, social, and cultural benefits (Istoc 2012).

The conservation of rural areas is typically associated with the preservation of cultural and natural heritage. These settlement areas bear the traces of various civilisations throughout history, which are part of the cultural identity of the local population. Preserving rural areas is essential for ensuring the sustainability of this identity (Abreu et al. 2024). However, conserving such settlements also poses

challenges. In particular, the declining rural population, weakening agricultural activities, and the migration of young people to cities complicate preserving these areas (World Bank 2021).

The preservation of rural areas is generally carried out through various policies, programmes, and collective efforts implemented by local governments, state institutions, and non-governmental organisations (Rastogi et al. 2010). These policies aim to preserve rural areas' original architecture, natural environment, and social structure. However, for these policies to be successful, the support and participation of residents are crucial (Abdul Aziz et al. 2023). The active role of locals in these processes increases the sustainability of conservation efforts and contributes to the preservation of local cultural heritage (Luo 2024).

Preservation of Cultural Heritage

The preservation of cultural heritage is one of the most important components of rural tourism and rural development. Cultural heritage reflects the identity, history, and values of a society. This heritage preservation is crucial for its transmission to future generations and its transformation into an economic asset through tourism (Chan 2023). The preservation of cultural heritage can only be achieved through residents' ownership of this heritage and their active participation in these processes. Additionally, preserving cultural heritage contributes to the diversification of the local economy and sustainable tourism management (Tang and Xu 2023).

Preserving cultural heritage also contributes to maintaining the unique identity of rural areas. In this process, cooperation between local governments, non-governmental organisations, and state institutions is necessary (Jang and Mennis 2021).

Conservation Policies and Sustainability

Conservation policies aim to protect rural areas' physical, social, and cultural structures. These policies include objectives such as preserving the historical fabric of rural settlements, ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources, and improving residents' quality of life. The success of conservation policies often depends on how well these policies align with the needs and expectations of the local population (Schmitz and Herrero-Jáuregui 2021). Therefore, it is essential to consult residents and involve them in the development and implementation of conservation policies (Sobhani et al. 2022).

On the other hand, sustainable development is an approach aimed at balancing the conservation of rural areas with economic development. This approach seeks to ensure the economic and social sustainability of rural areas. Sustainable development aims to increase residents' well-being and preserve rural areas' attractiveness. In this context, sustainable development strategies include rural tourism, the support of agricultural production, the marketing of local products, and the development of local industries (Schmitz and Herrero-Jáuregui 2021; Whitt, Low, and Van Sandt 2019).

Economic and social sustainability are essential elements of rural tourism and rural development. The economic sustainability of rural tourism can be achieved by increasing the income residents derive from these activities. Furthermore, rural tourism's social sustainability is possible through residents' active participation in these processes and

the preservation of local culture (Muresan et al. 2016). In this regard, the sustainable management of rural tourism must be planned to provide economic and social benefits.

Economic sustainability includes diversifying the local economy, supporting agricultural production, and developing local industries (Bathaei and Streimikiene 2023). Social sustainability, on the other hand, includes objectives such as improving residents' quality of life, strengthening social solidarity, and preserving local culture (Muresan et al. 2016). These elements are critical to the success of rural development strategies (Schmitz and Herrero-Jáuregui 2021).

Case Study: Adatepe Village

Adatepe Village is a settlement located at the foothills of Mount Ida, known for its olive cultivation and agricultural activities (Figure 1). The historical buildings in the village, with their stone architecture, stand out, while the village streets are narrow and winding, featuring an organic street layout (Figure 2). This spatial and architectural integrity reflects Adatepe's traditional way of life, shaped by a long history of coexistence between Greek and Turkish communities and contributing to the village's distinct identity. Adatepe's narrow streets, stone houses, and shared courtyards illustrate a lifestyle centred on communal interaction, craftsmanship, and harmonious living with the natural environment.

While restoration works in Adatepe have contributed to preserving the village's architectural fabric, they have also led to significant changes in its social structure. New settlers purchased and restored old stone houses in the village, transforming them into summer residences or boutique hotels. This process has caused a rapid increase in



Figure 1. Adatepe village.



Figure 2. Village street.

property prices and altered the village's social structure. Traditional agricultural activities in the village have diminished as tourism increased, and non-agricultural activities have become more prominent in the village's economy.

The declaration of Adatepe as an urban protected area in 1992 was important in preserving the village's historic structures (Figure 3). However, the increase in tourism during this period led to significant changes in the village's traditional social structure and landscape. Alongside the economic opportunities brought by tourism, negative impacts on the village's traditional fabric and social structure were also observed.

Some buildings in Adatepe have been repurposed and transformed into new functions, while others have lost their original forms during restoration. For instance, the old primary school in the village is now used for cultural activities, while olive groves and other agricultural lands have been converted for tourism purposes. During this process, some long-time residents left, altering the demographic structure of the village. Moreover, the increase in tourism activities in Adatepe has led to changes in the social structure and traditional ways of life, weakening social relationships and solidarity.

Tourism activities in Adatepe have placed significant pressure on the village's infrastructure, especially with the increasing number of tourists during the summer months. The water, sewage, and road infrastructure in the village have struggled to meet the demands of increasing tourism activities. Inadequate water resources have led to frequent water shortages, and the sewage system has struggled to cope with the increased population load. This situation has lowered the quality of life for residents and visitors and threatened the sustainability of the village's natural resources. Furthermore, the village's natural environment has also been impacted by tourism, leading to environmental degradation as tourism activities have negatively affected the local biodiversity and ecosystem. In this context, managing tourism activities in a more controlled manner



Figure 3. Restored old stone house.

is of great importance for preserving both the natural environment and Adatepe's social structure.

The described impacts on social structure, property prices, and agricultural decline have been confirmed through thematic analysis of stakeholder interviews and documented field observations in this study.

Data Collection

A structured survey was designed to collect quantitative data from a broader stakeholder base to complement the qualitative interviews and field observations. This approach allowed the study to capture various perceptions of conservation and sustainable development in Adatepe. The survey was structured to gather demographic information and assess the perceived importance of key conservation criteria. Additionally, the survey incorporated pairwise comparisons as part of the Analytic Hierarchy Process, enabling participants to systematically rank the relative importance of the identified criteria. Integrating this mixed-method approach enhanced the analytical depth and supported triangulation across data sources.

Survey data was collected from stakeholders in Adatepe: residents, tourists, public officials, tour organisers, and academics. One hundred twenty-eight participants started the survey, but only about 107 completed all sections. Participants were asked to identify their demographic profiles in the first part of the questionnaire. The demographic section of the survey consisted of four items, which included gender, age, education level, and occupation information. The data from the

Table 1. Demographic data: Respondent's profile.

Demographic Variables		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		107	100
	Female	50	47
	Male	52	49
	Nonbinary	5	5
Age		107	100
	18–30 years old	14	13
	31–40 years old	24	22
	41–50 years old	27	25
	51–60 years old	25	23
	61 years old and above	17	16
Education		107	100
	Primary School	4	4
	Secondary School	5	5
	High School	15	14
	Undergraduate	43	40
	Master's Degree	14	13
	Doctorate	26	24
Shareholder		107	100
	Residents	27	25
	Tourists	24	22
	Public Officials	18	17
	Tour Organisers	17	16
	Academician	21	20

N = 107.

demographic section were gathered and displayed in [Table 1](#). In the second part, participants were asked to evaluate conservation criteria that shape sustainable development in the region. People were also asked to evaluate the criteria determined based on literature and on-site studies about Adatepe Village's challenges and opportunities. Descriptive statistics were produced using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Based on all these studies, a questionnaire was prepared in which conservation and sustainable development criteria determined in the context of the study were compared with each other in pairs. The pairwise comparison method evaluated the SWOT criteria by residents, tourists, public officials, tour organisers, and academics.

Respondents self-identified as 47% female, 49% male, and 5% nonbinary or other. Their education level was also identified as 4% primary school, 5% secondary school, 14% high school, 40% undergraduate, 13% master's degree, and 24% doctorate. Twenty-five per cent of visitors are residents, 22% of them are tourists, 17% are public officials, 17% are tour organisers, and 20% are academics. It was understood that there was a balanced proportion of those who answered the questionnaire.

Results

The current situation of Adatepe Village was examined in detail through a SWOT analysis. This analysis was used to identify the village's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The SWOT analysis results provided critical data for the preservation and sustainable development of Adatepe. The SWOT findings presented here are derived from empirical data collected through structured stakeholder surveys, thematic analysis of interviews, and systematic descriptive analysis of field observations.



Figure 4. The historical buildings in the village, with their stone architecture.

The strengths of Adatepe include the village's rich cultural heritage, well-preserved traditional architecture, and high tourism potential. The historical buildings in the village, with their stone architecture, are particularly noteworthy (Figure 4). A significant portion of these buildings has been successfully preserved through restoration efforts, increasing the village's appeal as a tourist destination, and allowing visitors to experience traditional village life.

The natural beauty of Adatepe, particularly its location at the foothills of Mount Ida, offers a significant advantage for tourism. The village is surrounded by olive groves and forests, providing a tranquil environment for both residents and tourists. These natural resources enhance the village's tourism potential and serve as a vital resource for agricultural activities. Olive groves are a cornerstone of the village's economy and provide a sustainable source of income for the local population (Altinkaya, Tekin, and Eren 2011).

The weaknesses of Adatepe include infrastructure deficiencies, a decline in agricultural production, and an ageing population. The village's water, sewage, and road infrastructure have struggled to keep up with the increasing demands of tourism activities, negatively impacting the quality of life in the village. Water shortages due to the rise in tourist numbers during the summer months have become a significant issue for residents and visitors.

The decline in agricultural production has caused a significant shift in the village's economic structure. Traditional agricultural activities, such as olive farming, have diminished with the increase in tourism, reducing the importance of agriculture in the village's economy. The weakening of agricultural production threatens residents' livelihoods and leads to young people's migration to cities, weakening the village's demographic structure and social solidarity.

Opportunities identified for Adatepe relate to the sustainable management of tourism activities and the marketing of local products. Sustainable tourism can contribute to the village's economic development and improve residents' welfare. The planned management of tourism activities can facilitate the preservation of the village's natural and cultural heritage, and the participation of residents in these processes can be encouraged.

The branding and marketing of local products, particularly olive oil and handicrafts, can significantly contribute to the village's economy. Commercialising such products as tourist attractions can create new sources of income for residents and encourage the revitalisation of agricultural activities in the village.

The most significant threats to the future of Adatepe include uncontrolled tourism development, environmental degradation, and the loss of the village's traditional social structure. The growing number of tourists places significant pressure on the village's infrastructure, negatively affecting the quality of life. Uncontrolled tourism activities weaken Adatepe's social structure and may lead to negative attitudes towards tourism among residents.

Environmental degradation seriously threatens the preservation of Adatepe's natural environment. Issues such as the depletion of water resources, loss of biodiversity, and soil erosion jeopardise the sustainability of the village. These problems are exacerbated by inadequate infrastructure and the rise in tourism activities. Additionally, the declining young population and ageing demographic weaken the village's social structure and make preserving the local cultural heritage difficult.

The above SWOT analysis revealed that Adatepe Village's strengths include its rich cultural heritage, well-preserved traditional architecture, and high tourism potential. The weaknesses include infrastructure deficiencies, declining agricultural production, and an ageing population. The analysis also provided critical data on opportunities and threats to the village's sustainable development. Opportunities include sustainable tourism and the marketing of local products, while threats include uncontrolled tourism development and environmental degradation.

Based on the SWOT analysis results, interventions needed in Adatepe Village were identified, and the priority order of these interventions was analysed using the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP). AHP analysis allows for systematically evaluating strategies to solve the village's problems (Saaty 1980). This method helps decision-makers analyse complex issues and effectively implement strategies.

In the AHP analysis (Table 2), the priority intervention areas identified based on the SWOT analysis were infrastructure improvements, preservation of cultural heritage, and sustainable management of tourism activities. The implementation of these interventions will ensure the long-term sustainability of the village and contribute to the preservation of its cultural heritage. AHP analysis can guide decision-makers on how to prioritise and implement these interventions.

Table 2. AHP criteria and their priority scores.

Main Criteria	Priority Values of Main Criteria	Sub-Criteria	Priority Values of Sub-Criteria
Infrastructure and Basic Services	<u>0.317</u>	Energy Infrastructure and Efficiency	0.031
		Sewage System Upgrades	0.085
		Water Infrastructure Enhancement	<u>0.128</u>
		Transportation and Road Improvements	0.073
Revitalisation of Agricultural Production	0.070	Diversification of Agricultural Activities	0.010
		Support for Olive Farming	0.035
		Marketing and Branding of Local Products	0.018
		Employment Opportunities in Agriculture	0.007
Sustainable Management of Tourism Activities	0.193	Resident Participation in Tourism Planning	0.095
		Controlled Tourism Development	0.069
		Fair Distribution of Tourism Benefit	0.029
Environmental Sustainability	0.107	Biodiversity Preservation	0.021
		Sustainable Land Use Planning	0.011
		Conservation of Natural Resources	0.043
		Waste Management and Pollution Control	0.032
Cultural Heritage Preservation	<u>0.266</u>	Restoration of Historical Buildings	<u>0.133</u>
		Protection of Multicultural Identity	<u>0.053</u>
		Preservation of Traditional Lifestyles	0.080
Resident Participation and Social Cohesion	0.034	Preservation of Social Structure	0.010
		Education and Capacity Building	0.007
		Community Engagement in Decision-Making	0.014
		Mitigation of Social Change	0.003
Economic Development and Diversification	0.013	Retention of Young Population	0.001
		Development of Local Industries	0.005
		Entrepreneurship and Business Support	0.004
		Diversification of Income Sources	0.003

Note: Underlined values display the highest values of main and sub-criteria.

Infrastructure improvements are critical for the sustainable development of Adatepe. Strengthening its water, sewage, and road infrastructure will improve the quality of life for residents and ensure the sustainability of tourism activities. Reserving water resources and improving the sewage system are also essential for ensuring environmental sustainability.

According to the AHP analysis, infrastructure improvements were identified as the highest-priority intervention area. These interventions address urgent issues such as water scarcity and environmental degradation. Improving infrastructure also enables the management of tourism activities to be more effective and minimises environmental impacts.

Preservation of cultural heritage is crucial for maintaining the village's identity and attracting sustainable tourism. Efforts to restore and conserve historical buildings, traditional houses, and cultural landmarks enhance the village's appeal and ensure that its rich history is passed on to future generations. Encouraging local craftsmanship and cultural events can also strengthen community ties and promote cultural continuity.

The AHP analysis identified preservation of cultural heritage as the second-highest priority intervention area. This strategy aims to safeguard the village's unique cultural assets against the pressures of modernisation and uncontrolled tourism (Figure 5). By prioritising cultural heritage preservation, Adatepe can maintain its distinctive character and attract visitors interested in authentic cultural experiences.



Figure 5. Cultural heritage to be preserved.

Tourism management was identified as an important strategy to ensure the sustainability of tourism activities in Adatepe. The controlled management of tourism contributes to the preservation of the village's cultural and natural heritage and encourages the active participation of residents in tourism processes. The tourism management strategy proposed includes implementing visitor quotas, improving visitor distribution across seasons, enhancing local involvement, and developing guidelines to mitigate the negative impacts on cultural and natural resources. This strategy also aims to ensure the fair distribution of tourism revenues and strengthen social cohesion in Adatepe. To ensure fair distribution of tourism revenues, recommended strategies include developing local cooperatives, promoting locally-owned businesses, encouraging local product sales, and providing community representation in tourism planning.

In the AHP analysis, tourism management was identified as the third priority intervention area. This strategy encourages the participation of residents in the planning and managing of tourism activities in the village. Tourism management minimises environmental impacts and enables steps to be taken towards preserving the village's cultural heritage.

The SWOT and AHP analyses conducted in Adatepe Village revealed critical strategies for the sustainable development of the village. These strategies include interventions in infrastructure improvements, preservation of cultural heritage, and the management of tourism activities to ensure the long-term preservation and development of the village. The future of Adatepe depends on the successful implementation of these strategies and the active participation of residents in these processes.

The thematic analysis revealed several key themes related to tourism impacts and conservation needs. Stakeholders frequently highlighted infrastructure deficiencies, declining traditional agricultural activities, community displacement due to increased property prices, and environmental concerns such as water shortages and waste management issues. Representative quotations include one resident stating, 'Tourism brought income, but now locals can't afford houses here', and another public official noting, 'Water infrastructure is inadequate for current tourism pressures'. Such direct stakeholder insights clearly illustrate the real-world implications of tourism and validate the findings of SWOT and AHP analyses.

Discussion

The Tourism and Conservation Dilemma

Adatepe Village, as a settlement where rural tourism has flourished, is a significant example of the need to balance tourism and conservation. While tourism has enabled the diversification of economic activities and increased income sources for residents, it has also placed pressure on the village's cultural and natural heritage. The growing tourism potential of Adatepe carries the potential for conflict with the historical and cultural values that need to be preserved.

The positive impacts of tourism on Adatepe, especially in terms of economic development and job creation, must be considered. Restoration works in the village have been financed by tourism revenues, helping preserve the village's architectural fabric. However, the economic opportunities created by tourism have also brought about some

challenges. Uncontrolled tourism development has placed significant pressure on Adatepe's infrastructure, led to environmental degradation, and weakened the village's social structure. The novelty of this case lies in combining stakeholder perspectives, SWOT, and AHP methodologies, systematically prioritising interventions, and providing practical, context-specific guidelines for balancing tourism and conservation in rural settings.

This dilemma highlights the need to balance conservation and development goals. As seen in the case of Adatepe, sustainable tourism management is crucial to maintaining this balance. During the planning and implementation of tourism activities, the preservation of the village's cultural heritage and the participation of residents in these processes are critical factors. In this context, developing tourism management strategies and ensuring that residents embrace these strategies are essential for the long-term preservation of Adatepe.

Local Participation and Social Sustainability

The tourism activities in Adatepe must be managed sustainably to avoid damaging the village's natural and cultural fabric. To ensure the sustainability of tourism activities, it is important to assess the village's tourism potential, plan tourism activities, and ensure the participation of residents in these processes. These strategies include the fair distribution of tourism revenues, the management of tourism's environmental impacts, and the enhancement of tourism's positive effects on the local economy. As detailed in the Results section, empirical support for these proposed strategies was provided through structured surveys, thematic interviews, and systematic analysis methods (SWOT and AHP), addressing the aims outlined in the Introduction.

The participation of residents in the economic benefits derived from tourism can strengthen the village's social structure and contribute to the preservation of local culture. However, in this process, the attitudes and expectations of residents towards tourism should also be considered. In Adatepe, the migration of new settlers to the village and the rapid development of tourism have caused some changes in the village's social structure. A key question is how residents will adapt to this change and how they can benefit from it.

Encouraging the participation of residents in tourism processes is necessary for economic and social sustainability. Such participation increases residents' income from tourism and strengthens social solidarity and cohesion in the village. In this context, various training programmes, incentives, and participation mechanisms should be developed to involve residents in tourism activities. Additionally, cooperatives could be established, and the marketing of local products could be promoted to ensure that residents benefit fairly from tourism revenues. This study specifically confirmed these literature-defined benefits through empirical data obtained from stakeholder perceptions and systematically prioritised these through SWOT-AHP analyses, providing clear, context-specific implications.

Infrastructure Problems and Environmental Sustainability

The infrastructure problems in Adatepe pose a significant obstacle to its sustainable development. Particularly, deficiencies in the water, sewage, and road infrastructure

reduce the quality of life in the village and threaten environmental sustainability. The increasing number of tourists has exacerbated these infrastructure problems, especially during summer. Frequent water shortages and parking problems have become severe for both residents and visitors.

Environmental sustainability is crucial for the long-term preservation of the village. In Adatepe, priority should be given to infrastructure investments to ensure environmental sustainability. Protecting water resources, improving waste management systems, and increasing energy efficiency are all necessary measures.

Rural Development Strategies and the Future of Adatepe

Adatepe Village has significant potential for developing and implementing rural development strategies. These strategies include revitalising agricultural production, diversifying the local economy, and sustainably managing tourism activities. Agricultural production, specifically olive farming, forms the village's economic foundation and provides residents with employment opportunities. Therefore, supporting these traditional agricultural activities is critical for Adatepe's economic sustainability.

The revitalisation of agricultural production and the diversification of the local economy require the creation of new economic opportunities that will encourage the young population to remain in the village. Local products' branding and marketing can create new income sources for residents. Furthermore, the sustainable management of tourism activities is another strategy necessary to ensure Adatepe's long-term development. In this context, tourism management strategies should promote the preservation of the village's cultural and natural heritage and ensure the active participation of residents in these processes.

The future of Adatepe depends on the successful implementation of these strategies. The village's sustainable development is only possible through a holistic approach that increases the well-being of residents, supports environmental sustainability, and preserves cultural heritage. Collaboration between local governments, non-governmental organisations, and state institutions is necessary in this process. Additionally, it should be remembered that Adatepe can serve as a model for other villages as a successful rural development model. The findings of this study provide important insights that can be applied to other rural settlements.

The strategies developed for the preservation and development of Adatepe aim to improve residents' well-being and preserve the village's cultural and natural heritage. However, to achieve these goals, the participation of residents must be encouraged, infrastructure must be improved, and tourism activities must be managed sustainably. The successful implementation of these strategies will ensure the long-term sustainability of the village.

Conclusion

The preservation and sustainable development of Adatepe Village provide important insight into the general situation of rural areas in Turkey and the dynamics of rural tourism on a global scale. This study has developed recommendations for the preservation of Adatepe's cultural heritage, the sustainable use of natural resources,

and the improvement of residents' quality of life. The findings reveal various opportunities and threats concerning the current situation of the village, as well as its strengths and weaknesses. The specific rural development strategies discussed—supporting traditional agriculture and promoting local industries—were derived from stakeholder input and systematically prioritised through the SWOT-AHP methodology.

Preserving Adatepe's historical fabric is crucial for transmitting the village's cultural heritage to future generations. This preservation should not be limited to physical structures but should also include preserving the village's social structure and traditional ways of life. However, the challenges encountered in this process, particularly the economic constraints of residents and the declining tendency of the young population to stay in the village, complicate such preservation efforts. The clear implications drawn from this study include the necessity for controlled tourism management, community-based economic strategies, and prioritised infrastructure improvements informed by empirical stakeholder perspectives and analytic methodologies.

Balancing economic development with the preservation of cultural heritage is key to the sustainable development of Adatepe. Rural tourism can play a significant role in achieving this balance. However, the uncontrolled increase in tourism activities can damage the village's cultural fabric and negatively affect residents' quality of life (Zhuang, Yao, and Li 2019). Therefore, the sustainable management of tourism is essential.

The participation of residents in the planning and management of tourism activities increases the sustainability of these activities (Shani and Pizam 2011). Various training programmes, incentive mechanisms, and initiatives such as cooperative development can be considered to encourage residents' participation in tourism. Additionally, the branding and marketing of local products can contribute to the diversification of the village's economy.

Preserving Adatepe's natural environment is also important to the village's sustainable development. Protecting the village's water resources, olive groves, flora, and fauna supports environmental sustainability and tourism potential. However, infrastructure deficiencies in the village, particularly the inadequacies in the water and sewage systems, make it difficult to protect these natural resources.

Improving Adatepe's infrastructure is critical to ensuring environmental sustainability (Du and Jiao 2023). Improvements in areas such as water resource protection, energy efficiency optimisation, and waste management will not only enhance the quality of life in the village but also prevent environmental degradation.

The sustainable development of Adatepe requires developing and implementing rural development strategies. These strategies include the support of agricultural production, the development of local industries, and the marketing of local products. Additionally, creating economic opportunities that encourage the young population to remain in the village is critical to the success of rural development strategies.

Future recommendations include:

- (1) managing tourism activities in a more controlled manner,
- (2) developing projects that support environmental and cultural sustainability, and
- (3) involving residents more in these processes.

Furthermore, improving the village's infrastructure and branding local products are among the strategies that will contribute to the sustainable development of Adatepe.

Adatepe Village can be considered a significant model for rural tourism and sustainable development. While this study evaluates the current situation of the village, it also offers recommendations for addressing potential future challenges. The analyses conducted for the preservation and development of Adatepe have revealed various strategies aimed at preserving the village's cultural heritage, ensuring economic development, and supporting environmental sustainability. The analyses referred to are the SWOT analysis and the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), both systematically conducted based on empirical stakeholder input and detailed in the Results section.

In conclusion, the sustainable development of Adatepe is possible through strategies that encourage the participation of residents, support environmental sustainability, and preserve cultural heritage. These strategies will strengthen the economic and social structure of the village while preserving its unique identity and ensuring its transmission to future generations. Adatepe, in this sense, can also serve as a model for other rural settlements, demonstrating how rural tourism can be effectively utilised to preserve cultural heritage.

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