

Assessing community awareness for participatory conservation of cultural heritage: the case of Tepebag Tumulus and its surroundings in Adana Turkey

Assessing
community
awareness

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to identify the levels of awareness of locals about conservation and cultural heritage, in order to develop suggestions and methods for them to participate in these processes.

Design/methodology/approach – The method of research is based on face-to-face surveys, mainly questionnaires that were conducted with 1,200 local people. The data obtained was evaluated using the SPSS 25.0.0 V program.

Findings – The results show that locals mainly find appropriate the assets that reflect their culture but disregard archaeological remains. The participation of locals in the conservation process will end up benefiting them economically.

Social implications – It is currently accepted that effective conservation cannot be achieved unless its technical considerations are considered together with social and cultural aspects. Ensuring the participation of local people in the conservation process has proved to be important in the development of holistic and sustainable outcomes. In places, where multilayered cultural heritage exists and local residents are from different cultural backgrounds, a detailed assessment of cultural heritage perception that involves local people gains significance.

Originality/value – It is project-based in the sense of adding the dimension of community awareness to the practice of cultural heritage conservation in the multilayered and multicultural places.

Keywords Cultural heritage perception, Community participation, Conservation, Urban archaeological site, Adana

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

Cultural heritage comprises values that inform us about the common past of a society, strengthen notions of solidarity, unity and cooperation in the society, ensure the continuity of the experiences and traditions the society has accumulated throughout history, and direct



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their future lives. Tangible and intangible cultural heritage give information about how people have lived throughout history, and the values that they share. There is a responsibility of the society to transfer cultural heritage to future generations by preserving its original qualities (ICOMOS, 2013). Each society, having developed different criteria for conservation in line with its unique values, has started to “participate” in its conservation, even though some have done so indirectly.

Participation can be defined as getting involved in a concrete event, action, formation or in thought on an abstract level by sharing and discussing it with others (Yılmaz, 2004). It can also be described as the participation of individuals in physical arrangements and decisions made at the level of institutions or collaborating with them in the designing and planning processes of environmental changes (Yalcındağ, 1996). Many factors, such as the increasing communication opportunities emerging with the development of technology, the transition from an agricultural society to an industrial information society, the rapid increase of the urban population and education levels have caused rapid changes in planning and management processes all over the world. Strict management processes that operate from top to bottom have been replaced by communication-oriented management processes that are open to social participation (Macnaghten and Jacobs, 1997). This progress has made its impact felt in the field of conservation and the management of cultural heritage as in many other areas (Burra Charter, 1979).

With the adoption of international principles for the conservation of cultural heritage, many positive developments have taken place all over the world. In parallel with these developments, progress has also been made in both tangible and intangible cultural heritage and from movable to immovable cultural heritage values. Since their emergence, the principles of conservation, which mainly dealt with technical aspects, were later addressed in a more social dimension. It is evident from existing examples that a more correct approach to conservation has been followed, especially when the “participation of local people” becomes a priority. In other words, a conservation project, which successfully meet all of the technical aspects, cannot achieve sustainable success unless it is adopted by local people. It is important to ensure the participation of local people in order to ensure sustainability and success in transferring cultural heritage to future generations (Déom and Thiffault, 2013). Various stakeholders, social actors and local authorities also must participate in this process, and reach a consensus to decide what their legacy should be (Den, 2014). In terms of promoting the participation of local people in conservation, the financial benefits through various means such as tourism should not be disregarded.

In this context, community engagement in conservation projects is becoming increasingly important. The perception of heritage by local people, especially in regions where people come from different cultural backgrounds, becomes a parameter that determines and directs participation. Studies on this issue are more advanced in some developed countries and have been integrated within policy frameworks. However, current researches and practices on this issue in Turkey are limited; and this study seeks to explore this further through a case study of Tepebağ, the historic centre of the modern southern Turkish city of Adana. The Tepebağ quarter is a cultural site that contains various layers of history. It includes both an urban site and Tumulus. In terms of its social structure it is an example of a place where people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds have migrated to and integrated with the indigenous population. It was chosen in order to understand the public perception and approach to cultural heritage both above and below ground. The prerequisite for participation in conservation is to know the value of cultural heritage, to be conscious of this and to understand that this value is a part of us. In this context, the study aims to measure the awareness on cultural heritage and community participation in conservation and to develop suggestions for ensuring participation in the conservation of the historic environment. Suggestions have been developed for the

effective participation of the community in conservation by ensuring that local people evaluate the cultural heritage and tourism potential of the Tepebağ quarter.

2. Literature research

It is essential to provide multi-stakeholder consultation to the conservation process of the World Heritage Convention, which is the first signal of the awareness and participation in the conservation of cultural heritage in the international context (Gültekin and Uysal, 2018). Among international charters and declarations, the participation of people in the conservation process was first included in the Amsterdam Declaration in 1975 (ICOMOS, 1975). It introduced integrated protection as a new conservation policy and stated that an integrated approach was both beneficial and necessary. The Local Authorities' role in considering communities in both urban and rural areas was also emphasized.

Later, in 1987 (ICOMOS, 1987), in the Charter on the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas, which connected the success of conservation undertakings to the participation of citizens, it suggested preparing a program that informs all citizens, beginning with school-age children, in order to ensure the participation of the public and to encourage their contributions. It is stated in the ICOMOS Charter on the Built Vernacular Heritage, issued in 1999, that the appreciation and successful protection of vernacular heritage depends upon the involvement and support of the community, and continuing use and maintenance by the society (ICOMOS, 1999a). Again, at the International Cultural Tourism Charter adopted at the 12th General Assembly held in Mexico in 1999, tourism management in sites of cultural heritage value was discussed with an emphasis on tourism and conservation activities benefiting the host community. It was also stated that cultural heritage interpretation and training programs should be prepared for local people and should include the participation of local commentators (ICOMOS, 1999b).

The Valetta Principles for the Safeguarding and Management of Historic Cities, Towns and Urban Areas, adopted in Paris in 2011, addressed the significance of community participation in the conservation of historic cities, where basic spatial, environmental, social, cultural and financial terms should be balanced. It is interlinked with the development-promoting actions of former residents that allow them to stay in their places, together with the participation of new residents. A wide communication network between all stakeholders of good governance, namely elected authorities, municipal services, public administrations, experts, professional organizations, voluntary bodies, universities and residents should be facilitated by providing information flow, awareness raising and education. Traditional urban governments ought to be examining all aspects of cultural and social diversity in order to create democratic institutions in line with the new reality. The cultural diversity of different communities that have inhabited historic towns should be respected and valued within the framework of urban conservation planning. Planning procedures in historic urban areas must include participatory processes involving all stakeholders. While a wide coverage was given to the necessity of the stakeholders' participation in creating management plans, the results of the meetings with stakeholders, together with an analysis of the discussions were also requested to be included as annexes to the Management Plan (ICOMOS, 2011). The Declaration of Heritage and Landscape as Human Values issued in Florence in 2014, addressed community-oriented conservation. It states how bottom up approaches could yield improvements in the conservation and management of heritage and emphasized the necessity of establishing links between heritage conservation and sustainable local socio-economic development (ICOMOS, 2014).

In Turkey, the first national declaration by ICOMOS Turkey, in the 2013 Declaration on Turkey Architectural Heritage Conservation, also mentions participation in legal and administrative regulations. Here, what is underlined is the necessity of conservation

decisions having to be taken in consultation with the widest possible participation and consensus, with the public having the right both to participate in processes and decisions related to conservation, and to be informed about every stage without making a special application. In addition to different disciplines specializing in conservation, central and local governments, conservation boards, practitioners and property owners were defined as the other actors in the conservation of architectural heritage and, how a participatory model should be created was further explained (ICOMOS, 2013).

Among international research publications; [Grimwade and Carter \(2000\)](#) interpreted public participation mostly through cultural heritage interpretation in their studies. It is underlined that these assets, which are valuable for local people but are not considered sufficiently important at the national level, should be emphasized and devising visual communication material introducing this cultural heritage to the public and tourists are proposed ([Grimwade and Carter, 2000](#)). [Greer et al. \(2002\)](#), in their study on the relationship between society and archaeology, explained how this relationship has changed over time by giving examples from different regions of Australia ([Greer et al., 2002](#)). [Waterton and Smith \(2009\)](#) made a critical interpretation of the relationship between archaeological heritage and communities, stating that some assets and values were accepted as cultural heritage according to the criteria defined by experts (international and national authorities), while these were not necessarily taken as valid by local people ([Waterton and Smith, 2009](#)). In this context, with a critical point of view based on the “Authorized Heritage Discourse” put forward by [Smith \(2006\)](#), that there is actually no concept of cultural heritage as produced by the authorities, it is deduced that projects related to the conservation of cultural heritage were to be rendered unsustainable with “top-down” management systems ([Smith, 2006](#)). [Waterton and Smith \(2011\)](#) outline various different approaches to cultural heritage that could be seen even within the same geographical boundaries ([Waterton and Smith, 2011](#)). On the other hand, some studies emphasized the difficulties experienced in the implementation of participatory management systems in the conservation of cultural heritage in South Africa and emphasized that ready-made prescriptions do not work well enough, and that they had to be constantly updated considering the situation of the local people ([Chirikure and Pwiti, 2008](#); [Chirikure et al., 2010](#)). In [Grydehoj’s \(2010\)](#) study on the theme “inherited heritage – uninherited heritage”, it was found that the local people living in the northern islands of Scotland concentrate their cultural tourism developments on the cultural heritage values they themselves valued and ignored other cultural assets ([Grydehoj, 2010](#)).

Even though in some places these topics have been researched and discussed for about half a century, in Turkey, it is only in recent years that studies on this subject increased. [Asrav’s research \(2015\)](#) developed principles and strategies for historical rural landscapes and suggestions for place and community-oriented conservation and empowerment ([Asrav, 2015](#)). It focused on ensuring the continuity of life with the active participation of communities in the whole process. [Korlu \(2015\)](#) pointed out the significance of the evaluation of data as a whole, handling it with a user-oriented perspective in the improvement of urban environments, and proposed a method for user-oriented urban improvement studies. [Aydoğan \(2017\)](#) focused on the significance of providing community participation and support in the conservation processes of historic city centres, which is among the duties of the urban planning discipline ([Aydoğan, 2017](#)). [Gültekin and Uysal \(2018\)](#) examined the knowledge and awareness levels of the people in villages, which feature carved spaces exhibiting values close to the ones enlisted in the world heritage list, and these people’s participation tendencies regarding these values were measured ([Gültekin and Uysal, 2018](#)). [Aykan \(2018\)](#) discussed cultural heritage in the context of human rights in parallel with the understanding of its meaning for society and determined the characteristics defining a system that qualifies to be called human rights oriented at universal, national and local scales, to create an evaluation model ([Aykan, 2018](#)). [Uçar and Yoloğlu \(2018\)](#) focused on the

importance of social behaviour in the conservation of archaeological sites, and it is mentioned that the impact of individuals and society on conservation had increased, especially in areas where contemporary settlements and archaeological findings existed together. It is mentioned that cultural heritage education given at an early age would increase awareness and thus contribute to achieving successful results in the field of conservation. Based on this idea, awareness-raising training was given to include children from two selected secondary schools and the results were evaluated (Uçar and Yoloğlu, 2018).

Considering the literature related to the subject, it can be concluded that studies on community participation in preserving cultural heritage is mainly associated with heritage management and directs policies to centre the community needs and their sustainable development. In this context, this research aims to contribute to existing literature by providing a case in a multicultural region where there are many historic layers that belong to different civilizations. It has an urban archaeological site that dates back to the Neolithic period according to recent excavations.

3. Materials and methods

In this study, the selection of respondents is important as the research is based on the perspective of the community on cultural heritage and their participation in its conservation. The historic city center of Adana has hosted many civilizations throughout history (Umar, 2010; Yıldırım and Gırğiner, 2011) and the Tepebağ Quarter was chosen because it is a multilayered and multicultural region (Figure 1). The Quarter is a cultural area that includes the Tepebağ Tumulus, known as the first site of Adana's establishment, and sixteenth century monumental buildings as well as nineteenth and twentieth century traditional houses (Umar, 2010) (Figure 2). This region has received many immigrants, especially since the second half of the nineteenth century, and today it hosts people from many different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The population that came in the nineteenth century; It consists of some of the immigrants who came to Anatolia with the loss of land by the Ottomans, agricultural workers brought from Egypt and Syria during the reign of Adana governor



Figure 1.
Adana – Tepebağ
location map



Figure 2.
General view of
Tepebağ quarter and
the Tumulus ([https://
earth.google.com/web/](https://earth.google.com/web/))

Misirli Ibrahim Pasha, and then the workers from eastern and southeastern Anatolia (Ramazanoğlu, 2012).

Labour migration continued in the twentieth century, and after the 1980s, the region received immigration from the southeast Anatolia, and after the Syrian war, from Syria. With the construction of modern houses and the growth of the city of Adana to the north, most of the local population of the Tepebağ region left this region and people from the rural areas of Adana settled in their place. Especially after the 1998 earthquake, the region became even more deserted and economically incompetent people settled in the damaged houses. According to a thesis study conducted in 2010, the birthplace of the population in Tepebağ and Kayalıbağ is 66% Adana, 22% surrounding provinces, 12% Eastern provinces (Umar, 2010). Today, it is known that Syrians live in the region as a hand of this population.

Throughout history, Adana was rebuilt several times in the area of the Tepebağ Tumulus. The city's architecture did not develop much until the mid-nineteenth century with the exception of the re-construction of buildings along the Seyhan River which were frequently destroyed by floods (Payash and Aksulu, 2007). Adana had consisted of one-story houses made of mud brick until the late nineteenth century (Rother, 1971). The city showed a rapid development with the increase in cotton production and the improvement of the manufacturing industry in this period (Toksöz and Yalcın, 1999). The architecture is also influenced by the development in which the mud brick homes were replaced with 2–3 story structurally durable houses that are currently referred to as Traditional Adana Houses (Payash and Aksulu, 2007).

The Tepebağ Quarter was chosen as the sample area due to its multilayered cultural heritage. The “Kayalıbağ”, “Ulucamii” and “Karasoku” quarters, which are located around the Tepebağ Quarter, were added to the study because of their interrelatedness and similar texture (Figure 3). The study area is located on the west bank of the Seyhan River. The boundaries of the research area are İnönü Street to the north, Ali Munif Yegenâğa Street to the south, Seyhan Street to the east and Cakmak Street to the west. These quarters are within the urban protection area, so the Tepebağ Quarter also holds the status of an urban and archaeological site.

In the study, local people (residents and visitors) and tradesmen living in Tepebağ and the adjacent neighbourhoods were chosen as a sample. A questionnaire was prepared to reveal the current situation on participation in cultural heritage conservation. The questions addressed the participation dimension in terms of tourism. The interviews were conducted face-to-face, the contact information of the respondents was taken on a voluntary basis and

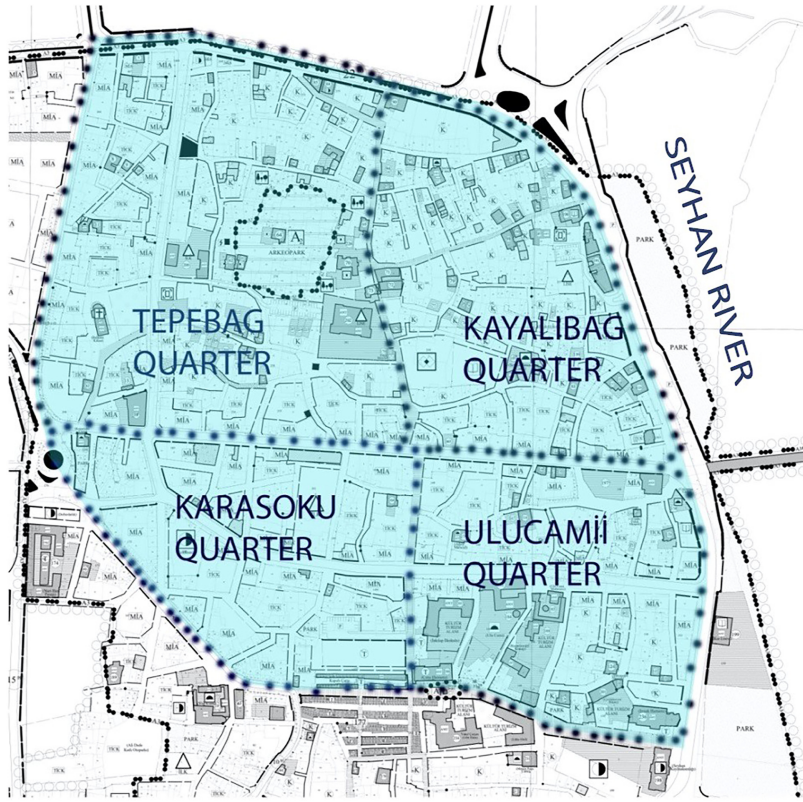


Figure 3.
Map of the study area

audits were carried out with randomly selected subjects for background checks. The data obtained was evaluated using the SPSS 25.0.0 V program package. The frequency and percentage distributions were calculated for the answers given to each question, and the degree of difference between the groups was determined.

The extent of the research comprises adults in the Seyhan District of Adana Province. A total of 1,200 interviews took place using a simple random sampling method. 423 of the respondents were tradesmen in the Tepebağ area, and the remaining 777 chosen among local residents and visitors, who agreed to contribute to the research between the months of October and December 2019.

4. Findings

4.1 Significance of the study area

Tepebağ and Kayalıbağ quarters lay in a region where the texture of traditional dwellings is more intense, with fewer monumental structures compared to other quarters being researched (Plate 1). These are namely the Tepebağ High School, Gazipaşa Primary School, Sefika Hatun Mosque, Seyhoğlu Mosque, Yeşil Masjid, St. Paul Church and the historic bank.

There are more monumental structures in the Ulucami quarter, and here, traditional housing and the monuments are intertwined. The monumental buildings are the Ulucami, the Ramazanoğlu madrasah and mansion, the İnkılâp Primary School, the Ramazanoğlu Small

Masjid, the Carsı Bath, the Irmak Bath, the Büyüksaat clock tower and the Ottoman Gendarmerie School (Old Riot Squad Building).

The Karasoku quarter, on the other hand, being the centre of Adana's oldest bazaar, hosts more commercial buildings but less traditional housing than the other quarters. As a monumental building, the Kemeraltı Mosque is located right at the centre of the bazaar.

This whole area is significant in terms of its location and the value it holds. There are 17 monumental buildings in addition to the traditional housing (Figure 4) [1]. Moreover, the stone bridge – namely Taşköprü, which dates back to the Roman period, is located in this area (Ramazanoglu, 2009).

Currently the monumental buildings that belong to T.R. Directorate General of Foundations “Waqf” (T.C. Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü) are in better condition owing to continuous maintenance and repair. However, most of the traditional houses in the area are in private ownership and are generally in poor condition due to lack of awareness and financial resources. Only in recent years have street improvements and restoration works in eligible traditional buildings been initiated with the contribution of the Adana Municipality.

4.2 The awareness levels of residents and visitors on conservation in the Tepebağ Quarter

1,200 people were included in a questionnaire with the aim of determining the awareness of residents, tradesmen and visitors about conservation and their willingness to participate in the conservation process. Respondents were asked about their age, educational status, and awareness of their living spaces, sense of rootedness and their willingness to participate in conservation activities [2]. 48% of the respondents were visitors to the area, 35% were operators in the area and 17% were residents of the quarter. 64% of the participants were men and 36% women. As Table 1 presents, ages of the respondents varied between 25 and 44 (31% 35–44, 25% 25–34, of a total 56%), followed by the middle-aged group between 45 and 54 with 24%. The young population (18–24 years old, 9%) and the older participation rates (55 + 0.11%) are low.

While high school graduates make up the majority of the population with 36%, with primary school graduates at 26%, and then middle school graduates with 22%. The rate of university graduates in the area is only 14%. The rest of the participants had not graduated from any school, and there are only three people holding higher education degrees.

When we look at the distribution of professions, the largest group consists of tradesmen and craftsmen with 46% (Table 2). Private sector blue collar workers comprise 23% and retirees 14%. Then follow the public sector workers (3.5%), private sector white collar workers (3.25%) and civil servants (3%). 2% of the participants were unemployed at the time.



Plate 1.
General view of
Tepebağ Quarter, 2010
(Tepebağ
Archive_N.UMAR)

















Quarter	Building	Photo	Quarter	Building	Photo
Tepebag Quarter	Tepebağ High School		Ulucami Quarter	Ulucami	
	Gazipaşa Primary School			The Ramazanoğlu Madrasah And Mansion	
	Şefika Hatun Mosque			The İnkılap Primary School	
	Yeşil Masjid			The Ramazanoğlu Small Masjid	
	St. Paul Church			The Çarşı Bath	
	The Historic Bank			The İrmak Bath	
Karasoku Quarter	Kemeraltı Mosque		Kayalıbağ Quarter	The Büyüksaat Clock Tower	
				The Ottoman Gendarmerie School (Old Riot Squad	
				Seyhoğlu Mosque	

Figure 4.
Monumental
structures in the
study area

Considering the monthly income of the participants, a quarter (26%) of the participants earn more than 3,000 TL (Turkish Lira) [3], while the earnings of just over half (53%) vary between 1,500 and 2,500 TL. A 17% slice has an income of 2,500–3,000 TL, and 4% around 500–1,500 TL [4] (Table 3).

Assuming that knowledge is a leading determinant of awareness and participation, the respondents' education levels and their interest and senses of attachment to their living spaces were ascertained. The age ranges from 45 to 64 formed the largest group taking part (41% 45–54 of age, 25% 55–64, making a total of 66%).

When the respondents were asked “What do you think cultural heritage includes?” a group of 27% answered “monumental structures,” and another 26% said “traditional houses”. 19% answered “local food”, and a total of 14% said “Handicrafts” and “Traditions”. This demonstrates that cultural heritage is generally perceived as concrete assets and in particular monumental structures (Table 4).

The majority group that chose “the monumental buildings” in the survey questions mostly consists of men between the ages of 35–44. The majority of this group compose of

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Demography		<i>N</i>	%
Gender	Male	437	36.4
	Female	763	63.6
Age distribution	18–24	106	8.8
	25–34	306	25.5
	35–44	375	31.3
	45–54	286	23.8
	55 and older	127	10.6
Educational status	Illiterate	3	0.3
	Nongraduate	14	1.2
	Primary school	315	26.3
	Secondary school	264	22.0
	High school	436	36.3
	University – 2 years	36	3.0
	University – Bachelor	129	10.8
	M. Sc. – Ph.D.	3	0.3

Table 1.
Demographic
characteristics of
respondents

What is the job of the person who brings the most income to the household?		<i>N</i>	%
Public sector worker		36	3
Private sector white collar		39	3.3
Public sector workers		42	3.5
Private sector blue collar workers		275	23
Businessman		13	1.1
Tradesmen and craftsmen		551	45.9
Doctor – Lawyer – Engineer		11	0.9
Farmer		34	2.8
Housewife		10	0.8
Student		1	0.1
Retired		165	13.8
Unemployed		23	1.9

Table 2.
Distribution of
professions

high-school graduates, their salaries vary between 1,500 and 2,000 TL and they have been residing in this region for more than 20 years. However, among those residing in the region for more than 40 years, the majority defines the cultural heritage as “traditional houses” with a difference of 2%. However, among those residing in the region for more than 40 years, the majority defines the cultural heritage as “traditional houses” with a difference of 2%. From this slight difference, it can be understood that the former residents of the neighbourhood are attached to their houses and are aware of their values.

None of the postgraduate/doctorate graduates surveyed in the field defined “local foods” as cultural heritage.

When asked the question designed to reveal the respondent’s awareness of community participation in conservation, “Does community participation play a role in the conservation of cultural heritage?”, the vast majority (90%) said “Yes”, while 6% answered “No”. Only 4% of them stated that they were indecisive (Table 4).

To measure the participants’ awareness of the state of cultural heritage in Tepebağ, the question was asked “Do you think cultural heritage is well preserved in Tepebağ and its surrounding area?” More than half of the respondents (53%) answered “no”, while only 19% responded “Yes”. 27% did not state any opinion, answering “I do not know”.

When asked “Why has it been preserved?” 64% of the respondents answered “Because it is historic” and 36% “Because it has undergone restoration work”. As seen from these answers, the participants of the questionnaire have similar thoughts, but their approach to the issue is different.

To the question “Why wasn’t it protected?” the majority of the participants (81%) stated that “the buildings lack maintenance” and 15% stated that they could not be protected due to “not being given the necessary attention”. 2% cited “financial reasons” and “people being unaware”.

As Table 5 illustrates, the answer to the question “What is your opinion on the conservation of cultural heritage and the development of tourism in Tepebağ centre?” was 97% positive. Only 3% of the participants were not satisfied.

When asked “Why is it negative?” the vast majority (61%) stated that they were not interested, and 29% said that it was due to lack of maintenance in the region and that the restoration works were performed only for show. Only a small number of respondents (10%) thought that there is no place to visit in the area.

When the participants were asked whether they would support tourism or not, more than a half (55%) stated that they would support tourism and, and 45% said that they would not.

The vast majority (90%) of those who would not support tourism declared they would not contribute because they were not interested. Only a small number of people (8%) declared

Monthly income	N	%
501–1,000 TL	14	1.2
1,001–1,500 TL	32	2.7
1,501–2,000 TL	322	26.8
2,001–2,500 TL	319	26.6
2,501–3,000 TL	202	16.8
3,001 TL and above	311	25.9

Table 3.
Monthly income of
respondents

Cultural heritage and community participation		Number	%
What do you think cultural heritage includes?	Traditional houses	1,104	26.1
	Monumental structures	1,134	26.8
	Local foods	803	19
	Traditions	581	13.7
	Handcrafts	611	14.4
Does community participation play a role in the conservation of cultural heritage?	Yes	1,081	90.1
	No	49	4.1
	Don't know	70	5.8

Table 4.
Respondents’
awareness on cultural
heritage and
community
participation

What is your opinion on the conservation of cultural heritage and the development of tourism in Tepebağ centre?

	Number	%
Positive	1,159	96.6
Negative	41	3.4

Table 5.
Respondents’ opinion
about cultural heritage
conservation and
tourism

that they would not support tourism because they were busy or did not know what to do. The rest said there was no support they could give.

As Table 6 shows, when asked “How do you think you can support tourism?” 41% said “I can work at a tourism facility”. and 18% said “I can produce handcrafted products and market them in tourism”. 15% stated that “I can market my agricultural products” and another 15% said “I can market my local foods”. 0–2% of participants said that they could give moral support, do their best, promote, support by selling their products, serve at their current workplace or support by visiting.

Another question measuring the participants’ awareness of the state of the cultural heritage in their living environment was “Are there any historic sites in Tepebağ and its surroundings?”. 99% said that there were, which demonstrates that people are aware of the historic sites around them.

In order to measure the participants’ understanding of historic sites, they were asked “Which areas are there? What are they called?”. 23% replied “Ataturk’s house”, 17% “Ulucamii”, 10% “Büyüksaat”, and 8% mentioned “Mestan Bath”, “the Museum” “Tepebağ High School” and “St. Paul Church”. “Taşköprü” and “Historic Houses” were mentioned by 7%. 4% responded “Kazancılar Bazaar”, 0.3% (5 people) declared that they did not know and 0.2% (4 people) that they could not remember. A minority of 0.1% (2 people) answered “Tepebağ Tumulus”.

When asked “Are excavations conducted in the historic areas of Tepebağ and its surroundings?”, 82% said “I do not know”, and 14% answered “No”. Only 4% answered yes (52 people). As can be seen from these results, the participants did not know about the Tepebağ Tumulus or the work being conducted in the vicinity, and the level of their awareness was low.

Those aware of the excavations were asked “Do you find the excavations useful?”. 64.5% thought that they were, with only 34.5% revealing that they did not find them useful. The same group were asked “Do you think these excavations attract tourists?”, and although the majority (58%) answered “Yes” and expressed a positive opinion, a considerable percentage (42%) answered “No”, and considered that they would not attract visitors or contribute to tourism.

The next stage of the research sought to identify the level of awareness of tradesmen in Tepebağ and the adjacent quarters in which 423 tradesmen were interviewed. When asked “How would you define Tepebağ?” 65% replied “An old historic neighbourhood”, 22% answered “A place where there is cultural heritage”, 8% responded “The first settlement in

Table 6.
The respondents’
opinion about
supporting tourism

How do you think you can support tourism?	N	%
I can produce handcrafted products and market them in tourism	124	18.7
I can work at a tourism facility	273	41.2
I can market my agricultural products	101	15.2
I can turn my house into a hostel	8	1.2
I can market my agricultural products	96	14.5
Promote	11	1.7
Moral support	18	2.7
Do their best	13	2.0
“I do not know now”	4	0.6
Support by visiting	3	0.5
Serve at their current workplace	6	0.9
Selling their products	6	0.9

Adana", 3% responded "Ruins", and 2% mentioned "Narrow and dirty streets". From this we can say that 95% of the participants are aware of the historical structure and the importance of the neighbourhood.

When asked "Who are the most frequent visitors to Tepebağ in your opinion?", 90% of the respondents said, "Local people" and 10% said "Tourists". From this we can say that it is understood that the region does not attract many tourists. They were then asked, "What is your opinion of the buildings that have undergone maintenance and improvements in Tepebağ?". 80% considered that they were successful, while a smaller number (20%) stated that they found them unsuccessful.

The issue of maintenance was further reinforced when they were asked "In your opinion, what kind of work should be undertaken to improve the historic buildings in Tepebağ?", where 70% drew attention to the importance of this by saying that "Maintenance work should be conducted", and 30% emphasized the need for a more thorough repair by stating "It should be restored". Finally, when asked "Can you give any support on this issue?" 96% said yes and only 4% said no, indicating that the people in the region are willing to participate in conservation (Table 7).

5. Discussion

Throughout the study, most of the respondents were between 45 and 64 who mostly defined cultural heritage as monumental buildings and traditional houses. It is observed that there is little awareness of intangible cultural heritage values. Besides this, the concept of "historic site" is mostly understood as monuments and monumental structures. Traditional dwellings and Tumulus are less likely to be included in the definition of "historic site" by the participants. Similar to Grydehoj's (2010) discussion on the "uninherited heritage" theme, it has been observed that the participants associate "historic sites" with "monuments" that they connect with but are unaware of other cultural assets (Grydehoj, 2010). This situation demonstrates that awareness should be raised for other cultural heritage values in the region. Also, as stated by Uçar and Yoloğlu (2018), the emphasis is put on the significance of social behaviour in the protection of archaeological sites, and conservation culture should be introduced and adopted from childhood for the protection of archaeological sites through educational initiatives. This finding is also similar to the findings of the research, as it is compatible with the participants, most of whom aged over 45, not including the Tumulus, which is an "archaeological site", within the context of a historic area. Again, in parallel with the existing literature, it is seen that as knowledge and awareness levels of local people about the neighbourhood they live in and the cultural heritage values increase, their desire to participate in the conservation process increases.

It was observed that only 4% of the respondents were aware of the excavation in Tepebağ Tumulus. This situation indicates that the awareness of the Tepebağ Tumulus and the ongoing excavation is at low levels. However, the group that was aware supported the excavations considering them useful and stated that these would increase the tourism potential of the region and attract tourists.

The monthly income of the majority of the participants was below 3,000 TL (nearly 500 USD). This shows that a poorer section lives in the area. This community's, primary

Can you give any support on this issue?

	Frequency	Valid per cent
Yes	407	96.2
No	16	3.8

Table 7.
Respondents opinion
about participation in
conservation

concern is employment and livelihood, but they think that they can support the conservation of cultural heritage through their own efforts and production. Respondents were positive towards participation in cultural heritage conservation, especially in terms of supporting tourism. Personal benefits of residents from tourism, affect their perceptions of tourism impacts and, consequently, their support for tourism development and planning (Oviedo-Garcia *et al.*, 2007). Most of them state they could work at tourism facilities as a contribution to the development of tourism in the region, while some others could market handcrafted products, local foods or agricultural products.

The interviews carried out with tradesmen in Tepebağ indicated that they see the area as an old historic neighbourhood. It has been observed that very few tradesmen were aware of the cultural heritage value of the area. This group perceived the maintenance and repair works in the area positively and were of the opinion that maintenance works should be maintained in order for the area to improve and, they were ready to provide support in this respect.

These findings support the idea that public participation in the improvement and conservation of the region could impact positively upon tourism (Joudifar and Türker, 2020). With the increasing recognition of the region, it would develop economically; the public would be in a position to take some share from this development and support conservation. Moreover, since the suggestions submitted by the participants in order to contribute to the development of tourism include intangible cultural heritage values, it would be important to keep these values alive in the area so as to increase the awareness of them among the local population. In the context of awareness created among the local people, the interaction between tourists and local people is almost the most appropriate tool to provide a result in which tourism has a positive effect (Atun *et al.*, 2019).

6. Conclusion

This study focuses on an urban and archaeological site located in the city centre and seeks the views of visitors, residents and tradesmen. The site has always possessed a cultural diversity with layers from different civilizations, and many of the current residents are migrants who have relocated from the East of Turkey and Syria, who are seeking a better life for themselves and their families. It is therefore helpful to seek their perceptions of cultural heritage in the area, a process which in itself may engender more of a sense of place-attachment, but would also give clues as to how these cultural resources may be utilized to help meet broader policy objectives in relation to leisure, tourism, sport, place marketing, heritage and other cultural aspects where culture is considered as a wide field that includes both hard and soft infrastructures. This “cultural planning” perspective (Bianchini, 1993) has been successful in regenerating many Western European cities, particularly those where the decentralization of powers from central to regional and local governments have taken place.

Traditional approaches to cultural heritage conservation in Turkey have not always yielded successful results especially if there are communities living in and around the area. New, more effective and localized conservation and planning tools are necessary in order to optimize these rich resources. This approach requires participatory management plans where decisions are taken with the support and involvement of all interest groups. These forms of participation, when developed further, have the added benefit of integrating diverse social groups including new residents, immigrants and the unemployed.

Although participation is a normal part of planning processes in many parts of the world such as Europe, North America and Australia, there are few examples in Turkey and as yet no legal obligation. However, the survey carried out in this study indicates that the insights gained could have a positive impact on economic development particularly in the tourism, heritage, place marketing and retail sectors. In view of this, a natural next step might be a

more detailed cultural audit could take place in order to identify the extent of cultural resources and how these might impact upon broader policy objectives.

Although this study focuses on heritage perception and conservation in the Tepebağ neighbourhood of Adana, it is suggested that this be considered in parallel with other strategic objectives that see “culture” in the broadest anthropological definition and makes connections with other areas of policy making.

Notes

1. Gazipaşa Primary School-St. Paul Church-The Historic Bank-The Çarşı Bath (<http://wowturkey.com>) Kemeraltı Mosque-The Ramazanoglu Small Masjid-The Irmak Bath-Seyhoğlu Mosque (01 Adana Türk Kültür Varlıkları Envanteri).
2. In the survey, except from Table 5, questions are open-ended questions, but clustering was made between close answers.
3. In 2019, 1 USD is 5.6 TL on average.
4. As of 2019, the minimum wage is 2.020,09 TL (<https://sgkucetleri.com/yillara-gore-asgari-ucret-tablosu-net-ve-brut-tutarlar.html>).

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Further reading

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