

PAPER DETAILS

TITLE: Kibbutzim in alleviating rural poverty in Tunceli

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PAGES: 180-202

ORIGINAL PDF URL: <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/4308025>



KIBBUTZİM IN ALLEVIATING RURAL POVERTY IN TUNCELİ

TUNCELİ'DE KIRSAL YOKSULLUĞUN AZALTILMASINDA KİBBUTZİM

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Geliş Tarihi: 22.10.2024 Kabul Tarihi: 09.12.2024

Abstract: Rural tourism is one of the most important activities that can help alleviate poverty in rural areas. One of the various ways to promote rural tourism is through cooperatives. In this context, the Kibbutz-style rural tourism model in the world serves as a successful example. In this regard, this study examined the external and internal factors impacting the formation of Kibbutz communities and evaluated the potential for implementing a Kibbutz-style rural tourism model in Tunceli/ Türkiye. In this study, which was prepared using a qualitative research method, content analysis was conducted on secondary data sources. A comprehensive analysis compared the social, geographical, and political infrastructure of Tunceli with that of the Kibbutz movement. In both cultures, a strong inclination towards values such as egalitarianism, solidarity, fraternity, and cooperation was evident. Additionally, both groups showed support for left-leaning political ideologies. However, a significant difference emerged as the people of Tunceli had not attempted to establish a social entity aligned with their core values, similar to the Kibbutz. Given the characteristics of Tunceli, it is hypothesized that a rural tourism cooperative operating in the Kibbutz style could effectively leverage poverty in Tunceli.

Key Words: Content analysis, cooperative, Kibbutz, rural development, Tunceli.

Özet: Kırsal turizm, kırsal alanlardaki yoksulluğu hafifletmeye yardımcı olabilecek en önemli faaliyetlerden biridir. Kırsal turizmi teşvik etmenin çeşitli yollarından biri de kooperatiflerdir. Bu bağlamda, dünyadaki Kibbutz tarzı kırsal turizm modeli başarılı bir örnek teşkil etmektedir. Bu doğrultuda, bu çalışmada Kibbutz topluluklarının oluşumunu etkileyen dış ve iç faktörler incelenmiş ve Kibbutz tarzı kırsal turizm modelinin Tunceli/Türkiye'de uygulanma potansiyeli değerlendirilmiştir. Nitel araştırma yöntemi kullanılarak hazırlanan bu çalışmada, ikincil veri kaynakları üzerinde içerik analizi yapılmıştır. Sosyal, coğrafi ve politik altyapıların kapsamlı bir analizi ile Tunceli'nin Kibbutz hareketiyle karşılaştırması yapılmıştır. Her iki kültürde de eşitlikçilik, dayanışma, kardeşlik ve işbirliği gibi değerlere güçlü bir eğilim olduğu görülmüştür. Ayrıca, her iki grup da sol eğilimli siyasi ideolojileri destekleme eğilimi göstermiştir. Ancak, Tunceli halkının Kibbutz'a benzer bir sosyal varlık oluşturma yönünde bir girişimde bulunmadığı gibi önemli bir fark ortaya çıkmıştır. Tunceli'nin özellikleri göz önüne alındığında, Kibbutz tarzında faaliyet gösterecek bir kırsal turizm kooperatifinin Tunceli'deki yoksulluğu etkili bir şekilde hafifletebileceği varsayılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İçerik analizi, kooperatif, Kibbutz, kırsal kalkınma, Tunceli.

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INTRODUCTION

To overcome the problem of poverty in rural areas, two conditions should be fulfilled. One is increasing income, and the second is justice in the distribution of income (Khan, 2000). In tourism, tourists and tourist income flow towards the destination where supply is provided (Vu & Turner, 2009). So, rural tourism can potentially leverage the socioeconomic level of poor people who live in rural areas (Sharpley & Sharpley, 1997). It can be an alternative means of livelihood for those living in rural areas in a world where industrialization is gradually increasing and agricultural labour is devalued by increasing mechanization in agriculture (Lane, 1994). However, in addition to the increase in income in rural areas, poverty can be prevented only with the fair distribution of this income (Khan, 2000). The fact that the private sector generally carries out tourism limits the distribution of tourism income to people experiencing poverty within the host community because of leakages from the middle and high classes (IIED, 2001). Additionally, Foreign-Resourced Investment threatens local competitors by maintaining a competitive advantage in the market against its local competitors, who need more capacity and skills (Overseas Development Institute, 2002). This situation results in the loss of benefits and the loss of locals' decision-making capability regarding their resources in rural areas (Mbaiwa, 2005). However, in the opposite case, expected benefits can be reached (Richards & Hall, 2002).

Cooperatives have a crucial role in overcoming this problem due to their people-oriented nature and working values of *self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity* (International Cooperative Alliance, 2022). Additionally, diverse collective capabilities can be provided to poor people by using cooperatives (Davolio, 2008). Cooperative's work style is based on community-based planning and implementation, resulting in a more equitable distribution of benefits (Okazaki, 2008). In cooperatives, consolidation value stays in the community, which has a role in producing the same consolidation value (International Cooperative Alliance, 2022). In the context of tourism, tourism's role and importance in the fight against poverty are widely accepted (ILO, 2011). However, although tourism cooperatives have the potential to reach the same aims (Fennell, 2006; Mehta, 2008), they have not received the intellectual interest it deserves (Paramasvaran, 2008). Tourism cooperatives can effectively reach benefits equally and democratically (Majee & Hoyt, 2011). It can be the best tool for alleviating poverty, especially in less developed environments (Aref & Gill, 2009).

One of the cooperatives which are in rural areas is the Kibbutz Movement in Israel (International Cooperative Alliance, 2022). The transformation of deserts and barren mountains in Israel into liveable regions and the size of their production capacity, both industrially and agriculturally, compared to their population, are observable facts that show the success of the Kibbutz Movement (Cheng & Yexia, 2015). The Kibbutz is culturally matched to the core values of a cooperative such as fraternity and solidarity. Although many organizations with similar aims have failed since the first kibbutz was founded in 1909, the Kibbutz Movement still survives (Abramitzky, 2011; Blasi, 1977; Cheng & Yexia, 2015; Helman, 1992). One of the areas of activity of Kibbutzim is rural tourism, and even in some Kibbutzim, rural tourism is the primary means of livelihood (Grossman, 2003).

Tunceli, a province of the Republic of Türkiye, is a rural area where industrialization and agriculture are not developed (Tunceli Governorate, 2018). However, aesthetic scenes of Mountains, valleys, rivers, geologic features, cultural and spiritual centers, and endemic biodiversity constitute a potential for rural tourism (Özgürel et al., 2015a). In various studies (Özgürel, 2012; Özgürel et al., 2015a; Özgürel et al., 2015b), tourism and touristic activities

are advised for contribution to economic development. However, managerial formations that can provide justice on distributions of tourism income to the rural population in Tunceli are still a gap. This study examined factors influencing Kibbutz formation and assessed the feasibility of implementing a Kibbutz-style rural tourism model in Tunceli. It compared Tunceli's social, geographical, and political landscape with the Kibbutz movement's. In this regard, this study provides a rich theoretical and practical discussion on the potential of rural tourism and cooperatives to alleviate poverty and strengthen social solidarity. In addition, this study differs from other studies in the literature by presenting a new perspective on the relationship between cooperatives and tourism through the Kibbutz Model. Thus, it makes a valuable contribution to the academic literature and policymakers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Kibbutz

Kibbutz is a phenomenon that should be dealt with intellectually (Cheng & Yexia, 2015). Between the 60s and 70s, academic studies on kibbutzim began to intensify. (Near, 1985). The lexical definition of Kibbutz is the rural settlement and society that aims for social justice and reflects this idea to practice in various areas of life in Israel (Jewish Virtual Library, 2022; Britannica, 2022; Skolnik, Himmelstein & Wigoder, 2002). Etymologically, “the Word root” of the Kibbutz is derived from the *qibbus*, which means “gathering” or “cooperating” in Modern Hebrew (Britannica, 2022; Online Etymology Dictionary, 2022). It means “gathering together” in old Hebrew (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2022). The Kibbutz has unique economic, management, and social practices (Barkai, 1987; Cheng & Yexia, 2015; Evens, 2015; Halamish, 2019). Fundamental values of a classic Kibbutz are cooperation, egalitarianism, fraternity, love of nature, and voluntariness in practice (Cheng & Yexia, 2015; Kanovsky, 1966; Near, 2011; Rosner, 2017; Spiro, 2004).

The history of the Kibbutz can be started from the events that caused the 2nd Aliyah in Russia (Israel Ministry of Aliyah and Integration, 2022). Between the late 19th century and early 20th century, Anti-Semitism and organized movements to murder Jews because of their religious difference in Russia led to a search for emancipation among the Jews who had socialist and Zionist backgrounds (Halpern & Reinharz, 1991; Israel Ministry of Aliyah and Integration, 2022; Sturm, 1972). These persecuted people immigrated to rural areas of Turkish-Palestine between 1904 and 1914 (Halpern & Reinharz, 1991; Jewish Virtual Library, 2022). When these idealist socialists came to Palestine, they reacted strongly to the system funded by Rothschild and Hirsch and based on exploiting Arab labor (Near, 1985). The realization that a communal life could have struggled with life's difficulties in Turkish Palestine played a role in forming the Kibbutz (Spiro, 2004). Officially the first Kibbutz, Degania alef was founded on the shores of Lake Kinneret by a small number of youths without a farming background for labor conquest (Abramitzky, 2011; Cheng & Yexia, 2015; Halamish, 2019; Near, 1985, 1997).

The philosophy of Kibbutz is a synthesis of Tolstoy's approach to nature, Marxist approach to egalitarianism in socioeconomic, Hegelian self-realization, and Buber's I-Thou principles in Voluntariness (Abramitzky, 2011; Amir et al., 2005; Bradley, 1972; Buber, 1947; Near, 2011). As an enterprise, Kibbutzim's primary purpose is caring for its members rather than making a profit (Kanovsky, 1966, p. 124). The formulation of the Kibbutz can be explained as *everyone will contribute as much as they can, and everyone will receive as much as they need* (Cheng & Yexia, 2015; Jewish Virtual Library, 2022; Shur, 1975; Spiro, 2004). The economic system of the Kibbutz resembles the structure of cooperatives in a family climate (Blasi, 1977; Moskovich, 2019). The Kibbutz economy is based on the idea that it is

the opposite of Adam Smith. The fact that not everyone is born with the same property, talent, and opportunities causes innate inequality in capitalism (Blasi, 1977). According to Ben Gruion, the emergence of the Kibbutz is actually because of this fundamental logical reason (Near, 2011). Production is planned and carried out collectively in the kibbutz. Motivation to work is provided not by money (Blasi, 1977; Cheng & Yexia, 2015) but by *hakkarah*, which means awareness that the group's well-being depends on each member's skills (Spiro, 2004). Rewarding is given to employees based on their needs, not their work (Blasi, 1977; Cheng & Yexia, 2015). Even if few people work in the jobs that generate the highest income, and many people work in the jobs that do not generate income, everyone has an equal vote in making business decisions (Blasi, 1977). Additionally, even if a Kibbutz member's need is expensive, it is promptly met if the Kibbutz can provide (Rosner, 2017). Also, it does not bother anyone on the Kibbutz (Blasi, 1977). After meeting individuals' social and individual needs, the remaining money is transferred to investment (Blasi, 1977). The Kibbutz is also a rural community that understands the importance of industrialization, which requires specialization (Levitan, 1973). While the Kibbutz focused on agriculture in its early days, it now operates in many different sectors apart from agriculture (Cheng & Yexia, 2015). Kibbutzim is more advanced in industrialization than its counterparts (Kanovsky, 1966, p. 126). Kibbutz factories and farms are more successful than others in Israel (Kanovsky, 1966; Melman, 1970). Another sector that Kibbutzim carries out is tourism. Kibbutzim offers its unique features and another tourism potential to tourists as a touristic product (Niv, 1989). In the scope of volunteer tourism, Tourists who come to the Kibbutz can experience working between 6 and 8 hours a day voluntarily for 3 to 6 months in jobs determined by the Kibbutz (Uriely & Reichel, 2000). Additionally, the Kibbutzim carries out various tourist activities by their tourism potentials, like horse and camel riding, swimming and beaches, tours with guides, and daily tours (Grossman, 2004; Niv, 1989). In some Kibbutzim like Kibbutz *Gvanim*³, tourism is the primary income source (Grossman, 2003).

There was no organizational structure for managerial activities until 1913 (Cheng & Yexia, 2015). After 1913, Kibbutzim developed a unique management and decision-making process different from the private sector (Cheng & Yexia, 2015; Moskovich, 2019). No group or individual alone controls production, consumption, and management. There is rotation and democracy in management (Blasi, 1977; Cheng & Yexia, 2015; Rosner, 2017; Rosner & Tannenbaum, 1987; Spiro, 2004). In the Kibbutz, the management consists of the professional committees and the secretary, whose duty is to coordinate the handling of daily routines with professional committees (Cheng & Yexia, 2015). Rotating managers, while planning the work to be done, also evaluate the efficiency of the work (Blasi, 1977; Spiro, 2004). Kibbutz members find solutions by discussing their business organization, education, etc., problems around the round table and making a joint decision (Beit-Hallahmi, 1981; Blasi, 1977; Cheng & Yexia, 2015; Near, 2011; Spiro, 2004). This meeting is generally done on Saturday night of Sabbath (Cheng & Yexia, 2015). Everything about life can be the subject of the "table" and handled in a democratic way (Near, 2011; Rosner & Tannenbaum, 1987). After discussion, problems are put to the vote (Beit-Hallahmi, 1981; Rosner & Tannenbaum, 1987). A 2/3 majority is required for a decision to be passed by voting (Cheng & Yexia, 2015; Rosner & Tannenbaum, 1987). Issues are handled with rational principles (Krook, 1968). All members can participate actively in committees other than the social committee because the social committee's duties are personal issues such as conflicts between families. However, the

³ Gvanim is an association that was founded in 1987 by members of an urban kibbutz in Sderot and today serves more than 1,500 people with various disabilities through more than 30 programs across the country. These programs include a specialization for young people between the ages of 18 and 35.

decisions of the social committee are open to every member (Cheng & Yexia, 2015). Community members dissatisfied with the voting result are free to leave the Kibbutz (Harkov, 2017).

In social life, the Kibbutz represents a common tangible entity in which people unite (Near, 2011). In a classic Kibbutz, household activities such as cooking, laundry, etc., are carried out collectively (Chary, 1981). Meals are eaten with members in the dining room (Abramitzky, 2011). In a classical Kibbutz, even the nuclear family transfers some of its functional characteristics, such as production, consumption, and taking care of children, to the commune as another institution (Beit-Hallahmi, 1981). Children are cared for collectively (Abramitzky, 2011; Chary, 1981). Career plans of children are carried out by the education committee of Kibbutz (Chary, 1981). The Kibbutz is a distinguished form of retirement for elders. For those who are physically unable to work, working in public affairs can be considered a Kibbutz-style retirement (Blasi, 1977; Cheng & Yexia, 2015). In Kibbutz, pathological issues such as drug use, alcoholism, and crime are almost non-existent (Blasi, 1977).

The Kibbutz also has a socio-political view. The Kibbutzim had a socialist stance and participated in the Jewish Labor Movement (Halamish, 2019). One of the key concepts in its establishment was the conquest of labor (Near, 1985). Since its founding, the Kibbutzim has created a homo sociologicus versus homo economicus (Abramitzky, 2011). The socio-political environment that Kibbutzim live in has a crucial role in surviving the Kibbutz. Kibbutzim had a pioneering and prestigious position in Israel during the establishment of the Israeli state, and up to rightist parties were elected (Near, 1997; Grossman, 2004). After 1977, with the right-wing Likud party winning the election, support for the Kibbutz decreased significantly as a result of the strengthening of the right-wing in Israel, and the Kibbutzim entered a crisis in the 80s, and some of the Kibbutz had to change their system (Halamish, 2019; Moskovich & Achouch, 2014; Moskovich, 2018), however, according to reports gained in 2008 show that the Kibbutz movement is rising again (International Cooperative Alliance, 2022).

Kibbutz communities are social structures known for their collective life and work models based on cooperative principles. The Kibbutz system has created an economic order where members work together, especially in agricultural and industrial production, and share their earnings equally (Near, 1997). The values such as volunteering, democratic management, economic participation, and social responsibility, which are the basis of cooperative principles, are concretely reflected in the organization of Kibbutzim. This strong connection between Kibbutzim and cooperatives has increased the economic security of individuals, as well as encouraging social solidarity and a culture of working together towards common goals. In addition, Kibbutz communities provide an example of the contribution of cooperatives to social capital accumulation by embracing the ideals of social justice and equality (Rosner & Tannenbaum, 1987). In this respect, the Kibbutz model is an essential example of the applicability of the cooperative principle in areas such as rural development and sustainable tourism.

When classical/traditional Kibbutzim are examined, it can be reached to the external and internal factors behind the formation of Kibbutz cooperatives. These are;

- Regional challenges that drive the community to a new way (Spiro, 2004).
- Values of cooperation, egalitarianism, fraternity, and voluntariness in practice (Cheng & Yexia, 2015; Kanovsky, 1966; Near, 2011; Spiro, 2004).

- Anti-capitalism and the dominance of leftist tendencies in the socio-politic environment that Kibbutz live in (Abramitzky, 2011; Grossman, 2003; Halamish, 2019; Near, 1985, 1997).
- Youth's Enterprise for establishing a social entity (institution), by values accepted by the community, for overcoming challenges.

Cooperatives in Türkiye

The history of cooperatives in Türkiye goes back to the Ahi (Brotherhood) Organization in the 12th century and the country's chest and fig producers' movements in the 19th century (Okan & Okan, 2013). Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic, gave great importance to cooperatives between 1920 and 1938 and encouraged the establishment of cooperatives (Ercin, 2002). This rising trend of cooperatives has evolved into a decreasing situation after his death and the private sector has been encouraged instead of the cooperative policy (Tanıyıcı & Bilgin, 2008).

A total of 84232 cooperatives operate officially in 26 different sectors in Türkiye (Decree Law 639, 2011; Decree Law 640, 2011; Decree Law 644). Of these, only 309 are tourism-related (TR Ministry of Trade, 2016). According to the tourism development cooperative article agreement which is published by the TR Ministry of Commerce (2023) , the official activities that a tourism cooperative may conduct in Türkiye are;

- Purchasing land, renting and hiring, establishing and operating a tourism facility,
- Buying, selling, leasing, renting, and mortgaging any sort of property,
- Engaging in agency services,
- Producing, marketing, and appraising any tourist product,
- Organising travels with vehicles, air and sea crafts,
- Collaborating, and conducting any project with any relevant authority for environmental protection,
- Borrowing and taking credit for fulfilling any needs,
- Be a partner with another company,
- Collaborating with other cooperatives,

The ratio of the number of cooperatives to the population in Türkiye is lower than in many European countries (Güresci & Gönc, 2017; Karakas, 2019). Cooperatives in Türkiye haven't been being influential and effective as expected (Güresci & Gönc, 2017; Tanıyıcı & Bilgin, 2008). Additionally, people in Türkiye participate in limited ratios to cooperatives and existing cooperatives face a series of problems (Alkan, 1998). These problems can be sorted as the complexity of the law related to cooperatives, Lack of awareness of cooperatives, Lack of education and R&D within cooperatives, Lack of professional management, neoliberal policies of central governments, lack of funding, lack of participation in the upper organization, lack of collaboration between local governments and cooperatives (ActHuman Report, 2020; Albayram Dogan & Yercan, 2016; Mülâyim, 1998; Serinikli & Kumkale, 2012; Tanıyıcı & Bilgin, 2008).

While cooperatives are subject to a single legal regulation in many countries, in Türkiye the laws that cooperatives are currently obliged to comply with are the Law on Cooperatives No. 1163, Law No. 4572 on Agricultural Sales Cooperatives and Unions and Law on Agricultural Credit Cooperatives and Unions No. 1581 (TR Ministry of Customs and Trade, 2016). This situation is perceived as a complex and difficult problem by cooperatives

(Serinikli & Kumkale, 2012). The cooperatives' needs are not considered in the legal regulations regarding the cooperatives. It takes a long time for a cooperative to fulfil the legal requirements, especially at the establishment stage (Özgül et al., 2020). The participation of cooperative members in administrative processes is limited and a democratic process is not adopted (Mülayim, 1998). Cooperatives must obtain permission from the central government for many of their managerial actions, and a government representative must be present at their general meetings (ILO & COPAC, 2013).

In Türkiye, financing is the biggest problem cooperatives face (Serinikli & Kumkale, 2012). Cooperatives are not large-scale ventures and the financial resilience of cooperatives is vulnerable (ActHuman Report, 2020). The basis of financial insufficiency is its members' low share of partnerships, their non-payment, and the lack of an institution that will give appropriate credit to cooperatives (Mülayim, 2006, p. 585).

In Türkiye, the concept of cooperatives, and the structure and function of cooperatives are not known by most people (Güresci & Gönc, 2017). For example, the agricultural credit cooperative, which is one of the cooperatives with the highest number of members in Türkiye, is thought to be an institution of the government by even cooperative members (Güreşci & Aktürk, 2015). In Urfa, Türkiye's 3rd largest agricultural area, the participation in cooperatives is only 0.62% and almost only one-third of its members have a positive attitude towards the cooperative (Sevinç, 2021). The main reason is that the phenomenon of cooperatives in Türkiye is not a public initiative, but a policy that the central polity creates (Tanıyıcı & Bilgin, 2008). The neoliberal policies of the right-wing parties that ruled for a long time in Türkiye (Mülayim, 1998), the appointment of unqualified people who only fulfil the wishes of their superiors to the cooperative management by the state, instead of democratically electing their managers by the election of cooperative members (Serinikli & Kumkale, 2012), have been effective in not forming the concept of cooperative in people's minds.

Despite all the adversities, the Case of Nepal illustrates that cooperatives can be a tool for leveraging the poor, creating employment, and creating a sustainable environment, when local governments support the cooperatives with education and finance (Basnet & Ghimire, 2019). Collaboration of cooperatives with the local government in line with the basic cooperative values significantly improves overcoming problems, especially for start-up cooperatives that need financial support (ActHuman Report, 2020). Case of Indonesia shows that the most important point in the support process is the commitment to cooperative principles (Maskur, 2016). One more successful case is in the USA. Cooperatives have been extremely successful in Madison, which has democratically established cooperatives and provided 5-year funding by the local government (Kerr, 2015). In Türkiye, the policies of the municipality of Tunceli are one of the few examples of success in establishing a cooperative and collaboration between local government and cooperatives (Yalçın, 2022).

In the 2014 local elections, in the Ovacık district of Tunceli province, Mehmet Maçaoğlu, the candidate of the Communist Party of Türkiye, who would later have been called the Communist president, won the local elections (Municipality of Tunceli, 2019). One of the things he did through the municipality after he was elected was to organize and establish a women's cooperative that produces mostly agricultural products with local resources and branding and selling these products under the name of "Ovacık Munzur Natural Products" (Ovacık Women's Cooperative, n.d). As a result of the 2019 local elections, the "communist president" was elected as the mayor of Tunceli (Municipality of Tunceli, 2019). The communist president successfully established a cooperative in the Municipality and made

it functional and sustainable, in cooperation between the municipality and the cooperative, adhering to the principles of cooperatives (Caylak & Akın, 2019).

Tunceli

Tunceli is a province in the eastern Anatolian region of Türkiye (Fırat Development Agency, 2016). In the north and west of Tunceli, there are the Munzur Mountains and the Karasu River, which are the extension of the eastern Taurus Mountains, the Bingöl Mountains, and Peri Su River in the east, and the Keban dam lake in the south (Fırat Development Agency, 2016; TCTD, 2022; Tunceli Governorate, 2018; TRMCT, 2022;). Tunceli's history starts from the first settlement in Tunceli in the Chalcolithic Age (5500-3500 BC). Tunceli has been home to the Subarrus, Hurrians, Hittites, Urartians, Medes, Persians, Romans, Byzantines and Sassanids, Mengüceks, Akkoyunlus, Ottomans, and the Republic of Türkiye until today (Tunceli Governorate, 2018).

Tunceli is an economically undeveloped province with no efficient sector in the region that will create employment by providing an economic contribution to the region's people, such as developed agriculture or industry (Tunceli Governorate, 2018). So, unemployment is a significant problem in Tunceli (Tunceli Provincial Directorate of Migration Management, 2019). According to the 2018 data from the Turkish statistical institution, Tunceli's GDP is below the average of Türkiye. According to 2019 data, while the total number of commercial enterprises is 39 in Tunceli, this number is 98,643 for the average Türkiye (Fırat Development Agency, 2016). Tunceli is the third province from last among 81 areas with the lowest Gross Domestic Product on Provincial Basis (Turkish Statistical Institute, 2020). Additionally, the immigration rate of Tunceli is -40% (Tunceli Provincial Directorate of Migration Management, 2019). Regarding tourism, development is the same, and in 2018, only 42,647 people stayed in accommodation facilities in Tunceli (Fırat Development Agency, 2016). 77% of the people in Tunceli are in the working age range (Tunceli Governorate, 2018). Only 8% of the population is older (Hegem Foundation, 2015). The ratio of the population aged 0-15 is 15.6 percent (Tunceli Provincial Directorate of Migration Management, 2019).

Despite being economically undeveloped, 70% of Tunceli consists of mountains. Tunceli has a uniquely rich biodiversity and aesthetically valuable natural landscapes due to its physical geography, climate structure, and abundant water resources (TCTD, 2022). Tunceli has cultural, ethnographic, folkloric, and natural potential tourist attractions (Özgürel et al., 2015b). So, it is possible for thermal, cultural, sports, and religious tourism as well as eco-tourism and geo-tourism (Özgürel et al., 2015a). Munzur National Park has the potential for camping, rafting, trekking, and picnicking (Tunceli Governorate, 2018). While the population of people living in Tunceli does not exceed one hundred thousand, over one million people from Tunceli live outside of Tunceli (Öktem, 2008). These people are interested in touristic events like the Munzur festival, which can potentially contribute to the local economy (Özgürel et al., 2015a). Administrators and local people are willing to tourism, and tourism awareness of the people is high (Özgürel, 2012; Özgürel et al., 2015b). Lack of investment and marketing seems to be the biggest obstacle for Tunceli to not use its potential in tourism (Özgürel et al., 2015b).

Tunceli is the only province in Türkiye where Alevi are the majority (Öktem, 2008). Alevi are an ethnoreligious minority with a proto-socialist tendency and anti-capitalist manner (Öktem, 2008). Solidarity, cooperation, egalitarianism, and fraternity are essential issues in Alevi culture (Bulut, 2013). Especially young Alevi people consider themselves egalitarian (Poyraz, 2005). A social institution called *Müşahiplik* in Alevism is a unity of values of fraternity, egalitarianism, cooperation, and solidarity (Azar, 2013). *Müşahiplik* is

also an obligation in the Alevi belief, and it is a significant phenomenon in Alevism (pirha.org). Müsahiplik is that two persons come together voluntarily and declare themselves one and inseparable both in this life and after death (Azar, 2013). Once two persons become müsahip of each other, all their possessions are common for both (Yıldırım, 2018).

Politically Alevis are considered democratic and leftist people (Yüksel, 2004). When the Turkish Grand National Assembly albums are examined, most MPs elected from Tunceli were members of the left parties (Turkish Grand National Assembly albums vol 1, vol 2, vol 3, and vol 4). Additionally, now the municipality of Tunceli is run by a mayor who is a member of the Turkish Communist Party, a left party (Municipality of Tunceli, 2019; Turkish Communist Party, 2023). Additionally, in the context of the cooperative, the mayor and its party have carried out successful works that are popular in Türkiye's national press.

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research aims to provide insight into people-worlds, often using inductive reasoning (Flick et al., 2004) and the purpose of this research is to evaluate the applicability of the Kibbutz cooperative in the form of tourism cooperatives in Tunceli. So, the qualitative research methodology is fit for this study since both the ontology of the object of this study and the type of reasoning match the qualitative research method. Besides, a systematic literature review was conducted for this purpose, and a content analysis was used to analyse those documents.

In the first step of this study regarding the systematic literature review, the term “Kibbutz” was selected as a keyword. The classical Kibbutz was reviewed; the main features of the classical Kibbutz were determined by reviewing 21 articles, six books, three articles in an encyclopedia, three governmental internet websites, one internet website, and two presentation papers. Scanned documents were reached from the open-access environment Wiley, Jstor, Science Direct, Emerald, and 210 multidisciplinary open sources, available in Mugla Sitki Kocman University e-library, between January 2022 and July 2022.

After the documents were searched by systematic literature review, content analysis was applied. Content analysis is a research technique that aims to obtain credible core understandings or credible permutative manifestations by achieving the visual/audible informants from a text with an inductive or deductive systematic (Bengtsson, 2016; Berg, 2009; Downe-Wamboldt, 1992; Drisko & Maschi, 2016; Flick et al., 2004; Holsti, 1969; Insch & Moore, 1997; Krippendorff, 2004; Neuendorf, 2017; Schreier, 2012; Stemler, 2000; Weber, 1990). Depending on the nature of the research object, the content analysis technique can be applied under the quantitative or qualitative method (Drisko & Maschi, 2016; Neuendorf, 2017; Schreier, 2012). If the research object is based on counting symbolic data requires deductive reasoning and manifest analysis, quantitative content analysis is implemented (Bengtsson, 2016; Drisko & Maschi, 2016; Stemler, 2000; Weber, 1990). However, qualitative content analysis is applied if the research object is situational, case-oriented, and requires inductive reasoning to achieve an understanding and latent analysis (Bengtsson, 2016; Schreier, 2012). The purpose of this research requires a profound understanding of the applicability of the Kibbutz cooperative in the form of tourism cooperatives in Tunceli. So, the analysis should be latent rather than manifest.

After all those systematic literature reviews and content analyses, eight main features of the Kibbutz were reached. These features were obtained after the content analysis and in-depth readings as codes. These are environmental challenges which impel people,

cooperation value, egalitarianism value, fraternity, voluntariness, political stance, enterprise for establishing a social entity, and youth potential as can be seen the Table 1 below:

Table 1.*Contents That Point Out Features Of The Kibbutz*

The name of the text that expresses the characteristics of the Kibbutz	Environmental Challenges which impel people	Cooperation value	Egalitarianism value	Fraternity	Voluntariness
Abramitzky (2011)	✓	✓	✓		
Amir et al. (2005)		✓	✓		
Barkai (1987)		✓	✓		
Beit-Hallahmi (1981)		✓	✓	✓	✓
Blasi (1977)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bradley (1972)					✓
Buber (1947)		✓		✓	✓
Chary (1981)		✓	✓		✓
Cheng & Yexia (2015)		✓	✓	✓	✓
Halamish (2019)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Halpern & Reinharz (1991)	✓				
Harkov (2017)	✓				
Helman (1992)		✓	✓		✓
Britannica (2022)		✓			
Jewish Virtual Library (2022) (Kibbutz Movement)	✓	✓	✓		✓
Jewish Virtual Library (2022) (Second Aliyah)	✓				
Israel Ministry of Aliyah and Integration (2022)	✓				
Kanovsky (1966)		✓		✓	

Lessem (1974)		✓	✓		✓
Levitan (1973)		✓			
Levitan (1970)		✓	✓	✓	✓
Melman (1970)		✓	✓	✓	✓
Moskovich & Achouch (2014)		✓	✓		
Moskovich (2018)		✓	✓		
Moskovich (2019)		✓	✓		
Near (1985)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Near (1997)		✓	✓	✓	✓
Near (2011)		✓	✓	✓	✓
Rosner (2017)		✓	✓	✓	✓
Rosner & Tannenbaum (1987)		✓			✓
Shur (1975)		✓	✓		
Spiro (2004)	✓		✓	✓	
Skolnik et al. (2002)		✓	✓		✓
Source: Authors.					

When the contents of the Kibbutz are examined, the features that make the Kibbutz a Kibbutz can be listed as follows;

1-There is a triggering external event/fact that enables the Kibbutz to be set up (called challenges in the following table).

2-Cooperation

3-Egalitarianism

4-Fraternity

5-Voluntariness

6-Political Stance

7-Youth Potential

8-An attempt to overcome challenges by establishing a social entity

In the second step, the elements with the main features of the Kibbutz and the tourism potential of Tunceli have been tabulated in the contents about Tunceli (Table 2). Features of the Kibbutz have been utilized as inclusion criteria, and contexts mentioned about those eight criteria about Tunceli have been selected and illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2*List Of Contents That Match The Inclusion Criteria*

Cited from	FEATURES OF KIBBUTZ								Total potential
	Challenges	Cooperation	Egalitarianism	Fraternity	Voluntariness	Political stance	Enterprise	Youth potential	
Ateş & Ateş (2019)									
Azar (2013)		✓		✓	✓				
Bulut (2013)		✓	✓	✓	✓				
Firat Development Agency (2016)	✓								✓
Hegem Foundation (2015)									✓
Municipality of Tunceli (2019)						✓			
Öktem (2008)	✓					✓			
Özgürel (2012)									
Özgürel et al., (2015a)	✓								
Özgürel et al., (2015b)	✓								
Pirha (2022)		✓	✓	✓					
Poyraz (2005)			✓		✓				

TR Ministry of Culture and Tourism (2022)									
Tunceli Culture and Tourism Directorate (2022)	✓								
Tunceli Governorate (2018)	✓								
Tunceli Provincial Directorate of Migration Management (2019)									✓
Turkish Grand National Assembly albums (Vol.1,2,3,4)							✓		
Turkish Statistical Institute (2020)	✓								
Yıldırım (2018)	✓				✓	✓			
Yüksel (2004)	✓						✓		
Source: Authors									

In Table 2, features of the Kibbutz can be found in Tunceli except attempt to form a social entity that fits the social structure. *Cooperation, egalitarianism, fraternity, voluntariness, political stance, and youth potential* are parts of the culture in Tunceli. Environmental challenges also remain, as the Kibbutz experienced. However, any attempt to overcome these challenges socially could not be found.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of both the Kibbutz model and the socio-cultural context of Tunceli reveals several key synergies that support the hypothesis of successfully implementing a Kibbutz-style rural tourism cooperative in the region. The Kibbutz model, built on the principles of cooperation, egalitarianism, and voluntarism, has demonstrated its effectiveness in transforming marginal areas into economically viable communities. Similarly, Tunceli shares a cultural heritage that emphasizes solidarity and cooperation, particularly through its Alevi values and left-leaning political inclinations. The results of this study are consistent with previous studies analyzing the success factors of the Kibbutz model (Blasi, 1977; Abramitzky, 2011). Kibbutzim, mainly organized around solidarity, egalitarianism, and volunteerism, provides examples that enable economic development in marginal areas (Near, 2011; Halamish, 2019). Similarly, the Alevi culture of Tunceli offers a suitable ground for adopting this model by emphasizing the values of cooperation, solidarity, and equality (Bulut, 2013; Öktem, 2008). However, it has been observed that these values are not embodied through cooperativism in Tunceli.

While the challenges faced by Kibbutzim during their formation—such as external pressures and the need for collective response—are echoed in Tunceli's geographic and economic isolation, a major difference lies in the absence of a collective social entity in Tunceli to channel these values into practical efforts. This gap presents both a challenge and an opportunity. The establishment of a Kibbutz-style cooperative would require significant organizational effort and external triggers, such as local government support or a strategic push from civil society.

Previous studies have shown that tourism cooperatives enable local people to benefit more fairly from income distribution and minimize the "leakage effect" caused by foreign investments (Mbaiwa, 2005; Richards & Hall, 2002). However, the legal and structural problems of cooperatives in Turkey (Albayram Doğan & Yercan, 2016; Serinikli & Kumkale, 2012) and the low trust of the public in cooperatives (Gureşci & Gönc, 2017) may limit the effectiveness of such initiatives. In contrast, strong local leadership and municipal support, as in the Ovacık Women's Cooperative case, can increase cooperatives' sustainability (Caylak & Akın, 2019). The success of the Ovacık Women's Cooperative in Tunceli, led by the Communist mayor, provides a strong precedent for how local political leadership can spearhead cooperative movements. The current political climate in Tunceli, aligned with cooperative principles, suggests that such an initiative could not only align with the cultural and political values of the community but also address the pressing issue of poverty by leveraging local tourism potential. Although the current local government in Tunceli no longer includes the "Communist Mayor," this does not pose a barrier to the establishment of Kibbutz-style cooperatives. The deeply rooted values of solidarity, egalitarianism, and cooperation in Tunceli's cultural and social fabric provide a solid foundation for sustainable cooperative initiatives, regardless of the political identity of the local leadership. As demonstrated in the Ovacık example, the success of a cooperative model lies primarily in community participation, effective use of local resources, and strengthening collective efforts.

The strong social bonds and culture of solidarity in Tunceli will continue to play a critical role in the establishment and development of cooperatives. Therefore, independent of the current political structure, it is feasible to implement Kibbutz-style rural tourism cooperatives, and the success of such initiatives will depend on community involvement and the effective mobilization of local dynamics.

In particular, Tunceli's rich natural and cultural landscapes offer a strong foundation for developing sustainable tourism. If managed through a cooperative structure, the benefits of tourism could be more equitably distributed among the local population, addressing both income generation and fair distribution. A well-structured cooperative could create employment, foster skills development, and enable the community to retain control over its resources, minimizing the risks associated with foreign investments or elite capture that often marginalize rural communities.

In summary, a Kibbutz-style cooperative model tailored to the unique conditions of Tunceli, supported by its strong cultural affinity for cooperation and egalitarianism, holds great promise for poverty alleviation through rural tourism. With the right leadership and community engagement, such a cooperative could serve as a blueprint for similar initiatives in other economically marginalized regions of Turkey. The literature also emphasizes that rural tourism can be used to reduce poverty and revitalize rural economies (Aref & Gill, 2009; Sharpley & Sharpley, 1997). However, it is stated that these benefits can only be achieved with management models that encourage local people's active participation and ensure fair income distribution (Fennell, 2006; Majee & Hoyt, 2011). The Kibbutz-style cooperative model attracts attention with its social solidarity and participatory decision-making processes (Cheng & Yexia, 2015; Rosner & Tannenbaum, 1987).

Future research could develop pilot projects to test the feasibility of Kibbutz-style cooperatives in economically disadvantaged regions such as Tunceli. Extensive sociological research could be conducted to understand local people's perspectives towards such initiatives, their motivations for participation, and possible barriers. In addition, comparative studies could be conducted to examine the success factors of Kibbutz or similar cooperative models in different countries and how these successes could be adapted to local contexts such as Tunceli.

For practical purposes, rural areas like Tunceli, municipalities, and local governments can encourage such initiatives by providing cooperatives financial support, infrastructure services, and training programs. Policymakers should simplify the legal framework and reduce bureaucratic barriers to cooperatives to facilitate their establishment and operation. Public education programs should be organized to raise awareness of the social benefits of cooperatives. Finally, cooperatives in Turkey should be encouraged to cooperate with successful international models. Information and experience can be shared, especially with successful examples like the Kibbutzim.

Ethical Approval

As this study is based on secondary data, obtaining ethical approval is not deemed necessary.

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