

## A Recommended Area For Rural Tourism And Recreation: Hızırilyas Village (Horasan-Erzurum)/Turkey

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### Abstract

This study recommends that Hızırilyas Village in Horasan County of Erzurum Province, which is located at North-East Turkey, having a potential of rural tourism and recreation with its natural resources and cultural richness should be utilized as a rural tourism and recreation area. According to a survey performed in the area especially in spring and summer months of 2012 and 2013; majorly organic agriculture is carried out in the village, and the village people, who are particularly interested in tourism, build farms to carry out organic agriculture. The village, which has a thermal water source and hot springs, is visited by people from nearby provinces, counties and villages every season. Zivin Creek, which runs through the village, is suitable for line-fishing. Woodland areas around Zivin Creek are used as picnic sites. Beekeeping is also practiced in the village having a rich flora. Local cuisine of the village also draws attention.

At the end of the study, frequency, percentage and chi-square analyses were applied to the data obtained through the questionnaires conducted to the local people and people coming to the village for tourism and recreation purposes using SPSS for Windows 18.00, and thus, rural tourism and recreation activities that can be performed in Hızırilyas Village were determined and recommendations were made therefor.

**Keywords:** Rural tourism, recreation, Hızırilyas, Erzurum, Turkey

### Introduction

Rural tourism has been widely acknowledged for its effectiveness in contributing to rural areas' development. With strong government support, rural tourism has developed in many countries during the last several decades (Park *et al.*, 2014).

The rural landscaping forms, emerging according to the primary engagements of people in rural areas, are grouped into cultural forest landscaping, agricultural landscaping, industrial landscaping and recreational landscaping with a general approach. Agricultural landscaping consists of agricultural lands and agricultural settlements. Recently, the longing for rural life triggered by the irregular urbanization problems has increased the interest in villages as agricultural settlements (Dirik, 2005).

In recent years, a great transformation is seen to occur in the understanding of tourism in Turkey as well, like the other countries of the world. Now, many people tend to perform such tourism activities nested within the nature, supporting the preservation of nature and cultural resources, rather than visiting holiday zones dominated by the triangle of sea-sun-sand.

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As people living in cities seek for leisure-recreation opportunity in rural landscapes at weekends or during other holidays, nearby mountains, shores of seas, lakes and rivers drawing attention with their landscapes have been made available for mass tourism. Rural landscaping has important functions such as being a food production location, constituting settlement ground for centralized industry, being a settlement area for people engaging in the activities of agriculture and other production-economy branches, and providing recreation opportunity for people living in cities (Koc & Sahin, 1999)

Rural areas are considered as such areas that are suitable not only for development of rural tourism among the types of tourism, but also for the “premises” of many types of tourisms sharing this environment. Types of tourism or touristic activities carried out directly based on the nature such as camp-caravan tourism, ecotourism, green tourism, cave tourism, stream tourism, plateau tourism, mountain tourism, winter sports tourism, hunting tourism, etc. may set good examples. These types of tourism use rural spaces as much as rural tourism does at least (Kiper & Yılmaz, 2008; Soykan, 1999)

According to the definition made by the European Union, rural tourism is described as the desire of people who want to spend their holidays in rural areas, seeing the rural legacy, and who like rural lifestyle (Serefoglu, 2009; Anonymous, 2003).

Recreational activities in rural areas such as walking, cycling, fishing, horse riding, natural activities and cultural tourism are deemed as a part of rural tourism. Although Agricultural Tourism, one of the Rural Tourism types, is often used to describe all tourism activities performed in rural areas, activities involving either tourism products directly connected with agricultural environment or agricultural products, or camping, educational visits, meals, recreational activities and farm products or handicrafts, are referred to as agricultural tourism (Serefoglu, 2009; Anonymous, 2007).

There are many studies conducted domestically and internationally with regard to rural tourism and recreation. These studies include Kesici (2012), Ozdemir Yılmaz & Kafa Gurol (2012), Akpınar Kulekci *et al.* (2012), Dimitrovski *et al.* (2011), Sharpley & Jepson (2011), Sezen & Yılmaz (2010), Williams and Shaw (2009), Cawle (2009), Karahan & Orhan (2008), Kiper & Yılmaz (2008), Uslu & Kiper (2006), Yılmaz (2004), Tribe *et al.* (2000). In the light of these studies Hızırilyas Village has been discussed as a recommended area for rural tourism and recreation.

In our country, attraction areas used for rural tourism purposes are too few in the Eastern Anatolia Region compared to other regions. One of the most important reasons of this is the fact that climate conditions are not so convenient. Hızırilyas Village in Horasan County, which is affiliated to Erzurum province located in the North-Eastern Anatolia Region, has a potential that will allow rural tourism with its features like hot springs, rural life, natural vegetation, eating and drinking culture. This study aims to provide recommendations on utilization of Hızırilyas Village as a rural tourism centre by exploiting its natural and cultural resources.

## Material and Method

Eastern Anatolia Region is divided into four sub-regions level II. TRA1 one of these sub-regions (Erzurum-Erzincan-Bayburt) region. TRA1 region have very different plant species, medicinal and aromatic plants (Çakal, 2013). Northeastern Anatolia Region classified as TRA1 has rich flora and fauna, fascinating topography and natural landscape of extraordinary beauty, high mountains, plateaus. 10 percent of endemic plants in Turkey is located in Erzurum (Anonim, 2014). Hızırilyas Village identified as research area is located in the TRA1.

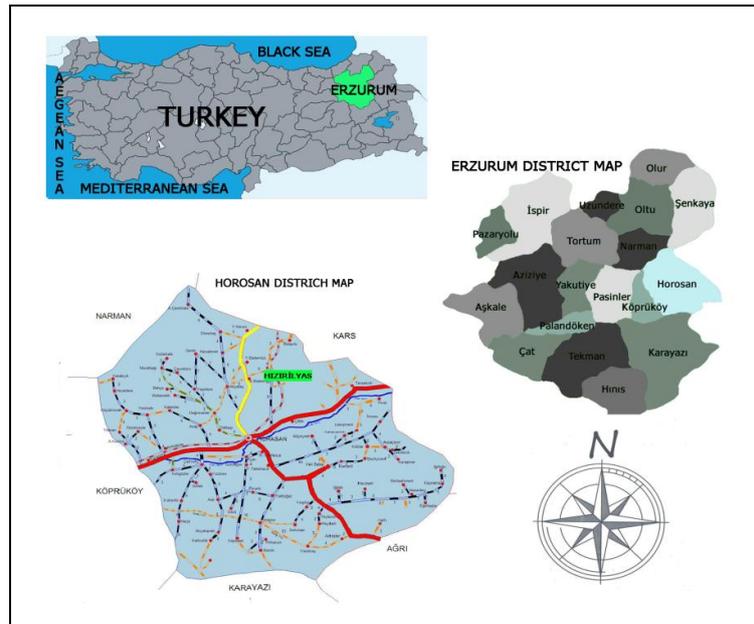
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Hızirilyas Village in Horasan county, which is affiliated to Erzurum province located in east of Turkey, was addressed as the study material. Hızirilyas Village is located at a distance of around 19 km to Horasan County, and 102 km to Erzurum. Horasan County, which remains at an important location in terms of transportation, is on the route of E80 highway, one of the important highway routes of Turkey. Besides being close to Turkey-Iran highway, Hızirilyas Village has a railway station with the railways extending to Istanbul to the west and Kars to the east.

Located inside the Erzincan-Erzurum-Pasinler depression, Horasan is established on Down Pasin Plain and by the side of Aras River. When the section where Hızirilyas Village is located is examined, volcanic series like andesite, trachyte, tuff and agglomerate, and clay stone, among eocene-aged rocks, conglomerate and marls are encountered (Gok, 2007). When Hızirilyas Village located at an elevation of 1660 m is examined for soil structure, brown and chestnut-coloured soil and lithosol soil, where step formation observed mostly at dip slopes is common are encountered. Hence, meadow-pasture areas allowing animal breeding are more common rather than agricultural activities.

Iran-Turan steppe elements are generally common on tectonic origin basins of Eastern Anatolia Region. Similar to steppes of Central Anatolia, herbaceous plants grow here (Atalay, 2002). While the base of Horasan basin is fully covered with herbaceous plants, since there are elevations exceeding 2000 m, step formation covers wide areas (Gok, 2007). When the vegetation maps of Hızirilyas is examined, it is seen to be also covered by step vegetation.

As a result of the works performed in Hızirilyas Village in 2009, a geothermal potential with a rate flow of 11 l/sec and 57 °C temperature from a depth of 64 meters was attained (Toy *et al.*, 2010). Water temperature of the hot spring situated in Kaplıca Quarter located at a distance of around 1.5 km at southeast of Hızirilyas Village has changed after the 1983 earthquake (Gok, 2007). Climatic features are similar to Eastern Anatolia continental climate. Winters are very hard and long, summers are hot and short. Zivin Creek, one of the most important branches of Aras River, passes through Hızirilyas Village. Study area is shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Study area

A survey work was conducted between April and October in 2012 and 2013 in the area to establish the study method. Hızırilyas Village was visited especially on holidays and weekends to conduct survey, and number of people coming for recreational activities such as spending holiday with the village people, entering the hot spring, having picnic was found to be between 80 and 100. Surveys were conducted in the area on different days, and questionnaire was conducted through one-to-one interview with 70 volunteers.

Frequency, percentage and chi-square analyses were applied to the data obtained as a result of the questionnaire study on SPSS for Windows 18.00 statistics package program.

### Rural Tourism And Recreation Potential of The Study Area

According to the investigations and field studies conducted in Hızırilyas Village, although the geothermal facility possessed by the village is highly poorly-maintained, due to the grade of the water, it is used intensively especially in summer months by people coming from nearby villages, counties, Erzurum Province and other nearby provinces.

Stated to be a source of healing for skin diseases, rheumatism, gynaecological diseases and bone calcification, the thermal water was determined to contain bicarbonate, chloride, sulphate, calcium and bicarbonate gas. Thanks to the efforts carried out by County Governorship of Horasan, the facilities situated in the area were partly improved, and two pools with 8 m length and 4 m width were built. Yet, a thermal water potential capable to meet the requirements of facilities with much higher capacity is available in the area. Serious efforts should be made to carry out promotion and facility establishment of the hot spring, which has an highly big reserve, and sulphur rate of which was proved to be useful for human health (Toy *et al.*, 2010). The area that was determined to have geothermal resources capable of meeting the requirements of a 900-bed thermal facility will become an important thermal tourism centre when utilized (**Figure 2**).



**Figure 2.** General view from Hızırilyas Village Hot Spring

Cuisine culture of Hızırilyas Village is similar to that of Erzurum and Horasan. While pastry is predominant, food are also made from the plants growing in the locality. Plants such as *Urtica dioica*, *Rumex crispus* L., *Polygonum aviculare*, *Portulaca oleracea*, *Asphodelus ramosus*, *Rumex acetocella*, *Agaricus campestris* and *Prangos uechritzii* grow naturally in the village. Stew is made with *Rumex crispus* L., *Polygonum aviculare*, *Portulaca oleracea*, *Urtica dioica* and *Asphodelus ramosus* plants together meat, and also a local food named “yalancı dolma” is made with mullein and bulgur. Fennel is pickled, which is an indispensable element of breakfasts. *Mentha pulegium* is used as spice in soups. Traditional cuisine of the village has the quality to serve eating & drinking tourism (**Figure 3**).



**Figure 3.** Plants growing naturally and made food with in the village

In Hizirilyas Village, *Salix alba* plant is encountered along Zivin Creek, and *Populus nigra*, *Rosa canina*, *Hippophae rhamnoides*, *Pinus sylvestris* plants are encountered within the village. Step plants wrapping in colours upon warming of the weather in spring draw the attention of birds, bees and butterflies. Sufficient flowering plant potential is available for beekeeping, bird and butterfly watching. Most common ones among these plants are *Hyoschyamus niger* L., *Lotus corniculatus* L., *Wiedemannia multifida* (L.) Bentham, *Ranunculus kotschy* Boiss., *Linaria genistifolia* (L.) Miller, *Saponaria prostrata* Willd., *Veronica gentianoides* Vahl., *Adonis aestivalis* L., *Anthemis tinctoria* L., *Carduus nutans* L. and *Achillea millefolium* L. Some of these plants are presented in Figure 4.

			
<i>Hyoschyamus niger</i> L.	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i> L.	<i>Wiedemannia multifida</i> (L.) Bentham	<i>Ranunculus kotschy</i> Boiss.
			
<i>Linaria genistifolia</i> (L.) Miller	<i>Saponaria prostrata</i> Willd.	<i>Anthemis tinctoria</i> L.	<i>Achillea millefolium</i> L.

**Figure 4.** Some flowering plants identified in Hizirilyas Village

In Hızirlyas Village, people make their living with agriculture and animal breeding. Relative increase of the land slope compared to plain base has diminished the parcel sizes to perform agriculture on, and since the possibility of irrigation is reduced, animal breeding is carried out along with agriculture. Hence, there are both agriculture and meadow-pasture lands in the village. Traditional life is still continued in the village (Figure 5).



**Figure 5.** Traditional life in Hızirlyas Village

People coming from nearby provinces, counties and villages to Hızirlyas Village for one day in summer also perform picnic activity. There is an area used as picnic site by the side of Zivin Creek. There are a few arbors, picnic tables and playground for small kids. People coming to the hot spring also perform rural recreation activity by having picnic (Figure 6).



**Figure 6.** Recreation areas available in the village

In recent years, an increase is seen in the number of people having summer houses built in Hızirlyas Village. Working and retired families who normally reside in the cities in the neighbourhood, or even in other provinces of Turkey, whose educational level is high and have professions, have their own summer houses built in the village. They spend their summer holidays in the village at their summer houses, supply their fruit & vegetable needs from their gardens where they grow organic products. Moreover, those who stay a bit longer turn their houses into ecological farms. They feed themselves with organic vegetables and fruit produced by them, organic eggs they obtain from the hens they breed, also engage in animal breeding and produce meat, milk, cheese and butter by themselves. They perform rural tourism and recreational activity with their lives nested within the nature (Figure 7).



**Figure 7.** Ecological life spaces nested within the nature in the village

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Zivin Creek allows water-based activities since it is a one of the high flow-rate creeks connected to Aras River. It has a potential to allow such activities as water ski, sportive line fishing. People coming to enter the hot spring and have picnic in the village also show interest in nature walks and cycling tours (Figure 8).



**Figure 8.** Potential to allow water-based recreation activities, nature walk and cycling tours

There is an historical bridge built by the Russians in the village. The historical bridge in Hızirilyas village draws the attention of the visitors. It could be utilized as a resource in terms of History and Culture Tourism (Figure 9).



**Figure 9.** The historical bridge in the village

Summer houses suitable for use as lodging house and motel are built in the village. Number of these houses is increasing day by day. These houses are capable of meeting the requirements of visitors coming to the village for recreational purposes (Figure 10).



**Figure 10.** Summer houses suitable for use as lodging house and motel in the village

Within the scope of Horasan Culture and Art Festival held since July 2011, jereed competition is performed, and tents are set up and people have picnic. These activities performed within the

scope of Culture and Art Festival show that Hizirilyas Village is a suitable area for Festival Tourism (Figure 11).



**Figure 11.** The jereed competition performed in Hizirilyas Village

The authentic features, natural spaces and vegetation in the area further allow tourism activities such as photo-safari, nature walk, grass ski and cycling.

#### **Statistical Evaluation of the Questionnaires applied to People**

According to the results obtained from the questionnaire study conducted, it was seen that, of the study participants, 42.9% were female, 57.1% were male, 12.9% were at the age of 19 years old and younger, 15.7% were at the age of 20 to 30, 20% were at the age of 31 to 40, 22.9% were at the age of 41 to 50, 15.7% were at the age of 51 to 60, and 12.9% were at the age of 61 and older, 2.9% were illiterate, 10% were elementary school graduates, 14.3% were secondary school graduates, 35.7% were high school graduates, 27.1% were university graduates, and 10% were master graduates, 24.3% were civil servants, 7.1% were tradesmen, 5.7% were workers, 18.6% were students, 14.3% were housewives, 12.9% were retired, 2.9% were unemployed, 68.6% were married, 31.4% were single, 5.7% had a monthly income of 0 to 500 TL, 8.6% had a monthly income of 500 to 1000 TL, 17.1% had a monthly income of 1000 to 1500 TL, 17.1% had a monthly income of 1500 to 2000 TL, and 51.4% had a monthly income higher than 2000 TL, 22.9% were resident in Hizirilyas Village, 22.9% were resident in Horasan County, 5.7% were resident in nearby villages, 4.3% were resident in other counties or villages of Erzurum, 34% were resident in Erzurum, 7.1% were resident in provinces other than Erzurum, and 2.9% were resident abroad, 18.6% were present in Hizirilyas Village since it was their permanent residence, 22.9% were present since their summer houses were there, 22.9% were present for having picnic, 27.1% were present for entering the hot spring, 8.6% were present for taking holiday, 64.3% had knowledge about rural tourism and recreation, and 35.7% did not have knowledge about rural tourism and recreation.

To the question “Would you like your village to be opened for tourism?”, 87.1% of the questionnaire participants answered “yes”, 8.6% answered “no”, and 4.3% answered “I am hesitant”.

To the question “If you do not want to contribute to tourism, what is the most important reason of this?”, 6.25% of the questionnaire participants answered “I do not know foreign language”, 18.75% answered “I am against opening of my village for tourism”, 25% answered “I think tourism will affect culture of my village negatively”, 6.25% answered “my family would contest”, 6.25% answered “my health would not allow”, 37.5% answered “I would not have time”.

To the question “Do you think tourism and recreation possibilities of Hızırilyas are sufficient?”, 28.6% of the questionnaire participants answered “yes”, and 71.4% answered “no”. To the question “Would you like Hızırilyas to be utilized as tourism centre?”, 87.1% of the questionnaire participants answered “yes”, and 12.9% answered “no”.

To the question “Which recreational and touristic activity do you perform most in Hızırilyas?”, 30% of the questionnaire participants answered “having picnic”, 10% answered “performing nature walk”, 48.6% answered “entering the hot spring”, and 11.4% answered “line fishing”.

To the question “If you came to Hızırilyas as a visitor and you need to spend the night in Hızırilyas Village, where would you like to stay?”, 24.3% of the questionnaire participants answered “in a village house with the house owner”, 11.4% answered “in a village house without the house owner”, 24.3% answered “in a hotel, if any”, 18.6% answered “in a village house with a family operating it as a lodging house”, and 21.4% answered “in the camping site, caravan or tent”.

To the question “If you came for holiday, how long do you usually stay in this village?”, 17.1% of the questionnaire participants answered “I come for one day”, 28.6% answered “less than one week”, 31.4% answered “one week”, 7.1% answered “more than one week”, and 15.7% answered “a few weeks”.

Some questions were asked to the participants to determine their views on and demands from Hızırilyas village in terms of tourism and recreation, and frequency analysis was conducted.

Answers given to the questionnaire item “Which feature of Hızırilyas do you like most?” are presented in Table 1 by their order of importance.

**Table 1.** Order of importance of the questionnaire item “Which feature of Hızırilyas do you like most?”

Order of importance	Its hot springs		Its picnic site		Its vegetation		Its topographic features		Its traditional life	
	f	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	f	%
1	55	<b>78.6</b>	9	12.9	3	4.3	1	1.4	2	2.9
2	10	14.3	49	<b>70.0</b>	10	14.3	1	1.4	2	2.9
3	5	7.1	8	11.4	34	<b>48.6</b>	6	8.6	16	22.9
4	-	-	3	4.3	15	21.4	30	<b>42.9</b>	21	30.0
5	-	-	1	1.4	8	11.4	32	45.7	29	<b>41.4</b>

When we examine the table, to the question “Which feature of Hızırilyas do you like most”, 78.6% of the study participants were seen to give the answer of “its hot springs” in the 1<sup>st</sup> place, 70% were seen to give the answer of “its picnic site” in the 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 48.6% were seen to give the answer of “its vegetation” in the 3<sup>rd</sup> place, 42.9% were seen to give the answer of “its topographic features” in the 4<sup>th</sup> place, and 41.4% were seen to give the answer of “its traditional life” in the 5<sup>th</sup> place.

Answers given to the questionnaire item “What is Hızırilyas most (top 5) known for?” are presented in *Table 2* by their order of importance.

**Table 2.** Order of importance of the questionnaire item “What is Hızırilyas most (top 5) known for?”

	hot springs		cuisine		traditional features		local products		historical structure		agricultural areas		natural vegetation		Fauna	
	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	66	<b>94.3</b>	1	1.4	3	4.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	2	2.9	11	15.7	10	14.3	5	7.1	5	7.1	18	<b>25.7</b>	19	27.1	1	1.4
3	2	2.9	14	20.0	17	<b>24.3</b>	10	14.3	-	-	16	22.9	8	11.4	4	5.7
4	-	-	18	<b>25.7</b>	15	21.4	11	15.7	3	4.3	13	18.6	7	10.0	2	2.9
5	-	-	11	15.7	8	11.4	25	<b>35.7</b>	4	5.7	10	14.3	6	8.6	6	8.6
6	-	-	11	15.7	4	5.7	12	17.1	18	<b>25.7</b>	6	8.6	13	18.6	5	7.1
7	-	-	1	1.4	11	15.7	4	5.7	24	34.3	4	5.7	13	<b>18.6</b>	13	18.6
8	-	-	3	4.3	2	2.9	3	4.3	16	22.9	3	4.3	4	5.7	39	<b>55.7</b>

When we examine the table, to the question “Which feature of Hızırilyas do you like most”, 94.3% of the study participants were seen to give the answer of “its hot springs” in the 1<sup>st</sup> place, 25.7% were seen to give the answer of “its agricultural areas” in the 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 24.3% were seen to give the answer of “its traditional features” in the 3<sup>rd</sup> place, 25.7% were seen to give the answer of “its cuisine” in the 4<sup>th</sup> place, 35.7% were seen to give the answer of “its local products” in the 5<sup>th</sup> place, 25.7% were seen to give the answer of “its historical structure” in the 6<sup>th</sup> place, 18.6% were seen to give the answer of “its natural vegetation” in the 7<sup>th</sup> place, and 55.7% were seen to give the answer of “its fauna” in the 8<sup>th</sup> place.

Answers given to the questionnaire item “What types of landscape impress you most in Hızırilyas?” are presented in *Table 3* by their order of importance.

**Table 3.** Order of importance of the questionnaire item “What types of landscape impress you most in Hızırilyas?”

Order of importance	Rural life landscape		Natural vegetation		Mountains		Agricultural activities		Zivin Creek	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	27	<b>38.6</b>	16	22.8	8	11.4	3	4.3	20	28.6
2	20	28.6	13	18.6	6	8.6	4	5.7	25	<b>35.7</b>
3	12	17.1	23	<b>32.9</b>	13	18.6	9	12.9	13	18.6
4	4	5.7	17	24.3	23	<b>32.9</b>	18	25.7	6	8.6
5	7	10.0	1	1.4	20	28.5	36	<b>51.4</b>	6	8.6

When we examine the table, to the question “What types of landscape impress you most in Hızırilyas?”, 38.6% of the study participants were seen to give the answer of “rural life landscape” in the 1<sup>st</sup> place, 35.7% were seen to give the answer of “Zivin Creek” in the 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 32.9% were seen to give the answer of “natural vegetation” in the 3<sup>rd</sup> place, 32.9% were

seen to give the answer of “mountains” in the 4<sup>th</sup> place, and 51.4% were seen to give the answer of “agricultural activities” in the 5<sup>th</sup> place.

Answers given to the questionnaire item “Which of the following tourism and recreation activities do you think can be performed in Hızırilyas?” are presented in Table 4 by their order of importance.

**Table 4.** Order of importance of the questionnaire item “Which of the following tourism and recreation activities (top 5 by order of importance) can be performed in Hızırilyas?”

	Order of importance									
	1		2		3		4		5	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Thermal Tourism	64	<b>91.4</b>	2	2.9	-	-	-	-	-	-
Flora tourism	2	2.9	3	4.3	4	5.7	1	1.4	4	5.7
Nature walk	15	21.4	6	8.6	10	14.3	6	8.6	-	-
Festival tourism	1	1.4	16	<b>22.9</b>	10	14.3	8	11.4	9	12.9
Eating & drinking tourism	6	8.6	14	20.0	6	8.6	2	2.9	-	-
Agriculture-farm tourism	9	12.9	11	15.7	11	<b>15.7</b>	3	4.3	-	-
Bird and butterfly watching	1	1.4	2	2.9	3	4.3	3	4.3	-	-
Camp-caravan tourism	-	-	6	8.6	6	8.6	6	8.6	9	12.9
Plant watching	-	-	2	2.9	1	1.4	5	7.1	4	5.7
Line fishing	1	1.4	8	11.4	7	10.0	9	<b>12.9</b>	12	17.1
Grass ski	-	-	2	2.9	2	2.9	1	1.4	3	4.3
Tradition-customs tourism	-	-	1	1.4	5	7.1	4	5.7	3	4.3
Historical site tourism	-	-	-	-	1	1.4	2	2.9	1	1.4
Nature walk with horse	2	2.9	-	-	1	1.4	4	5.7	11	<b>15.7</b>

When we examine Table 4, to the question “Which of the following tourism and recreation activities do you think can be performed in Hızırilyas”, 91.46% of the study participants were seen to give the answer of “Thermal Tourism” in the 1<sup>st</sup> place, 22.9% were seen to give the answer of “Festival Tourism” in the 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 15.7% were seen to give the answer of “Agriculture-Farm Tourism” in the 3<sup>rd</sup> place, 12.9% were seen to give the answer of “Line Fishing” in the 4<sup>th</sup> place, and 15.7% were seen to give the answer of “Nature Walk with Horse” in the 5<sup>th</sup> place.

Answers given to the questionnaire item “What factors do you think hinder the development of tourism in Hızırilyas?” are presented in Table 5 by their order of importance.

**Table 5.** Order of importance of the questionnaire item “What factors do you think hinder the development of tourism in Hızırilyas?” (top 3)

Order of import.	Difficulty of transportation		Inconvenience of climate		Inadequacy of land conditions		Inadequacy of security		Inadequacy of health facilities		Inadequacy of education		Traditional structure	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	16	<b>22.9</b>	15	21.4	4	5.7	10	14.3	11	15.7	3	4.3	10	14.3
2	5	7.1	27	<b>38.6</b>	8	11.4	4	5.7	9	12.9	9	12.9	8	11.4
3	15	21.4	8	11.4	9	12.9	5	7.1	10	14.3	12	<b>17.1</b>	12	<b>17.1</b>

When we examine the table, to the question “What factors do you think hinder the development of tourism in Hızırilyas?”, 22.9% of the study participants were seen to give the answer of “difficulty of transportation” in the 1<sup>st</sup> place, 38.6% were seen to give the answer of “inconvenience of climate” in the 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 17.1% were seen to give the answer of “inadequacy of education” and “traditional structure” in the 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

Answers given to the questionnaire item “Which of the following activities would you like to be available in Hızırilyas?” are presented in Table 6 by their order of importance.

**Table 6.** Order of importance of the questionnaire item “Which of the following activities would you like to be available in Hızırilyas?”

Order of import.	Camping sites		Leisure sites		View terraces		Touring paths in nature		Picnic sites		Facilities such as tea garden, restaurant		Playgrounds for kids, sports facilities	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	13	18.6	35	<b>50.0</b>	1	1.4	3	4.3	7	10.0	10	14.3	3	4.3
2	16	<b>22.9</b>	13	18.6	3	4.3	10	14.3	13	18.6	12	17.1	3	4.3
3	18	25.7	6	8.6	3	4.3	9	12.9	22	<b>31.4</b>	8	11.4	4	5.7
4	9	12.9	7	10.0	6	8.6	13	18.6	13	18.6	18	<b>25.7</b>	5	7.1
5	12	17.1	5	7.1	9	12.9	19	<b>27.1</b>	5	7.1	8	11.4	12	17.1
6	1	1.4	3	4.3	17	24.3	7	10.0	10	14.3	11	15.7	19	<b>27.1</b>
7	1	1.4	1	1.4	31	<b>44.3</b>	9	12.9	-	-	3	4.3	24	34.3

According to the results obtained from the questionnaire for participants to determine the activities they would like to be available in Hızırilyas, , 50% of the participants were seen to give the answer of “leisure sites” in the 1<sup>st</sup> place, 22.9% were seen to give the answer of “camping sites” in the 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 31.4% were seen to give the answer of “picnic sites” in the 3<sup>rd</sup> place, 25.7% were seen to give the answer of “facilities such as tea garden, restaurant” in the 4<sup>th</sup> place, 27.1% were seen to give the answer of “touring paths in nature” in the 5<sup>th</sup> place, 27.1% were seen to give the answer of “playgrounds for kids, sports facilities” in the 6<sup>th</sup> place, and 44.3% were seen to give the answer of “view terraces” in the 7<sup>th</sup> place.

Certain questions about the subject matter were asked to the study participants to determine their preferences by their gender, age and education, and chi-square analysis was applied to understand whether there are differences among them in terms of the answers they have given. All chi-square values for the differences among them in terms of the answers they gave to the questions were found to be statistically insignificant with the significance level  $p > 0.05$ . These results show that there is not difference among the study participants by their gender, age and education in terms of the answers they have given to the questions.

A significant correlation was found between professions, marital statuses and income levels of the participants, and their the answers given to several questions (Table 7).

**Table 7.** Answers having significant correlation with profession, marital status and income level

Demographic Feature	Question	Answer	$\chi^2$	P
<b>Profession</b>	What is Hizirilyas most known for?	Its historical structure	52.480	0.029*
	Which recreational and touristic activity do you most perform in Hizirilyas?	Line fishing	33.787	0.038*
	Which of the following activities would you like to be available in Hizirilyas?	Touring paths in nature	58.463	0.047*
<b>Marital Status</b>	What factors do you think hinder the development of tourism in Hizirilyas?	Inadequacy of land conditions	10.399	0.006**
	Which of the following activities would you like to be available in Hizirilyas?	Camping sites	13.349	0.038*
	Which of the following recreation activities do you think can be performed in Hizirilyas?	Thermal tourism	4.744	0.029*
<b>Income Level</b>	What factors do you think hinder development of tourism in Hizirilyas?	Inadequacy of education	12.944	0.044*
	Which of the following activities would you like to be available in Hizirilyas?	Picnic sites	41.145	0.004**

As seen in *Table 7*, chi-square values for the difference between the study participants by their profession groups in terms of the answer “its historical structure” to the question “What is Hizirilyas most known for”, the answer “line fishing” to the question “Which recreational and touristic activity to you most perform in Hizirilyas”, and the answer “touring paths in nature” to the question “Which of the following activities would you like to be available in Hizirilyas” were found to be significant with the significance level of  $p < 0.05$ .

Chi-square values for the difference among the study participants by their marital statuses in terms of the answer “inadequacy of land conditions” to the question “What factors do you think hinder development of tourism in Hizirilyas”, the answer “camping sites” to the question “Which of the following activities would you like to be available in Hizirilyas”, and the answer “thermal tourism” to the question “Which of the following tourism and recreation activities do you think can be performed in Hizirilyas” were found to be significant with the significance level of  $p < 0.05$ .

Chi-square values for the difference among the study participants by their income levels in terms of the answer “inadequacy of education” to the question “What factors do you think hinder development of tourism in Hizirilyas”, and the answer “picnic sites” to the question “Which of the following activities would you like to be available in Hizirilyas” were found to be significant with the significance level of  $p < 0.05$ .

In terms of the profession of study participants, to the question “What is Hizirilyas most known for?”, 53% of those having the professions of civil servant and housewife answered “its natural vegetation”, whereas, 67% of those having other professions answered “its agricultural areas”. In terms of the profession of study participants, to the question “Which recreational and touristic activity do you most perform in Hizirilyas?”, 47% of those having the professions of civil servant and student answered “having picnic”, whereas, more than 60% of those having the professions of tradesman, farmer, housewife and retired answered “entering the hot spring”. In terms of the profession of study participants, to the question “Which of the following activities would you like to be available in Hizirilyas?”, 45% of those having the professions of tradesman, worker, farmer and unemployed answered “having sites”, whereas, 30% of those having the professions of civil servant answered “touring paths in nature”.

## Conclusion

As a result of the survey studies conducted in the study area, data collected and one-to-one questionnaires conducted with local and visitor people; Hızırilyas Village was concluded to be a rural tourism area which can be recommended primarily for thermal tourism with its hot spring resources.

The jereed competition performed in Hızırilyas Village within the scope of Horasan Culture and Art Festival held conventionally in the village has ensured the village to be known for festival tourism. Festival tourism has appeared in the second importance place according to the questionnaire results, as well.

Number of families who reside in nearby provinces and counties in winter months and who have summer houses and farms built in Hızırilyas Village and live an ecologic life in summer months is increasing day by day. Agriculture-farm tourism is seen to be a recommendable type of tourism according to the questionnaire results, as well.

Since Zivin Creek is a high flow-rate creek, it may allow performance of water-based activities, primarily line fishing. Line fishing appears in the top places in questionnaire results, as well.

As seen in the questionnaire results, a great majority of the participants have knowledge about tourism and recreation, are eager for opening of the village for tourism, and are willing to contribute if it opened for tourism. What they want to contribute most is lodging house operating and performing guidance. Participants want planning of leisure sites such as bungalow houses, lodging houses, motels in Hızırilyas Village primarily, and of camping sites as important in the second place.

Hızırilyas Village draws attention with its local cuisine, traditional life and natural vegetation. But it does not take part in the top places according to ordering of importance in questionnaire results. Güvenç and Kaya (1996) stated that plants such as *Urtica dioica*, *Prangos uechritzii*, *Polygonum aviculare*, *Portulaca oleracea*, *Rumex acetocella*, *Asphodelus ramosus*, *Mentha pulegium*, *Agaricus campestris* grow naturally in Erzurum's vegetation, and that they are exploited as vegetables. These plants are encountered in the study area, as well, and used in food making.

Plants growing naturally in the study area and used in food making, salads, pickles, and food made of paste as a traditional habit constitute the eating & drinking culture and contribute to rural tourism. As stated also by Kesici (2012), our local food and beverage culture that has an indisputable complementary characteristic in rural tourism activities may play important roles in providing a destination image anywhere in the country. When looked at the examples in the world, rural tourism and gastronomy tourism are complementary to each other.

A project has been produced for Hızırilyas Village within the scope of rural recreation area planning taking the observations and the expectations of questionnaire participants into consideration. Tent camping site, bungalow houses, picnic site, horse riding field, copse, salmon facility, view terraces, restaurant, tea garden, local product sale points and touring paths have been included in the project. New hot spring facilities have been planned, since existing hot spring facilities are very poorly-maintained. The plants used in the project have been chosen among the plants capable of growing in the conditions of Erzurum and Horasan, such as *Acer negundo*, *Acer platanoides*, *Acer pseudoplatanus*, *Betula pendula*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Eleagnus angustifolia*, *Fraxinus americana*, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Picea abies*, *Picea pungens* Hoopsii, *Pinus sylvestris*, *Prunus cerasifera* Pisardii Nigra, *Salix babylonica*, *Berberis thunbergii*



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