

## **A Study of Awareness of Cultural Heritage: Sivas Sample**

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**ABSTRACT:** *This study analyzed the awareness of the students at Cumhuriyet University toward the cultural heritage of the city of Sivas. The study set out from the result of another study carried out previously at the exploratory level and limited number of students<sup>1</sup>. The findings of the previous study revealed that the cultural heritage of the city was not known enough by the university students.*

*This study followed three-stage process. In the first stage, The Scale of Cultural Heritage Awareness applied in the previous study was developed, and a survey was applied to the students at Cumhuriyet University central campus. In this stage, students' levels of awareness for the cultural values of the city were detected, and Mann Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis H tests were conducted to determine whether there were differences between various groups.*

*In the second stage of the study, four separate focus groups were created in order to determine the reasons of the low levels of cultural heritage awareness of the students who were reached via pollsters and surveys. The focus-group studies dwelled on the suggestions students developed in an effort to improve students' views and awareness of the cultural heritage. In the last section of the study, a focus-group meeting was held with the tourism representatives in Sivas, the results of this meeting were shared, and solution offers were developed in order to raise awareness<sup>1</sup>.*

**Keywords:** *Cultural Heritage, Awareness, Sivas*

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Cultural heritage can be defined as the function of passing on the knowledge to the next generations, resulting from the oral or nonverbal traditions, the types of traditional production, performance arts, applications in social life, rituals, festivals, and, most importantly, experiences created by the past generations (Jokilehto, 2005: 16; Vecco, 2010: 622). The concepts of heritage mentioned here are intangible ones. Apart from these intangible elements; the tangible elements are cultural structures, temples or sanctuaries, bridges, and monuments and buildings having a cultural value, all of which were inherited by past generations (Unesco, 2012:3).

In order for a cultural asset to be accepted as a heritage, it must be owned by the society. A cultural asset should be accepted and protected by society, its continuity should be ensured if it is an intangible cultural asset, and it should be recognized by people. Only if these conditions are provided, a cultural asset will be accepted as a heritage (Mourato and Mazzanti, 2002: 51).

On the other hand, cultural heritages are of importance for their environments. As a result of the increasing awareness of cultural heritage, so many tourists will want to visit these places (Ratanakomut, 2006: 5). With the tourists arriving, rest areas, refreshments facilities, transport sector, and giftware industry will develop and create the possibility of employment. Thus, the awareness of cultural heritage may be seen as an important element (Shankar and Swamy, 2013; Bedate, 2004: 101).

Furthermore, awareness is a significant component in the protection of cultural heritage. The people living in the neighborhood of a cultural heritage may harm it when they have not enough conscious (Unesco, 1972). In the cases of lacking enough conscious for intangible cultural heritages, these intangible cultural heritages are on the risk of being extinction. When there is not sufficient awareness for tangible cultural assets, these assets could not be protected and are damaged (Unesco, 1999; Unesco, 2003).

Due to the abovementioned reasons, the levels of awareness of the cultural heritage stakeholders must be improved. Awareness is an important component both for the protection of cultural heritage and for transforming the cultural heritage to a gain factor (Dümcke and Gnedovsky, 2013: 7).

This study focuses on students' level of awareness of cultural heritage. In accordance with the obtained results, it was evaluated what can be done to increase the levels of awareness of cultural heritage in Sivas.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

When analyzed, the previous studies are seen to generally focus on the definition of the concept of cultural heritage (Unesco, 2012; Jokilehto, 2005; Vecco, 2010; Alzahrani, 2013), the protection of cultural heritage assets (Shankar and Swamy, 2013; Unesco, 1972; Teo and Huang, 1995; Unesco, 2013), the economic values of cultural heritage assets (Ruijgrok, 2006; Kim, et. al., 2007; Mazzanti, 2002; Choi, et. al., 2010; Bowitz and Ibenholt, 2009; Badate, 2004; Mazzanti, 2003), and the administration of cultural heritage (McKercher et. al., 2005; Aas, et. al., 2005; Taylor, 2007).

Studies on the awareness of cultural heritage are limited. In this topic, Ratanakomut (2006), and Shankar and Swamy have carried out studies. Ratanakomut (2006) suggested that awareness of cultural heritage of the society is based on the factors such as being explorer, respect, regulations, reviving the cultural heritage and rewarding in order to raise awareness. He also emphasized that it is important to increase and maintain the awareness of cultural heritage.

Shankar and Swamy (2013) also touched on the awareness of cultural heritage in their study. They pointed out that the awareness of cultural heritage is an important factor in terms of protection and administration of the cultural heritage, creating awareness takes time, and it needs local support. It was also emphasized that awareness is generally the most well-known and accentuated component of the cultural heritage administration and this is one of the most effective ways of providing the respect of public towards the cultural heritage and protecting it.

## III. METHOD

A three-stage approach was followed in this study carried out to determine the awareness of the students at Cumhuriyet University toward the cultural heritage of the city of Sivas. In the first stage, students were applied a face-to-face survey with the method of quota sampling; in the second stage, four separate group works composed of students were performed. In the last stage, a focus-group meeting was held with the tourism representatives in Sivas.

In the first stage of the study, the survey form that was created by interviewing with the representatives of the provincial directorate of culture and tourism consists of 7 sections. The first 6 sections are the questions prepared to determine the awareness of the students at Cumhuriyet University toward the cultural heritage of the city of Sivas. *The Scale of Cultural Heritage Awareness* developed by the researchers in a previous study was reviewed and enriched as a result of the assets in the report of Protecting the Cultural Heritage and Developing the Tourism in Sivas prepared by The Governorship of Sivas The Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism in 2001, and the interviews with the officials in The Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism. Cultural heritage assets consists of the topics of *mosques, madrasah, museums, bridges, inns, mansions, handicrafts, local dishes, cultural and art activities / festivals, minstrels and the culture of minstrelhood, folk songs and folk dances*. There are 62 items concerning to cultural heritage in the scale.

In the first part of the survey, students were asked how much knowledge they have about the outstanding *historical structures* in Sivas and whether they have seen those structures. In the second part, they were asked how much knowledge they have about the *handicrafts* in Sivas and whether they have buy them; in the third part, about the prominent foods in *Sivas cuisine* and whether they have tasted them; in the fourth part, about the *activities* performed in Sivas and whether they have attended those activities. In the fifth part, students were asked about the minstrels who are living/lived in Sivas, their level of knowledge about the minstrels, and whether they have listened to those minstrels. In the sixth part, there are questions concerning the students' knowledge and experiences about the *minstrelsy culture, Sivas folk songs and folk dances*.

In the scale of *knowledge*, participants were asked how much they know about the cultural assets in Sivas (1: I don't know, 2: I know a little, 3: I know well); in the scale of *experience*, *i*) how often they visit historical structure (1: I have never visited, 2: I have visited a few times, 3: I have visited several times), *ii*) how often they purchase handicrafts (1: I have never purchased, 2: I have purchased a few times, 3: I have purchased several times), *iii*) how often they eat local dishes (1: I have never eaten, 2: I have eaten a few times, 3: I have eaten several times), *iv*) how often they attend the activities (1: I have never attended, 2: I have attended a few times, 3: I have attended several times), *v*) how often they listened to minstrels (1: I have never listened, 2: I have listened a few times, 3: I have listened several times), *vi*) how often they visit intangible culture, etc. (1: never ... - 3: several times ...).

Survey forms finalized by reviewing through pre-test were applied to 50 students chosen with convenience sampling method between November and December 2014 through 3% sample received via quota sampling from 40.000 students at Cumhuriyet University central campus. Within the scope of the research, 1200 students were applied survey by face-to-face method, and after eliminating incomplete and incorrectly filled survey forms, total 1128 survey forms were evaluated. Pollsters consist of 13 selected and educated students at the Vocational School of Tourism Management.

In the second section of the research, four separate group works were performed, one of which consists of the pollster students, and three of which consist of the students having participated in the survey. In the focus-group study, the main topics were students' thoughts toward the awareness of cultural heritage, their / other students' awareness, their suggestions for raising the awareness, and so on.

In the last section of the research, a focus-group meeting was held with the tourism representatives in Sivas in August 2015.

#### IV. THE RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses created in the scope of the study are the following:

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a statistically significant difference between whether students are from Sivas and their awareness toward cultural heritage.

H<sub>2</sub>: There is a statistically significant difference between students' levels of income and their awareness toward cultural heritage.

H<sub>3</sub>: There is a statistically significant difference between students' classes and their awareness toward cultural heritage.

H<sub>4</sub>: There is a statistically significant difference between the duration students lived in Sivas and their awareness toward cultural heritage.

H<sub>5</sub>: There is a statistically significant difference between the satisfaction of the students from living in Sivas and their awareness toward cultural heritage.

H<sub>6</sub>: There is a statistically significant difference between level of interest students have for culture tourism and their awareness toward cultural heritage.

#### V. ANALYSIS OF DATA

The data obtained from the research were evaluated with SPSS statistical software. 1128 survey forms were assessed in terms of compliance with the t test and variance analysis, and nonparametric tests were applied since the data did not comply with the normal distribution. The averages of variances in the scale were calculated and grouped by their main topics. In the scale, 24 historical artifacts were evaluated under the title of "historical structures"; 5 handicrafts in "handicrafts"; 8 local dishes in "local dishes"; 14 activities in "activities"; 7 minstrels in "minstrels"; and 4 intangible cultural heritage in "ICH". Furthermore, the mean scores of the scales of knowledge and experience were taken, and their *awareness* scores were calculated.

In line with the developed hypotheses, whether students' awareness of cultural heritage show differences by *i*) whether they are from Sivas, *ii*) their income, and *iii*) their classes was analyzed with Mann Whitney U test; and by *i*) the duration the students live in Sivas, *ii*) the satisfaction they have for living in Sivas, and *iii*) their level of interest for culture tourism was evaluated with Kruskal Wallis H test.

#### VI. FINDINGS

##### 6.1. Descriptive Findings

When looked at the demographic properties of the students having participated in the study, it is seen that genders show almost equal distribution (Table 1). When it comes to the age distribution, the students under and over 20 show equal distribution, whereas, by level of income, participants having income of 500 TL and under constitute about one-fifth of all participants. A-third of the participants are first-grade students and the rest are upper-grade ones. The duration students reside in Sivas comprises of three groups; a group of 16,3% including a part of the first-grade students lived in Sivas for at most three months at the time of conducting the study. A group of 54,1%, the least majority of which is the second-grade students, had been living in Sivas for between 1 and 5 years; whereas 29,6% of the participants who are from Sivas or whose families were residing in Sivas had been living in this city for more than 5 years. About one-third of the students are from Sivas, and 6,6% families of those students reside in the counties of Sivas.

**Table 1.** Demographic Features of the Students Participating in the Study

Variations	Groups	f	%	Variations	Groups	f	%
<b>Gender</b>	Female	578	51,2	<b>Years of residence</b>	Fewer than 1 year	184	16,3
	Male	550	48,8		1-5 years	610	54,1
<b>Age</b>	20 years and under	558	49,5		Over 5 years	334	29,6
	Over 20 years	570	50,5	<b>Hometown</b>	Sivas	404	35,8
<b>Personal Income / Allowance</b>	Under 500 TL	241	21,4		Out of Sivas	724	64,2
	Over 500 TL	887	78,6	<b>Place of Residence of Family</b>	Sivas city centre	324	28,7
					Sivas county	75	6,6
			Out of Sivas		729	64,7	
<b>Grade</b>	First-grade	384	34				
	Upper-grades	744	66				

The faculties and schools at which the students are studying are the following: Faculty of Engineering (15,8%), Faculty of Education (14,6%), Faculty of Letters (13,6%), Faculty of Economy and Administrative Sciences (13,1%), Cumhuriyet Vocational High School (8,6%), Sivas Vocational High School (7,2%), Vocational Health High School (3,7%), Faculty of Theology (3,3%), Faculty of Medicine (3,2%), Faculty of Science (3%), Faculty of Communication (2,3%), Faculty of Dentistry (1,3%), Faculty of Fine Arts (0,8%), Faculty of Veterinary Science (0,7%), Faculty of Architecture (0,4%), Faculty of Technology (0,4%), Faculty of Pharmacy (0,3%) Vocational School of Tourism and Hotel Management (0,2%), and School of Physical Education and Sports (0,1%).

**6.2. Findings regarding General Awareness**

Students' views concerning cultural assets were summarized in 6 titles in Table 2. When the scores in the scale of awareness between 1 and 1,65 are regarded as low, 1, 66 and 2,32 as medium, and 2,33 and 3 as high, the awareness toward *activities* such as festivals (A.O.= 1,27), toward *intangible cultural heritageassets* such as folk songs, folk dances and tradition of minstrelsy (A.O.=1,51), and toward *minstrels* the city has grown up (A.O.=1,64) is seen to be extremely low. Students' awareness toward *handicrafts* such as silversmithing, cutlery (A.O.=1,72), *historical structures* such as mosques, madrasahs, mansions (A.O.=1,76), and *local dishes* such as peskutan soup and Sivas meatball (A.O.=2,01) is at medium level. Students' general awareness of cultural heritage is regarded as low (A.O.=1,65). In the next section, analysis of variance was performed as to various groups in order to understand whether low level of awareness is at the same level for all participants.

**Table2.** Arithmetic Mean of the Participants regarding the Awareness of Cultural Heritage

	Knowledge	Experience	Awareness	Level of Awareness
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>				
1.Historical Structures	1,84	1,69	1,76	<b>Medium</b>
2.Handicrafts	1,88	1,55	1,72	<b>Medium</b>
3.Local Dishes	2,07	1,96	2,01	<b>Medium</b>
4.Activities	1,33	1,21	1,27	<b>Low</b>
5.Minstrels	1,71	1,56	1,64	<b>Low</b>
6.ICH	1,53	1,50	1,51	<b>Low</b>
General Status	1,73	1,57	1,65	<b>Low</b>

**6.3. Discrimination Tests**

**6.3.1. Test results for Mann Whitney U**

Whether students' awareness of cultural heritage show differences by *i*) whether they are from Sivas, *ii*) their income, and *iii*) their classes was analyzed with Mann Whitney U test. Initially, students' awareness score distributions by their hometown, income and class were examined. In the interpretation of the results, *medians* were used since the groups separated by income and classes show similar distributions; *mean ranks* were used since the groups separated by hometown show different distributions (Table 3).

It can be seen that students' awareness of cultural heritage show statistically significant difference by whether they are from Sivas. They hypothesis "H<sub>1</sub>: There is a statistically significant difference between whether students are from Sivas and their awareness toward cultural heritage" was accepted in terms of all cultural assets. Statistics were given in Table 3.

When looked at whether students' awareness of cultural heritage shows difference by their classes, it is seen that the awareness of upper-grade students who spent much more time is higher than first-grade students. So, the hypothesis "H<sub>2</sub>: There is a statistically significant difference between students' levels of income and their awareness toward cultural heritage" was accepted in terms of all variables except "minstrels". Similarly, these results were given in Table 3.

When the awareness of cultural heritage of the students whose personal incomes are 500 TL and under are compared to those whose are over 500 TL, the awareness of students whose personal incomes are low (2,06) toward local dishes is higher than those whose personal incomes are high (1,94) (U = 97.935, z = -1,997, p = .046). The hypothesis "H<sub>3</sub>: There is a statistically significant difference between students' classes and their awareness toward cultural heritage" was accepted only in terms of local dishes but were rejected in terms of other variables.

**Table 3.** Mann Whitney U Values Indicating Differences between Groups and Mean Ranks and Medians as to Cultural Heritage

Cultural Heritage	Hometown			Class			Income		
	Sivas <sup>a</sup>	Out of Sivas <sup>a</sup>	U	First <sup>b</sup>	Upper <sup>b</sup>	U	500 TL and under <sup>b</sup>	500 TL over <sup>b</sup>	U
1. Historical Structures	774.88	447.10	<b>61.254*</b>	1.58	1.73	<b>168.914*</b>	1.77	1.67	101.330
2. Handicrafts	697.08	490.52	<b>92.684*</b>	1.50	1.70	<b>170.295*</b>	1.70	1.70	103.174
3. Local Dishes	788.60	439.45	<b>55.712*</b>	1.81	2.00	<b>161.626*</b>	2.06	1.94	<b>97.935*</b>
4. Activities	769.29	450.22	<b>63.512*</b>	1.11	1.14	<b>157.893*</b>	1.14	1.14	104.091
5. Minstrels	639.93	522.41	<b>115.774*</b>	1.54	1.57	147.899	1.57	1.50	101.872
6. ICH	684.67	497.44	<b>97.699*</b>	1.29	1.50	<b>162.338*</b>	1.42	1.42	103.936

<sup>a</sup>Mean Rank, <sup>b</sup>Median  
\* p < 0.05

**6.3.2 Test Results for Kruskal Wallis H**

The change in the cultural heritage awareness levels of the students is tested with Kruskal Wallis scale according to students’ i) time spent in Sivas, ii) satisfaction they have because of living in the city and iii) interest in cultural tourism (Table 4).

Distribution of the students’ scores for the time they have spent in Sivas, satisfaction level and interest in cultural tourism is checked at first. As all the variables of the groups were similar; medians of the groups were used interpreting the results.

Median values of cultural heritage awareness showed meaningful difference accordingly the time spent in Sivas. In the multiple comparison test that was done in order to determine the source group / groups of the difference, Bonferroni correction method and Dunn procedure were used. The meaningful levels after corrected p values were given in Table 4. H<sub>4</sub>: The hypothesis of “there is a meaningful statistical change in students’ cultural heritage awareness level responsively with the time they spend in Sivas” is expected for all groups excluding the “minstrels” variable. For the minstrels variable a meaningful difference between those who lived in Sivas for more than 5 years a) shorter than a year and b) those who lived in the city 1-5 years.

H<sub>5</sub>: When the hypothesis of “there is a meaningful difference between the satisfaction level of living in Sivas and cultural heritage awareness” is analyzed; the hypothesis is accepted for the groups in which the satisfaction level is high and rejected for the groups in which the level is low or intermediate. The post hoc tests showed that this difference resulted from the difference between the group of high satisfaction level and the other two groups. It is also found out that the students whose satisfaction level is higher, the awareness level is higher, too.

H<sub>6</sub>: When the hypothesis of “there is a meaningful statistical difference between students’ level of interest in cultural tourism and cultural heritage awareness” is analyzed; it is accepted in the low cultural tourism interest level group excluding the minstrels variable; it is also accepted for the medium interest level group for the historical sites, handicrafts and non-solid cultural heritage objects and it is accepted for the high interest level group in the aspects of historical sites, handicrafts, minstrels and non-solid cultural heritage objects. With the post hoc tests it was found out that the difference is obvious for all groups in the aspects of historical sites, handicrafts and non-solid cultural heritage objects; for low, medium and high interest level groups in the aspects of local food and activities; and between low and medium interest level groups in the aspect of minstrels. It is also clear that the awareness level is high for the students whose cultural tourism interest level is high.

**Table 4.** Kruskal Wallis Values Showing the Differences Between Cultural Heritage Awareness Groups

Cultural Heritage	Time Spent in Sivas				Satisfaction Level for Living in Sivas				Interest in Cultural Tourism			
	Less than a year	1 – 5 Years	More than 5 years	x	Low	Medium	High	x	Low	Medium	High	x
1. Historical Structures	1,35	1,63	2,08	376,034	1,58	1,65	1,85	89,561	1,63	1,69	1,83	39,511
2. Handicrafts	1,20	1,60	2,00	172,098	1,50	1,65	1,80	24,824	1,50	1,70	1,80	34,852
3. Local Dish	1,50	1,81	2,62	323,350	1,75	1,84	2,25	74,148	1,81	1,94	2,13	23,204
4. Activities	1,00	1,10	1,36	261,866	1,07	1,13	1,21	49,586	1,10	1,14	1,14	14,945
5. Minstrels	1,50	1,50	1,64	32,955	1,50	1,50	1,57	20,436	1,50	1,50	1,57	30,350
6. ICH	1,21	1,42	1,75	91,587	1,38	1,42	1,58	45,203	1,29	1,42	1,50	33,996

## **6.4 Qualitative Research**

Five different focused group studies were carried out for the research. The first four studies were applied on students and the last one is done with tourism staff. The first focused group study was done by 13 interviewers. 4 of the interviewers are from Sivas and only families of two live in Sivas. Most of them are Tourism school students. The problems, reactions of the participants to the context, interviewers' observations of the students' awareness level and the interviewers' opinions on the methods to increase the awareness level were added into the research.

The participants of the other 3 student groups are the volunteering students who wanted to fill in the survey. In the first focused group, students from Sivas and the students from other cities were interviewed together and in the other three groups all students were interviewed separately. 34 students were interviewed in total. Only 8 of the participants are from Sivas. All the participants are students of different departments and their ages are 18 – 34. During the interviews students were asked whether they are aware of the cultural heritage, reason of their awareness level, how to create that awareness and their opinions about the survey context.

The interviewer students were marked with A; all other focused groups were put together and marked with digits. Interviewer group students are marked from A1 to A13. The second focused group consists of the students marked as 1 – 10; the third focused group consists of the students marked as 11 – 16; and the last one is marked as 17 – 21.

### **6.4.1. Focused Group (First Part)**

In this part, results of the focused group studies were evaluated together. We can divide the results into two main sub-groups: (1) *whether they have awareness* and (2) *advices*.

During the focused group studies, students were asked whether they or the people around them are aware of the cultural heritage and in accordance with the results of the qualitative study it is found out that both the students from Sivas and the others have little or no awareness. In fact, a student from Sivas (15) stated that "I was born and bred in this city and I am totally ashamed of myself. There are lots of things that I don't know about my hometown." In a similar manner, a student from another city (A6) said "This is my fifth year in Sivas and I have heard about it just last year" for the Ulu Mosque of Divriği which is in UNESCO's world cultural heritage list.

When the students are asked why aren't they aware of cultural heritage; two main answer groups appear highlighting the autogenous and environmental handicaps. Autogenous causes are disinterest, ignorance, not having the chance of learning about the heritage and financial issues; and environmental causes are, not being informed about the heritage, not being made public and the difficulty of reaching the knowledge.

One of the students' (1) saying "All of us are in our twenties. Neither the history, nor the culture is in our agenda" emphasizes the share of disinterest in cultural heritage awareness level. However, there are students who are interested in minstrels, local food and culture.

Although there are some students stating the reason of disinterest on cultural heritage is financial problems, most of them are in favor of not having the chance to see the cultural heritage option. One of the female students (A3) stated that she attends to the tours that their department organize. However, she somehow feels uncomfortable on those tours. Evaluating the environmental problems, lack of advertising takes the first place but the most striking part of this aspect is the people around the students' not giving / sharing information about the cultural heritage with the students. Students complain about illiteracy and disinterest of the people about the cultural heritage. The students from Sivas (2, 11) summarized the situation saying "our parents have never taught us about the cultural heritage."

One of the students from other cities (A2) told that he asked a question about Şifaiye Madrasah to a waiter working in there and the waiter scolded him instead of answering the question; and upon another student's (A6) question, the respondent directed him to a tourist information office. The students from other cities mostly complained about the attitude of the local people and tradespeople about giving information of the cultural heritage. On the other hand, in the group there are students from other cities stating they gave information about their hometown and local culture to their guest students, but they could not observe the same level of interest in the students from Sivas.

Emphasizing the failures of the local government on introduction and protection of the local cultural objects, students complained about the locked down historical places for restoration work for long periods of time. A student (12) stated that it is not easy to reach to the historical places even in the city center. He wanted to visit the Congress Building but he was not accepted into the building because of an ID card issue.

For increasing the cultural heritage awareness level, students advices were like organizing tours, students and the staff of the Tourism Department's running introduction activities, using the spring fest and the media for introduction. The most preeminent wish of the students is free tours especially for Tourism Department students.

The students pointed the lack of the plates giving info about the cultural heritage. The plates are not visible or there are no plates at all. A12 said that big plates or maps giving the direction to important historical places could be placed in the city center. Another idea about introduction was more efficient usage of the open air advertisements. Students advised using everything visible to people to arise curiosity. In order to increase university students' awareness level varied activities should be organized during the spring fest and mobile applications should be coded, the participating students said. On the other hand, students of the Tourism Department want to take place in activities introducing the cultural heritage and want the department take further steps organizing such activities.

One other question directed to the participating students was whether the survey constituting the quantitative part of the study created awareness on them or the other students they applied the survey. All the pollsters said "it arose curiosity in all participants" or "created awareness" and they had to give extra information to the participants. The pollsters' feedback proves that even the survey created awareness on its own. Some of the pollsters (A5, A8, A9, A10, A13) reported that some participants took photos of the survey form; some pollsters (A1, A2, A11) said that some participants took notes from the form; and one pollster (A6) told that there were participants who filled in the form but did not give it back and took it with them. A participant (7) said "I want to take this form and see the answers one by one, it lit a fire in my mind". Some participants reported that they heard about Ulu Mosque fo Divriği, local food, handicrafts, names of the folk dances and minstrels for the first time by the survey form. When the quantitative study was being carried out (November – December, 2014) one of the participants (3) who spent less than three months in Sivas said "I had no interest for the first three months, but the survey arose curiosity in my mind"; and one other (22) said even the survey itself changed his/her attitude towards the cultural heritage and his/her level of awareness.

#### **6.4.2. Focus Group (Second Part)**

Focus group interviews were carried out in two main steps in the study. In the first step, students were taken into group interviews and in the last part group interviews were carried out with tourism staff of Sivas. The results of the focused group study, that was done with students, were shared with representatives of tourism business and reasons of the low cultural heritage level was evaluated. In this context possible solution suggestions were created to increase the cultural heritage awareness level.

To the focused group meeting, tourism representatives of Governorate, Directorate of Culture and Tourism, City Hall, ORAN Development Agency, Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Chamber of Merchants and Craftsmen attended.

Representatives of the tourism business and institutions stated that the study will arise cultural heritage awareness on the local people and university students. One of the most striking findings of the interviews is the difference in the views of the public and private sectors. While the representatives of the public sector were so sensitive, the private sector representatives were not taking the situation seriously. On the other hand, it looked as if the private sector left the awakening awareness issue totally to the public sector.

Another point that drew our attention was both sectors saying they are aware of the need for protecting cultural heritage but the local people are not so. In the interviews representatives stated that cultural objects are not protected properly, restoration work is not done well, carefully and on time (particularly the Gök Madrasah) and local people are not protective enough. They also pointed out that the environment work of the Ulu Mosque of Divriği could not be completed, the old houses around the mosque could not be restored, the green pass to the castle could not be created and many problems occurred during the restoration work of the Congress Museum and Buruciye Madrasah. Besides, the shops in the madrasahs and Taşhan spoil the historical fabric of these buildings.

One of the important points that shone out in the interviews was unsuccessful highlighting of the historical fabric of such a historic city. Failures in protecting the Hititian artifacts and in highlighting the buildings of the Seljukian era was one of the significant subjects. The issue of not being able to publicize the local food was also discussed. Restaurants' ignoring the local food and not including them in their menus was another criticized subject.

Representatives did some evaluation to increase the cultural heritage awareness level and gave the following advices: Sivas, as an ancient city, has been able to protect many historic objects to day. in this context, particularly in the tourism week, many activities should be organized throughout the year. With seminars and education programs informational drawback should be overcome. Planning should be done in accordance with the facts of the city and with cooperation of other cities tourism activities should be increased.

For university students and other non-local people, some touristic attraction sources should be developed and periodical tours should be run. The role of the housewives should not be ignored and they should be included into introductive activities. Taking short films of traditions and sharing them on social networks would be of help.

In order to increase the potential, compass of the publicity work should be increased to regional scale. Brochures and other introductory materials that are capable of introducing the city should be created in order to strengthen the touristic activity potential. Doing the introduction in national and international scale can make touristic activities a lot more lucrative for the whole city. Radical steps should be taken restoring and protecting the historical buildings.

“Tourism is sea – sand and sun” motto should be changed and importance of cultural tourism should be illuminated. Following these steps, that historical city can be a main center of cultural tourism. As well as its potential profit, cultural tourism can wake and protect the cultural heritage of the city.

Being one of the oldest cities of The Turkish Republic, Sivas has a special place in this region. Even this situation alone is a significant reason for attracting historians, students and a lot of tourists. As an highly traditional city, Sivas has a rich kitchen and some handicraft experience like art of ceramics. Handicrafts industries are good at making of souvenirs. If this branch of industry can be promoted to a better level, it can contribute to cultural tourism activities.

On the other hand, tour operators should develop programs introducing the city and the banks should raise loans for touristic facilities in order to introduce cultural and historical values better.

In the interviews, another pointed out important problem of tourism was the insufficient and inefficient introduction. Although there are some important steps taken with aim of overcoming this problem, officials state that introductory activities should be revised by professionals.

## VII. RESULT

In the study it is found out that cultural heritage level of university students is so low and the result is coherent with the previous recon. Students’ awareness marks are lowest at traditional activities, minstrels and non-solid cultural heritage; and at medium level in the historical sites, handicrafts and local food. Regarding 84% of the students have lived in Sivas for more than a year and 30% more than 5, the result is shocking.

In the analysis carried out with the aim of differentiating cultural heritage awareness levels in groups it is found out that; i) students from Sivas are more aware than the students from other cities ii) students who spent more time in Sivas are more aware than freshmen, iii) students whose income is less than 500TL are more aware than those with higher income (only in local food), iv) students who spent more time in Sivas are more aware than those who spent little time, v) students who are happy to live in Sivas are more aware than those who are not, vi) students who are interested in cultural tourism have higher marks than those who are not. Interesting finding was that the students of lower income class are more aware of the local food. Effect size is not calculated for Mann Whitney test but checking the medians the difference can be interpreted to be low.

In the focused group studies that were carried out to find the reasons of low awareness level and solutions; it was concluded that reasons were mainly personal and environmental. Students admitted their disinterest in cultural heritage; on the other hand they complained about not being encouraged to learn about cultural heritage and even when they want to do so, they can not reach the sources. Interviews and observations done with the students showed that even the study itself arose awareness in the students. Students gave advices on the ways to increase cultural heritage awareness level and wanted to take part within the activities that could be run to increase the level.

In the interviews done with tourism representatives, they told that cultural tourism potential of the city is so high but neither the local people nor the university students are aware enough of the cultural heritage, and promised that they will maintain the proper support.

In future researches, cultural heritage awareness level of students from every grade should be studied and methods should be developed to be applied in formal or non-formal education. For better support, important people of the city should be made aware.

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