



## TRAVELLING COMPANIONS: A CONSTRAINT ANALYSIS OF PET OWNERS IN TURKEY

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to explore the constraints that pets have on tourist travel, as well as the influence of these barriers on owners' intentions of taking pets with them as travel companions. In this study, the scale developed by Chen, Peng and Hung (2014) was used as a data collection tool. The sample area included Turkey's three largest cities in terms of the population: Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir. This is the first study in this field in Turkey. The responses of 393 Turkish pet owners were examined through exploratory factor analysis. The results revealed three dimensions of pet-related tourism constraint which are specific, interpersonal and structural. In addition, constraints were determined to negatively affect owners' previous travel experience in having pets included in tourist activities.

## 1. Introduction

Human beings and animals have been living together to share the world, building multi-dimensional relationships since the creation of the world. The significance of the human-animal relationship has been revealed throughout history, across cultures, and in recent research (Walsh, 2009). In addition to this, pets play a more important role in humans' lives as close companions that break the traditional view of human-animal relations (Carr & Cohen, 2009).

Pets refer to animals domesticated and cared for by their owners, as well as those with which the owners have emotional bonds (Serpell, 2003; Chen, Peng & Hung, 2013). For many people, the pets they feed and care about are considered to be the members of the nuclear family. Because of this strong bond between human and non-humans, people have a natural inclination to take their pets on their holidays. According to the 2019-2020 National Pet Owners Survey conducted by American Pet Products Association (APPA), 84.9 million homes own a pet (67% of the U.S. households), an increase of 56 percent since 1988, and about 37% of pet owners travel with their pets every year (APPA, 2019a).

Although tourism has traditionally been considered an activity specifically reserved for humans (Ivanov, 2018), there has been an increase in the importance of non-humans in tourism and leisure experience in view of changing figures in leisure and tourism needs or desires (Carr, 2009).

Chen et al. (2014) emphasized that pet owners have gone to touristic activities with their animals and these pet owners are ready to spend money on their pets. In reference to dogs alone, Carr and Cohen (2009) argue that although there is a strong desire among dog owners to go on holiday with their pets, this desire is relatively low. As such, there are embedded pet-related tourist factors that influence or constrain pet owners' decision such as extra cost that owners need to come through before and while participating in these tourist activities. It is not fully known what these constraints are in tourism, but a multitude of studies in Western and non-Western contexts would help to fill in some of these gaps.

For example, even though there is an increase in the general concern for the environment in tourist practices, this does not guarantee that the rights and welfare of individual animals will be considered (Hughes, 2001; Fennell, 2012b; Fennell, 2013; Gunlu Kucukaltan & Dilek, 2019). In this regard, this study aims to scrutinize the factors that influence pet owners' decisions when getting pets as travellers to participate in tourist activities in Turkey. It is hoped to identify the problems that pet owners have regarding their pet-related tourist activities. An associated aim is to predict the difficulties

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and obstacles experienced by pets during their participation in travel and tourist activities.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Background of the Study

In the interaction between humans and animals, pets are an important starting point. Although animals have physical presence and identity, humans have attributed a cultural identity to them. The lives, personalities, meanings and values of animals depend largely on people. When animals are the object of our gaze, at zoos or aquarium or when traveling with our animal companions, we often consider them with the aid of a mirror pointed not at the animal object but rather at ourselves (Berger, 1980). Since they cannot explain their thoughts to us, we impose our comments on their worlds. (Fennell, 2012a). In this study, pets as companion animals considered travellers and their limitations in terms of participation in tourism are examined in accordance with their owners' opinions. Pet is any animal kept by human a very broad spectrum of animal species. Not only common companion animals such as dogs, cats, but also less common mammal species, such as reptiles and fish, which may be part of the travel experience, are considered within this scope. (Leggat & Speare, 2000). The theoretical premise used to explain the willingness or need of people to travel with their pets is attachment theory.

In its earliest application, the concept of attachment was used to conceptualise child-parent relationships in a variety of settings such as the separation between parent and child during the formative years of school (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978). As the literature on human-animal relationships progressed, attachment theory was used as a framework to examine the strong relationships that evolve between humans and their pets (Zilcha-Mano, Mikulincer & Shaver, 2011; see also Cohen, 2002).

Throughout the twentieth century, the rapidly increasing number of pets and the importance of their roles in human life have led many scholars to wonder how this changes human decision making and behavior (Miller & Washington, 2013). When examining and predicting how pet owners treat their pets, researchers have remarked the importance of emotional attachment among pets and pet owners (Chen, 2018). As pointed out by Albert and Bulcroft (1988), the reason why pets have been seen as family members (Herzog, 2010; 2011), while playing an emotional and psychological role in many urban families is that modern society is filled with pressure from work or other places, with individuals suffering from alienation within interpersonal relationships. Pets can help their owners overcome loneliness, relieve stress, and provide emotional comfort. Others contend that pets frequently achieve a state of personhood, often being identified as very close or special friends (Sanders, 1999). It is for these reasons that pet owners demonstrate a willingness

to spend money on their pets as travel companions, and such a decision might have a positive or negative influence on owners' travel experiences (Chen, Hung & Peng, 2011).

Since the 1980s, leisure scholars have noticed that leisure activities are affected by several barriers (Witt & Goodale, 1981; Crawford & Godbey, 1987; Samdahl, 1991), and this research evolved quite quickly into a focus on leisure constraints. One of the first books on the topic by Wade (1985) contextualised a whole series of constraints along with the areas of biology, psychology, socio-economics, and life cycles. Perhaps most active in the early stages of leisure constraints research was Jackson who provided depth and diversity into this theme of leisure research, which dominated leisure studies research in the 1990s. Jackson wrote on trends in leisure preference and alternative constraints (1990); antecedent constraints (*ibid.*); internal homogeneity of constrained leisure (1991); change and stability in leisure constraints (Jackson & Witt, 1994), as well as the development of a hierarchical model of leisure constraints (Crawford, Jackson & Godbey, 1991).

One of the most important contributions in the leisure constraints literature is the study by Crawford and Godbey (1987) because it proposed three types of constraints: intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural constraints – through a rigorous integration of previous literature that has been widely used by other scholars (see Chen, Hung & Peng, 2014). In recent years, Gilbert and Hudson (2000), Nyaupane, Morais and Graefe (2004), White, Thomas, Johnston and Hyde (2008), Nyaupane and Andereck (2008), and Hung and Petrick (2010) have all applied this typology. These studies further developed the constraints model and made it more robust (Chen et al., 2014). In the review of work by Miller and Howell (2008), Carr and Cohen (2009), Hultsman (2012), and Chen et al. (2014) on having pets accompany tourist and leisure activities, we find it logical to apply this typology within the present study. The following section discusses the approach and findings of the studies mentioned in the following sections.

### 2.2. Studies on Pet-Related Tourism

Pets as a part of social life have become an important factor both in travels of pet owners, leisure activities and participation in tourism. It is significant for researchers and other interested parties to specify whether pet owners will plan to take their pets when traveling for touristic purposes, as modern individuals add increased value on tourism and have an increasing bond to their pets (Peng, Chen & Hung, 2014; Fennell, 2018). Scholars and practitioners have started to determine the impact of animal companions on pet owners' daily activities and consumption because pet-related products, including services, became an estimated \$75 billion industry in 2019, amounting to more than

15 times the value of the industry in 1997 (Ridgway, Kukar-Kinney, Monroe & Chamberlin, 2008; APPA, 2019b).

The decision of whether to include pets in tourism or leisure activities is important, as pets may affect the quality of an individual's tourism experience (Urry, 2002; Chen, Hung, & Peng, 2011; Peng et al., 2014). Based on market research reports, 40% of owners have taken their pets to tourist activities, while other owners may have considered this option (Hung, Chen & Peng, 2016). Researchers have come to a consensus that it is considered to involve owners' emotional attachment to their pets when investigating human-pet relations and how owners treat their pets (Poresky, Hendrix, Mosier, & Samuelson, 1987; Johnson, Garrity, & Stallones, 1992; Friedmann & Son, 2009). Despite studies focusing on how a pet influences its owner's consumer behavior, Carr (2009) draws attention to the need for further research on how animal companions affect the owners' participation in tourist activities. Above all, the pet-related constraints on tourism and travel and how pet owners can negotiate these constraints that have not yet been discovered in current tourism and anthrozoology literature (Chen et al., 2011). Among the scholars who have applied findings from anthrozoology to consumption and leisure/tourism participation, studies conducted by Gillespie, Leffler and Lerner (2002), Greenebaum (2004), Miller and Howell (2008), Carr and Cohen (2009), Chen et al. (2011), Hultsman (2012) Chen et al. (2014), Peng et al. (2014), Hung et al. (2016), and Ivanov (2018) are the most relevant to the current research: Gillespie, Leffler and Lerner (2002), Greenebaum (2004), Miller and Howell (2008), Carr and Cohen (2009), Chen et al. (2011), Hultsman (2012) Chen et al. (2014), Peng et al. (2014), Hung et al. (2016), and Ivanov (2018).

Both Gillespie et al. (2002) and Hultsman (2012) used qualitative methods to examine levels of participation in leisure with dogs. Gillespie et al. (2002) and Hultsman (2012) concentrated on engaging in one activity, sports, using comparatively small sample sizes (60 and 50 pairs of couples) respectively. The research contributed to how pets impress their owners' behaviour throughout leisure activities. On the other hand, Greenebaum (2004) studied pet owners' decision-making behaviour when they include their pets in leisure activities designed for dogs. Greenebaum offered that owners are to think about their pets' options and abilities, the venue's environment. In addition to that, it is emphasized that owners should previously consider the characteristics of other participants, both humans and dogs when exercising their pets at a community center in parallel with Gillespie et al. (2002) and Hultsman (2012).

Chen et al. (2011) conducted a comprehensive study which has the most relevance to the objectives of the present study. These scholars used the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) to scrutinize the decision

by owners to take their pets in tourist activities, with results demonstrating that the inclusion of pets in tourist activities requires significant planning (Chen et al., 2011). The researchers noted that their analysis of pet constraints was restricted, so may not entirely reflect the barriers that owners may need to consider before travelling or participating in tourism/leisure activities. Carr and Cohen (2009) highlighted various constraints (e.g. extra cost and preparation time) by quantitatively examining 311 Australian dog owners. An essential part of their research involved an investigation of accommodation procurement for dogs when owners go away for the holidays. This recent study was outstanding for the tourism and hospitality literature because it not only explored the perspectives of pet owners but also gave suggestions for practitioners. For a research objective similar to Greenebaum's (2004), Hultsman (2012) and Carr and Cohen (2009), but in a different context, Miller and Howell (2008) examined how other participants react to dogs' interaction in leisure activities - especially resentment on part of other tourists. Examples of resentment were connected to previous negative experiences with dogs, while other examples of resentment were related to irresponsible owners who failed to clean up their pets' waste.

In a subsequent study by Chen et al. (2014), the researchers developed a scale that measured constraints associated with bringing dogs along on tourist activities, associated with an investigation of the effect of these constraints on owners' intentions to bring dogs on tourist activities. 518 Taiwanese dog owners' responses were investigated through EFA (exploratory factor analysis) and CFA (confirmatory factor analysis). The findings explored three proposed dimensions of pet-related tourism constraints: 1) Pet-related specific constraints, 2) Pet-related interpersonal constraints and 3) Pet-related structural constraints. The constraints were determined to negatively affect owners' intentions to take pets along on tourist activities (Chen et al., 2014). Based upon the analysis of 458 dog owners, Peng et al. (2014) found support for the application of the TPB model in parallel with the study conducted by Chen et al. (2011). The implications of the Peng et al. (2014) are important because the study on the influence of pet attachment on owners' attitudes and intentions sheds new light on the existing literature and practices.

A subsequent study by Hung et al. (2016) examined the factors that affect pet owners' decisions when taking pets to participate in tourist activities. The results from structural equation modelling (SEM) showed that the aforementioned pet-associated constraints negatively affected owners' behaviour (568 Taiwanese dog owners who have included their pets in tourist activities). Finally, a study by Ivanov (2018) focused on a neglected niche of tourists, namely non-human travellers, consisting of pets, robots, toys and pet rocks, with the result

of increasing the scope and characteristics of non-human travellers and the challenges that merge for tourism brokers to accommodate the various needs of these tourists and their companions.

Given the review of the studies on the topic of pets and tourism referred to above and the literature provided by pet-related governmental and non-profit associations (e.g. Miller & Howell, 2008; the American Veterinary Medical Association, 2009), there is a need for further research on constraints, especially in different cultural contexts. It is aimed to contribute to the emerging base of literature in this area through consideration of how animals affect their human companions. In this regard, the study focused around the literature on intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural constraints, and we resist the use of the term human owners because of how anthropocentric this sounds.

### 3. Method

The data required to examine the problems and barriers to participation in tourist activities in Turkey was based on the pet owners' tourism constraints scale developed by Chen, Peng and Hung (2014). The objective was to identify pet-related constraints that prohibit owners from taking pets as travellers to tourist attractions. The questionnaire used in this study was divided into two main sections. The first section consisted of 14 statements on pet-related tourism constraints which are organised under three categories: specific constraints, interpersonal constraints and structural constraints – the conceptualizations developed by Crawford, Jackson and Godbey (1991) and Nyaupane, Morais and Graefe (2004), the given terms interpersonal, intrapersonal and structural constraints were modified by Chen et al. (2014). The second part of the questionnaire, comprising of nine questions, was designed to elicit demographic and travelling information from the respondents. The sample area included Turkey's three largest cities in term of population: Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir. On the other hand, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to determine normality. It is understood that the data is normally distributed because all p-values are greater than 0.05. In addition to that, The fact that the skewness and kurtosis indices calculated by dividing the skewness and kurtosis values to their standard errors (std. error) close to 0 within the limits of  $\pm 2$  are considered as evidence of the existence of the normal distribution (George & Mallery, 2010). In this regard, an assessment of normality showed that the data can be considered normally distributed.

According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2006), a sample size of 300 is generally sufficient when performing factor analysis. The aim, therefore, was to solicit responses, via mail and telephone, from more than 300 respondents for validity and reliability. The units of analysis were the people living in the three target cities with their pets and who had travelled at least once with their pets. Two

of the three authors act as volunteers for the Animal Rights Federation in Turkey (HAYTAP), and we used the contact information of the members of this non-governmental organization (about 200 members of HAYTAP) to increase the sample size easily through a snowball sampling strategy, which is used in situations where it is difficult to access subjects with the target characteristics. The survey was distributed to 393 pet owners living in İstanbul (143 owners), Ankara (128 owners), Izmir (122 owners) between August and October 2019. These cities are home to the most domesticated pets in Turkey. According to Sarial Kubilay (2019), it is estimated that 14 million households have pets in metropolitan cities, including Istanbul, Izmir and Ankara.

The scale developed by Chen et al. (2014) was independently translated into Turkish by three translators, a PhD candidate in tourism and fluent in English, an English lecturer who had been working at Batman University for five years, and a professional translator. A back-translation technique was employed in the study, which requires translating the items from the source language to the target language and later to back-translate them to the source language for consistency and uniformity. Data were analysed in this study using SPSS 20.

Characteristics of the respondents and their pets are outlined in Table 1. The majority of respondents were married or cohabiting, having attained a bachelor's degree, and most of the respondents did not have children. Finally, the number of those with a previous tourism experience with a pet was mostly between 1-7 times (81.1%), and most of the sample was between 26 and 44 years. Years of pet ownership are mostly greater than one year (90.1 per cent of the sample), with 34% of the sample owning a pet for 15 years and over.

### 4. Findings

The questionnaire was structured so that each item was rated using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important). 14 of the questionnaires distributed did not meet the pre-acceptance requirements, so they were excluded from the study, leaving 393 questionnaires submitted for analysis. The data collected were analysed using EFA with varimax rotation to determine the dimensions of the scale. The results of the EFA demonstrate that pet-related tourism constraints can be classified according to the three factors in parallel with the study of Chen et al. (2014) (See Table 2).

As shown in Table 2, the factor loadings were between 0.61 and 0.85, and the means were between 2.84 and 4.34. The findings of the factor analysis suggest a three-factor solution and explain more than 75% of the variance in the data with eigenvalues that are greater than 1. A reliability analysis (Cronbach's Alpha) was also conducted to test the reliability and internal consistency of each factor. The Cronbach's alpha of the specific constraints was 0.81, while the figures for interpersonal constraints and structural

**Table 1.** Characteristics of respondents (N=393)

		frequency	%
<b>Gender</b>	Male	182	46.3
	Female	211	53.7
<b>Age</b>	25 and below	37	9.4
	26-44	243	61.8
	45 and above	113	28.8
<b>Marital Status</b>	Married/Co-habiting	304	73.1
	Single	106	26.9
<b>Education</b>	High School or below	42	10.6
	Bachelor's degree	254	64.6
	Postgraduate	97	24.8
<b>Income (monthly)</b>	0-2500	21	5.3
	2501-4000	123	31.2
	4001-5000	186	47.3
	More than 5001	63	16.2
<b>Years of Pet Ownership</b>	Less than 1	39	9.9
	1-5	97	24.6
	6-14	124	31.5
	15 and above	133	34
<b>Children in Household</b>	Yes	137	34.9
	No	256	65.1
<b>Previous experience of taking pets to tourism activities</b>	1-3	182	46.3
	4-7	137	34.8
	8 and above	74	18.9
<b>Type of Travel</b>	Overnight	128	32.5
	Single-day	265	67.5
<b>Reasons for travelling with pet(s)* (N=376)</b>	Pet(s) is/are part of the family	283	72
	Make the pet(s) happy	265	67.4
	Avoid pet(s) feeling depressed	273	69.4
	Avoid feelings of guilt at leaving pet(s) behind	189	48
	Other	64	16.2
<b>Total</b>		<b>393</b>	<b>100</b>

\* Respondents gave more than one reason for wishing to travel with their pet(s), whilst some respondents gave no answer.

constraints were 0.78, and 0.84 respectively for the owner request factors. Because of the low factor loading (0.4), one item from the pet-related interpersonal constraints category (i.e. INC4: 'I have no companion to go with me') was eliminated by Chen et al. (2014) in their study. However, in this study, this particular item was included in the analysis (INC4 factor loading = 0.61).

With regards to pet constraints to owners' previous experience – that of including pets when participating in tourist activities – this element was examined with the resultant standardized coefficient. The variance of the owners' intentions explained by constraints was examined by an R-squared analysis (Chen et al., 2014). The test results suggested that pet constraints have a statistically significant negative effect on owners' previous experience ( $\beta = -1.73$ ,  $t = -7.32$ ,  $F = 23.20$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and explained 39.6 % of the variance in such experience to include pets when participating

in tourist activities (Table 3). A further investigation of the standardized coefficients was conducted to determine which constraint factors contributed the most to the construct. Pet-related structural constraints contributed the most to intentions ( $\beta = -0.413$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), followed by pet-related interpersonal constraints ( $\beta = -0.311$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and pet-related specific constraints ( $\beta = -0.194$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

After the above statistical analysis was carried out, owners who went on overnight trips or single-day trips were separately paid. The findings indicated that the three pet-related tourism constraints had negative effects on both groups of owners. When considering the reasons for travelling with pets (Table 1), member of the family (72% of respondents), which often included the pet being likened to a child, featured by owners. In other words, pet owners want to spend time with their pets during their travels because of the emotional bond that they have

**Table 2.** Results of measurement scale from the factor analysis (N=393)

	Factor Loadings	Eigen value	Variance	Cronbach $\alpha$	Mean
<b>Pet-related specific constraints (SPC)</b>		<b>2.186</b>	<b>20.162</b>	<b>0.81</b>	
<b>My Pet...</b>					
SPC1: lacks self-control during the trip (e.g. over-excited and aggressive)	0.64				3.86
SPC2: is not suitable for this activity	0.75				4.16
SPC3: does not like to go out	0.78				3.67
SPC4: gets tired easily	0.84				4.06
<b>Pet-related interpersonal constraints (INC)</b>		<b>3.121</b>	<b>21.786</b>	<b>0.78</b>	
INC1: I feel uncomfortable when participating in this activity with my pet, because some of the participants do not like animals.	0.66				3.93
INC2: Other participants don't take their pets in the activity	0.76				4.12
INC3: My pet can be unsociable to other animal or human participants	0.74				3.26
INC4: I haven't companion to go with me	0.61				4.21
<b>Pet-related structural constraints (STC)</b>		<b>5.643</b>	<b>33.212</b>	<b>0.84</b>	
STC1: Getting pets to a tourism activity contains bigger costs (e.g. dining, accommodation or transportation)	0.69				4.34
STC2: I don't know any companies or anyone who can give me information about how to participate with my pet in this activity	0.73				4.26
STC3: The destination is not available for my pet (e.g. dirty environment)	0.72				3.84
STC4: Getting my pet to this activity is time-consuming	0.83				3.13
STC5: I can't take part in this activity because of having to take care of my pet at the meanwhile	0.85				2.94
STC6: There aren't niche areas/destinations nearby me	0.82				2.84
Total Variance Extracted (%): <b>75.16</b>					

with these animals. Therefore, pet owners want to travel with their animal companions no matter what kind of travelling is involved (i.e. overnight or single-day). On the other hand, the mean of "taking pets to a tourism activity involves greater costs" such as dining, accommodation and transportation (STC1) is the highest mean between pet-related structural constraints (M = 4.34). In addition to that, "I do not know anyone or any companies who can provide me information about how to take my pet to participate in this activity" (STC2) and "this destination is not fitting for my pet (e.g. unclean environment)" (STC3) are respectively other highest means in pet-related structural constraints (M=4.26 and M=3.84). This suggests that there are limitations related to extra costs, lack of information, and unsuitable destinations as constraints. Moreover, the mean of "I have no companion to go with me" (INC4) is M=4.21 and which has a negative impact on an owner's tourist behavior. Another point that is effective in

pet owners' decisions to participate in tourism is the suitability of their pets (SPC2) for tourist or leisure activities (M=4.16).

After the factor analysis and R-squared measure, we explored the influence of the pet owners' socio-demographic characteristics on constraints to travel using analysis of variance (ANOVA). Three characteristics showed statistically significant influences: monthly income, years of pet ownership and children in the household. Least significant difference (LSD) post hoc analysis showed that there is a statistically significant difference between respondents with the highest income (>4001) and all the other respondents on the pet-related structural constraints dimension (F = 9.05; df = 3; p < 0.05). Depending on the years of pet ownership, factor loadings differed on the pet-related interpersonal constraints dimension (F = 5.46; df = 2; p < 0.05) and the pet-related structural constraints dimension (F = 6.89; df = 2; p < 0.05). Regarding children in the

**Table 3.** The effect of pet constraints on owners' previous experience<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients			
	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
1 - Previous experience of taking pets to tourism activities	-415	0.109	-1.73	-7.32	0.000

<sup>a</sup>Independent variables: Pet Constraints

household, a significant impact is shown in the case of the pet-related structural constraints dimension ( $F = 2.52$ ;  $df = 3$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). According to the LSD analysis, respondents that have a child or children differ from respondents that have no children. For the group of respondents who have children, the pet-related structural constraints dimension is the most significant one, while it is less significant for respondents that have no children. In the next section, a discussion of the findings of this study on current literature and the potential usefulness of the findings to practitioners are outlined.

## 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Many people in the world have pets (mostly cats and dogs), and there is abundant literature in academia and popular culture explaining that the potential relationships between animals and humans bear many benefits. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), pets can help their owners' blood pressure get well, as well as cholesterol and triglyceride levels, aiding people to have healthier lifestyles. The CDC also reports that pets can help enhance opportunities for exercising and outdoor leisure activities. Owning a pet also decreases feelings of loneliness and increases occasions for socialization. People frequently stop to communicate with others having pets, and these individuals have many shared experiences because of their relationship with companion animals (Robinson & Segal, 2019).

On the other hand, several studies have been conducted to show pets can help people with chronic illnesses or in rehabilitation. In addition to this, a study published in March 2016 in the journal *Gerontologist* reported that a certain bonding takes place when people take their dogs for a walk, bringing them health benefits (Mueller, Gee & Bures, 2018). Those who engage in dog walking have a lower body mass index, few daily living limitations, fewer doctor visits, and also engage in more exercise. Possessing a pet has an effect on how well someone is aging (Alves & Albuquerque, 2018; CDC, 2019). For these reasons, there is a strengthening of the desire to be with pets in a wide array of different social situations, not just at home. This includes a variety of leisure activities, especially tourism, because of the amount of time that humans spend away from their pets as a result of the trip. It would, therefore, be of interest to investigate the amount of time that tourists would be willing to spend away from their pets through leisure and tourist excursions. Furthermore, the industry (accommodation, travel, recreation, food and beverage) response to this emerging trend would be to capitalise on the tourism-pet market by considering pets as travellers and by taking steps to meet the needs of pets and their owners. This has been observed in the academic literature about tourism, as the strong human-animal bond leads to guests wishing to travel with pets (Taillon, MacLaurin & Yun, 2013).

The pros and cons of this type of travelling have been the topic of recent research in tourism studies. Tourism practitioners and managers, therefore, can provide better services to existing and potential visitors by alleviating the burdens of travelling with pets, as Chen et al (2014) have stated. Tourism businesses can provide benefits and required information for pet owners. For example, nearby pet-friendly tourism businesses (e.g. transportation services), directions to and instructions for specified places and leisure activities for pets and their owners. Having said that the locations of areas such as dog parks for visitors who travel with their pets. In addition, various incentives can be provided. For example, by offering discounted group tickets to owners who bring pets. Thus, participants can be encouraged to come with their friends and family members with their pets. Although there is no solution for every constraint, it should be kept in mind that some are easier to overcome than others. For example, a pet may not be physically fit for a particular activity. In such a case, the manager's efforts to attract the owner with pet(s) to his/her own business will have little effect (Chen et al., 2014). In addition to this, tourism managers and employees would need to adopt a broader perspective/feeling of who the traveller is and what services he/she/it can consume (Ivanov, 2018). Consequently, there should be enhanced reciprocity and cooperation between the tourism business environment and tourists with pets. By contrast, the challenges related to pets as travellers have been discussed according to the literature on barriers and leisure constraints. The prominent research in this area is by Peng et al. (2014) as well as Hung et al. (2016), who both concluded there are many constraints to travelling with pets, particularly relating to physical fitness, other participants' effects and the extra cost involved that owners need to overcome before and while participating in activities (Chen et al., 2014).

The objectives of the present study were to explore pet-related constraints on participation in tourist activities, the measurement of pet constraints comprehensively via a reliable and validated scale, and to examine the effect of pet constraints on owners' tourism intentions in Turkey. Pet owners in Turkey are seeing their pet(s) as a member of their family and they want to participate in tourist activities with them. However, there are limitations related to extra costs, lack of information, no companion to go with, and unsuitable destinations. On the other hand, when considering owners' previous travel experience, pet-related tourism constraints had negative influences in parallel with the research by Peng et al. (2014) and Hung et al. (2016). According to their results, there is a strong desire amongst pet owners to travel with their pets, but the actualisation of this desire is comparatively low, especially on the basis of overnight travel. It can easily be said that the most basic reason for



this is the problem of accommodation. Despite the increase in the number of people travelling with their pets from year to year, many hotel companies in Turkey do not accept pets. For instance, the number of pet-friendly hotels in Turkey is 426 (10.6% of the all-star hotel in Turkey ) according to patilioteller.com, which is a travel agency registered by the Association of Turkish Travel Agencies. In recent years, given the rapid increase in the rate of the pet ownership in Turkey, it is clear that businesses within tourism need to take into consideration pet travellers, which are seen by the owners as members of their family.

### 5. Limitations and Future Research

This study examined the subject of including a pet when participating in tourist activities. This study is considered exploratory and carried out for the first time in Turkey, and thus is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to tourism in Turkey, as well as to more general contexts. There are, however, some limitations with the study; the number of pet owners in Turkey is not known. There is no official certification system for whether hotels are pet friendly. Moreover, sampling is limited to the three largest cities (İstanbul, İzmir, Ankara), which are the most populous cities and thought to have the highest rates of pet ownership in Turkey. It is, therefore, not possible to make a clear generalization of the data obtained. Combined with this, the present study did not think about the scenario in which owners take their pets to tourist attractions of different destinations. Future research may consider the formulation of an extensive model to investigate owners' decisions to take or not take pets when participating in tourist or leisure activities. In particular, facilitating factors (e.g. motivations, negotiation strategies) and inhibiting factors (e.g. pet-related tourism barriers/constraints) should both take into account the efforts to create a more holistic approach.

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