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Tourism Education Universities in Turkey: Comparison of Different Structures and Related Effects on Education Quality

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Abstract

There are many different tourism education applications in Turkey, common ones being; tourism faculties and their tourism related departments, departments of tourism management under business faculties or faculties of economics and administrative sciences, vocational tourism schools and tourism and hotel schools; all having their advantages and disadvantages brought to the tourism higher education system. Thus this rapid increase in the quantity has led to many complex and variable structures and forms in higher tourism education. The aim of this study is to analyze and discuss the different organizational structures of higher tourism education in Turkey and focus on the strengths and weaknesses of each by offering suggestions. In this study, qualitative research is conducted and among the methods available interview technique is preferred due to its suitability for the research area. The interview questions were open ended and structured and interviews were held face to face where the population of the study consisted of 20 people who are educators and experts in Turkish tourism education

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Keywords: Tourism Education, Education in Turkey, Tourism Schools, Faculty of Tourism, Tourism Management Departments;

1. Introduction

“Tourism is already a field of science and an interdisciplinary science that investigates and researches phenomena in the tourism field by use of scientific methodology that aims to establish cause-effect relations. Therefore, we cannot talk about a single approach or mythology in studies carried out in the tourism field,” the final Report on Road mapping for Academic Tourism Education Conference (2011), Dalaman, Muğla report had implied suggesting that tourism was a part of social science and benefited from all the qualitative and quantitative methods the social sciences traditionally employ where many researches and works are increasing in quality and quantity in both national and international levels thus leading to rapid increase in tourism programs in many forms as a department in faculties, and as a main branch of science within the body of academic institutes like own tourism schools and faculties. Thus this rapid increase in the quantity has led to many complex and variable structures and forms in

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higher tourism education which brings out the question about the contents and differences among them by analyzing each structures contents and fit with the industry' needs (Pirnar 1992; Pirnar 1993; Pirnar 1994; Ministry of National Education 2001; Hacıoglu, 2008, Kozak, 2009).

1. Tourism Education in Turkey

As of 2011-2012 academic year, the breakdown of four year undergraduate tourism education programs are as follows; 13 tourism faculties, 14 Tourism management departments connected to Business or Trade or Economics Faculties or FEAS and 33 hotel and tourism management schools (Kilic & Bayraktaroglu, 2012). Thus, higher tourism education in Turkey is highly varied with different curriculums and structures offered by different universities which makes accreditation procedures harder (Kozak, 2009). In Turkey, almost ALL the vocational schools are offering tourism programs (80%) meaning that as a vocation it is accepted with a proper education (Istanbul Aydın Üniversitesi, Türkiye Araştırmaları Merkezi & TURAD, 2012), Thus it is not the same for 4 year high education programs, since $\frac{3}{4}$ s of all the students registered to higher tourism education are within this 2 year vocational group. Figures 1 and 2 indicate the other groups.

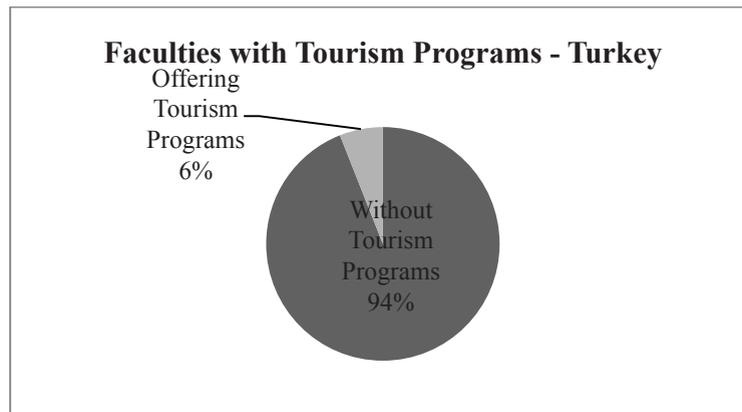
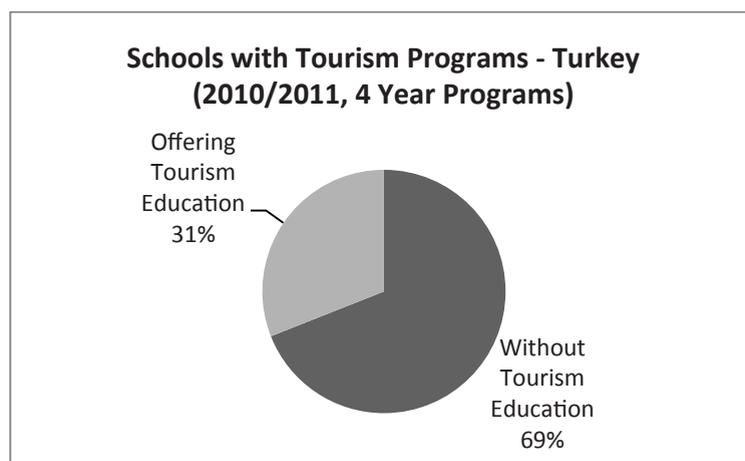


Figure 1- 2010-2011 academic year % of faculties with tourism programs - Turkey



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