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# An Investigation of The Publication of Books About Tourism Education in Turkey

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## Abstract

Tourism education has been developing in recent years along with the expanding tourism industry in Turkey. Tourism literature and published tourism lesson books have also been expanding for over twenty years. The aim of this study is to investigate the content of published tourism books in Turkey. In order to facilitate this, fifteen popular publishing houses were investigated in this study. According to this study's findings, 160 tourism books were published in these publishing houses. Food and beverage and tourism marketing were the most studied subject fields while research methods, transportation and tourist health were the least studied. Publishing more books on tourism in all fields should be encouraged in order to increase the variety of the books on this subject in Turkey.

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*Keywords:* Tourism, tourism education, published lesson tourism books, Turkey;

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## 1. Introduction

Travel and tourism is one of the world's largest industries, currently employing of over 250 million people worldwide. Tourism is a key to development, prosperity and well-being. Over time, an ever increasing number of destinations have opened up and invested in tourism development, turning modern tourism into a key driver of socio-economic progress through export revenues, the creation of jobs and enterprises, and infrastructure development. As an internationally traded service, inbound tourism has become one of the world's major trade categories. The overall export income generated by inbound tourism, including passenger transport, exceeded US\$ 1.2 trillion in 2011, or US\$ 3.4 billion a day on average. Tourism exports account for as much as 30% of the world's exports of commercial services and for 6% of overall exports of goods and services. Globally, as an export category, tourism ranks fourth after fuels, chemicals and food. For many developing countries it is one of the main sources of foreign exchange income and the number one export category, creating much needed employment and opportunities for development (UNWTO, 2012).

In 2011, world tourism continued to rebound from the setbacks of 2008-2009, in a year marked by persistent economic turbulence, major political changes in the Middle East and North Africa, and the natural disaster in Japan. Worldwide, international tourist arrivals grew by 4.6% in 2011 to 983 million, up from 940 million in 2010 when

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arrivals increased by 6.4%. In 2011, international tourism receipts reached a record US\$ 1,030 billion (euro 740 bn), up from 927 billion (euro 699 bn) in 2010. As a tourist destination, Turkey has demonstrated spectacular growth in recent decades, and it entertains a larger number of vacationers each year. In 2011, Turkey moved up one position to sixth place (with 29 million tourists) overtaking the United Kingdom in the top 10 rankings for international tourist arrivals. It also took twelfth place for receipts (US\$ 23.020 million).

Turkey 3.524 licensed accommodation establishments provide the country with 882.449 beds. In addition there are a great number of locally registered accommodation establishments (500.000 beds) and other facilities and services (<http://www.ktbyatirimisletmeler.gov.tr>). The tourism industry in Turkey has traditionally focused on the mass sun and sea market and city destinations, although nature based and cultural tourism market has been growing in recent years. Turkey has considerable potential for the development of alternative tourism types such as eco-tourism, adventure tourism, thermal spas and heritage tourism (Avcikurt and et.al., 2009). Despite the growth of the tourism industry, it has not been supported by sound strategies and strategic plans in Turkey. Tourism in Turkey has been facing serious problems for many years, including seasonality, low hotel occupancy rates, a high dependency on tour operators, transportation difficulties, an inadequate infrastructure, poor service quality, a lack of qualified staff, a lack of sound marketing programmed a high percentage of lower-income tourists, and the effects of national and global crises. All of these problems are significant, but the high dependence on tour operators, the effects of the crises on the industry, poor service quality and a lack of qualified staff are particularly problematic. Over the years, there have been some attempts to overcome poor service quality and the lack of qualified staff by developing sound strategies for tourism education (Okumus and Yagci, 2005).

Tourism education can be described as being one of the main sub sectors of the multifaceted tourism phenomenon and one whose manifestations could impact directly or indirectly on the whole of the tourism sector. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has singled out tourism education as having the potential to achieve customer satisfaction and also improve the competitiveness of tourism businesses and regions if specific education and training are guaranteed (Ayikoru and et.al., 2009).

In Turkey, educational facilities are predominantly under the responsibility of the state. Entry to university in Turkey is based on a universal examination. The national educational system provides different levels of tourism training and education. Professional tourism education is conducted by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Ministry of Education. Tourism vocational training at university level (i.e. two year, four-year and graduate programmed) is the responsibility of the Council of Higher Education. Since 1967, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism has conducted the activities concerning tourism education in accordance with regulations related to its establishment law through the Office of the Education Department. As far as vocational courses for hospitality and tourism training are concerned, the Ministry sponsors seven month courses in Tourism Training Centers (TUREMs) in various different places. Besides formal education, informal education constitutes an important element of tourism education in the country. This is mainly due to the fact that tourist education in Turkey has not been centrally organized or coordinated (Avcikurt and et.al., 2009).

At present, tourism and hotel management courses at university level are available in 174 schools, of which 127 offer a two-year programmed (Advanced Vocational Schools), and 47 a four-year programmed (Tourism and Hotel Management Schools, Faculties and Departments). Vocational courses for hospitality and tourism at high school level (for assistant cooks, waiters, receptionists and room maids) are provided through a four-year programmed (Junior High Schools) in 106 state schools and 7 private high schools offering tourism and hotel management courses. There are also 20 programmed leading to the award of M.Sc and PhD degrees in the field and hospitality management.

Visitor expenditure on accommodation, food and drink, local transport, entertainment and shopping is an important contributor to the economy of Turkey, creating much needed employment and opportunities for development (Avcikurt and et.al., 2009). The overwhelming success of international and domestic tourism has given rise to a pressing demand for quality professional human resources. Requirements for skilled and efficient human

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