The Profile of Academicians Working in Higher Education Level Tourism Schools

Rahman Temizkan
Eskişehir Osmangazi Üniversitesi, Turizm Fakültesi, Eskişehir, Türkiye (rahmantemizkan@hotmail.com.tr)

Cesim Behremen
Eskişehir Osmangazi Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Eskişehir, Türkiye (cesim.behremen@gmail.com)

Extensive Summary

Tourism has been much developed in Turkey since 1980s by means of incentives. State of Turkey has found many tourism education institutions in secondary and high education levels within the scope of formal education to supply the qualified human resource demand of advancing tourism sector in Turkey. Because of the fact that building of these formal education institutions requires long time and huge financial resource, the certificate programs in the 1980s and 1990s could be tolerated to some level. Coming to 2010s, considering the number of tourism institutions and students it is high time to say that the sector should be fed with tourism graduates. However, it is well known that the graduates do leave the tourism sector in a short time after working for a while. Therefore, it could be said that the outputs of the investments in tourism education do not meet the expectations. Thus, this study aims to detect and uncover the facts about the profiles of “tourism academicians” with the assumption of quality of the graduates and tourism education depend on the profile of academicians.

In order to providing data to the study, CVs of 1640 academicians were collected from websites of both vocational collages (two years education at university level) and bachelor’s degree tourism schools and faculties (four years education at university level) in Turkey. The CVs were analyzed by content analysis. The genders, type of institutions, bachelor’s degrees, master degrees, doctorate degrees, and administrative positions of academic personnel were analyzed and the results were compiled into tables. Findings were displayed as cross tables and analyzed by chi square tests.

According to the findings, Out of 1640 academicians, the number of employed academicians are as follows; 814 (49.6%) of them in faculties and four-years schools, 104 (6.3%) of them in tourism departments in four-years sciences schools, 84 (5.1%) of them in economics and administrative sciences schools, 521 (31.8%) of them in two-year vocational tourism schools and 117 (7.1%) of them in two-years social sciences vocational high schools. On the other hand, the degree classifications of the academicians are as follows; 93 (5.7%) professors, 138 (8.4%) associate professors, 371 (22.6%) assistant professors, 667 (40.7%) lecturers and 292 (17.8%) research assistants. However, it was detected that just 614 (37.4%) out of 1640 academicians have a bachelor’s degree in tourism. 511 (31.2%) out of 1640 have a master’s degree, and only 349 of them (21.3%) have a doctorate degree in the field of tourism. The cross table on gender and degree indicates that as degrees raise the number of the female academicians decline and males dominate the higher degrees. According to the results of the chi square test the degrees differ meaningfully from genders (X^2_18 = 23,752; p<0.01). Relatively, the cross table comparing genders with administrative positions of 304 academicians corresponded with the above results. According to Pearson chi-square test, there is a meaningful difference between administrative positions and genders (X^2_18 = 10,472; p<0.01). The cross table comparisons on administrative positions versus bachelor’s degrees indicate that academicians with administrative duties have a bachelor’s degree on tourism (112 people, 52.3%), business management (28 people, 13.1%), and other disciplines (74 people, 34.6%).
Administrators holding a tourism degree majorly occupy the auxiliary positions. On the other hand, even it is a hopeful situation that more than half of the chairs are tourism graduates, it will be more convenient to see that all of them are tourism graduates. The cross table on administrative positions and master’s degrees indicate that top management is particularly selected from those without a tourism degree. Pearson chi-square tests relatively indicate that the distribution of administrative positions to the field of master’s degree differs significantly (X²hes= 10,585; p<0,01). According to the cross table on administrative positions and doctorate degrees, academicians that occupy the 167 administrative positions have graduated from tourism (60 people, 35,9%), business administration (27 people, 16,2%) and the other fields (80 people, 47,9%).

It is normal to expect academicians who are to be in any level of administrative positions to have at least one level of tourism graduation as they are responsible to prepare the strategic plans of their institutions. On the other hand results of the cross tables 7 and 8 imply that tourism graduate academicians are perhaps particularly not assigned to administrative duties especially to the top management level.

Today, tourism as one of the major sources for covering the current account deficits is a critical and pioneering industry for Turkey. After on 1980s, Turkey has much developed a capacity on higher tourism education at any level depending on the tourist arrivals and revenue increase.

However, it is apparent that the produced qualified human resources have not been placed both in the institutions and in the sector. Even though the concept of “tourism academicians” was a start point for the study, it is more convenient to name it as “the academicians working in higher tourism education institutions” after extracting the study results. As the study results indicate that there are many handicaps for tourism graduates for becoming an academician and particularly occupying administrative positions in tourism institutions. It is concluded that the major handicap is the preceding number of extrinsic academicians that occupy both tutorial and administrative positions. Perhaps, it can be thought that another factor for the occupation of administrative duties by extrinsic academicians is due to the fact that the regulation for associate professorship has been put into action in the year of 2011 and associate professors have not become professors in tourism yet. Thus, it is necessary to increase the number of associate professors in the field of tourism. It is of vital importance that the goals of tourism are set by competent tourism academicians for building of a sound future. The sector and government mechanism can defeat rivals only by implementing academic research and development studies, building and developing different tourism system and placing qualified human resources that tourism graduated academicians can form.

A recent project for overcoming the many problems in tourism was carried out by TIYADER (International Tourism Educators and Professionals Association) a non-profit organisation for tourism improvement. This project has proposed many solutions for various problems of the industry and the problems mentioned afore.