



Research Article

ANALYSIS OF PHD DISSERTATIONS IN TOURISM (2014-2018)

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine and categorize the dissertations made in higher education institutions in Turkey. In the study, doctoral dissertations in all fields of tourism topics in Electronic Thesis Bank are examined. Accordingly, a total of 52 doctoral dissertations were found in the Thesis center between 2014-2018 in the Department of Tourism Management, open to access. The theses were divided into groups according to their fields and then their situation in the literature was examined. In the first stage of the analysis, doctoral dissertations about tourism were classified according to their fields, subjects and participants. In the next step, the dissertations were evaluated with content analyzes. It is determined that doctoral dissertations are made in six different fields related to tourism and most doctoral dissertation is written about management and organization.

Keywords: Tourism, YÖK Electronic Dissertation Bank, Doctoral Dissertations, MAXQDA.

1. INTRODUCTION

Postgraduate education and training provided by universities have an important role in training qualified manpower (such as faculty, scientist, researcher) required to conduct research and solve country problems (Karakütük, 2002: 6). In Turkey, the vast majority of scientific studies are carried out by universities and theses prepared as part of the education contribute positively to the production and development of science (Bakır, 2013: 1). Doctoral dissertation studies are seen as an important tool in the academic advancement of a field (Karagöz and Yüncü, 2013: 207).

It is important to examine every kind of literature produced at any given time period at intervals in order to reveal the line of development of discipline in question (Kozak, 2001). The growth of tourism as a field of knowledge and the increase in the number of scientists who publish on this subject cause an increase in the studies conducted in this field (Özel and Kozak, 2012: 716-717). One of the reasons for this increase is the curiosity to examine the contributions of scientists and broadcasting organizations to tourism literature and the need to evaluate the research performance of these individuals and organizations (Hall, 2011: 16). Studies in different sub-branches and subject areas of tourism can contribute to the field by providing a comprehensive perspective on these fields. Accordingly, the importance of the publications needed for the development of the field and the acceptance of tourism as an academic subject has increased gradually (Jogaratham et al., 2005: 641). In parallel with the increasing number of universities in recent years, dissertations and publications in

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the field of social sciences have been increasing, but it is not known exactly which disciplines these studies are conducted and how they tend to research (Seymen et al. 2009, Zencir and Kozak, 2012, p. 673).

When the related literature is examined, it has been found out that a current study that doctoral dissertations about tourism has not been compiled. In this context, this research aims to examine and to class doctoral dissertations on tourism categorically in Turkey. It is thought that this research will show the topics that are being studied in the last 5 years and the direction of future researches. In this way, it will be possible to see the distribution of the dissertations related to tourism. It is assumed that the research is important in terms of shedding light on future dissertations and publications.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Different researches in different fields for scientific publications are available in the literature. These studies concentrate on criteria such as bibliometric analyzes, content analysis and subject distributions of dissertations, the most frequently cited sources, research methods used and data collection techniques (Al and Tonta, 2004, p. 24).

The first study on the evaluation of dissertations in the field of tourism belongs to Crichton (1978). In this study, the author examined 122 dissertations with key words such as airlines, travel, recreation, parks, leisure, tourism and tourists. Karagöz and Yüncü (2013), examined 385 pieces in the field of tourism that enrolled in Higher Education Institution between 1991-2010 to reveal development of tourism information network structure and its change over the years. Kozak (1998) determined the distribution of theses by universities, subjects and years by examining the dissertations written in the field of tourism between 1952-1997.

With the rapid development of the tourism sector, tourism education was given in vocational and technical schools to train the human resources that have the professional and managerial knowledge needed by the sector, and then separate departments and schools related to tourism were opened with the effects of the intense demand coming from the public and private sectors (Eivazi Gharamaleki, 2011, p. 32). Today, academic education in tourism education is realized by universities. This type of education constitutes a background consisting of theoretical concepts and improves students' ability to analyze, evaluate and comment (Echtner, 1995, p. 121).

Tourism education in universities tends to focus on providing students with their future careers in the sector. The meaning of tourism education is not paid much attention. The first academic studies on tourism have been about economic effects. However, since the 1970s, tourism has not only been seen as economic but also social, cultural, political and environmental interactions (Inui et al., 2006, pp. 25-26). In the early stages of the phenomenon of tourism, it may be focused primarily on the economic impact of scientists interested in economics and business (Eivazi Gharamaleki, 2011, p. 32). In the 1980s, tourism education has become an issue that is closely related to the international community (Kozak and Kozak, 2014). Parallel to this development as well as in Turkey, the number of tourism education institutions has increased rapidly from these years (Özdoğan and Çavuş, 2009).

Tourism education at the level of higher education in Turkey is carried out in 3 ways within the framework of the Higher Education Law No. 2547, by the university as associate, bachelor and graduate level (Ünlüönen and Boylu, 2005, p. 15).

The aim of associate degree education is to train mid-level employees who will work in tourism and hospitality sector. In this direction, the education is provided within the Vocational Schools. The first institutions opened in this field were Boğaziçi University and Hacettepe University in 1974. As of 2010, associate degree tourism and hotel management programs are continuing in the sub-areas such as tourism and travel management, tourism guidance, cookery, tourism animation, hospitality services (Kozak et al., 2014, p. 135). In the field of travel, tourism and leisure activities at associate degree in Turkey, students in total 181.52 have an education according to 2015-2016 data (Yök, 2016).

Bachelor's degree education has been “Ankara Trade and Tourism Higher Teacher School” since 1965-1966 academic year, as adding “tourism department” to Ankara Trade Higher Teacher School. The school has been established to train vocational courses teachers especially for middle school trade and tourism vocational high schools. After the Higher Education Law No. 2547, this school was taken under the structure of Gazi University Faculty of Vocational Education and the tourism department was transformed into “tourism management and hotel management education”. The related department was included in the “Faculty of

Commerce and Tourism Education’’ established in Gazi University in 1992 and started to continue its tourism education at the undergraduate level (Ünlüönen and Boylu, 2005, p. 20). In 2010, the Faculty of Tourism was restructured. In addition, among the first universities in this field, the Institute of Tourism affiliated to the Izmir Academy of Economic and Commercial Sciences in 1964, Kuşadası Tourism and Hotel Management School in 1974 (Adnan Menderes University) and Balıkesir Tourism Management in 1976 and the School of Hotel Management in 1979, Mersin School of Tourism and Hotel Management take place (Kozak et al., 2014, p. 135). The tourism education at bachelor degree in Turkey started to be carried out at Faculties of Tourism in 2012 with Higher Education Council (HEC) 's decision. Thus, thanks to the different departments established within the Faculties of Tourism, a structure that enables specialization was created (Zencir et al., 2016, p. 1035).

Institutions providing tourism education at bachelor level may vary according to their aims. For example, it can be said that the Tourism Management Departments within the Faculties of Economics and Administrative Sciences are management-oriented and the Schools of Tourism and Hotel Management are practice oriented (Eser, 2002, p. 144).

In Turkey, there are postgraduate programs given after the undergraduate education. The aim of the tourism education given at the graduate level is to educate managers and researchers who can solve the complex problems of modern tourism in social, economic and technical characteristics and evaluate the effectiveness of different factors and have the power of abstraction, analysis and decision making (Olalı, 1984, p. 206). Graduate programs are also among the trainings given by universities. The first program in tourism and hospitality sector in Turkey was opened in 1981 by Hacettepe University. This was followed by Istanbul University in 1982 and the number of these programs has increased rapidly.

Doctorate education is defined as a degree or step that is accessed through exams and a scientific work after a bachelor's or master's program (Kozak et al., 2014, p. 136). The first program opened in the field of tourism is within the scope of Istanbul University and in the following years, doctoral trainings in tourism continue to be given by various universities such as Dokuz Eylül University and Gazi University.

Tourism sector, which is one of the sectors where competition is rapidly increasing in the world, is constantly increasing international competition in our country. While it is observed that the tourism attractiveness of our country increases every day, quality standards are expected to increase accordingly (Güngör and Ayhan, 2016, p. 1565). In this respect, the relationship of tourism sector with tourism education is of great importance. In order to transfer professional and technical information and to achieve high service standards in tourism, it should be ensured that tourism education is provided at the social level and tourism awareness is placed (Ürger, 1992, p. 247). The aim of tourism education is to awaken the awareness of tourism in the public, to increase productivity in the labor-based tourism segment, to provide professional knowledge and behavior to the staff serving directly to tourists, to provide a balance between personnel authority, skills and responsibilities (Maviş and Kozak, 1992, p. 169).

According to data from World Tourism Organization (WTO), tourism will grow by 5.5% in 2020 in Turkey. This growth rate will be the 4th highest growth rate among European countries (İnce, 2004). It must focus on the solution of the existing sectoral problems in Turkey of future as driving force of economy to respond to the needs of demand leading up to it that the tourism sector is considered as power and national benefits reach the expected target to perform at the highest level. These problems are infrastructure, superstructure problems, as well as qualified human resources to take place in the sector. Therefore, in addition to the necessity of in-service training of the labor force serving in this field, the labor force (student) who has not yet entered the field of tourism should take its place in the sector as a qualified labor force with vocational training. The unique qualities of touristic goods and services and the individual contributions of the employee to the quality of the service rendered it compulsory that the training to be provided to them be a quality training. In Turkish tourism education, instead of complaining about the ongoing problems; their immediate solutions should be put into practice, and the steps taken and developments taking place in the world tourism education technology should be closely monitored (Olçay, 2008, p. 390).

3. METHODOLOGY

Universities are important institutions in the production and sharing of scientific knowledge and one of their social functions is research. While the contribution of the researches carried out during the graduate education to the field of study is very high, doctorate dissertations constitute the most important of these. This

study is important in terms of the fact that it is an example of content analysis for the dissertation studies published in the field of tourism, that no such study has been done before and that the findings obtained from the study give direction to the future researchers.

According to data obtained from National Thesis Center there is a total of 334 doctoral dissertation in the field of tourism in Turkey. The first doctoral dissertation is Social Tourism which was prepared in 1978. Between 2014-2018, 52 dissertations were prepared in the field of tourism. In this research, 52 doctoral dissertations in the Department of Tourism Management and in Turkish language, which are open to database, were examined by content analysis method.

3. 1. Data Analysis

The data obtained during the analysis were analyzed with a licensed MAXQDA 18, a professional computer-assisted qualitative data analysis program (Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software / CAQDAS). Particularly within the scope of qualitative research, the ongoing developments all over the world and in our country now make it necessary to use such professional software. MAXQDA is an important and up-to-date software that has been used by researchers since 1989 and is still being worked on to optimize the nature of qualitative research. Thanks to the program, the analysis process has been made more clearly and systematically, and it has been possible to make the necessary adjustments by controlling the coding.

The data were analyzed in three main categories as “participants“, “research field” and “other subjects” of the dissertation. The category of “research area” is detailed within the framework of 5 themes:“marketing ”,“ management ”, sustainable tourism”, “alternative tourism” and “destination”. In the analysis of qualitative research data, code-subcode frequency graphs and sub-codes of a code are given according to the number of participant expressions.

3. 2. Findings

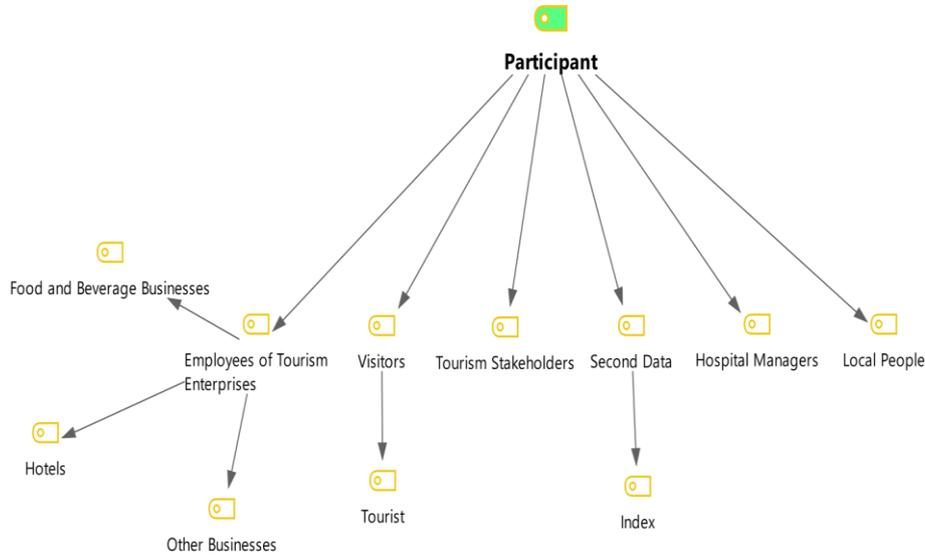


Figure 1: Classification of PHD Dissertation Studies in Tourism Management Department in 2014-2018 by Profile of Participants -Code-Subcode Model

Figure 1 shows the profile of the participants in the PHD dissertation. The participants of the dissertation studies are tourism enterprises employees, visitors, tourism stakeholders, local people, hospital managers. At the same time, secondary data were used in two doctoral dissertations conducted in the department of tourism management between 2014-2018.

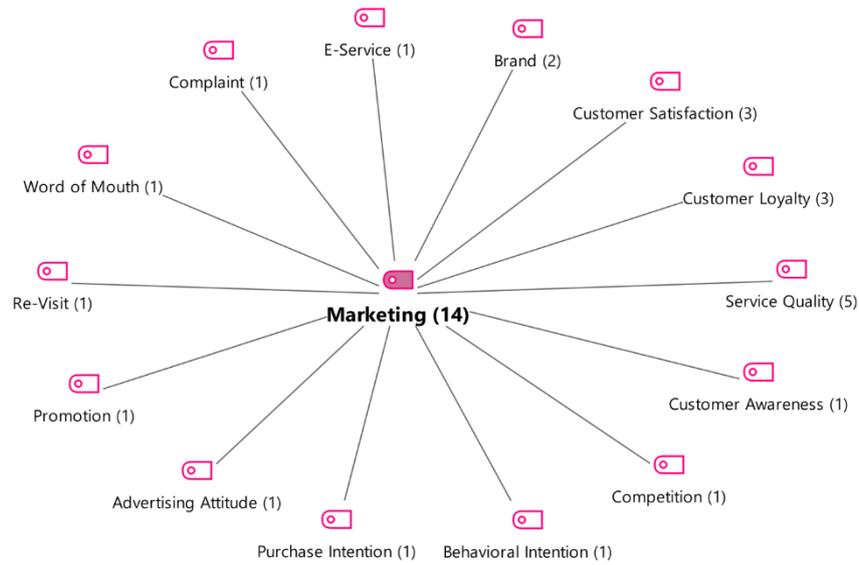


Figure 2: Classification of PHD Dissertation conducted in the Department of Tourism Management between 2014-2018 by Marketing Field -Code-Subcode Model

In Figure 2, dissertation topics are gathered under the theme of marketing. Under this theme; 14 codes were formed: word of mouth communication, revisit, promotion, advertising attitude, purchase intention, behavioral intention, competition, customer awareness, service quality, customer loyalty, customer satisfaction, brand, e-service and complaints. As can be seen in Figure 2, service quality (5) was the most studied subject of marketing.

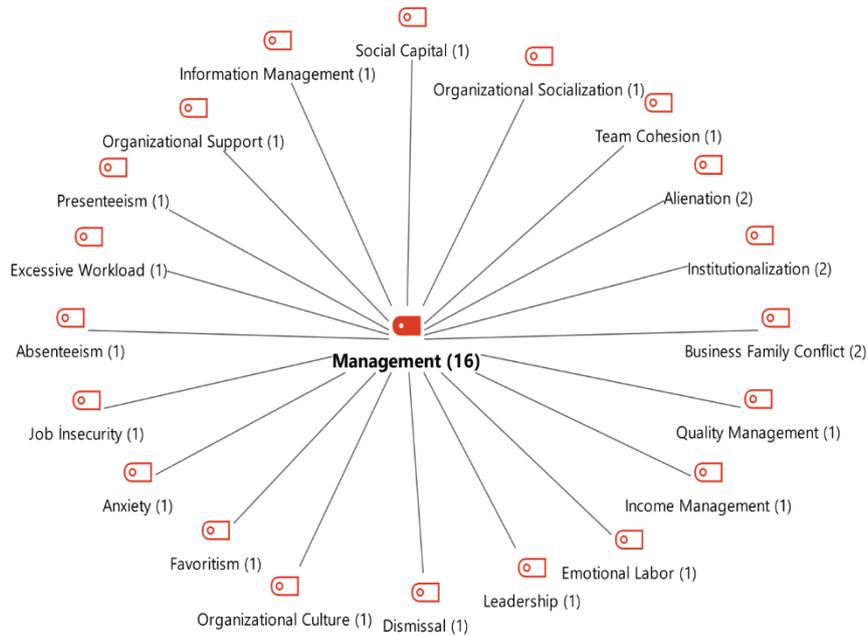


Figure 3: Classification of Doctoral Dissertation Studies in Tourism Management Department in 2014-2018 by Management Area -Code-Subcode Model

In Figure 3, dissertation topics are gathered under the theme of management. A total of 20 different subjects have been studied in the field of management. These issues are social capital, organizational socialization, team cohesion, alienation, institutionalization, family conflict, quality management, income management, emotional labor, leadership, dismissal, organizational culture, favoritism, anxiety, job insecurity, absenteeism, excessive workload, presenteeism, organizational support, knowledge management. It is seen that in the doctoral dissertation studies conducted in the Department of Tourism Management between 2014-2018, the most studied subjects are institutionalization, alienation from work and business family conflict in the field of management.

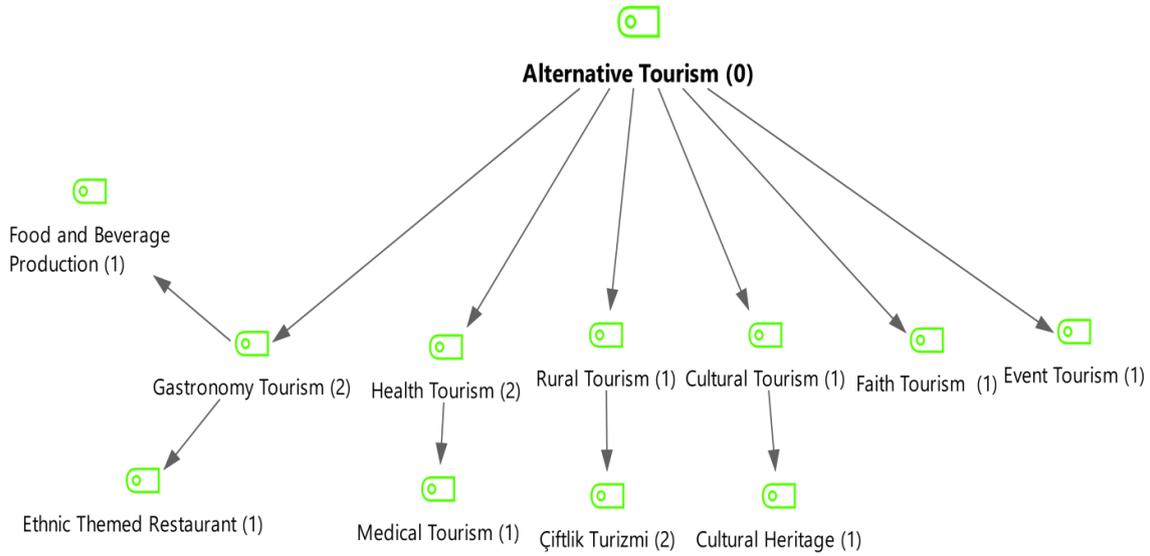


Figure 4: Classification of PHD dissertation conducted in the Department of Tourism Management between 2014-2018 by Alternative Tourism -Code-Subcode Model

In Figure 4, dissertation topics are gathered under the theme of alternative tourism. Dissertations in the field of alternative tourism are gastronomy tourism, health tourism, rural tourism, cultural tourism, faith tourism and event tourism. 2 dissertations have been written in the field of gastronomy tourism and these dissertations have been written in the field of food and beverage production and ethnic themed restaurants, 3 dissertations have been written in the field of health tourism and 3 studies have been made in the field of medical tourism, 2 studies have been written in the field of farm tourism and 2 dissertations in the field of cultural tourism. one of them was prepared in the field of cultural heritage.

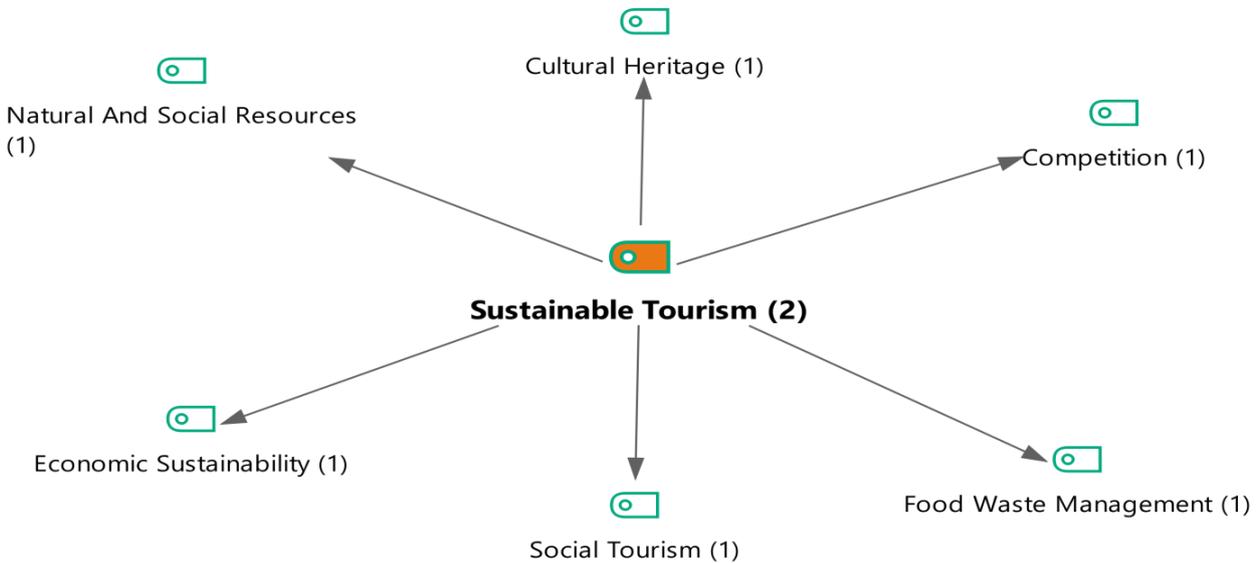


Figure 5: Classification of Doctoral dissertation Studies in the Department of Tourism Management Between 2014-2018 by Sustainable Tourism. Code-Subcode Model

In Figure 5, dissertation topics are gathered under the theme of sustainable tourism. When the doctoral dissertation studies conducted in the department of tourism management between 2014-2018 were examined, a total of 6 subjects were studied in the field of sustainable tourism. These issues are cultural heritage, competition, food waste management, social tourism, economic sustainability, natural and social resources.

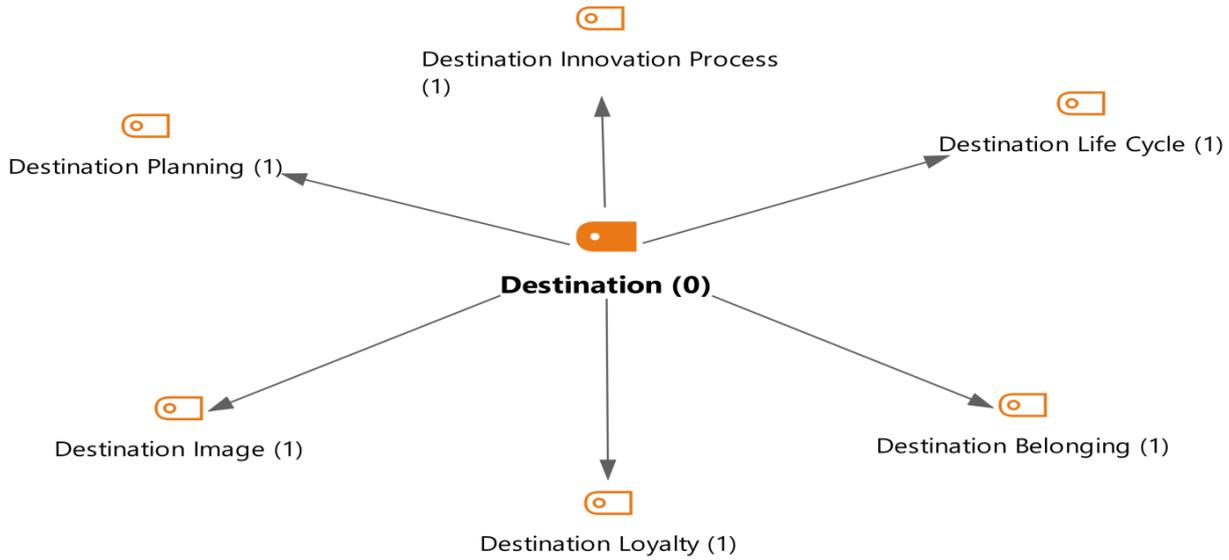


Figure 6: Classification of Doctoral Dissertations in the Department of Tourism Management Between 2014-2018 by Destination Area -Code-Subcode Model

In Figure 6, the dissertation study topics are gathered under the theme of destinations. Destination theme consists of 6 topics: destination image, destination loyalty, destination belonging, destination life cycle, destination innovation process and destination planning.

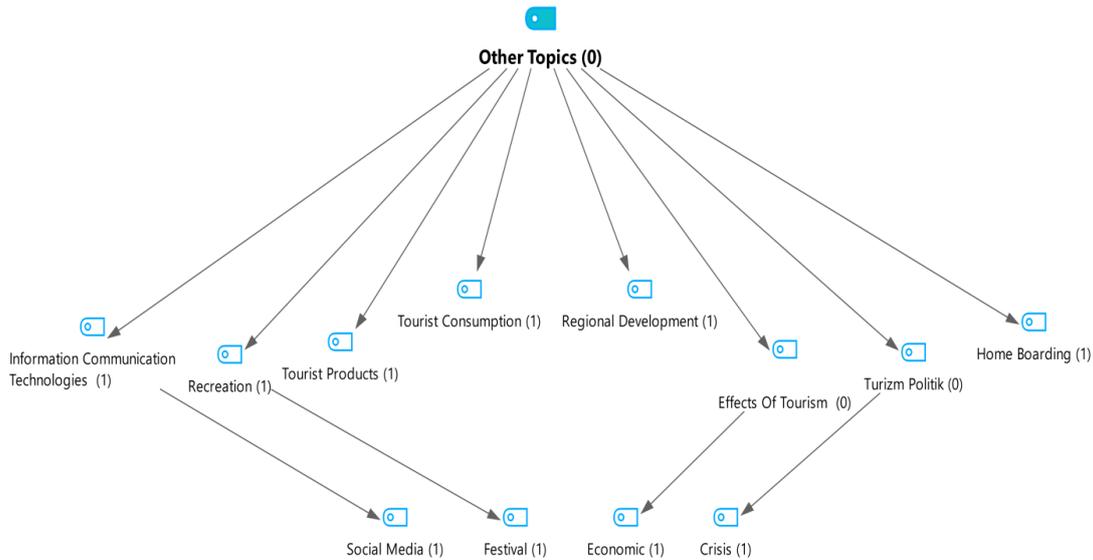


Figure 7: Classification of PHD dissertation Studies in the Department of Tourism Management between 2014-2018 by Other Subjects -Code-Subcode Model

In Figure 7, the dissertation study topics are gathered under the theme of other topics. The dissertation studies conducted in the field of tourism management between 2014-2018 were classified under the theme of “other subjects”, except for the areas of marketing, management, alternative tourism, sustainable tourism and destination. Under this theme, 8 topics were studied: information communication technologies (social media), recreation (festival), touristic product, touristic consumption, regional development, effects of tourism (economic), tourism policy (crisis) and homeboarding.

4. CONCLUSION

This study, which aims to examine the dissertation studies in the field of tourism, reveals the most studied dissertation topics in recent years. According to the findings obtained in the study, hotel employees constitute the sample where the research questionnaires are applied the most. Employees, as one of the most

important building blocks of the sector, are important in terms of determining customer satisfaction. Therefore, the determination and analysis of issues such as employees' opinions, perceptions, attitudes and behaviors on various subjects directly affect the service quality of the businesses.

It is seen that most of the PhD dissertations are about marketing, management, alternative tourism, sustainable tourism, destinations and other subjects. When the tourism dissertations about marketing are examined, service quality is the most studied issue. The issue of service quality is an issue that must be measured in terms of achieving competitive advantage and sustainability. Quality is one of the most important reasons for the tourism businesses in the service sector to be preferred by the customers. This requires determination of the quality of service and perceived service. In the doctoral dissertations studies, it is seen that the most studied subjects are institutionalization, alienation from work and family conflict in the field of management. In the field of alternative tourism, rural tourism and health are the most studied subjects. In particular, the number of studies in this field is increasing due to the increasing importance of health tourism in Turkey. Cultural heritage, competition, food waste management, social tourism, economic sustainability, natural and social resources are the most studied topics in sustainable tourism.

Destination theme topics include destination image, destination loyalty, destination belonging, destination life cycle, destination innovation process and destination headings. Destinations are important places of tourism, offering various goods and services, attracting tourists and aiming to get more shares from tourism. Studies in these areas emphasize the importance of destinations in tourism. The final title of the dissertation subject in the field of tourism is 'other' option. Information communication technologies (social media), recreation (festival), touristic product, touristic consumption, regional development, effects of tourism (economic), tourism policy (crisis) and home boarding are among these topics. It can be said that the dissertation studies on these subjects are also among the current topics.

As a result, the dissertations are generally composed of current topics. Although such studies are frequently encountered in the literature, the study reveals the latest status of doctoral dissertations in the field of tourism. For the next studies, the year intervals in which the dissertations are made can be expanded and evaluations can be made according to different variables. In addition, such studies are considered important by the individuals who will write a doctoral dissertation in terms of providing general information.

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