



EVALUATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES IN TURKEY WITHIN THE SCOPE OF TOURISM TYPES

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Abstract

In Turkey, there are a total of 26 regional development agencies, including three development agencies in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir with a single province, and twenty-three development agencies established by bringing together more than one province. Each province where development agencies are established has its own tourism potential. It is thought that this potential will increase the touristic demand in the context of diversification of tourism. In this context, the aim of this study is to reveal which types of tourism the regional development agencies prioritize in order to develop tourism in their regions and the relationship between the tourism types they support and the tourism potential of their regions. For this purpose, in this study, in which data was collected through document analysis from qualitative research techniques, the annual reports of regional development agencies published in 2020 were examined and their activities were subjected to content analysis in the context of supported tourism types. As a result of the examination of the annual reports, consisting of 2534 pages of 26 regional development agencies, it has been concluded that cultural tourism, health tourism, nature tourism, ecotourism, gastronomic tourism and rural tourism are among the tourism types that development agencies want to develop/support the most in their regions and especially provide financial support. From this point of view, in this study, suggestions were made to the regional development agencies by considering the potentials of the provinces they cover in terms of tourism types.

Keywords: Regional development, Development agencies, Types of tourism, Supports, Turkey.

Introduction

The concept of regional development, emerged as a part of the process of eliminating the development differences between a country, city or different spatial categories (Özgür, 2014). Utilizing the natural, economic, cultural and technological resources available in a certain geographical region of a country, benefiting from local opportunities at the highest level emerges as a necessity of the understanding of regional development (Cankorkmaz, 2011). With the development of tourism in the underdeveloped region of the country, it is possible for new resources to flow into the economy of that region and to create new business areas and employment areas. In this way, there is an increase in the income of the regional economy in every sector or field. In this context, the tourism sector can be used as a tool to ensure balanced regional development, as it develops and grows within the country and helps to eliminate the development differences between regions (Polat & Özdemir Yılmaz, 2014). In addition, the role of regional development agencies, which we can consider as regional policy tools, in reducing interregional development disparities and ensuring local development, is undeniable (Lagendijk et al., 2009; Erođlu & Kum, 2010). As a matter of fact, development agencies carry out many activities in order to reveal the tourism potentials of the relevant regions and to increase tourism revenues. Among the mentioned activities, to prepare various promotional materials in order to promote the tourism potential of the regions (brochures, catalogues, promotional videos, promotional books, maps showing the location of touristic products, etc.), to inform tour operators and investors about the region by participating in domestic and international fairs, to hold meetings with local stakeholders in order to promote the region and sharing information by participating in meetings and trainings held at the national level. In addition, development agencies also carry out common mind activities at the point of studies of relevant institutions and organizations on the ways of realizing the most effective

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use of alternative tourism resources of the relevant region (Demir & Karakuş, 2016; Alpaslan & Aydın, 2021).

Development agencies in Turkey were established in a period when the candidacy process for membership to the European Union was active and effective, in order to reduce the development gap between the regions in the country and to contribute to regional development (Coşkun & Almalı, 2020). The development agencies currently operating in Turkey are making efforts to make the regions stronger in various aspects by supporting various projects with financial support programs (Işık et al., 2010). In this context, development agencies, creating regional promotion opportunities for their regions to be the focal point of new investments and providing transportation, infrastructure, workforce, etc. to investors related to the region. They aim to provide information and guidance on issues (Budak & Eroğlu, 2013).

It should be underlined that regional development agencies play an important role in the development of cooperation between the public and private sectors and non-governmental organizations. In order to activate the local potential, to accelerate regional development in accordance with the issues specified in the national development plans and programs and to ensure sustainability in this sense are among the main establishment objectives of regional development agencies (Özkan et al., 2014). On the other hand, Akıncı Vural & Yalçın (2017) underline that many issues such as creating a tourism strategy, utilizing the unused potential of regions, creating tourist attraction areas and diversifying alternative tourism activities are among the main objectives of development agencies. From this point of view, in this study, a general evaluation was made by examining which types of tourism development agencies prioritize in order to develop tourism in their regions.

Conceptual Framework

Regional Development Agencies

One of the most important factors in the emergence of the interregional development gap is the concentration of investments and economic activities in certain centers due to geographical or demographic reasons. In this context, States have to produce various development policies to eliminate these differences (Coşkun & Almalı, 2020). In Turkey, especially from the 1960s to 2009, the development policies managed by the State Planning Organization started to be realized by the regional development agencies as of 2009 (Tiftikcigil, 2015; Kutlutürk & Orhan, 2021). Development agencies were established in the 1930s with the aim of improving the socio-economic characteristics of a region whose borders were determined independently of the government. It was first established in European countries to increase competitiveness and especially for economic development (Turan, 2016; Young-Hyman, 2018; Bulmuş & Polat, 2020).

Regional development agencies are defined as public/state-financed institutions located on a regional basis, supporting local economic development by using mostly “flexible” policy tools in an integrated manner, apart from the basic structure of the central government and local governments (Maç, 2006; Budak & Eroğlu, 2013; Işıkçı, 2018; Toktaş et al., 2018). It is possible to say that regional development agencies, which emphasize the role of innovation in regional competitiveness, are established by following the growth/development trends of a particular region. In this context, the basic foundational rationale is to promote the competitiveness and efficiency of the region where the development agencies operate on a business-like structure by taking place within the wider regional development system (Esen & Aşık Dizdar, 2014).

Regional Development Agencies in Turkey

The first studies on the concept of regional development agency in Turkey started in the 1990s (Kadiroğlu & Türko, 2021). The aim of starting this process in Turkey is to accelerate the European Union accession process as well as global developments (Maç, 2006; Özkan et al., 2014). In this context, regional development agencies came to the agenda for the first time in Turkey at the 1999 Helsinki Summit, when full membership to the European Union was registered. With the involvement of regional development agencies among the arrangements to be made in the medium term in the Accession Partnership Document prepared by the European Union commission, the legal regulation process has started (Lagendijk et al., 2009; Cankorkmaz, 2011; Çelikkol, 2014).

Development agencies established in Turkey also include a new management model (Tiftikcigil, 2015). This management model is suitable for the “governance” approach. With this model, local actors were able to take place in the management and decision bodies of a public institution within the central government structure

(Coşkun & Almalı, 2020). Development agencies in Turkey were established within the scope of “Law on Establishment, Coordination and Duties of Development Agencies” numbered 5449, which entered into force in 2006. Duties and powers of development agencies are as follows (Law on Establishment, Coordination and Duties of Development Agencies, 2006, Article: 5):

- To provide technical support to the planning studies of local governments,
- To support activities and projects that ensure the implementation of regional plans and programs,
- To follow up and evaluate the implementation process of the supported activities and projects and to report the results to the Undersecretariat of State Planning Organization,
- Contributing to the development of the region’s rural and local development capacity in accordance with regional plans and programs and providing support to projects within this scope,
- To follow other projects carried out by the public sector, private sector and non-governmental organizations in the region and considered important in terms of regional plans and programs,
- To develop cooperation between public sector, private sector and non-governmental organizations in order to achieve regional development goals,
- To use or make use of the resources allocated to the Agency in accordance with regional plans and programs,
- Conducting research to identify the resources and opportunities of the region, accelerate economic and social development, and increase competitiveness,
- To promote or have the business and investment opportunities of the region promoted at the national and international level in cooperation with the relevant institutions,
- To follow up and coordinate the permit and license transactions and other administrative works and transactions of investors, public institutions and organizations in the provinces of the region, within the period specified in the relevant legislation, from a single source,
- Supporting small and medium-sized enterprises and new entrepreneurs by collaborating with relevant institutions on issues such as management, production, promotion, marketing, technology, finance, organization and workforce training,
- To promote the activities of bilateral or multilateral international programs in which Turkey participates in the region and to contribute to the development of projects within the scope of these programs,
- To create a website where the activities of the agency, its financial structure and other issues related to the agency will be published up-to-date.

Development agencies in Turkey have been established in accordance with the NUTS system accepted by the European Union, based on the Statistical Regional Units Classification (İBBS) established for Turkey with the Council of Ministers Decision dated 28/08/2002 and numbered 4720 (Coşkun & Almalı, 2020). Development agencies in Turkey were established on the Level 1 (12 sub-regions), Level 2 (26 sub-regions) and Level 3 (81 provinces) Regions in this classification. Three agencies with a single province were established in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir, and more than one province was brought together in the other twenty-three agencies. In addition, development agencies have been established in all regions of the country and the organizational characteristics of all agencies in the country have been considered in the same way (Garipağaoğlu, 2020; Özişik, 2021). Table 1 contains information on the names, provinces, centers and establishment years of regional development agencies in Turkey.

Table 1. Regional Development Agencies in Turkey

Regional Development Agency	Cities Covered	Central City	Foundation Year
Ahiler Development Agency - AHİKA	Aksaray, Kırıkkale, Kırşehir, Nevşehir ve Niğde	Nevşehir	2009
Ankara Development Agency - ANKARAKA	Ankara	Ankara	2009
Western Mediterranean Development Agency - BAKA	Antalya, Burdur, Isparta	Isparta	2009
Western Black Sea Development Agency - BAKKA	Bartın, Karabük, Zonguldak	Zonguldak	2009
Bursa, Eskişehir, Bilecik Development Agency - BEBKA	Bilecik, Bursa, Eskişehir	Bursa	2009
Çukurova Development Agency - ÇKA	Adana, Mersin	Adana	2006
Eastern Anatolia Development Agency - DAKA	Bitlis, Hakkâri, Muş, Van	Van	2008

Dicle Development Agency - DİKA	Batman, Mardin, Şırnak, Siirt	Mardin	2008
Eastern Mediterranean Development Agency - DOĞAKA	Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Osmaniye	Hatay	2009
Eastern Black Sea Development Agency – DOKA	Artvin, Giresun, Gümüşhane, Ordu, Rize, Trabzon	Trabzon	2009
Fırat Development Agency - FKA	Bingöl, Elazığ, Malatya, Tunceli	Malatya	2009
Southern Aegean Development Agency - GEKA	Aydın, Denizli, Muğla	Denizli	2009
Southern Marmara Development Agency - GMKA	Balıkesir, Çanakkale	Balıkesir	2009
İpekyolu Development Agency - İKA	Adıyaman, Gaziantep, Kilis	Gaziantep	2008
İstanbul Development Agency - İSTKA	İstanbul	İstanbul	2008
İzmir Development Agency - İZKA	İzmir	İzmir	2006
Karacadağ Development Agency - KARACADAĞ	Diyarbakır, Şanlıurfa	Diyarbakır	2008
North Eastern Anatolia Development Agency - KUDAKA	Bayburt, Erzincan, Erzurum	Erzurum	2008
Northern Anatolia Development Agency - KUZKA	Çankırı, Kastamonu, Sinop	Kastamonu	2009
Eastern Marmara Development Agency - MARKA	Bolu, Düzce, Kocaeli, Sakarya, Yalova	Kocaeli	2009
Mevlana Development Agency - MEVKA	Karaman, Konya	Konya	2008
Central Black Sea Development Agency - OKA	Amasya, Çorum, Samsun, Tokat	Samsun	2008
Central Anatolia Development Agency - ORAN	Kayseri, Sivas, Yozgat	Kayseri	2009
Serhat Development Agency - SERKA	Ağrı, Ardahan, Iğdır, Kars	Kars	2009
Trakya Development Agency - TRAKYAKA	Edirne, Kırklareli, Tekirdağ	Tekirdağ	2009
Zafer Development Agency - ZAFER	Afyonkarahisar, Kütahya, Manisa, Uşak	Kütahya	2009

Source: Prepared by the author, compiled from the websites of Development Agencies.

As can be seen in Table 1, 26 regional development agencies have been established to operate in 81 provinces in total in Turkey. Regional development agencies operate in the fields of “providing financial aid or support”, “revealing new investment areas”, “advising SMEs”, “determining the long-term development goals of the region” and “contributing to developments in social areas”. Development agencies are also used as a tool in directing investments. In other words, it is possible to say that regional development agencies play an important role in attracting investments in some regions where the private sector is hesitant (Özer, 2009). It also includes supporting entrepreneurs by providing financial incentives or advice, creating new ventures and internationalizing them (Arslan, 2010).

Tourism-Oriented Supports of Regional Development Agencies

Regions that have to adapt to economic and political changes in order to survive in the global competitive environment should attract attention especially with new investments. As a matter of fact, the issue of globalization is of vital importance in terms of regional development. With regional structures that can be evaluated among economic actors, it is possible for regional development to find direction and to revive the regional economy. At this point, it should be underlined that regional development agencies play an important role. Because development agencies are the driving force of development in the regions (Akyol, 2013). Regional development defines the increase in the level of welfare in a region in parallel with the positive use of economic and social potential. In this sense, it is possible to talk about a close relationship between tourism and regional development. As a matter of fact, two important reasons emerge as tourism creating employment opportunities in the regional sense, providing regional and general economic growth, and increasing the level of welfare. Tourism brings new external monetary income sources to the local external economy, often having a positive economic and developmental impact at the regional level. But it also produces other forms of undesirable change and cost in relation to other livelihoods. Thus, since the development of tourism in a region will offer new business activity, tourism and its support will tend to be viewed from the perspective of regional development, which not only competes for customers but also competes for investors and attracts new capital (Yıldız & Sarıtaş, 2021).

While regional development agencies ensure that the infrastructure and regional development process of the underdeveloped regions are sustainable in developed countries, they play a role in the realization of a development that supports the growth process in developing countries (Kutlutürk & Orhan, 2021). In other

words, development agencies, which are an integral part of national development, eliminate the development differences within the country with the incentive programs and projects of the regions in the country (Akıncı Vural & Yalçın, 2017). In this context, development agencies are responsible for preparing regional plans in accordance with the regions they are responsible for. Regional plans should include some measures to evaluate the potential and reveal the dynamics of the region with the participation of all possible stakeholders. On the other hand, development agencies carry out a number of support activities in order to achieve the targets set in the regional plan and other high-scale plans. These support programs (financial and technical supports) are prepared in accordance with the work programs (Aydın, 2019).

Related Studies

Demir & Karakuş (2016) concluded that the support and incentive opportunities of development agencies for the tourism sector have increased from year to year and reached significant dimensions, in the study carried out by regional development agencies in order to examine tourism projects, programs and strategies at regional or national level. In addition, in this study, it has been determined that tourism is considered as the most important investment and application area in terms of regions and this issue has attracted the attention of development agencies.

In a study carried out by Çiftci et al. (2016), it was aimed to determine the effects of the activities carried out in the Thrace Region, which is the area of activity and responsibility of the Trakya Development Agency, on the tourism sector. As a result of the research, it was determined that Trakya Development Agency carried out very important studies in the field of tourism, but these studies did not reflect on the concrete outputs at the same level.

In a study conducted by Özkan et al. (2018), it was aimed to reveal the role of the South Marmara Development Agency in ensuring the regional tourism values and sustainability. In this context, tourism projects supported by the South Marmara Development Agency between 2010-2013, tourism project outputs between 2010-2012, and tourism projects to which financial support was given in 2013 and organizations that received support were examined. As a result of the research, it has been determined that the Southern Marmara Development Agency creates employment in tourism with the tourism projects that it provides financial support in the region, adds new areas to tourism, supports trainings to train qualified workforce in the tourism sector, contributes to the renewal of touristic facilities and mainly supports public projects in the tourism sector.

In a study carried out by Düzgün (2020) in order to determine the contributions of development agencies in Istanbul's competitive advantage and becoming a brand city, it was tried to determine which of the advantages it has and to what extent are used in order for Istanbul and its region to be a preferred region. As a result of the research, it has been seen that Istanbul Development Agency has made significant contributions to increasing the tourism potential of cities and making them a sustainable and branded region. It has been determined that it has brought important innovations to the branding of the city and supported many projects related to the subject, especially by cooperating with other organizations in the region.

Methodology

In this study, it is aimed to analyze the activities of regional development agencies established in Turkey in terms of the types of tourism they support. In line with the aim of the study, answers to the following questions were sought:

- Which types of tourism do regional development agencies prioritize/support in order to develop tourism in their regions?
- Which are the regional development agencies that carry out projects to support tourism types in their regions?
- Are the types of tourism supported by regional development agencies related to the tourism potential of their regions?

In the study, data were collected through document analysis, one of the qualitative research methods. Document review is one of the qualitative research methods used to rigorously and systematically analyze the content of written documents, in which data is analyzed empirically to gain meaning or understanding. Documents contain recorded texts or pictures without the intervention of a researcher (Kıral, 2020). Content analysis was used in the analysis and interpretation of the data. Content analysis is a method of analyzing

written, verbal or visual communication messages (Elo & Kyngas, 2008). In other words, by examining the annual reports of regional development agencies published in 2020, the content analysis of the activities in question in the context of supported tourism types was in question. In this context, activity reports of 26 regional development agencies, consisting of 2534 pages in total, were examined.

In this study, the activity reports of the development agencies for the year 2020 were used and the types of tourism supported by the development agencies and the other activities in the relevant reports were analyzed in terms of tourism. Research data has been obtained from the official website of 26 development agencies that have been established so far. Since the information is completely based on the information published on the websites of the development agencies regarding the activities of 2020, the information not included in the reports is not included in the scope of the research. The headings in the activity reports of regional development agencies are: “*General Information* (vision and mission, authority, duties and responsibilities, information about the agency, physical structure, organizational structure, information and technological resources, human resources, services provided, management and internal control system)”, “*Purpose and Objectives* (main objectives, basic policies and priorities)”, “*Information and Evaluation of Activities* (financial information, performance information)”, “*Corporate Capability and Capacity Evaluation* (superiorities, weaknesses, evaluations)” and “*Suggestion and measures*”. Under the heading “*Information and Evaluations on Activities*” within the aforementioned sub-headings, studies carried out by development agencies in 2020 and project support activities/supported tourism types/performance information/support programs etc. place is given. In this study, these titles were examined in detail. In addition, this study does not necessitate an approval from ethical committee in terms of its scope.

Findings and Comments

An inventory of tourism types supported by development agencies has been prepared in the annual reports examined in order to determine which types of tourism are prioritized by regional development agencies in Turkey in order to develop tourism in their regions (Table 2).

Table 2. Tourism Types Supported by Regional Development Agencies

Regional Development Agency	Supported Tourism Types
AHİKA	Ecotourism, Gastronomy Tourism, Agrotourism, Nature Tourism, Movie Tourism, Culture Tourism
ANKARAKA	Thermal Tourism, Health Tourism
BAKA	Ecotourism, Culture Tourism, Cave Tourism, Caravan Tourism, Faith Tourism, Rural Tourism, Agrotourism, Astrotourism, Health Tourism
BAKKA	Industrial Heritage Tourism, Camping and Caravan Tourism, Bicycle Tourism, Sports Tourism, Ecotourism, Nature Tourism
BEBKA	Rural Tourism, Winter Tourism, Mountain Tourism, Health Tourism, Thermal Tourism, Ecotourism, Culture Tourism, Camping and Caravan Tourism
ÇKA	Gastronomy Tourism, Culture Tourism, Cave Tourism, Rural Tourism, Nature Tourism, Sports Tourism, Adventure Tourism
DAKA	Ski Tourism, Winter Tourism, Bird-watching, Faith Tourism
DİKA	Culture Tourism, Faith Tourism, Ecotourism, Gastronomy Tourism
DOĞAKA	Gastronomy Tourism, Culture Tourism
DOKA	Culture Tourism, Experience Tourism, Creative Tourism, Sports Tourism, Health Tourism, Faith Tourism, Ecotourism, Winter Tourism, Rural Tourism, Camping and Caravan Tourism, Ski Tourism, Winter Tourism, Tableland Tourism
FKA	Nature Tourism, Thermal Tourism, Culture Tourism, Health Tourism, Camping and Caravan Tourism
GEKA	Ecotourism, Culture Tourism, Bicycle Tourism, Gastronomy Tourism, Rural Tourism, Nature Tourism, Sports Tourism, Adventure Tourism, Thermal Tourism, Health Tourism, Caravan Tourism, Faith Tourism, Apitourism (Apitherapy), Geriatrics Tourism, Agro Tourism
GMKA	Rural Tourism, Water Sports and Diving Tourism, Culture Tourism, Gastronomy Tourism, Health Tourism, Thermal Tourism, Sea Tourism, Caravan Tourism, Ecotourism
İKA	Gastronomy Tourism, Culture Tourism, Ecotourism
İSTKA	-
İZKA	Nature Tourism, Rural Tourism, Faith Tourism, Cultural and Historical Tourism, Gastronomy Tourism, Sea and coastal Tourism, Congress and Fair Tourism

KARACADAĞ	Culture Tourism, Faith Tourism, Thermal Tourism
KUDAKA	Health Tourism, Winter Tourism, Congress and Fair Tourism, Historical and Cultural Tourism, Adventure and Extreme Sports Tourism, Ecotourism
KUZKA	Health Tourism, Winter Tourism, Nature Tourism, Camping and Caravan Tourism, Bicycle Tourism, Ecotourism, Adventure Tourism
MARKA	Industrial heritage Tourism, Gastronomy Tourism, Health Tourism, Cave Tourism, Culture Tourism, Geriatric Tourism
MEVKA	Cultural Heritage Tourism
OKA	Culture Tourism, Nature Tourism, Rural Tourism, Historical Tourism, Gastronomy Tourism, Health Tourism
ORAN	Bicycle Tourism, Winter Tourism, Health Tourism, Sports Tourism, Thermal Tourism, Gastronomy Tourism, Nature Tourism, Rural Tourism
SERKA	Winter Tourism, Nature Tourism, Culture Tourism
TRAKYAKA	Rural tourism, Culture Tourism, Health Tourism, Caravan Tourism, Industrial Heritage Tourism
ZAFER	Rural Tourism, Thermal Tourism, Health Tourism, Winter Tourism, Nature Tourism, Creative Tourism

In the light of the findings in Table 2, it is possible to say that cultural tourism, health tourism, nature tourism, ecotourism, gastronomic tourism and rural tourism are among the tourism types that development agencies want to develop/support the most in their regions and especially give financial support. On the other hand, all of the regional development agencies examined within the scope of the research, with the exception of Istanbul Development Agency (ISTKA), have carried out activities to support tourism in their regions.

In this study, it is possible to express the support provided by the development agencies, whose activity reports for the year 2020 were examined, as “Guided Project, Direct Action Project, Technical Support, Financial Support Project”. When we examine the subject in terms of tourism types;

- In the studies carried out by AHİKA, it is aimed to reveal the potential tourism areas, to rehabilitate alternative tourism areas, to ensure integration with destinations and to diversify tourism at this point. AHİKA, which draws attention to the existence of geographically indicated products in terms of the development and spread of areas such as gastrotourism and agrotourism, has been prepared for 25 regional products of the region with the AHİKA, TR71 (Aksaray, Kırıkkale, Kırşehir, Nevşehir, Niğde) Regional Product Short Promotional Film study. In addition, it is possible to say that AHİKA has activities such as the creation of the “Cappadocia Trail” trekking route, updating the region's film inventory, creating new flight routes, and supporting UNESCO creative cities network activities.
- According to the research findings, it has been determined that the activities carried out by ANKARAKA are health and thermal tourism themed. In this context, it has been determined that Discover Ankara Brochures, which are prepared for the purpose of diversifying tourism activities and promoting historical and natural beauties, have been updated with new data.
- It has been determined that the activities carried out by BAKA are aimed at diversifying the tourism activities that are stuck on the coastline of Antalya with new ecotourism products and thus increasing the added value of the regional Tourism. In this context, efforts have been made to establish new ecotourism routes in the region. In addition, efforts were made to create caravan parking areas for the development of caravan tourism. In short, it is possible to say that important studies have been carried out by BAKA to research and evaluate the ecotourism potential of the region in terms of alternative tourism types.
- When the activities carried out by BAKKA in terms of tourism types are examined, it is seen that researching the industrial heritage elements of the region, Keltepe mountain planning, camping and caravan tourism, tent camping tourism, creating orienteering maps for the development of orienteering sports in the region, creating pilot bicycle routes, and promoting and marketing the regional tourism. In addition, studies have been carried out to create bicycle routes with fully prepared infrastructure in order to develop nature sports and diversify tourism. By making the region an individually and massively preferred tourism destination, development strategies have been determined to provide economic outputs from all these activities.

- When the activities of BEBKA are evaluated, it is seen that especially local products are evaluated for the development of rural tourism in the context of tourism types in the provinces of the region. In this context, priority is given to the development and diversification of tourism and local values in the countryside. In addition, it has been determined that they support the feasibility studies of bungalow type accommodation facilities suitable for the target markets and tourism types to be prioritized in these markets, ecotourism, camping and caravan tourism, in order to diversify tourism and increase the number of tourists coming to the provinces of the region.
- It has been determined that the activities of ÇKA are predominantly gastronomy-themed. In this context, especially in Adana and Mersin, gastronomy strategy studies were supported. In addition, ÇKA focuses on the fact that the provinces of the region are different from each other in terms of tourism types and accordingly both the tourist profile and target markets differ, and it carries out its activities and supports for tourism in this direction. On the other hand, it has been determined that ÇKA has support programs to create a holistic tourism destination through the development of rural cultural tourism, to expand the tourism market in the region, to bring the geographical environment outside the coasts to tourism and to spread the tourism activities in the region throughout the year.
- When the activities carried out by DAKA are considered in terms of tourism types, it has been determined that there are support activities for ski tourism in Hakkâri and bird watching activities in Muş. In addition, activities for the development of faith tourism infrastructure in Hakkâri were determined.
- DİKA's activities, on the other hand, are predominantly cultural tourism themed. In this context, it has been determined that studies have been carried out to increase the recognition of Mesopotamia, which is a cultural destination, in terms of cultural tourism. In addition, it has been determined that DİKA participates in support activities for the identification of local dishes unique to Mardin, the creation of original standards, their integration with tourism by recording them, and therefore their evaluation within the scope of gastronomy tourism.
- When DOĞAKA's activities are evaluated, it is seen that studies are carried out to contribute to the diversification of tourism in the region and to increase the economic value of the tourism sector. In this context, studies on the development of gastronomic tourism in Hatay are supported.
- DOKA carries out important activities to discover new destinations in the provinces of the region, to develop existing ones and to support sustainable development by popularizing alternative tourism types. In this context, it is seen that they support tourism types with the activities carried out on the development of new generation tourism products that will increase the local tourism experience of the tourist (experience tourism), increasing the human/corporate capacity and capability in tourism, and transforming the geographically indicated products into tourism value. In addition, studies have been determined to establish long-term partners in order to develop cultural heritage-based products/services in UNESCO-defined areas in the Black Sea basin and to create new investment opportunities in tourism.
- When the activities carried out by the FKA in terms of tourism types are examined, it has been determined that there are studies to create alternative tourism routes in the provinces of the region. In addition, studies on consultancy and training activities in the field of innovative entrepreneurship ecosystem, development of nature, culture and health tourism types, industrial development, rural development and commercialization and branding of local products were determined.
- It is seen that GEKA's activities in 2020 are focused on alternative tourism types. In this context, efforts are being made to diversify the regional tourism and spread it to four seasons. The creation of regional ecotourism destinations and the promotion of related destinations are considered within the scope of these studies. In addition, projects have been carried out to determine eco-trekking, bicycle tracks and other tourism routes.
- When the activities of GMKA are examined, the activities for the creation of walking routes that can highlight the historical, cultural and natural features of the region and that can be developed to include

other tourism products with a sustainable tourism approach draw attention. The Troas Culture Route, which was developed to contribute to the visitability of the Çanakkale destination and to diversify tourism, is one of these activities.

- IKA has worked to increase its activities within the framework of gastronomic tourism in Gaziantep, one of the provinces of the region, and cultural tourism in Kilis. In addition, it has been determined that the creation of cultural villages in the Mount Nemrut National Park and the diversification of tourism by focusing on ecotourism activities are included in the 2020 studies of IKA.
- In order to increase tourism-oriented diversity on the coasts, İZKA carried out activities aimed at cooperation with sector stakeholders. Inventory studies have been carried out to evaluate the potential of tourism, history and cultural tourism and to determine the places where these types of tourism can be developed. Studies were carried out to determine the industrial heritage and intangible cultural heritage values of İzmir and to determine the tourism potential of İzmir in these matters. Feasibility studies were carried out for the “İzmir Historical Kemeraltı Jewish Culture and Faith Tourism Point”.
- In the studies carried out by KARACADAĞ, activities related to bringing natural, historical and cultural values into tourism by considering the balance of protection and use, and in this sense, the diversification of tourism in the provinces of the region by developing various thematic tourism routes stand out. In addition, activities have been carried out to achieve the goal of increasing regional tourism from hourly stays to daily stays and to ensure tourism diversity by taking into account the new generation trends.
- It has been determined that KUDAKA’s activities are focused on the development of products and services that differentiate and create value in the tourism sector of the region. In this context, for example, alternative package programs for winter tourism and sports tourism tourists have been prepared and activities for determining tour routes have been determined.
- In the activities of KUZKA in 2020, it has been determined that the focus is on studies to determine the main tourism types and tourism themes in the region. For example, studies have been carried out to determine potential routes in the provinces of the region for bicycle tourism and camping and caravan tourism.
- In the activities of MARKA, it has been determined that there is support for determining the gastronomic tourism values of the provinces of the region and carrying out studies in this sense. In addition, the industrial heritage tourism values of the provinces of the region were determined and activities were carried out to transform these areas into touristic use.
- When the activities carried out by MEVKA in terms of tourism types are examined, activities for the development of cultural heritage tourism in the provinces of the region have been determined.
- In the context of tourism types, OKA has carried out activities mainly to promote important destinations with cultural and nature tourism potential, to ensure the branding of cities and to open the region to the outside.
- It has been determined that ORAN has diversified its activities by establishing tourism and promotion units for the development of alternative tourism types in the provinces of the region. In this context, activities were carried out in order to develop winter, thermal, health and sports tourism opportunities and to increase the competitiveness of the provinces in the region. In addition, studies have been determined to contribute to the socio-economic development of individuals living in rural areas by creating, promoting and increasing the attractiveness of destinations for rural tourism.
- When the activities of SERKA are examined, it has been determined that the studies focused on winter tourism are predominant. In this context, the needs analysis of Sarıkamış Ski Center, which is one of the most known and branded points in terms of winter tourism, was made.
- It has been determined that TRAKYAKA’s activities in 2020 are predominantly cultural heritage tourism and rural tourism. In this context, studies have been carried out to reveal the cultural elements that can be included in the intangible cultural heritage inventory in the provinces of the region. In

addition to the efforts to expand rural tourism in the provinces of the region, activities regarding the determination of six different routes were carried out within the scope of the development of experience tourism in the provinces of the region.

- When the studies carried out by ZAFER are examined in terms of tourism types, it has been determined that there are activities for the development of thermal and health tourism opportunities. In this context, it has been determined that studies have been carried out to develop alternative tourism (history, winter and nature tourism) in the Kumalar Mountain Region, which has complementary features to thermal tourism in Afyonkarahisar, one of the provinces of the region. In addition, studies have been carried out to create attraction centers and experience workshops where tourists can participate effectively within the scope of creative tourism, primarily on craft and folk arts and gastronomy. Activities were also carried out to create innovative / interesting infrastructures to increase the tourism potential and awareness of the locations that stand out in terms of tourism values in rural areas.

Conclusion and Evaluation

It is not possible to say that the regional development agencies in Turkey are responsible for all the planning carried out at the regional level. As a matter of fact, it is usual for the central government to remain under the responsibility of the central government due to the inability to delegate decision-making authority on local issues considered to be of strategic importance. Therefore, coordination problems may arise as the impact of decisions taken at the central level may affect other local decisions. For example, the measures brought by the central government towards renewable energy sources may also have an impact on tourism policies in the region. In this context, especially local stakeholders are expected to comply with the project-oriented format introduced through development agencies so that they can influence the development of the region (Alvarez et al., 2014). One of the duties of the development agencies specified in the Law is to “promote or have the business and investment opportunities of the region promoted at the national and international level in cooperation with the relevant institutions” (Çelikkol, 2014). In addition, when the subject is approached specifically for the tourism sector, it is necessary to underline the objectives such as creating a tourism strategy, providing investment, utilizing the unused potential of the region, creating tourism attraction zones, promoting the region both in the national and international arena, diversifying alternative tourism activities and providing branding on an urban scale (Özkul & Demirer, 2012).

Turkey is a very rich country in terms of touristic supply capacity. Therefore, it is vital to benefit from all resources in the most effective way, especially in matters such as increasing the share in the international market and eliminating the imbalances in demand between regions (Ege, 2014). As a matter of fact, as a result of the developments in the world, the standard tourist type and tourist expectations have changed and tourism types have emerged as a natural result of this situation (Albayrak, 2013). In this context, each of the 26 regions where development agencies are established has its own tourism potentials (Demir & Karakuş, 2016). It is obvious that the said potential will increase the touristic demand by diversifying the touristic product supply (Ege, 2014). From this point of view, with this study, it has been tried to reveal which tourism types the regional development agencies prioritize in order to develop tourism in their regions, and the relationship between the tourism types supported by regional development agencies and regional development agencies that carry out projects to support tourism types in their regions, and the tourism potential of their regions.

As a result of this study, it has been determined that cultural tourism, health tourism, nature tourism, ecotourism, gastronomic tourism and rural tourism are among the tourism types that development agencies want to develop/support the most in their regions. It has been determined that AHİKA, which covers the provinces of Aksaray, Kırıkkale, Kırşehir, Nevşehir and Niğde, supports ecotourism, gastronomy tourism, agrotourism, nature tourism, film tourism and cultural tourism in its 2020 activities. In this context, it is recommended to carry out activities for cave tourism, faith tourism and cultural heritage tourism in the provinces of the region. As a matter of fact, the Kuzgun Doline, which has a depth of 1400 meters in Niğde, can be evaluated for its cave tourism potential. In addition, the İhlara Valley is important for faith tourism with its shelter and faith places carved into the valley walls, as well as coming to the fore with its natural beauties for the region. It should also be emphasized here that “Göreme National Park and Cappadocia” in Nevşehir is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. Potential cultural heritage sites for the region are thought to be important in terms of diversifying tourism.

It has been determined that ANKARAKA, which covers the province of Ankara, supports thermal and health tourism in its activities. Considering the winter tourism potential of Elmadağ, which is one of the important and major winter tourism centers of Turkey, activities should be carried out in this area.

It has been determined that BAKA, which covers the provinces of Antalya, Burdur and Isparta, supports ecotourism, cultural tourism, cave tourism, caravan tourism, faith tourism, rural tourism, agrotourism, astrotourism and health tourism. Antalya is one of the most active cities in golf tourism. Therefore, activities and supports for golf tourism are considered important in terms of diversifying tourism. In addition, considering the fact that Düzlerçamı region, which is one of the first places where hunting tourism started in Turkey, is within the borders of Antalya province, the necessity of carrying out activities for hunting tourism emerges. Again, the fact that Saklıkent, located within the borders of Antalya, is an important winter tourism center, the Salda ski center in Burdur and the Davraz ski center in Isparta reveal the need for winter and ski tourism activities in the region.

It has been determined that BAKKA, which covers the provinces of Bartın, Karabük and Zonguldak, supports industrial heritage tourism, camping and caravan tourism, bicycle tourism, sports tourism, ecotourism and nature tourism. İnkümu, Amasra and Çakraz beaches in Bartın, sea tourism, Bulak Cave in Karabük and Kızılelma and Gökgöl caves in Zonguldak have the potential for cave tourism. Therefore, it is recommended to carry out activities on related tourism types.

It has been determined that BEBKA, which covers the provinces of Bilecik, Bursa and Eskişehir, supports rural tourism, winter tourism, mountain tourism, health tourism, thermal tourism, ecotourism, cultural tourism, camping and caravan tourism. In addition, Kurtköy, Abbaslık, Kapaklı Villages, located in the center of Bilecik and suitable for wild boar hunting, can be evaluated in terms of hunting tourism, and Ayvaini cave (5500m), which is among the longest caves in Turkey in Bursa, can be evaluated in terms of cave tourism. On the other hand, amusement parks should also be developed as tourism attractions and included in activities to diversify tourism. In this context, Eskişehir province (Tale Castle) has an important potential.

It has been determined that the activities of ÇKA covering Adana and Mersin provinces support gastronomy tourism, cultural tourism, cave tourism, rural tourism, nature tourism, sports tourism and adventure tourism. There are important highland tourism centers in Adana (Aladağ Ağçakise, Başpınar Bıcı and Kosurga Highlands, Kozan-Horzum and Çulluşağı Highlands, Pozantı-Armutoluğu Highlands, etc.). In this sense, plateau tourism and Pozantı winter tourism center in Adana and Bolkar Mountains in Mersin should be evaluated in terms of winter tourism supports. Mersin province, on the other hand, is home to many more important centers belonging to the early Christian period. For this reason, it is possible to say that the activities to be carried out on faith tourism will contribute to the diversification of tourism in the region.

It has been determined that DAKA, which covers the provinces of Bitlis, Hakkâri, Muş and Van, supports ski tourism, winter tourism, bird watching and faith tourism. In addition, activities for the development of hunting tourism can be carried out in the Sarikonak region of Bitlis province, where land animals are abundant, and in Lake Van, Lake Nazik and Lake Aygır, which are suitable for fishing. In addition, the Van-Akçalı travertines have an important potential in terms of tourism and its contribution to the tourism of the region should not be ignored. Muş tulip, which is an endemic plant species in Muş, is also capable of contributing to the diversification of tourism in the region with activities to be carried out within the scope of botanical tourism. Cilo-Buzul Mountain Ranges in Hakkari are used for climbing sports, mountain trekking, etc. It is very suitable for ecotourism activities. Evaluation of the potential in this sense is considered important.

It has been determined that DİKA's activities, which cover the provinces of Batman, Mardin, Şırnak and Siirt, support cultural tourism, faith tourism, ecotourism and gastronomy tourism. There are places suitable for cave tourism, sportive angling, mountain and nature trekking and wildlife within the borders of Batman province. It is possible to say that cave tourism in Hasankeyf district, sportive angling in the Dicle River and Batman and Garzan Streams, trekking and winter sports activities in Mereto, Aydınlık and Raman Mountains should be supported. In addition, the existence of areas for camping and caravan tourism (Beyazsu, Karasu, Bakırkırı, Gurs waterfalls, Yeşilli Valley, etc.) in Mardin will contribute to the tourism diversification activities to be carried out in the region. Germ-i Ab thermal spring, located in Mardin, Dargeçit district, is the most important thermal center of the region with its healing waters and is suitable for the realization of thermal tourism activities. The province of Şırnak, on the other hand, has an important potential in terms of river tourism (Dicle River) and sportive angling (Kızılsu Stream). In addition, it is considered important to

carry out activities to contribute to the region within the framework of the thermal tourism potential of the Billoris (Sağlarca) Spa in Siirt.

In the activities of DOĞAKA, which covers the provinces of Hatay, Kahramanmaraş and Osmaniye, support for gastronomy tourism and cultural tourism has been determined. Iskenderun district of Hatay province is a frequented area for ships with its ports that are adequately equipped in terms of cruise tourism and will be able to provide important outputs from tourism with the activities to be carried out in the region. In addition, activities for thermal tourism (Döngel Thermal Waters, Ekinözü Springs, etc.) and highland tourism (Başkonuş Plateau, Yavşan Plateau) should be carried out and supported in Kahramanmaraş. Osmaniye has an important potential in terms of mountain and nature walks and botanical tourism in the context of tourism types.

Covering the provinces of Artvin, Giresun, Gümüşhane, Ordu, Rize and Trabzon, DOKA's activities include cultural tourism, experience tourism, creative tourism, sports tourism, health tourism, faith tourism, ecotourism, highland tourism, winter tourism, rural tourism, camping and caravan. It has been determined that there are supports for tourism, ski tourism and winter tourism. In addition to these, activities for equestrian trekking in Artvin (the villages of Şavşat, Ardanuç and Yusufeli, the plateaus at the foot of Kaçkar and Karçal Mountains), and cave tourism in the provinces of Rize and Ordu are important. In addition, the Kadirga Plateau in Gümüşhane and its surrounding plateaus and its terrain structure, road connections to Taşköprü Plateau and ancient cities, and areas suitable for bicycle tours. Therefore, there is a need for activities to develop bicycle tourism in Gümüşhane.

In the activities of the FKA, which covers the provinces of Bingöl, Elazığ, Malatya and Tunceli, supports for nature tourism, thermal tourism, cultural tourism, health tourism, camping and caravan tourism have been determined. When the potential of the provinces of the region in terms of tourism types is evaluated, winter tourism in Bingöl (Yolçatı and Hesarek Ski Resorts), paragliding in Elâzığ (Hazarbaba Mountain), sportive angling in Malatya (Tohma Stream, Kozluk Stream, Karakaya Dam Lake etc.) and Tunceli winter and ski tourism (Munzur Mountains, Avcı Mountains and Bağırpaşa Mountain) activities are recommended to be evaluated.

In the activities of GEKA, which covers the provinces of Aydın, Denizli and Muğla, it has been determined that there are support for ecotourism, cultural tourism, bicycle tourism, gastronomic tourism, rural tourism, nature tourism, sports tourism, adventure tourism, thermal tourism, health tourism, caravan tourism, faith tourism, apitourism (apitherapy), geriatric tourism and agro-tourism. It can be said that the activities supported and carried out by the relevant development agency for the diversification of tourism in the region adequately meet the potential of the provinces of the region. In this context, it can only be suggested to carry out activities to increase the contribution to the marine tourism potential of the region.

In the activities of GMKA, which covers the provinces of Balıkesir and Çanakkale, supports for rural tourism, water sports and diving tourism, cultural tourism, gastronomy tourism, health tourism, thermal tourism, sea tourism, caravan tourism and ecotourism have been determined. In addition, it can be suggested to carry out activities for yacht tourism in Balıkesir, which has a marina and a yacht-dockyard, and for sportive angling (Babakale, Saros Bay, etc.) and botanical tourism in Çanakkale.

In the activities of İKA, which covers Adıyaman, Gaziantep and Kilis provinces, it has been determined that there are supports for gastronomy tourism, cultural tourism and ecotourism. In addition, when the tourism potential of the provinces of the region is evaluated, it can be said that there is a need for important studies on the diversification of tourism, especially faith tourism in Kilis, botanical tourism and hunting tourism in Gaziantep.

In the activities of İZKA, which covers the province of İzmir, It has been determined that there are supports for nature tourism, rural tourism, faith tourism, cultural and historical tourism, gastronomy tourism, sea and coastal tourism, and congress and fair tourism. In this context, the research findings show that there is a need for studies to increase the importance of Bozdağ ski resort, which is located within the borders of the province, in winter tourism. In addition, the potential of İzmir for thermal tourism from past to present should not be ignored.

It has been determined that KARACADAĞ, which covers the provinces of Diyarbakır and Şanlıurfa, supports cultural tourism, faith tourism and thermal tourism in its activities. In addition to these, it is possible to say that gastronomic tourism should be supported in the region. In addition, Diyarbakır has an important potential in terms of cave tourism (Birkley Cave, Hilar Cave, Hassuni Cave, etc.).

In the activities of KUDAKA, which covers the provinces of Bayburt, Erzincan and Erzurum, it has been determined that there are support for health tourism, winter tourism, congress and fair tourism, historical and cultural tourism, adventure and nature sports tourism and ecotourism. In addition to these, it is possible to say that within the framework of the tourism potential of the provinces of the region, activities for faith tourism and nature tourism should be carried out.

It has been determined that KUZKA, which covers the provinces of Çankırı, Kastamonu and Sinop, supports health tourism, winter tourism, nature tourism, camping and caravan tourism, bicycle tourism, ecotourism and adventure tourism. In addition, it is possible to say that sports tourism, faith tourism and cultural tourism in Kastamonu, which is one of the provinces of the region, and activities related to the potential of highland tourism, cruise tourism and cave tourism in Sinop should be supported.

It has been determined that MARKA, which covers the provinces of Bolu, Düzce, Kocaeli, Sakarya and Yalova, supports industrial heritage tourism, gastronomy tourism, health tourism, cave tourism, cultural tourism and geriatric tourism. One of Turkey's main tourism centers is located in Bolu-Kartalkaya and Kocaeli-Kartepe. Therefore, activities for winter tourism should be supported in Bolu and Kocaeli. In addition, bird-watching in Düzce (Efteni Lake and its surroundings), nature tourism in Sakarya, activities within the scope of ecotourism in Yalova are the issues that need to be emphasized in order to diversify tourism in the region.

It has been determined that there is support for cultural heritage tourism in the activities of MEVKA, which covers the provinces of Karaman and Konya. Düdenyayla cave, one of the longest caves in Turkey, is located within the borders of Konya. There are also important caves (İncesu cave, Yenidunya cave, etc.) within the borders of Karaman province. In this sense, it is considered important to support the cave tourism potential of the region. On the other hand, both Karaman and Konya are cities whose ecotourism, historical and cultural tourism potential cannot be ignored. Therefore, it is recommended that those concerned should support the studies on the aforementioned types of tourism.

It has been determined that OKA, which covers the provinces of Amasya, Çorum, Samsun and Tokat, supports cultural tourism, nature tourism, rural tourism, historical tourism, gastronomy tourism and health tourism. Cycling tourism in Borabay Lake in Amasya, camping and caravan tourism around Yedi Kugular Bird Sanctuary, cycling tourism in Çorum, thermal tourism potential is significant in Samsun Havza and Ladik and Tokat. Therefore, it will be possible to diversify tourism and provide more benefits from tourism to the region with supported activities.

It has been determined that ORAN, which covers the provinces of Kayseri, Sivas and Yozgat, supports bicycle tourism, winter tourism, health tourism, sports tourism, thermal tourism, gastronomy tourism, nature tourism and rural tourism. Divriği Great Mosque and Hospital in Sivas is on the UNESCO World Heritage list. In this context, support is needed for the development of cultural heritage tourism in Sivas. In addition, faith tourism in Yozgat and Kayseri, camping and caravan tourism in Kayseri and cultural tourism potential should be supported in the context of tourism types.

It has been determined that SERKA, which covers the provinces of Ağrı, Ardahan, Iğdır and Kars, supports winter tourism, nature tourism and cultural tourism. Mount Ararat, Turkey's highest mountain, has a very important potential in terms of tourism. This potential needs to be supported specifically for mountain tourism. Ardahan province Bilbilan Plateau, and Göle district Okçuoğlu and Yalnızçam plateaus are plateaus with tourism potential in the province. Likewise, there is a potential that can be evaluated for highland tourism in the province of Kars. In this context, it is recommended to support activities such as highland tourism, bird watching and botanical tourism in the provinces of the region.

It has been determined that TRAKYAKA, which covers the provinces of Edirne, Kırklareli and Tekirdağ, supports rural tourism, cultural tourism, health tourism, caravan tourism and industrial heritage tourism. Considering the faith route, nature route and flavor route studies carried out by the Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism in Edirne province, it is possible to say that activities and supports for faith tourism, nature tourism and gastronomy tourism are among the issues that should be given importance by development agencies. In addition, Dupnisa Cave (3150 meters long), located in Kırklareli, is among the longest caves in Turkey. Again in Kırklareli, there are hunting grounds approved by the state. Kırklareli-Longoz (Subasar) forests, on the other hand, can be evaluated within the scope of nature tourism. The cave tourism potential of Güngörmez Cave in Edirne and the fact that the mountainous areas in the province are suitable for mountain and nature trekking are among the issues that should be emphasized in order to

diversify tourism in the region. In this context, it can be suggested to development agencies to carry out studies especially in the direction of cave tourism, faith tourism, nature tourism and gastronomy tourism.

It has been determined that ZAFER, which covers the provinces of Afyonkarahisar, Kütahya, Manisa and Uşak, supports rural tourism, thermal tourism, health tourism, winter tourism, nature tourism and creative tourism. There are areas suitable for bird watching (Karakuyu lake, Eber lake etc.) in Afyonkarahisar province. Kütahya province, on the other hand, has an important potential for Turkey with its Phrygian Valley historical and cultural tourism areas. Again in Kütahya, Kütahya Castle, Ulu Mosque, Çinili Mosque, etc. cultural tourism potential. Therefore, it is considered necessary to carry out studies on historical and cultural tourism in the province. There are many endemic and medicinal plants in the Spil Mountain National Park, where Manisa tulips grow naturally. This means ecotourism, botanical tourism and so on reveals the fact that activities are supported. It is also possible for the visitors to camp with their own tents and caravans in the Atalani area of Spil Mountain. Similarly, Uşak has areas suitable for camping and caravan tourism.

This study has some limitations. In this study, which was carried out to analyze the activities of regional development agencies established in Turkey in terms of the types of tourism they support, only the annual reports of regional development agencies published in 2020 were examined. In this context, it is important to examine what activities the development agencies have carried out in the process from the day they were established to the present, at the point of handling the activities they support in terms of tourism types. Therefore, in future studies, comprehensive research can be done by examining the activity reports published by the development agencies since the year they were established. Again, in future studies, studies on the evaluation of the activities of development agencies from the perspective of tourism sector stakeholders are recommended. In addition, interviews with development agencies can contribute to the literature on qualitative research to determine the level of written activities.

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