

Gastronomy Tourism as an Alternative Tourism: An Assessment on the Gastronomy Tourism Potential of Turkey

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Abstract

Gastronomy tourism, besides being the most important means of economic development, it is also the most significant part of the fastly developing cultural tourism market. Many recent researches emphasized that the culinary culture of a target destination has a significant part in the travel experience. Travelling for the purpose of experiencing the new and unbelievable food, wine and other inimitable local gastronomy assets of another region is gastronomy tourism. In Turkey, tourism policies had been limited to the coastal mass tourism in the coastal zones of Aegean and Mediterranean regions, utilizing sea, sand and sun potentials of the country, win the purpose of maximum contribution to the national economy, by attracting foreign tourists. Turkish Cuisine; in seven region with advantage of having different climates and vegetation, reserves diversity of local taste and flavour in its cuisine as well Turkish cuisine one of three top cuisine in the world. The aim of this study is to emphasize the importance of marketing strategy of the traditional Turkish cultural cuisine as a alternative tourism field. Turkish articles with the subject of "gastronomy" published in "Google Scholar" and Council of Higher Education Thesis Centre or foreign articles regarding the gastronomy potential of Turkey and master's and PhD thesis on the subject have been analysed within this research. A content analysis has been conducted as a result of the revision of the data gathered from 54 articles and 32 thesis within the scope of defined categories. Also method of frequency analysis has been utilised during the analysis of the data. According to the findings, gastronomy tourism has an important potential as a kind of alternative tourism for the Turkish tourism sector.

Keywords: Alternative Tourism, Gastronomy Tourism, Destination Marketing, Content Analysis

Introduction

Tourism is a sector that brought 1 billion 138 million people and income at the amount of 1 trillion 245 billion dollars in 2014 (UNWTO, 2015). This figure is 41 million 627 thousand

people for the year of 2013 in Turkey. The obtained income was 34 billion 305 million dollars (TURKSTAT, 2015). As can be seen with these figures, tourism is an important source of income for countries. The development of alternative tourism types except that of traditional mass tourism in Turkey would provide the destinations and enterprises an important advantage in an environment of high competition.

The increase of the interest in the gastronomy and local cuisines have not only had an impact on the tourism incomes, but also provided social and economical contributions to the local community. People's interests in the quality of food, need for sustainable agriculture due to ecological concerns, health and nutrition concerns, access to wider information on foods and beverages, gained information regarding different cuisines have impact on the expectations and the buying behaviour of tourists. Improvement of gastronomy tourism in Turkey appears to be one of the most powerful tools to support the development of rural areas.

A society's cuisine culture is related to their life styles as well. In every country's cuisine structure, preparation and cooking of food and equipments and kitchenware show great differences. In the world development about tourism are researched, it is seen that "gastronomy" has an important role in the marketing of touristic destinations. Gastronomical unstriment that are belongs to destinations are highly used in the marketing activities, demand on new products that are marketted and offered to tourist and income that obtained from gastoronimical turistical activities are demonstrated with serious numeric datas. A country's cuisine culture is one of the most important factors for tourists to visit the country. There are some alternatives to provide sustainability in tourism. Marketing of regions on the basis of destinations and even the tourism activities in specific dimensions under the name of special interest tourism is of uttermost importance for many countries. In this context, "gastronomy tourism" can be integrated with various types of tourisms, besides being a type of tourism on its own terms. Gastronomy tourism being a new type of tourism, actually gastronomy happens to be presented as a tourism product by tour operators and travel agents abroad that are marketing destinations (Chaney & Ryan, 2012). Within the light of this, gastronomic wealth is also used a tool for marketing the destinations. Gastronomic wealth is known as a product diversification tool in cases, where the destinations have similar architecture, climate, price and other properties. It can be told that Turkey has a very important gastronomic tourism potential that is not completely used, when its gastronomic wealth is considered.

According many research that are in recent years, an increasing number of tourist states that tasting local food where travel has been made consist al lot of part of their experiences and they say that imposible to know the region culture whitout tasting local food (Yun et al., 2011). Although gastronomy tourism is a new kind of tourism, the tour operators and travel agencies, which are marketing destination, are presenting gastronomic tourism for a long time (Chaney & Ryan, 2012).

Today it is of uttermost importance that the culinary heritage of the destination can be acknowledged as a tourism product. It is possible to present to the experience of the tourist, the food and beverages of quality by converting them into a tourism product. The expenditures on this tourism product would contribute to the economy of the region and local community and create a multiplier effect in the region (Deveci et al., 2013). In this sense, gastronomy richneses are used as an instrumnet marketing destination. Gastronomy tourism is a factor of the cultural tourism market, which improves in the world rapidly, gastronomy tourism contributes both social and economic progresses, and it highly contributes intercultural communication as well.

In the world, the known oldest cuisine culture appeared in Mesopotamia. In course of time, this cuisine created China and Anatolian cuisines. Anatolian cuisine constitutes base of Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greek and Ancient Rome cuisine. The known European cuisine derived from Ancient Rome cuisine as well. Turkish Cuisine is one of top three cuisine with China and France cuisine, because it occurred after long and historical process (Aktaş & Özdemir, 2007, p. 23). Turkey is an important tourism destination in terms of natural scenery and internationally known as one of the most favourite countries for its natural beauties. On the other hand, Turkey is in need of increasing the varieties of its tourism marketing possibilities by giving more importance to “cultural” and “heritage” tourism like many other successful destinations such as France, Italy, Spain, China are doing for years.

Turkish articles with the subject of “gastronomy” published in “Google Scholar” and Council of Higher Education Thesis Centre or foreign articles regarding the gastronomy potential of Turkey and master’s and PhD thesis on the subject have been analysed within this research. A content analysis has been conducted as a result of the revision of the data gathered from 54 articles and 32 thesis within the scope of defined categories. Also method of frequency analysis has been utilised during the analysis of the data. According to the findings, gastronomy tourism has an important potential as a kind of alternative tourism for the Turkish tourism sector.

Gastronomy Tourism as an Alternative Tourism

Gastronomy tourism is an important marketing instrument in the marketing of destinations as it is a kind of tourism that can be performed 12 month of a year. Thus the destination can make benefit of advantages of tourism such as economic, socio cultural and infrastructure for twelve months. This indicates that the gastronomy tourism is an important marketing tool for the marketing of destination. Gastronomy tourism creates an efficient alternative for the new destinations that cannot have the benefit of “sea, sun and sand”. Gastronomy tourism adds in important added value to the destination in the creation of the touristic destination and creates a market of its own (Kivela et al., 2005). Gastronomy tourism, which is evaluated in concept of cultural tourism, involves in all tourism activities and it is considered as one of the alternative tourism types therefore it creates an alternative tourism out of the mass tourism and it develops in the world rapidly. Besides the traditional mass tourism, enriching alternative tourism types, meeting the demand on special interest tourism and increasing this demand, at the point of question of extreme competition environment provides important advantages to country, destination and enterprises.

The term “gastronomy” is derived from gaster (stomach) and nomas (law). The word gastronomy was first used in Ancient Greece. Sicilian Greek Archestratus wrote a book in 4th century on food and wine in Mediterranean. Gastronomy was involved in several chapters of this book (Santich, 2004). The term gastronomy began to be used in literature with *Gastronomie ou L’Homme des Champs a Table (Gastronomy or Man from Field to Table)* by Joseph Berchoux in 1801 (Göker, 2011). The word “gastronomy” was in a poem of Jacques Berchoux in 1804 for the first time. In the definitions made by various authors, gastronomy appears as “research for good eating and drinking”, “converting the culture of eating and drinking into art”. Gastronomy Tourism or Culinary Tourism can be defined as the kind of tourism that has a high contribution to the motivation and behaviour of travel to live a unique food and beverage experience (Kesici, 2012, p. 34). Gastronomy tourism can be defined as the kind of tourism that has a high contribution to the motivation and behaviour of travel to live a unique food and beverage experience (Harrington & Ottenbacher, 2010). According to

the researches conducted in member and candidate states to European Union, the gastronomy tourism has a serious amount of contribution to the economics of the country with number of enterprises, employment and added value.

The gastronomy tourism is described as a journey to another region for purpose of experiencing region's "unique, different and unforgettable" food, wine and specific gastronomic assets that are peculiar to that region. Today many countries that have unique local gastronomy culture develop and promote their regions for purpose of economical effects for regional development instruments and to protect and sustain local culture and meet demands of today's tourist. Today, local gastronomy culture is one of the most important worth for tourism-aimed activities. For the purpose of secure and provide the sustainability of local culture diversities in the world, national and international organizations register and put under protection the local gastronomic assets.

Gastronomy means the properties that diversify the cuisines of countries or regions from each other, foods, eating habits and food preparation techniques of a country or region (Cömert & Özkaya, 2014, p. 63). Different terms as culinary tourism and food tourism also exist to describe the tourism activities related to the food experience besides the gastronomic/gastronomy tourism. Rapidly growing gastronomy tourism is diversified with many subheadings as wine tourism, beer tourism, chocolate tourism, and cheese tourism. There are many countries in the world that can perform gastronomy tourism successfully, including the sub branches. For example France, Italy, Spain, Australia and Germany are among the countries that have a successful wine tourism in the world, and in cheese tourism, France, Switzerland, Italy and Netherlands have a worldwide fame.

In general, gastronomy tourism (Yüncü, 2010); is a whole that forms product and services that consumed by tourists which are effective in agriculture and economic improvement, effective in development of regional tourism, which is a part of local culture and marketing of local competitive region. The phrase "culinary tourism" was coined in 1998 and refers to international tourists who plan their travels partly or largely on the basis of a desire to experience different and exotic culinary specialities and traditions (Long, 2004). That is, the primary goal of such tourists is to explore, experience, and enjoy the unique gastronomy (or cuisine) of a particular destination (Wolf, 2006).

A region having local foods will make a great contribution in advantages of this competitive. Quality food and drink in a region improve tourism products and tourists' experiences in the region. It is known that in situation when gastronomical richness, architecture of destination, climate, price and other properties are similar, a production differentiation is used as a tool (Richards, 2002). Food has important place in sustainable tourism. This importance occurs in various proportions. Primarily tourist's consumption of foods makes multiplier effect on region. In this way, local economy makes profit. Lastly in order to compete with region tourism competitive a variety of tourist attraction should be developed.

UNWTO described "Gastronomy tourism" as a set of recreational empirical activities related to food, in the gastronomic destinations. These activities include gastronomic travels festivals, markets and food producers, food fairs, food shows and experience of local and qualified food. Kozak (2002) states that cooking methods with local products have become important for destinations and catering businesses, traditional foods have become popular within the scope of gastronomy tourism and the customer expectations tend to exotic and nostalgic foods depending on the regions. Cultural tourism is not only limited to visits to museums, historical sights and art galleries but at the same time includes experiences related with gastronomy that is getting to know the cuisine and tasting the food of the region (Santich,

2004). Importance of the gastronomic wealth and cuisine of a destination as a tourism product increases day by day. Gastronomic experiences become one of the most important tourism activities for tourists travelling to a destination.

Gastronomy tourism has four different types of motivations as physical, cultural, social and prestige. First one is the physical motivation. Food is a must for life and tourist wants to eat food to live or to travel. Second one is cultural motivation; tourist wants to have food to learn a culture. Within this context simple local products are sufficient to motivate the tourist. Therefore, the visits to the primary production sites, restaurants and festivals, where the local food is presented play an important role. Third one is the social motivation of the tourist. Tourist takes active place in the gastronomy activity and that provides the social motivation. Fourth motivation is the prestige. The tourist makes prestige for himself out of sharing the experiences in the region, in the environments he is in (Guzman & Canizares, 2011). The main source of motivation for gastronomy tourism is to visit local or regional areas, food producers, restaurants, food festivals and special sights with the purpose of tasting a special dish or production stages of a food (Deveci et al., 2013, p.30).

Gastronomy Tourism is an important and valuable symbol of local culture, one of the most efficient tools to achieve the sustainable rural development goals through its role in local agriculture and economic improvement and an important element in marketing with its positive contribution to the improvement of destination image. Gastronomy Tourism is candidate to become one of the most popular alternatives in the World travel market as the cuisine is one of the most important travel motivations to attract tourists to new and exotic destinations. In the most popular destinations of the world as France, Italy and Spain, gastronomy has become one of the most important touristic products. Many destinations are using gastronomy efficiently as a marketing tool. In the gastronomy tours organized in Europe there are; visits to the local wine makers, wine tasting, wine trainings, visits to vineyards and vine harvesting, participating in agricultural activities, visits to local cheese makers and cheese tasting, visits to local markets, visits to olive oil makers and olive oil tasting, festivals, local culinary courses, visits to culinary museums.

Tourism and agriculture are the leading complimentary sectors even though many sectors are related to each other. Because tourism is a service sector, where fruit and vegetables, wine etc. basic food and beverages are intensively consumed. Tourism sector procures major part of basic inputs during production to reply the food and deinks requirement of local and foreign tourists from the agriculture sector. The range of variety of agricultural products in a country can have a positive impact on tourism demand for the country. The interaction between tourism and agriculture has recently featured the agriculture tourism based on the geographical and climate conditions of our country. Local community that lives on agriculture in the regions, where tourism is developing, has to integrate tourism and agriculture in a more planned and rational manner not by leaving the fertile agricultural lands to touristic establishments but by using fertile fields for agriculture and relatively infertile fields for tourism and recreational purposes (Çıkin et al., 2009, p.4). In Agro-tourism, tourists can have direct participation in agricultural activities. Besides this type of tourism is quite important with regard to take the maximum advantage of agricultural fields. Agricultural tourism or agro-tourism in other words, appeared as a result of development in international tourism in the fields with natural attractions, where the agricultural activities are performed. In general agro-tourism is a kind of tourism that supports the development of sustainable tourism, has respect to the environment and values the cultural heritage and authentic characteristics of regions. Agro-tourism is a multifunctional type of tourism that gives the opportunity to

tourists to be informed and participate in the agricultural fields, agricultural professions, local products, traditional cuisine and daily life of people. Taking into consideration the characteristics of agro-tourism, gastronomy tourism is a type of tourism that also involves the agro-tourism.

Gastronomy as a Destination Marketing Tool

Due to the fact that the “gastronomy” as an element of attraction of destination is a cultural heritage, it is a powerful tool and ranks as first in the expectations of tourists regarding the destination (Selwood, 2003). Role of gastronomic identity is big in creating a unique and different place and in competing with increasing competition for destinations. Gastronomic identity differentiates according to the cultural, geographical, ecological, economical structure and historical process in the time being. It is impossible to imitate these features that belong to the region (Kesici, 2012). Sustainable tourism is an important tool for sustainable development. According to Correia et al. (2008); gastronomy is not only a merely element of attraction but also a complementary instrument of different cultural products. It has an important place in sustainable tourism with this complementary aspect. Gastronomy increases the local consumption as well providing yields to economy with the multiplier effect it causes. Furthermore, local cuisine being a symbolic element for the destination provides advantage for the destinations in competition with the provided attraction. The root of Gastronomy tourism lays in agriculture, culture and tourism. These three factors give opportunity of marketing and positioning of gastronomy tourism as regional attraction and experience. Agriculture provides the product; culture provides culture and authentic; and tourism provides substructures and services (Rand & Health 2006, p. 208).

Gastronomy tourism that is defined as visit or travel to a region or undertaking with the purposes of board activity can be more properly defined as a type of special interest tourism within the culture tourism (Bekar & Kılınc, 2014, p. 19). Gastronomic diversity is one of the most important elements for a destination. Within this context, gastronomy is an important element to create awareness in a destination and to support the destination to compete with other destinations (Deveci et al., 2013). Berno (2006) stated that the local and traditional gastronomic values had become to extinction with globalization; and the sustainable gastronomy goals could be achieved with a tourism understanding that supported the local agricultural activities and gastronomic heritage in the destination; by emphasizing that there would be an increase of demand to the local food and local cuisine with the recent gastronomy tourism, and mentioned that the demand in local and organic food would effect the protection of traditional culinary art with the sustainable restaurant concept.

Cuisine tourism; is to visit food producers, food festivals, restaurants and special areas with purpose of tasting a special kind of food or to see preparation of food. In addition to this to taste a special food, to see different process of preparation food or to taste a famous chef's foods takes places in the same concept (Hall et al., 2003, p. 60). Today, more people start to travel because of food culture (Long, 2004). Gastronomic tourism helps to level up for the label of regions (Boniface, 2003). Moreover, food can change the regions because cuisines help to have relation between the type of food and touristic places. A region's food has important effects on choices of region and tourist experience having in that region. Some people travel to taste new cuisine cultures (Mc Kercher et al., 2008, p.137).

Shenoy (2005) stated that all regions and destinations tried to create products of their own in order to differentiate from their competitors in a world tourism market, where the competition had been increasing day by day, and the local culinary was a unique source as a

marketing instrument. Developing countries should bear in mind that the gastronomy has an important place in the development of a country and in marketing strategies. Gastronomic activities have a direct or indirect impact on the destinations. As an example, it prevents the destination to become monotonous and ordinary with its character of being authentic and exclusive to the region, increases the attraction of the destination, helps the society to strengthen by supporting the development in economy and socio culture. With the help of feeling of exclusiveness created by gastronomy, it increases the popularity of the destination. It plays an important role in formation of brand identity of the destination with the positive food experiences of the visitors. It forms a strong source of income for destinations. Gastronomy has an important power in increasing the competitive capacity of the destination and providing its sustainability, as well (Rand et al., 2003).

Refreshment products had been considered as supportive products for many years in tourism sector and had not been deemed as travel motivation to attract tourists on its own. According to researchers as Hjalager (2002), Scarpato (2002), destinations like Tuscany and Lyons that use gastronomic products as a marketing tool and present them as touristic products along with their complementary character to the touristic products have therefore become popular. Today, more people start to travel because of food culture (Long, 2004). Gastronomic tourism helps to level up for the label of regions (Boniface, 2003). Moreover, food can change the regions (China, Mexico, France, Italy etc) because cuisines help to have relation between the type of food and touristic places. The consumption of local foods can contribute to some components about maintainability of this region. These components are participating and supporting the production of food and the agricultural activities, obstructing the authentic exploitation, being increased the attractiveness of touristic places, getting a stronger society, constituting vanity source, and having a stronger label (Telfer & Wall, 1996).

Henderson (2009, p. 109) claimed that food is the most important factor to increase the image of destination of food and drinks for tourists to constitute the general experience about destination. Hjalager and Richards (2002), states that tasting the local food is an important part of tourism because of being both an activity and amusement. In holidays, local foods and drinks have an important role for presenting new pleasures and cultures to tourists (Sparks, 2007, p. 1180). In many regions, gastronomy states importance as a marketing factor. For example, some travel agencies present the advantage of gourmet holiday to Italy and France regularly. These regions become like foremost vine destination in the world (Kivela & Crofts, 2008, p. 356).

Gastronomy becomes the most important reason for tourists to travel because of tourists' requests about new and special experience and alternative types of tourism (Rand & Heat, 2006, p. 210). The vines which marketing by a true integrated way, constitute a chance for destination and restaurants sector (Cambourne & Others, 2003, p. 268). In these days, gastronomy is important because it is accepted that gastronomy is a target for travelling to a destination. Gastronomic tourism is an alternative income resource for some regions that have not the probability to benefit from sea, sunshine and sand, and natural resources (Kivela & Crofts, 2006).

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local cuisine is important for maintainable tourism for destination (Sims, 2009). Even seeing strategic level, politic and regional progresses are related to local cuisine (Boyne & Hall, 2004). The cultural cuisine which is an important factor for tourism, has a big potential for marketing destinations and assisting the power of competition (Rand & Heat, 2004, p. 4). It is seen that gastronomic tourism provides the progress of agricultural and pastoral places and produce local food with the experience which tourists get from food (Quan & Wang, 2003). Also, gastronomic tourism provide the advantage of competition and being label for region or country. Gastronomic identity ensures an important measurement of difference, improvements and advancement processes for a region. Consequently, cultural cuisine is on important state with respect to improvements of destination and economic progress (Henderson, 2009).

Culinary Culture of Turkey

As a society's eating behaviour and culture is related with life style, changig life will cause to change eating behaviour and culture. In this case, every country cuisine culture show differences (Durlu-Ozkaya, 2009, p. 87). Local cuisine, represent ethnical society in which food are produced and consumed (Chuang, 2009, p. 87).The concept of cuisine culture includes food, different kind of food and beverages, preparing, cooking, servicing, storing, consuming types of foods. As eating habit is a part of culture, it can show difference among every society. Maviş (2003) described the concept of cuisine as "food, different kind of food and beverages, preparing, cooking, servicing, storing, process of consuming foods; accordingly enviroment and equipment, eating behaviour and belief which occurs in this concept, all applications in overall and unique cultural structure.

Turkish cuisine, France cuisine, China cuisine, Indian cuisine, Italian cuisine, and Mexico cuisine can be good examples for universal cuisines (Ciğerim, 1999, p. 204). It is obvious that when culinary culture is mentioned not only food and beverages, which are, belong to a country but also preperation of food and service methods and equipments and kitchenware which are used in preparation and service, position and architecture of kitchen, food types and food ceremony and similar activities are tried to described.

Turkish cuisine already exists before Turks came to Anatolia. Moreover Turkish Cuisine has been affected and changed. Before Turks came to Anatolia, invasion of Persians, Greeks and Arabain and lastly Crusades caused diversifying foods and enriched foods (Doğdubay & Giritlioğlu, 2008, p. 437). When Turkish cuisine is mentioned, foods and beverages that satisfy behaviour of people living in Turkey, preperation, cooking, store and conserve of food and beverages; practice and beliefs for theses processes is understood. However, while mentioning about richness of Turkish cuisine, it will be wrong to evaluate Turk ethnically. With settlement of Turks in Anatolia, rich local animal and agricultural products are began to use, local community food was began to join to Turkish Cuisine. In this period, when is Turkish Cuisine is mentioned, Ottoman Palace Cuisine was came mind. Turkish cuisine is an unique cuisine which benefits from Arabian, Persian, North Africa, Balkans, Aegean Islands, North BlackSea Caucasia and Europa, this unique cuisine in deed is carries characteristic of a "fusion cuisine, somehow this cuisine can have features, varieties and abundance that are not common in other kind of cuisine. (Bilgin & Samancı, 2008; Güler, 2010). The root of East Asia cuisine depends on China cuisine. When it is looked the developing process of Turkish cuisine, it is seen that after Turk settled in Anatolia, they began to adopt Anatolian cuisine and combined and enriched with Middle Asia cuisine carried with them.

In the later periods, in the parallel expanding of geography of Ottoman Empire, gastronomic richness which are belong to other regions was joined Turkish Cuisine. Therefore, during this process Turkish cuisine gained the feature of fusion cuisine. For this reason, Turkish cuisine is one of the living oldest and best cuisines in the world (Akgöl, 2012; Bilgin & Samancı; 2008, Hatipoğlu, 2008). Every nation has cuisine culture in respect of cultural structure. Turkish cuisine is one of the most gorgeous and colorful cuisines in the world. This richness arises from Turkish Nation created the oldest community in the world (Dereli, 1989, p. 2).

The variety of Turkish cuisine is related to many factors. The geographical location of Turkey and historical processes has been through contribute highly to forming the Turkish cuisine culture and creating diversity of cuisine. (Durlu-Ozkaya, 2009). Turkish cuisine is famous for using a variety of products for producing a variety of foods (Sürücüoğlu and Özçelik, 2005, p. 10). The cuisine culture which was brought Turks from Middle Asia was enriched and diversified as result of affecting other communities (Baysal, 1993, p. 20). The Turkish cuisine which is inheritor of Ottoman cuisine, affected to Balkan and the Middle East and it affect this cuisines. Arabian cuisine also affected to Turkish cuisine. Especially, in southeast region cuisine, Arabian eating habit has a great affect. As palace cuisine affected by western countries and it affects their countries. In geographical places where Turkish people lived affected the cuisine culture's variety as well. The nourishment type which is consist of meat and fermented milk comes from the Middle Asia, developed agricultural system depended food comes from Mesopotamia, fruit and vegetables come from Mediterranean and Aegean cultures, and they determine the Turkish cuisine culture (Baysal, 1993; Durlu-Ozkaya et al., 2009).

Turkish tribe was affected by nomadic life style, for this reason agricultural products was not that important, animal product was consumed mostly (Tezcan, 2000, p. 21; Ögel, 1982, p. 15). In the course of time, agriculture was started to improve day by day, and wheat is the most important agricultural product. It is known that geographical region differences such as nomadic and agricultural economics structure made Turkish cuisine to be diversity and different (Yaman, 1989, p. 467). In addition, the oil, yoghurt and cheese, which has an important place in the human being and nourishment are produced and expended by Turks (Aktaş & Ozdemir, 2007, p. 24). Certainly, Turkish people's religions of Islam affects the improvements of their cuisine culture. In the Holy Koran, pig is the only animal to forbid to eat. However, eating donkey, horse, mule, lizard, slug and reptile is advised that people should not eat them. Today, in Turkish cuisine, these kinds of animals are not used in food. In Islam, alcohol is forbidden to drink, and people do not use it to drink.

While the Turkish cuisine which has pleasurable and sensitive culture is constituting, it is affect by conquer countries, emigrates from Middle Asia to Anatolia, and the inheritors of Ions, Rome, Sumer and Frigya (Gürman, 1993, p. 2). The Turkish clans which move from the Middle Asia to Anatolia, take many productions from every region to Anatolia with them. After Turkish people come to near east, there are some important changes about cuisine culture. Due to affected other regions, Turkish cuisine has gorgeous and various food. When Turkish people come to near east, grain production is made, and vegetables, fruits and sugar are also produced in there (Güler, 2010). The Anatolian soil that appropriate agriculture, provides raising agricultural products and animals. Because of this reason, Turkish cuisine culture has various kinds of food in this period (Bilgin & Samancı, 2008). It can be said that Turkish cuisine culture lives the most magnificent period in Ottoman Empire. Palace cuisine starts to improve in the second part of 15th century in Topkapı Palace because Fatih Sultan

Mehmet wants to have big kitchens in Topkapı Palace (Aktaş & Özdemir, 2007, p. 25). Also, this diversity increases because of vegetation, productive soil and sea products (Güler, 2008, p. 4).

It is known that the Turkish cuisine is one of the top three cuisine and it is the most nutritive cuisine in the world (Sürücüoğlu & Özcelik, 2005, p. 10; Durlu-Ozkaya et al., 2009; Durlu-Ozkaya, 2009). The historical processes of Turkish people also affect the Turkish cuisine culture because Turkish cuisine culture has the long development from past to today.

The Gastronomy Tourism Potential of Turkey

Turkey is an important tourism destination in terms of natural scenery and internationally known as one of the most favourite countries for its natural beauties. On the other hand, Turkey is in need of increasing the varieties of its tourism marketing possibilities by giving more importance to “cultural” and “heritage” tourism like many other successful destinations such as France, Italy, Spain, China are doing for years. In this sense, the concept of culinary tourism product has been accepted as a new aspect. This new dimension will contribute on tourism marketing of Turkey in many different ways. According to academic studies, the tourists who come to travel to Turkey, want to know and try to the Turkish cuisine culture (Pekyaman, 2008, p. 19). The success of a destination affected to the power of competition. It is easier that the marketing activities, which makes with strength and original attractiveness, are more successful because these original components provide to have the power of competition to destinations (Yavuz, 2007, p. 39). Remington and Yüksel (1998), The most important reason for tourists to come again to Turkey is food, and food gives help to have pleasure on the 4th of rank. According to the Table 1, Turkey’s strengths of gastronomy tourism are high qualities, varieties and values of food product, successful chefs and local products, using cuisine as a four season product, strengths of Turkey’s tourism industry.

Table 1

SWOT Analysis of Gastronomy Tourism in Turkey

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Opportunities</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High qualities, varieties and values of food product • Successful chefs and local products • Using cuisine as a four season product • Strengths of Turkey’s Tourism Ind. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working possibilities with organizations such as, Slow Food Movement, TAF, Travel agencies, TAFED • Establishment of connections through local & regional products to develop cross-Turkey products • Establishment of promotional activities and partnerships on cuisine varieties • Culinary education programs in the universities

<u>Weaknesses</u>	<u>Threats</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The weakness of perception on international Cuisine in Turkey • The lack of theoretical definitions on cooking and food for consumers • The lack of national organisations focusing on developing cuisines as a tourism product • The lack of culinary tourism packages • The need of collaborations in between public and private sectors • The need of available information on international markets • The lack of promotional activities and partnerships on wine tourism • Improving the educational backgrounds of the chefs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial limitations for cuisine tourism • Regional limitations of market-ready cuisine • Promotional difficulties on the perception of cuisine in Turkey

The importance of gastronomy tourism for the tourism of Turkey can be listed as the following:

- Gastronomy tourism is one of the most important tools of sustainable rural development.
- Gastronomy tourism will achieve its objectives with sustainable gastronomy (eco-gastronomy).
- Gastronomy tourism can be performed in all seasons.
- Gastronomy tourism is a factor of balance in the geographical deployment of tourism.
- Gastronomy tourism can be integrated in many kinds of tourism.
- Recreational activities in gastronomy tourism are quite divers and exclusive to the region.
- Tourist profile in Gastronomy tourism is quite different.
- Gastronomy tourism contributes to the protection of natural environment and cultural heritage.
- Gastronomy tourism is efficient in the realization of sustainable tourism objectives.
- Gastronomy tourism is an important tool in the marketing of a country.

Eco-tourism is quite an important tool in the sustainable rural development. In the realization of sustainable rural development, "gastronomy tourism" that focuses on the local agricultural values would be effective. Offering the rural areas for tourism and employing some of the population in tourism as well with agriculture in Turkey are among the objectives that must be among the development policies.

Many of the tourists who prefer visiting Turkey, want to recognize Turkish cuisine culture, but generally, it is impeded to these wishes because of the foods which belong to the same country with tourists. Also, when the Turkish cuisine's foods are not made in original

descriptions and presented by unsuitable way, it causes to learn the Turkish cuisine in a wrong way. The books which writes in foreign languages and reviews should be published, brochure should be prepared, TV programs, websites and travel agencies should be advised to promote the Turkish cuisine (Doğubay and Giritlioğlu, 2008, p. 452). Istanbul is the most developing city for tourism because of festivals and activities. Due to be 2010 European Culture Capital City, the aim of Istanbul is to show the world that the union of east and west cultures. In Istanbul, people start to do some gastronomic activities last years because the interest about gastronomic tourism increases day by day, and Istanbul cuisine is one of the best cuisines in the world.

From 2005 to 2012, UNESCO registers three cities for creative gastronomic city. These cities are Popoyan in Columbia, Chengdu in China, and Ostersund in Sweden. UNESCO chooses Hatay for 4th of creative gastronomic city nominee in Turkey, and if it is accepted, it will provide improve the gastronomic tourism and be a good model for protecting the gastronomic culture in Turkey. Also, this improvement cause to be a good label for Turkey in the world. The tours of vine and grape harvest travel Tekirdağ, Canakkale and Denizli, and also, İzmir, Muğla, Mersin, Adana, Hatay and Gaziantep are travelled because of local foods' gastronomic attractiveness.

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism has a plan as "The Tourism Strategy of Turkey 2023", and this plan aims to improve the boutique hotelier for gastronomic tourism by doing "Olive Corridor" in Marmara. Being a good label in the cuisine culture, olive and vine in Marmara, joining national and international festivals and activities about local food, presenting Mediterranean and Aegean cuisines and vines in seashore hotels are aims for the plan. Cappadocia is famous region for raising grapes and producing wines from these grapes. In this region, the first grape harvest and cultural tour are came together. Southeast of Anatolia is famous for delicious foods in Gaziantep, Diyarbakır, Sanlıurfa and Mardin. In these regions both Arabian and Turkish people live together for long years, and their cultures affected each other.

With the use of local refreshment culture of Turkey that has a positive image with cuisine culture in the world the attractiveness of the rural tourism destination can be increased. The fact that Turkey has plenty of values as rural markets, local cheese makers, vineyards, traditional olive oil makers, traditional food courses, food festivals and food culture, would create a difference for Turkey in gastronomy tourism.

Research Method and Findings

Turkish articles with the subject of "gastronomy" published in "Google Scholar" and Council of Higher Education Thesis Centre or foreign articles regarding the gastronomy potential of Turkey and master's and PhD theses on the subject have been analysed within this research. A content analysis has been conducted as a result of the revision of the data gathered from 54 articles and 32 theses within the scope of defined categories. Also method of frequency analysis has been utilised during the analysis of the data. According to the findings, gastronomy tourism has an important potential as a kind of alternative tourism for the Turkish tourism sector. Keywords "gastronomy", "gastronomy tourism", "culinary", "Turkish cuisine", "culinary tourism", "food", "food tourism", "local cuisine", "regional cuisine", "wine", "wine tourism" have been taken as basis for the scanning in order to define the articles and thesis to be used in the study. As a result of the scanning, 54 articles and 32 thesis have been analysed with regard to "date of publish, journals that the articles were published in,

distribution of theses by the universities, research subjects, keywords, research methods, data gathering methods, data analysis methods, conclusions”.

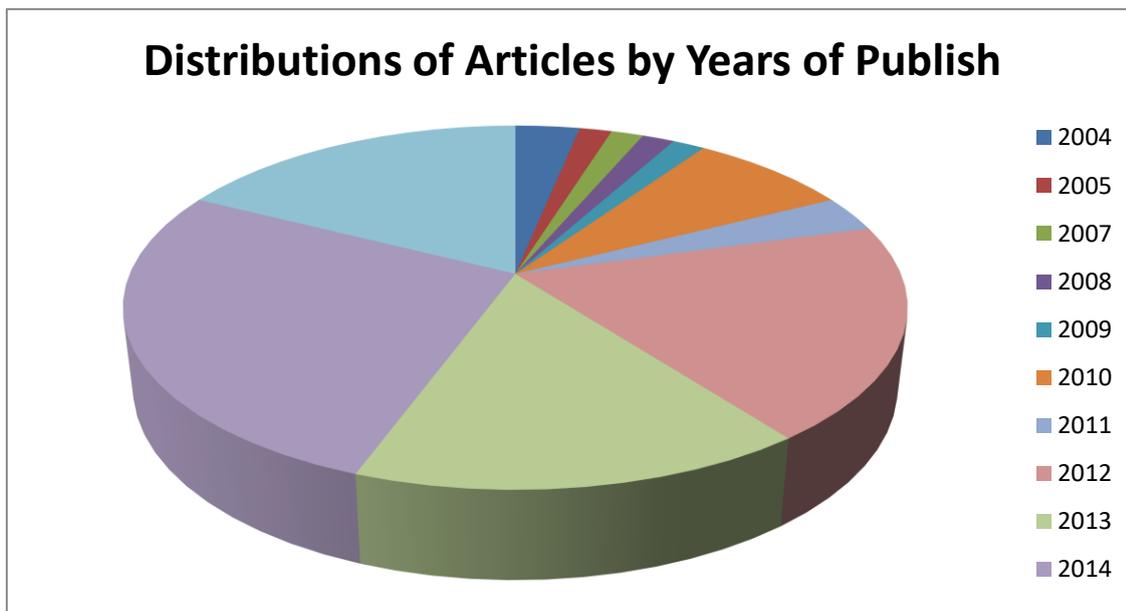


Figure 1: *Distributions of Articles by Years of Publish*

Pursuant to Figure 1, revised articles were published between 2004-2015. 31.5% of them were published in 2014, 20.4% in 2015, 18.5% in 2013 and 9.3% in 2010. Taking into consideration the distributions of articles by years of publish, the number of articles in the field of gastronomy has increased in particular after the year 2010.

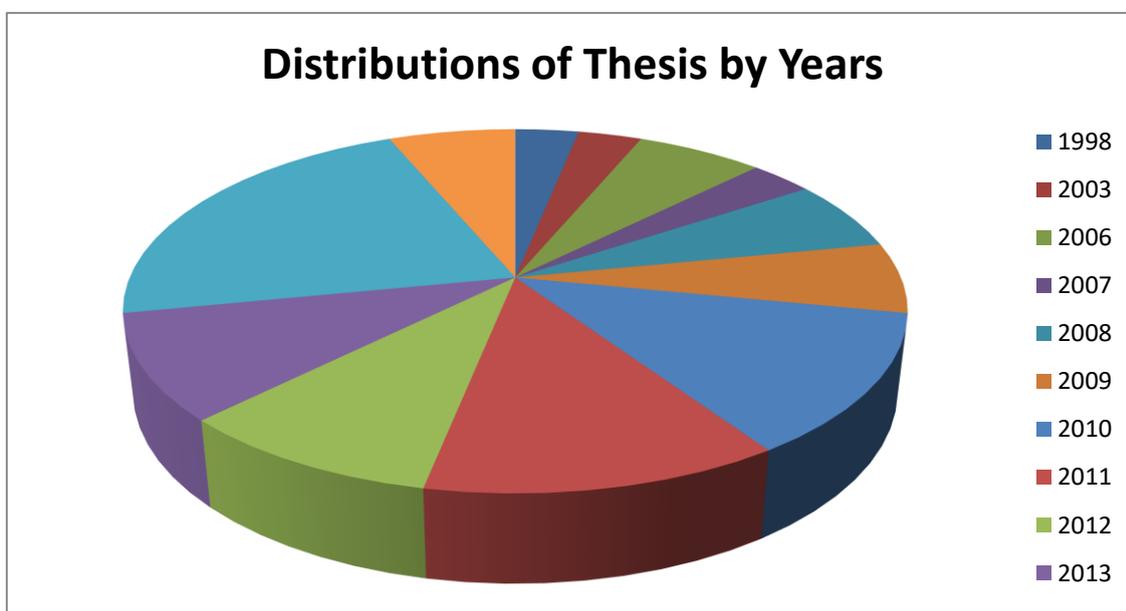


Figure 2: *Distributions of Thesis by Years*

According to Figure 2, analysed thesis were prepared between 1998-2014. 21.9% of them were prepared in 2014, 12.5% in 2011, 12.5% in 2010, 9.4% in 2012. Taking into consideration the distributions of theses by years, the number of thesis in the field of gastronomy has increased in particular after the year 2010. As a result of these findings, it can be said that in

Turkey, the academic studies in the field of gastronomy have started quite recently. Gastronomy tourism is a new research field for Turkey.

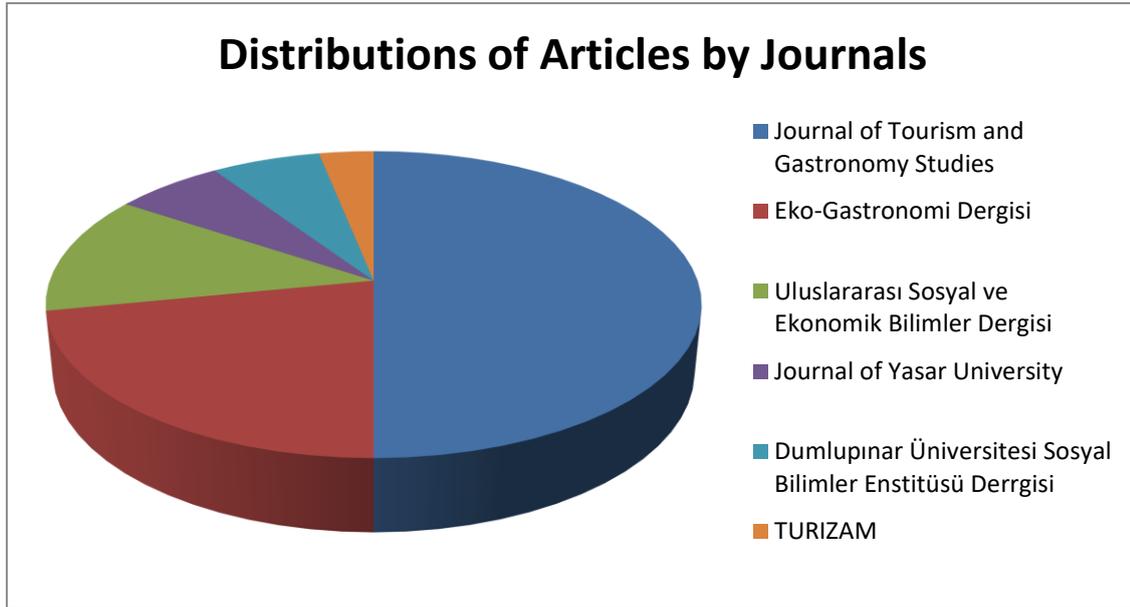


Figure 3: *Distributions of Articles by Journals*

According to Figure 3, 29.6% of the articles were published in Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies, 13% in Eko-Gastronomi Dergisi (Journal of Eco-Gastronomy), 7.4% in Uluslararası Sosyal ve Ekonomik Bilimler Dergisi (Journal of International Social and Economic Sciences), 3.7% in Journal of Yaşar University, 3.7% in Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi (Journal of Institute of Social Sciences of Dumlupınar University). The margin of the other journals is 1.9%.

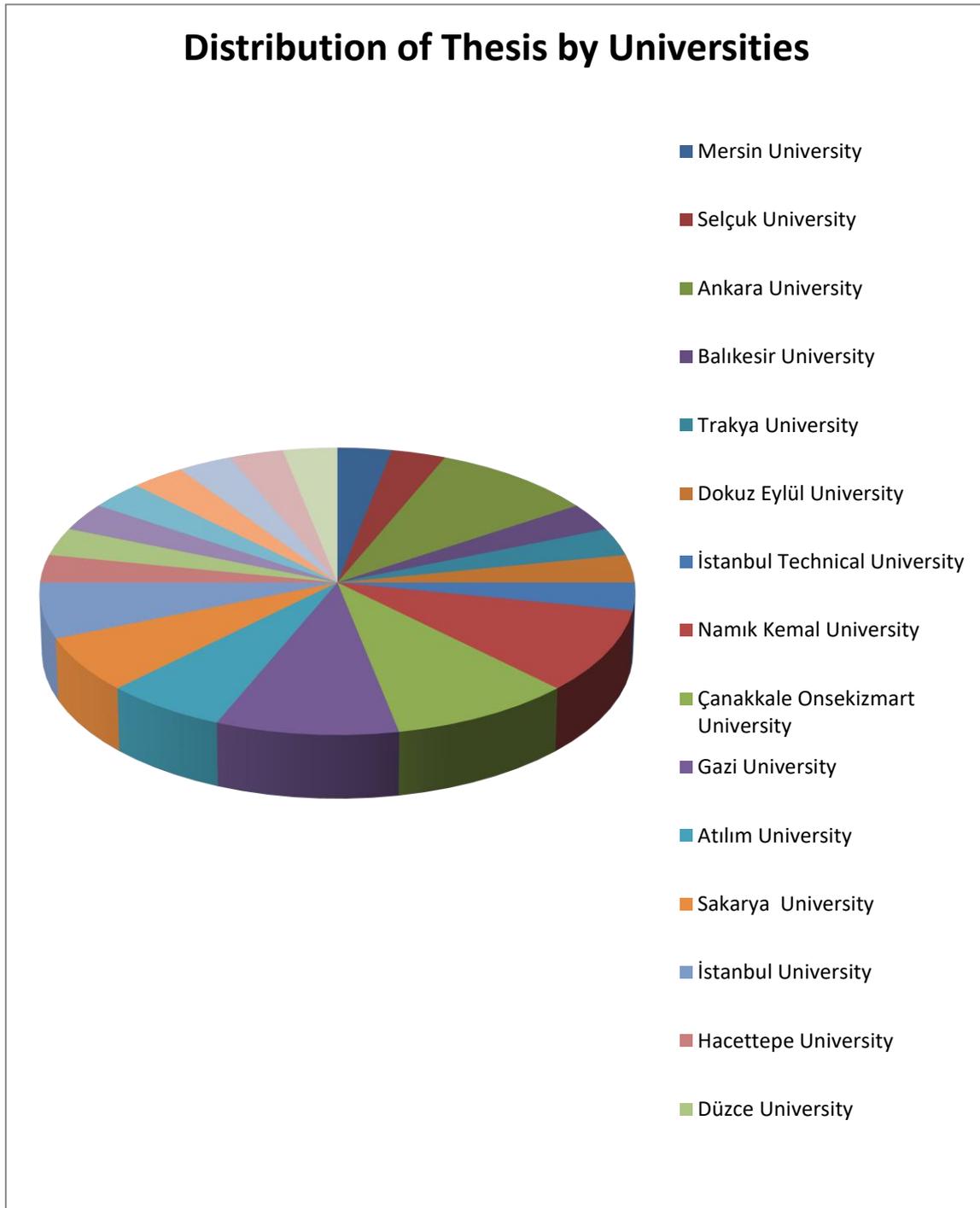


Figure 4: *Distribution of Thesis by Universities*

According to Figure 4, 9.4% of the thesis were prepared in Ankara University, 9.4% in Canakkale Onsekizmart University, 9.4% in Gazi University, 9.4% in Namık Kemal University, 6.3% in Atılım University, 6.3% in İstanbul University, 6.3% in Sakarya University, the ratio in other universities is 3.1%.

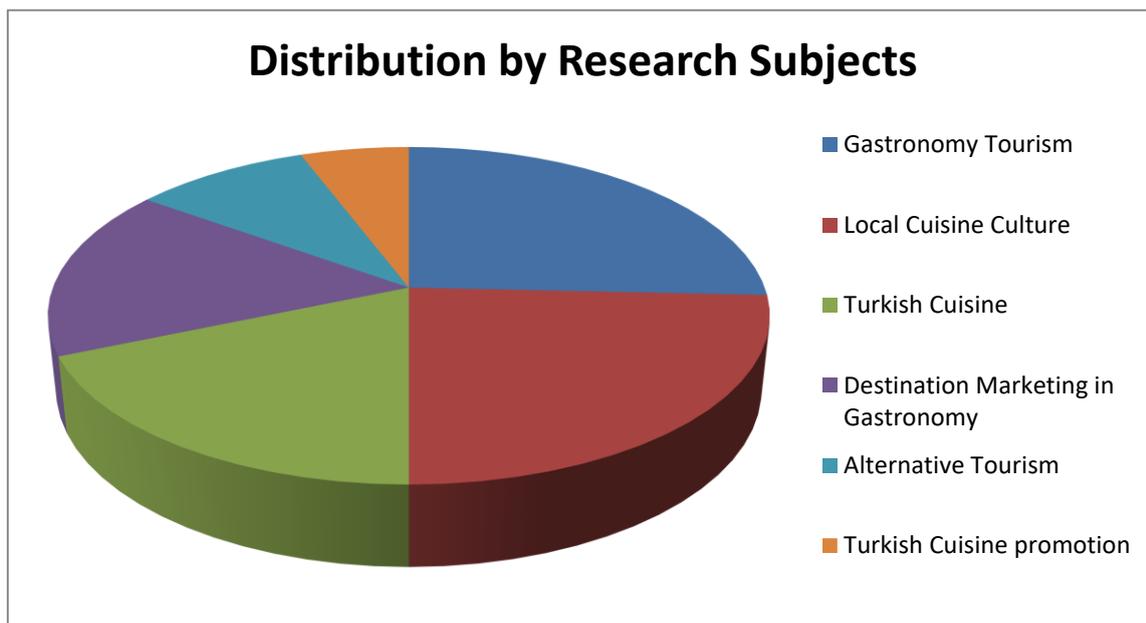


Figure 5: Distribution by Research Subjects

It can be observed in accordance with Figure 5 that the analysed articles and thesis mainly focus on subjects as; 41,9% on “gastronomy tourism”, 39.5% on “local cuisine culture”, 30.2% on “Turkish cuisine”, 26.7% on “gastronomy in destination marketing”, 15.1% on “alternative tourism”. Other leading research subjects are “food culture”, “sustainable gastronomy”, “sustainable rural development”, “promotion of Turkish cuisine” and “Turkish wine sector”.

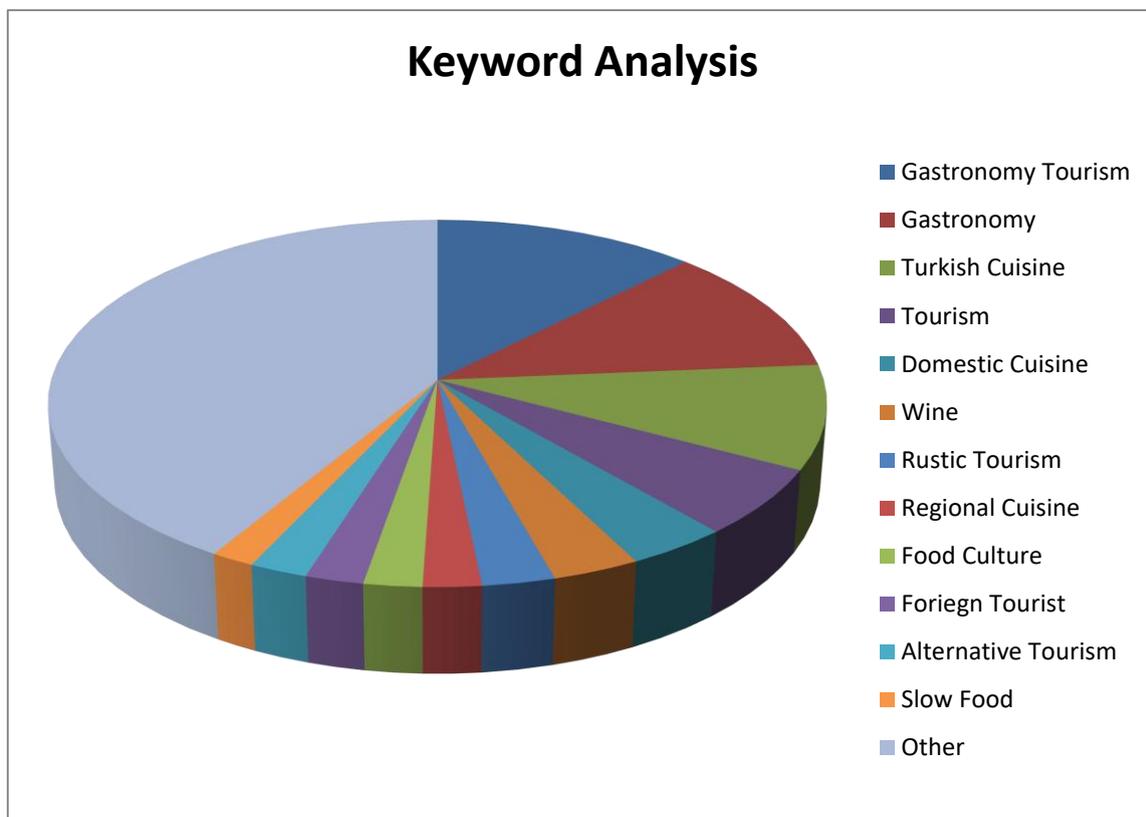


Figure 6: Keyword Analysis

According to Figure 6, most commonly used keywords in a total of 86 articles and these were; “gastronomy tourism” by 26.7%, “gastronomy” by 24.4%, “Turkish cuisine” by 19.8%, “tourism” by 12.8%, “local cuisine” by 8.1%, “destination marketing” by 7% and “wine” by 7%. As to the research method in the analysed articles and thesis; qualitative research method was utilised for 51.2%, quantitative research method was utilised for 40.7%, and qualitative and quantitative (combined) research method was utilised for 8.1%. “Survey” is the most preferred method of data gathering by 37.2%. “Interview” by 26.7%, “secondary data sources” by 19.8%, “survey and interview” by 8.1%, “case study analysis” by 5.8%, “observation” by 2.3% was among the data gathering methods. When the analysis methods used in the researches are reviewed, it can be seen that in the 40,7% of the researches were conducted with “descriptive analysis”, 12,8% with ANOVA, 10,5% “t test”, 7% with “factor analysis”, 7% with “chi square test” and 4,7% with “Mann Whitney-U test”. Other utilised analysis methods were; “clustering analysis, regression, correlation and regression, content analysis, tukey’s test, correlation, Kruskal Wallis H test, NPar test/Run test”.

Distribution of the research results shows that the most important and commonly accentuated results are respectively;

- Importance and wealth of local cuisine culture,
- Inadequacy in the promotion of gastronomy tourism,
- Importance of gastronomy in the presentation of the destination,
- Importance of gastronomy in the development of region,
- Importance of Turkish Cuisine culture and the need to promote thereof,
- Lack of umbrella organization for gastronomy tourism,
- Lack of local and national plans regarding gastronomy tourism,
- Importance of gastronomy in destination competition,
- Importance of gastronomy in sustainable tourism,
- Importance of gastronomy in universities,
- Necessity to increase the researches in the field of gastronomy,
- Importance of gastronomy tourism for Turkey,
- Importance of wine sector in Turkey and inadequacy of efficient marketing activities.

When the improvements about tourism are researched, it is seen that gastronomy has an important role for marketing the touristic destinations. The marketing activities which used gastronomic factors that relate to destinations, the income which are from gastronomic tourism activities and requiring new products prove with serious numeric data. Gastronomy carries a potential to increase the worth of many destinations. The Ottoman and Turkish cuisines which are in the world’s best cuisines, assist big additions to be label for destinations with a right location and attractive image (Güzel,2009:28). Today, when the competition is extremely high, destinations have to put their factors of attraction in good use by making a difference in many fields in order to be able to compete with the other destinations. Changing market choices should be very well analysed and development of attraction factors of the destination must be planned. Historical and cultural values take the lead in the attraction factors of the destination. Gastronomy has an important place in means of cultural attraction and is also a difference simulating marketing element with its inherence to a destination. According to the analysis of researches; in Turkey, tourism policies had been limited to the coastal mass tourism in the coastal zones of Aegean and Mediterranean regions, utilizing sea, sand and sun potentials of the country, win the purpose of maximum contribution to the national economy, by attracting foreign tourists. Turkish Cuisine; in seven region with

advantage of having different climates and vegetation, reserves diversity of local taste and flavour in its cuisine as well Turkish cuisine one of three top cuisine in the world.

Conclusions

Gastronomy tourism is a kind of tourism that appeals to tourists with high income, intellectual, between the ages of 35-55, like to travel to destinations with different cuisine cultures, open to new experiences, like consuming the food, where they are produced, want to share their experiences with others, and spend much. Gastronomy tourism creates an important power in marketing of the destinations with its possibility of performance all year long, increase in the amount of expenditure and time of stay compared to other kinds of tourisms, contribution to local development, environment sensitive development, exclusive to the region, authentic and inimitable range of products. Gastronomy tourism has an important leading power in the destination and life curve from the discovery of the destination to the period of regression when the demand decreases.

Gastronomy is an important part of tourism and creates a strong image with the attractiveness formed exclusive to the region in the development of the destination under the pressure sourced by the competition on tourism. Day by day tourism activities are globalized. At this point, it is necessary to analyse the gastronomy market well in order to be successful in the development of gastronomy. Gastronomy is an important source that creates the cultural identity in post-modern societies, thus has an important place in culture tourism. Gastronomy tourism is an important factor of the culture tourism market that develops rapidly in the world and it has important contributions both to social and economic development and intercultural interactions. Gastronomy tourism has important contributions to the local economic development in the regions, where it is developed. It is known that the gastro tourists rather prefer the local products and in particular their tendency to local food and beverages are higher compared to other types of tourists. Therefore, gastronomy tourism has positive contributions to new investments in the local economic sector, development of these sectors, protection of local values and sustainability.

There are many alternative tourism products that Turkish tourism sector can present to the world in accordance with the changing demand of the tourists. One of them is our unique and profoundly wealthy gastronomic wealth that has formed in a period of thousands of years. It cannot be said that this wealth could be marketed to the world as a tourism product so far. Taking into consideration that countries like Canada, South Africa and Australia that do not have even a cuisine culture of their own have based their tourism strategies mainly on gastronomy and have succeeded, and many destinations in Europe have created a brand value with gastronomy tourism, it can be better understood how powerful actually a marketing tool this potential is for Turkey, which could still not be valued.

According to research results; in Turkey the studies on gastronomy tourism mainly intensify in 2010 and after. Majority of the articles were published in Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies and Eko-Gastronomi Dergisi. The academicians publishing in this field preferred the national journals rather than the international ones. More qualified publishes in the international journals would have important contributions to studies both in sectorial sense and in the field of gastronomy tourism. Analysed articles and thesis emphasized the importance of marketing the gastronomy tourism in Turkey as a kind of alternative tourism by focusing on the wealth of Turkish cuisine culture. The necessity of removing the obstacles before the development of gastronomy tourism by solving problems like the lack of planning in the field, particularly the problems in the field of education, the lack of umbrella

organization, inefficiencies in promotion and marketing was pointed out. As one of the most important instruments of sustainable tourism and regional development, gastronomy tourism is a potential strength for Turkish tourism that should be put to good use.

Gastronomy tourism is one of the most important elements of tourism marketing and this new concept will contribute at a great level on the tourism marketing of Turkey. To achieve this aim, cooperation between local inhabitants and private sector should be realized. Gastronomy Tourism will positively push local economic growth and these results will be efficient and satisfactory for both sides. Turkey's culinary tourism activities should be enriched and developed in below ways:

- Improving agri-tourism activities
- Establishing farm vacations
- Tasting/buying packaged local products/farmer's markets
- Improving traditional dining experiences
- Visiting cheese factories
- Starting winery tour and tasting and visiting wine factories
- Opening culinary schools
- Improving possibilities for dining in Turkey's many fine restaurants

In Turkey, the type of being branding has moved into public policy arguments for Turkey to be in today's global world. The argument turns around how to create and sustain the image of country that is attractive for tourists while making benefit. Turkey is represented with a number of natural beauties such as sun, sea, sand and the ruggedness of the Mediterranean coastline. Culinary tourism has potential to get worth to many destinations for Turkish cuisine, which is one of richest cuisine in the world, with correct positioning and with attractive image, which will be created will highly, contributes to branding destination. The lack of enough public relations and advertisement activities of turkish cuisine is the most important problem we face in tourism marketing of Turkey. In summary, Turkish cuisine has a great potential and by taking the necessary actions this potential will be realized and achive the successful level of main european destinations such as France, Italy and Spain. Suggestions are improved for marketing Turkey as a culinary destination;

- Improving national, local and sector brand images
- Choosing goal markets (including domestic markets)
- Creating the familiarness and enhancing the profile of cuisine tourism marketing places.
- Improving an adequate bank of culinary images for use in marketing programs
- Improving companion and commitment of funds to help link smaller culinary tourism tools
- The importance of companion at all levels and between government and industry as well as associating culinary tourism with other tourism yields

Today's culinary traditions have been impressed by a long history of transmigration, together with regional product availability. Chefs have associated cultural traditions and local products, producing new forms and styles of cooking. Scaffoldings from different geographical regions across the country will emphasize the rich variety susceptible in Turkish gastronomy tourism influenced, not only by global but also by regional pressures, which can be branded under the umbrella of the cuisine in Turkey.

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