

The Necessity of Cultural Routes Education for Tourist Guides in Turkey

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Abstract: The notion of “Cultural Routes” first emerged in Europe in 1987. It has been known in Turkey at the beginning of 2000 and known for the last few years in Asian countries. Trekking route and path notions have been used in the USA and Asian countries instead of cultural routes term. However the usage of notion is different, cultural routes will be the most regarded alternative tourism activities in near future. Cultural routes education for tourist guides in Turkey and in Europe is investigated and quantitative/qualitative methods are used at the same time in this study. As a method, FEG(European Federation of Tourist Guide Associations) and head of tourism and guidance departments in Turkey and people responsible for preparing seminars in IRO, ARO and ANRO are interviewed, literature is reviewed and a relevant questionnaire is prepared to the professional tour guides in Turkey and it is implemented to 272 tourist guides with English license. The results of this questionnaire are given in the findings section. According to data the need of education is emphasized and suggestions are given.

Key Words: Cultural Routes, Tourist Guides, Tourist Guidance Education

Türkiye’de Turist Rehberleri için Kültür Rotaları Eğitiminin Gerekliliği Üzerine Bir Araştırma

Özet: Kültür rotası kavramı 1987 de Avrupa’da ortaya çıkmıştır. Türkiye’de 2000’li yılların başında Asya ve Uzak Doğu’da ise son yıllarda tanınır hale gelmiştir. ABD, Asya ve Uzak Doğu ülkelerinde kültür rotası kavramı yerine yürüyüş parkuru/izi gibi kavramlar kullanılır. Kullanılan kavramlar ne kadar farklı olursa olsun kültür rotaları yakın gelecekte en popüler alternatif turizm araçlarından biri olmaya adaydır. Bu çalışmada turist rehberleri için kültür rotaları eğitiminin gerekliliği araştırılmış, nitel ve nicel yöntemler bir arada kullanılmıştır. Bu kapsamda FEG(Avrupa Turist Rehberleri Federasyonu), Türkiye’deki Turist Rehberliği ve ilişkili bölümlerin bölüm başkanları, İstanbul, Ankara ve Antalya rehberler odaları ile görüşmeler yapılmış ve 272 İngilizce ruhsatnameli aktif rehberlere anket uygulanmıştır. Sonuç bölümünde elde edilen bulgular eşliğinde kültür rotaları eğitiminin gerekliliği vurgulanmış ve öneriler geliştirilmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Kültür rotaları, Turist Rehberleri, Türkiye, Kültür Rotaları Eğitimi, Turist Rehberliği Eğitimi

Introduction

According to World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (WFTGA), tourist guide is a person who guides for visitors in the language of their choice and interprets the cultural and natural heritage of an area. In addition, tourist guide is required to possess an area-specific qualification usually issued and/or recognized by the appropriate authority. This is distinct from a tour manager who manages an itinerary on behalf of the tour operator, provides local practical information ensuring the program is carried out as described in the tour operator's literature and marketed to the traveller/consumer. Tourism guidance is also an opportunity for travelling, discovering new places and entertainment. Because of these reasons, one might think that this is an easy and entertaining profession. In fact, it is a stressful and difficult profession (Batman et al., 2000 pg: 24). Tourist guides are responsible for every detail from the first moment of meeting the tourist to the last moment which is the end of the tour. Since tourist guides manage the operation with their performance and attention towards the tourists they also play a very important role of the tourist's satisfaction (Yarcan et al, 1998, pg: 95). For this reason, tourist guides have to improve themselves, their abilities and their knowledge in their specific areas of interest. Tourist guides are also known as information providers, motivators, peacekeepers, envoys, leaders, advisers, actors/actresses, psychologists, listeners, interpreters, organizers, buyers and missionaries for their countries. These are guides' most important roles (Köroğlu et al., 2012). Tourist guides should have some individual specialties to be successful throughout their careers. These are (Batman et.al, 2000, pg: 24-35);

- Communication skills
- Technical and educational skills
- Leadership
- Behaviour control
- Patience and sympathy
- Sense of humour
- Good- looking
- Professional ethics and determination.

Apart from these, it is necessary to keep these additional skills (Snell et all, 1992):

- to have a good grasp of his/her mother tongue,
- to speak a foreign language fluently,
- to have sufficient information about history, contemporary issues and traditions of the country visited,
- to have information about the region,
- to have general knowledge.

Tourist guides can give the tourists an incredible tour experience through his/her high quality skills. So a tourist guide must be regardful in his communication with the tourists and must prepare a very good and detailed tour management plan (Snell et al, 1992, pg. 27; Doswell, 1979, pg: 66; Crick, 1992; p.142). On the other hand, tourists guides must have a good impression on tourists through his mastery of own local culture and traditions (Salazar, 2006, p. 847; Yazıcıoğlu et al., 2012). The necessity of professional tourist guidance service originated with the starting of mass tourism and developing of tourism. Saturation of mass tourism, increase in house hold incomes and annual leaves shaped the tourism as an essential necessity in people's minds which in turn resulted in diversification of tourism activities. In this context, alternative and special interest tourism activities have arisen. Expectations of tourists have raised and have been more selective day by day. Considering all variables, 2023 Tourism Strategies and Action Plan in Turkey intends to increase tourism share for Turkey by developing tourism alternatives and using natural, cultural, historical and geographical values of Turkey in balance with protection and usage of environment. Instead of micro scale planning of tourism resources, creation of tourism corridors, touristic regions, touristic towns and eco-tourism regions is a more positive approach in order to define and advertise usage criteria. Therefore attractions of regions with tourism potential will increase with other alternative tourism activities (Turkish Tourism Strategy 2023, 2015). Each sector related to tourism needs an improvement to support tourism. Whilst hotels require service variety, environment protection within the scope of sustainability or travel agencies try creating different tour packages and marketing them via internet technologies, tourist guides have to make a difference in their jobs not only in national scale but also in international scale. Within this framework, tourist guides are given in-service seminar every year in cooperation with Turkish Tourist Guides Federation (TUREB), Turkish Travel Agencies Association (TURSAB) and Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism. This aims to renew information and abilities of tourist guides. It was necessary up to three years ago. Now it is optional. Moreover tourist guides focus in one subject with these seminars. Istanbul Chamber of Tourist Guides (IRO) arranged 20 different specific subjects for 2002-2010. Approximately 1000 tourist guides who attended those seminars had certifications. The most favourite subject was the art-culture (TUREB, 2012). The latest seminars were about Byzantium Art, Ottoman Art, Architecture Specialization in Istanbul, Jewish Diaspora Tourism in Istanbul, Christian, Islamic Art in Istanbul, Ornithology Specialization in 2013. Attending those seminars was compulsory to work as an active tourist guide until 2012 June. This obligation in legislation has now been obsolete. In addition to being a social service, tourism guidance now has been a profession defined and legislated within law. This step is very important for the tourism sector. Tourism guidance is now the second sector which is similarly legislated as TURSAB.

Tourism guidance has been protected by the laws of occupation. In future, the federation of tourist guides will shoulder more responsibility and they will have a niche position on the market (Tourism Bulletin, 2014). According to new law(Official Gazette, 2012);

- Federation of Tourist Guides will organize the compulsory practice tour under the supervision of Ministry of Culture and Tourism.
- Guidance courses will be provided whenever it is necessary.
- All tourist guides will be compulsory members of the organization of guidance profession.
- Administration will serve for duration of 3 years.
- Tourist guides will not work under base pay tariff determined by federations and Ministry of Culture and Tourism.
- Compulsory seminars has been cancelled and they have been converted to optional seminars.
- Passive membership will be started for the guides who want to have a break for some length of time.
- They will not lose their guidance license in passive membership period.

Cancellation of the seminars among these articles of laws is the most relevant within this study. Personal development of guides that is mentioned above is left to their own free will. The aim of this study is to emphasize the necessity of cultural routes education in tourism guidance as a profession.

1. The Notion of Cultural Routes in Turkey and in the World

The notion of cultural routes first emerged in Europe. The aim of European Cultural Routes programs that have been conducted by the Council of Europe since 1987 is to emphasise the common cultural heritage of different Europe countries.

The European Institute of Cultural Routes is a non-profit association based in Luxembourg whose aim is to help the Council of Europe, as a technical body, in the establishment of European Cultural Routes.

It was established in 1998 and its role is:

1. to examine applications for new projects;
2. to monitor activities in the field and co-ordinate the work of partner organizations;

3. to disseminate and archive information documents.

It aims also human rights, cultural democracy, cultural variety, identification, mutual dialog and relations beyond time, space and prosperity. The Santiago de Compostella located in Spain was elected the first European cultural route in 1987 by the Council of Europe. This route is source of inspiration and the reference point of planning for the future activities. The aims of cultural routes program are.

- to increase the awareness of European culture and citizenship.
- to share and develop the mutual culture.
- to support interfaith dialogue by better understanding of Europe history.
- to develop and preserve cultural and natural heritage.
- to give a priority to cultural tourism with a sustainable development vision.
- to create special areas for spare time activities to promote the cultural tourism (European Council, 2015).

The Council of Europe defines the aspects of cultural routes program's politics. It also defines new routes, new themes, approves the networks and makes a decision for the cultural routes. Cultural Routes that have the certificate of the council of Europe in different categories are listed below (European Council, 2015).

- The Santiago de Compostela Pilgrim Routes (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 1987).
- The Hansa (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 1991).
- The Heinrich Schickhardt Route (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 1992).
- The Viking Routes (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 1993).
- The Via Francigena (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 1994).
- The Vauban and Wenzel Routes (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 1995).
- The Routes of El legado of andalusí (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 1997).
- European Mozart Ways (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2002).
- The Phoenicians' Route (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2003).
- The Pyrenean Iron Route (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2004).
- The European Route of Jewish Heritage (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2004).

- The Saint Martin of Tours Route (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2005).
- The Cluniac Sites in Europe (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2005).
- The Routes of the Olive Tree (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2005).
- The Via Regia (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2005).
- Transromanica - The Romanesque Routes of European Heritage (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2007).
- The Iter Vitis Route (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2009).
- The European Route of Cistercian abbeys (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2010).
- The European Cemeteries Route (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe– 2010).
- Prehistoric Rock Art Trails (2010)Thermal Heritage and Thermal Towns (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2010).
- The Route of Saint Olav Ways (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2010).
- The Casadean Sites (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2012).
- The European Route of Ceramics (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2012).
- The European Route of Megalithic Culture (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2013).
- The Huguenot and Waldensian trail (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2013).
- Atrium, on the architecture of totalitarian regimes of the 20th century (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2014).
- The Réseau Art Nouveau Network (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2014).
- Via Habsburg (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2014).
- The Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2015).
- The European Routes of Emperor Charles V (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2015).
- Destination Napoleon (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2015).
- In the Footsteps of Robert Louis Stevenson (Certification Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – 2015).

European Cultural Routes are very important in developing tourism and European mutual tourism strategies. Professional tour guides are trained and educated for this reason. Cultural routes training in Europe is different from one country to another.

In 1999 Turkish Garanti Bank organized a project competition for the purpose of revealing cultural and historical values in Turkey. The project of Kate Clow , an English citizen who lives in Turkey, was selected. This project was the first cultural route in Turkey named as “Lycian Way”. This 509 km route is an ancient commercial route that connects the cities of ancient Lycian Civilization. It is located in Teke Peninsula, in the southwest of Turkey between Fethiye and Antalya Gulfs. Trekking on the route takes a month. This route is one of the best long-distance trekking routes in the world according to Sunday Times in 2010. The second long-distance trekking route in Turkey is St.Paul Way religious route .St Paul was credited for the spread of Christianity to Western Europe. The St Paul Trail is a 500km 27-day way-marked footpath from Antalya, to Yalvac (Bastemur, 2011). The other cultural routes in Turkey are:

- Lycian Way (History Route)
- St. Paul Trail (Religious Route)
- Abraham’s Path (Religious Route)
- Independence Trail (War Route)
- Kaçkar Mountains (Nature Route)
- Kure Mountains (Nature Route)
- Sultan’s Trail (History Route)
- Via Egnatia (History Route)
- Evliya Çelebi Way (Pedestrian Route)
- Phrygian Route (Ancient History Route)
- Hittite Trail (Ancient History Route)
- Yenice Forest Trails (Natural Route)
- Carian Trail (Ancient History)
- Gastronomy Route
- Sarıkamış Trails (Mountaining)
- Mount Ararat (Mountaining)
- Idyma Way (History Route)
- Between Two Seas (Anonymous, 2016).

The notion of cultural routes is known as trekking routes in Asia and America. The most popular trekking routes in Asia and America are as below.

- Annapurna Circuit, Nepal
- Great Wall, China
- Ratanakiri, Cambodia
- Ladakh Range, India
- Gunung Tahan, Malaysia

- The North, Thailand
- Appalachian Trail, USA
- John Muir Trail, California, USA
- Santa Cruz Trek, Peru
- Torres del Paine, Chile
- Ciudad Perdida, Colombia
- Silk Road (UNWTO, 2015).

“In addition to featuring how routes of a cultural nature add value to the experience of travellers, the *Global Report on Cultural Routes and Itineraries* also highlights the positive impacts generated by these itineraries in terms of sustainability and benefits for local communities” (UNWTO, 2015).

1.1 Tourist Guidance Education In Turkey

There are 12 vocational school (2-year degree), 13 faculty (4-year degree) programs given to tourist guidance (OSYM, 2015).

The qualifications to be a tourist guide in Turkey are:

- to be a citizen of Turkey
- to be at least 18 years old
- to graduate from tourist guidance programs in vocational schools or faculties or master programs. (If the applicants have 4 year degree but other programs except for tourist guidance, they can apply guidance courses prepared by TURSAB (Travel Agency Federation of Turkey) and other tourism federations approved by the ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey
- to have foreign language proficiency. (TEOFL, IELTS etc.)
- to complete implementation tour in Turkey and to pass the exam after the tour (the Law of Occupation, Article;3).

After providing these conditions, tour guide ID card is given and applicant will be a tourist guide. Tourist guides have to carry tour guide ID on tours. Until 2012 they had to attend the seminars given by TUREB every 2 year, but that necessity is lifted up as mentioned therein before. These seminars are no longer compulsory. They are optional. Education for the profession of the guides in the relevant region is given on these seminars organized by TUREB; TURSAB and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey. The examples of profession areas of tourist guides are listed below:

- Culture-Art
- Ornithology
- Diving
- Istanbul in ancient times
- Turkish carpet business
- Gastronomy and Wine

- Children and Museum
- Countries (these seminars are given for each country) (TUREB, 2012).

Cultural routes education is neither on seminars nor in the curriculums at the universities. Cultural routes are mentioned only within the scope other lessons like tourism geography or alternative tourism.

2. Methodology

Tourism context has been investigated by numerous studies in recent years. A questionnaire was developed based on the literature and in-depth interviews. Data collection methods considered for the survey were personal interviews and mail-back surveys. Interviews are made with European Federation of Tourist Guide Association (FEG), heads of tourist guidance departments of four year faculties (or collages) and two year vocational high schools. Surveys are completed by 272 tourist guides, found in Turkish Tourist Guides Catalogue, whose foreign language is English. 121 of these surveys are considered as valid. The aim of this survey is to determine the awareness of Turkish tourist guides on cultural routes and European cultural routes and to determine the willingness of attendance in cultural routes seminars and to question whether they see the cultural routes as a profession or not in the future. Survey data is analysed by using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) for Windows 17.0. While data is evaluated, certain statistical methods are used (number, percentage, average, standard deviation). If the number of samples in the survey group is not sufficient or does not comply with the sample test criteria, then non-parametric methods are used (Kalaycı, 2008; Sümbüloglu, 2007). Normal distribution analysis, which is a parametric test hypothesis, is implemented for the variables of the survey. Application of the Kolmogorov Smirnov test which shows the normal distribution of variables indicates the lack of normal distribution. Non-parametric methods are chosen in the analysis of data.

The relation between Cultural Routes-Awareness statements is tested by Spearman correlation. The correlation relations among scales are evaluated according to criteria below (Kalaycı, 2006, pg; 116);

R	Relation
0,00 - 0,25	Very weak
0,26 - 0,49	Weak
0,50 - 0,69	Moderate
0,70 - 0,89	Strong
0,90 - 1,00	Very Strong

Acquired data is evaluated as 95% reliable with a 5 % level of significance.

3. Findings

To the research 36 of the tourist guides (29,8%) participating in the survey are women. 85(70,2%) of them are men. According to profession factor, 82 (67,8%) of them have culture-art profession, 3 (2,5%) sports, 15 (12,4%) museum , 7 (5,8%) different countries and 14(11,6%) other professions. 23(19,0%) of the guides work at the travel agencies as a tourist guide. 98 (81,0%) of them work as independent guides. Demographical characteristics of tourist guides can be seen on table 1.

Table 1: Demographical Analyses

Tables	Groups	Freq(n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	36	29,8
	Male	85	70,2
	Total	121	100,0
Age	18-25	10	8,3
	26-33	37	30,6
	33-40	26	21,5
	41-49	30	24,8
	50 +	18	14,9
	Total	121	100,0
Education Level	2 year degree	24	19,8
	4 year degree	65	53,7
	Master degree	23	19,0
	PhD	9	7,4
	Total	121	100,0
Where did they get their tourist guide ID?	2 year degree	28	23,1
	4 year degree	36	29,8
	The Ministry of Culture and Tourism	56	46,3
	Other	1	0,8
	Total	121	100,0
Guidance Experience	1-3	18	14,9
	3-7	26	21,5
	7-10	14	11,6
	10-13	12	9,9
	13 +	51	42,1

	Total	121	100,0
Profession	Culture-Art	82	67,8
	Sports	3	2,5
	Museum	15	12,4
	Other Countries	7	5,8
	Other	14	11,6
	Total	121	100,0
Working Geographical Area	Marmara	52	43,0
	Aegean and Mediterranean	46	38,0
	Central Anatolia	12	9,9
	Black Sea	2	1,7
	Eastern and South-eastern of Anatolia	9	7,4
	Total	121	100,0
The type of work	I work at the travel agency as a tour guide	23	19,0
	I work as an independent guide	98	81,0
	Total	121	100,0

The well-known cultural routes in Turkey according to Turkish tour guides are Lycian Way (73,6%) and St.Paul Way (68,6%). These are the oldest routes in Turkey as mentioned before. Cultural routes preferred by the tourist guides can be seen on table 2.

Table 2: Culture Routes Preferences Of The Tourist Guides

Name of the Route	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Lycian Way	89	73,6
St.Paul Way	83	68,6
Independence Trail	21	17,4
Evliya Çelebi Route	20	16,5
Hitit Route	25	20,7
Frig Route	24	19,8
Others	20	16,5

The awareness of tourist guides in Turkey about cultural routes is high except for European Cultural Routes (Table 3). Meaningful relations ($r=0.601$;

$p=0,000<0.05$) are found between the statement of “I have a good knowledge about cultural routes in Turkey” and the statement of “I am familiar with the notion of cultural routes”. Increasing the attendance level of the statement “I have a good knowledge about cultural routes in Turkey”, also increases the attendance level of the statement “I am familiar with the notion of cultural routes”.

Table 3: The Relations Between The Awareness Of Cultural Routes’ Statements

	Average	Standard Dev.	1	2	3	4	5	6
1-I am familiar with the notion of cultural routes	3,430	0,864	1,000					
2-I have a good knowledge about cultural routes in Turkey	3,410	0,811	0,601**	1,000				
3-I have a good knowledge about European Cultural Routes	2,370	0,985	0,428**	0,350**	1,000			
4- I am of the opinion that cultural routes will be more popular in future	3,360	0,838	0,306**	0,388**	0,301**	1,000		
5-I absolutely attend if there is an education about cultural routes	3,420	0,831	0,246**	0,285**	0,260**	0,445**	1,000	
6- I can prefer cultural routes in future as a profession in guidance	3,280	0,965	0,306**	0,319**	0,196*	0,521**	0,504**	1,000

Increasing the attendance level of the statement “I am familiar with the notion of cultural routes” also increases attendance levels of the statements “I am of the opinion that cultural routes will be more popular in future” and “I absolutely attend if there is an education about cultural routes”.

When all answers are compared with the gender, knowledge of women is much more than men($p<0,05$) as you can see on table 4.

Table 4: The Relations Between The Statements And Gender

	Group	N	Ave	Sd	MW	p
I am familiar with the notion of cultural routes	Female	36	3,670	0,676	1 210,000	0,035
	Male	85	3,330	0,918		
I have a good knowledge about cultural routes in Turkey	Female	36	3,640	0,723	1 096,000	0,016
	Male	81	3,310	0,831		
I have a good knowledge about European Cultural Routes	Female	35	2,740	0,852	1 001,000	0,006
	Male	83	2,220	1,001		

I am of the opinion that cultural routes will be more popular in future	Female	36	3,670	0,632	1 083,500	0,006
	Male	84	3,230	0,883		
I absolutely attend if there is an education about cultural routes	Female	36	3,610	0,838	1 126,000	0,019
	Male	82	3,340	0,820		
I can prefer cultural routes in future as a profession in guidance	Female	36	3,560	0,735	1 135,000	0,044
	Male	80	3,150	1,032		

Increasing education level, the attendance level of the statement “I absolutely attend if there is an education about cultural routes” increases meaningfully as you can see on table 5. Increasing education level, the attendance level of the statement “I am of the opinion that cultural routes will be more popular in future” increases. 81.51% of tourist guides attended the survey work as independence tourist guides. According to geographical region criteria, 52 guides (43,0%) work in Marmara, 46 guides (38,0%) work in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions, 12 guides (9,9%) work in the Black Sea Region, 9 of them (7,4%) work in East and South-eastern Regions of Turkey.

Table 5: Average Of Education Level

	Group	N	Ave	Sd	KW	P	Diff.
I am of the opinion that cultural routes will be more popular in future	2 year degree	24	3,330	0,637	7,946	0,047	4 > 1 4 > 2
	4 year degree	64	3,220	0,934			
	Master degree	23	3,570	0,788			
	PhD	9	3,890	0,333			
I absolutely attend if there is an education about cultural routes	2 year degree	24	3,380	0,770	4,541	0,209	
	4 year degree	62	3,350	0,851			
	Master degree	23	3,740	0,541			
	PhD	9	3,220	1,302			
I can prefer cultural routes in future as a profession in guidance	2 year degree	21	3,290	0,717	4,132	0,248	
	4 year degree	63	3,130	1,114			
	Master degree	23	3,480	0,790			
	PhD	9	3,780	0,441			

The results of an interview with FEG (European Federation of Tourist Guide Association), showed that tourist guides education in Europe is not very different from Turkey. For instance; 4 year degree is compulsory for the guides in Portugal, 2,5 year education is compulsory for the guides in Greece.

Implementation tour and foreign language proficiency are common in all Europe countries.

Furthermore; cultural routes are found in curriculum in many European countries (Portugal, France, Greece, Spain etc.) (Snatti Interview, 2015). After the graduation from the universities, optional seminars are given for the profession (FEG Interview, 2015).

When all curriculum are searched from the universities which have tour guidance and related departments in Turkey, there is no related classes to Cultural Routes. After this research all head of tourism guidance departments were called and tried to get information about whether cultural routes information were given during any classes or as a seminar. 6 four year faculties and 5 two year vocational high schools were taught cultural routes as a part of tourism geography or cultural heritage classes. 5 four years faculties and 6 two year vocational high schools' heads are given information that cultural routes classes can be taught as a whole class in a term. 7 four years of faculties and 5 two year vocational high schools' head thought that it must be. 1 of head of faculties and vocational higher school had no clue. Especially heads of departments at the universities close to the most popular cultural routes thought the class should be a selective different class for one term.

According to interview with IRO (Istanbul Chamber of Tourist Guides), ARO (Ankara Chamber of Tourist Guides, ANRO (Antalya Chamber of Tourist Guides), all the attendees gave an opinion in the same way. Cultural routes class should be on the curriculum as a selective class in the last term for the students who have an interest on it.

Conclusion and Suggestions

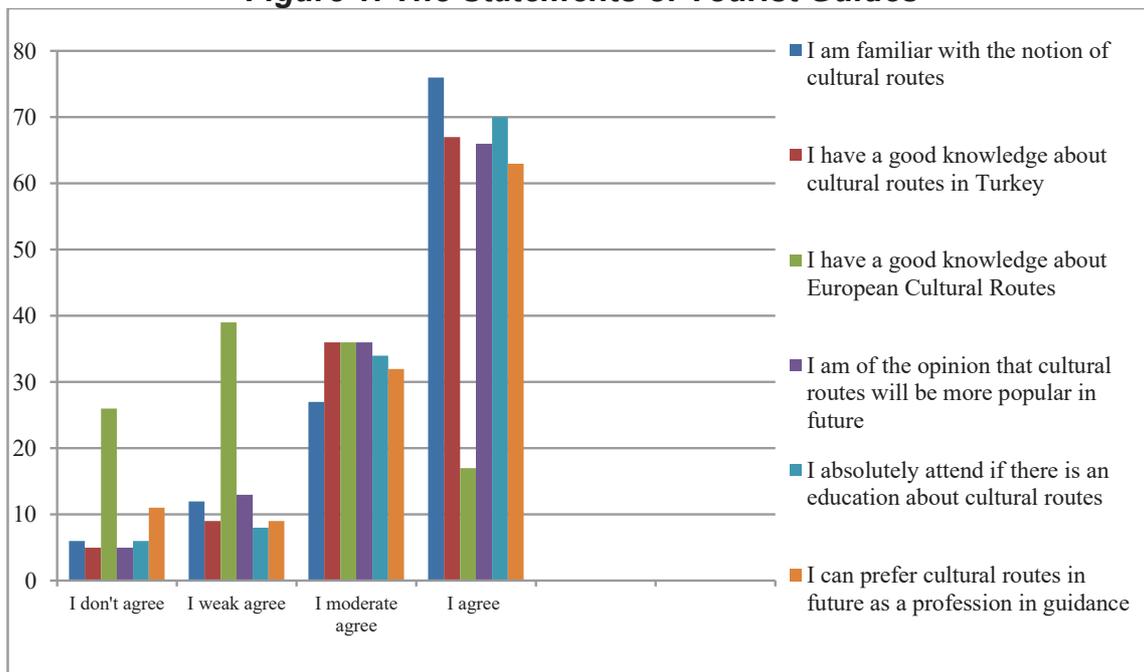
The Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes seeks to reinforce the potential of Cultural Routes for cultural co-operation, sustainable territorial development and social cohesion, with a particular focus on themes of symbolic importance for European unity, history, culture and values and the discovery of less well-known destinations. It helps to strengthen the democratic dimension of cultural exchange and tourism through the involvement of grassroots networks and associations, local and regional authorities, universities and professional organizations. It contributes to the preservation of a diverse heritage through theme-based and alternative tourist itineraries and cultural projects (COE, 2013).

Routes in Asian countries are also important for their tourism activities. In the scope of this, the 3rd World Trail Conference and Walking Festival were arranged on Jeju Island between 29th – Oct and 3rd Nov 2012. 23 Trail Associations from 17 countries were represented. The Conference is funded by

the Korean Ministry of Knowledge Economy and organised by the Jeju Olle Foundation (which made the first walking trail on Jeju Island) and the Provincial Tourism Association of Jeju. The place of conference preference is not a coincidence. Jeju Island is about 80km long, is centred on a volcanic cone which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Walking trails became popular only 10 years ago, when the Jeju Olle Trail was opened; prior to that skiing and mountaineering were popular sports. Most of the walkers now support a lively trail wear industry (imported and local equipment and clothes), off-season holidaying on the coast and mountains. Trekkers travel to Japan, south-east Asia (Vietnam, Thailand) and Europe (mainly Switzerland), in search of holiday experiences (Conference Report, 2015).

Increasing education and economic level of the people changed the tourism choices of the people. Over the past six decades, tourism has experienced continued expansion and diversification, becoming one of the largest and fastest-growing economic sectors in the world. Many new destinations have emerged, challenging the traditional ones of Europe and North America (UNWTO, 2015)

Figure 1: The Statements of Tourist Guides



Increased healthy life consciousness also affects tourist choices. Demand for Slow Cities, alternative tourism activities especially trekking are the most important examples. According to UNWTO database, most of the outgoing tourists prefer travel agencies. Cultural routes are getting more popular because of changing tourism preferences. Because cultural routes unite kinds of tourism alternatives like gastronomy and trekking, archaeology and diving, culture and

riding etc. Turkish tourist guides have enough knowledge about cultural routes in Turkey but not in the world as it can be seen in figure 1.

Research of curriculum in tourism guidance shows that cultural routes classes are not provided. This knowledge is gained in other classes and implementation tours piece by piece. As indicated by the table below, tourist guides in Turkey have expressed interest in training and education of cultural routes. They have also shown willingness to choose these cultural routes as an area of specialization due to expected popularity of this area. 18 cultural routes will be available in Turkey by the end of 2015. Destination management plans, international marking of routes and GPS survey is about to be completed. Just a few tourist guides in Turkey have a very good knowledge about both national and international cultural routes. Cultural routes education is a necessity for tourist guides. In this scope the necessities are given below:

- Adding cultural routes classes in the curriculum of the universities that provide tourist guides education.
- Providing cultural routes education in optional seminars for tourist guides.
- Conducting projects on cultural routes in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and Culture.
- Preparing a guide for cultural routes in Turkey and in the world.
- Preparing implementation tours for tourist guides related to cultural routes
- Giving cultural routes education not only in national scale but also internationally.

Cultural routes are great opportunities to diverse tourism. Turkish tourist guides need to be prepared for this alternative tourism activity which is expected to be popular in the near future. Whilst Lycian Way the first route in Turkey had just a few visitor in 2000, today it hosts thousands of people from all around world for trekking, jogging, cycling camps. How national park guides (they can just work inside one specific national park in Turkey. It is different from tourist guides) help to the visitors needing direction finding or flora and fauna information, tourists guides need to serve the visitors on 18 routes in Turkey. Especially few routes have hard parts and finding a direction is almost impossible because of lack of international trail marking due to difficult weather conditions. There are no GPS and connections some points on the routes. Those reasons make the routes sometimes dangerous. Other reason is to be needed to have a tour guide is that ancient cities and historical places are located on many routes. Getting detailed information about cultural routes for tourist guides or tourism guidance students is as important as to know cultural heritage. Whilst looking at the number of visitors to 33 cultural routes in Europe,

it is inevitable that cultural routes will be much more popular than today. Suggestions are given below for cultural routes education.

- Selective Cultural Routes class can be located in curriculum for the last term. (When the curriculum were searched, last term students are about to complete all cultural and natural classes. So they are almost ready to be a tour guide. One education term is 14 weeks. All cultural routes in Turkey can be taught in 14 weeks and also can be glanced other routes in the world.)
- Seminars can be arranged for professional tour guides by tourist guide chambers.
- Cultural routes classes can be taught in master degree level of tourist guidance
- Compulsory seminars can be organized for each term of the department of tourist guidance. One of the topics can be cultural routes.

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