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# Bibliometric Analysis of Postgraduate Thesis Studying Regional and Local Themes in The Field of Gastronomy

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## Abstract

The rapid development of gastronomic tourism in recent years has led to numerous studies in the literature. Various studies discuss the topic of gastronomic tourism from different aspects. The study of such studies with the help of bibliometric analysis makes clear the course of development of the relevant literature and helps to determine the topics dealt with in this field and the target groups included in the research. These studies are important in identifying which topics are not covered in the literature and in suggesting research topics in this regard. The results showed that most of the researched theses were postgraduate dissertations, that the dissertations were mostly written in 2020, that more qualitative methods were used in the research methods, that the dissertations were mostly published in the Department of Tourism Management, and that the terms of gastronomy and culture were used the most among the keywords. Finally, it was found that the research data in the dissertations were mainly related to Gaziantep cuisine. It is expected that the study will reveal the developments in the relevant literature and help academics to identify the gaps related to the topic.

**Keywords:** Tourism, local cuisine, local food, bibliometric analysis.

## Introduction

Graduate and doctoral programs in postgraduate tourism education enable students to gain the ability to access information and evaluate and interpret information obtained through scientific research. Postgraduate education also aims to equip students with the necessary skills to conduct independent research and arrive at new syntheses by examining scientific developments in more detail (Güçlü Nergiz, 2014: 213). In this regard, doctoral studies play an important role in the development of scientific literature. These developments in the scientific literature, in turn, help to provide information about the current state of the relevant literature. In this regard, literature review studies also contribute to this process.

The study of scientific literature dates back the early decades of the last century. The term statistical bibliography was first used by E. Wyndham Hulme at Cambridge University in 1922. However, despite much research, the term bibliometrics was not adopted until 1969 (Pritchard, 1969) and quickly came into use, especially in North America (Wilson, 1999). Nalimov and Mulchenko coined the term scientometrics in 1969, i.e. ‘the use of quantitative methods concerned with the analysis of science, considered as a process of knowledge’, and this term is widely used

in Europe (Wolfram, 2003). Scientometrics, thus, was originally limited to the measurement of scholarly communication, while bibliometrics was designed for more general information processes. Today, however, bibliometrics and scientometrics are used interchangeably (Glanzel, 2003). As interest in bibliometric studies increased over time, specific publications began to appear. The first journal in this field was *Scientometrics*, founded by Tibor Braun in 1978. In the 1980s, however, lack of documentation, difficulties in manual data collection, and fees for obtaining documents hindered progress in the field, and interest in bibliometric studies encountered several limitations. In the 1990s, however, the availability of online data on publications, the replacement of journal information compiled in volumes by online databases, and the establishment of numerous specialized or multidisciplinary databases on thousands of journals, articles, and books led to an increase in the number of bibliometric studies (Glanzel, 2003).

Bibliometrics refers to visual and quantitative analyzes to generalize patterns and dynamics in scientific publications that summarize research trends in various scientific fields (Nederhof, 2006; Wang *et al.*, 2012). Accordingly, bibliometrics refers to the application of mathematical and statistical methods to books and other means of communication and is the scientific study of recorded discourse (Pritchard, 1969: 348). Bibliometric analysis, on the other hand, allows for the quantitative analysis of characteristics such as the topics of particular documents and/or publications, the journals in which they are published, and the number of authors, etc. (Tayfun *et al.*, 2018: 524). According to Pritchard (1969), the purpose of a statistical bibliography is to illuminate the development of a discipline by enumerating and analyzing various aspects of written communication, to illustrate historical movements through the collection and analysis of statistics on books and periodicals, to identify national or universal research use of books and periodicals, and, in many local cases, to identify the general use of periodicals. Therefore, bibliometrics can be applied to any discipline by evaluating the scholarly literature in a particular field (Andres, 2009: 1). In recent years, bibliometric analysis has been widely used, from monitoring research in the social sciences and humanities (Arıca and Corbacı, 2019a; Hicks, 2004; Katz, 1999; Nederhof, 2006).

Bibliometric studies help to obtain information about the publication performance of institutions (Sakar and Cerit, 2013) and the publication policy of a country in the scientific field (Al, 2008). Thus, these studies enable the identification of problems and missing topics (Arıca, 2014), the identification of newer topics, and the determination of additional areas of study by monitoring developments in various branches of science. They can also help identify research clusters and researchers, showing how different schools of thought may have emerged depending on the author and institutional characteristics (Fahimnia *et al.*, 2015: 102). Bibliometric studies are thus studies that show the performance of the field in relation to research in any branch of science (Law and Cheung, 2008).

In recent years, many studies in the field of tourism have been conducted using the method of bibliometric analysis. These studies usually examine publications such as articles, dissertations, and books. However, it was found that there are few studies that focus on the *local* keyword in the field of tourism. In this regard, this study used bibliometric analysis to examine studies of doctoral dissertations in the field of tourism that deal with the local keyword.

## Literature

Postgraduate theses can be used to observe the characteristics of food and beverage science and the stage of development of the field (Arica, 2014). However, there are few studies (Ayaz and Turkmen, 2018; Cuhadar and Morcin, 2020; Kargilioglu, 2021; Sünnetcioglu *et al.*, 2017; Sahin *et al.*, 2018; Tayfun *et al.*, 2018) dealing with doctoral theses in the field of food and beverage science.

Tayfun *et al.* (2018) examined doctoral dissertations on food and beverage topics from 1990-2018. 1421 dissertations were examined in their studies. They found that dissertations on this topic have increased significantly since 2007. These dissertations used mostly quantitative methods to conduct research for tourists and chefs.

Sünnetcioglu *et al.* (2017) analyzed 33 dissertations written in the field of gastronomy between 1987 and 2017. The results show that the theses were mostly postgraduate theses, foreign tourists were included as samples in the studies, and quantitative research methods were most commonly used.

In their article, Ayaz and Turkmen (2018) examined 45 dissertation studies on local food (food culture and local products) from 1999-2017 using the bibliometric analysis method. In the research conducted, they concluded that there was the most number of doctoral dissertations on this topic, the dissertations were written in 2016 at the most and they were mostly written in the context of the Department of Tourism Management.

Kargilioglu (2021) analyzed 8 postgraduate theses and 25 articles on street food published from 2016 until April 2021 using the method of bibliometric analysis. In these studies, the researcher found that the topics related to festivals, destination preference and image, the inventory of the street foods of the cities, consumer preferences and food safety were discussed.

Sahin *et al.* (2018) analyzed 23 dissertations written between 2014-2017 in the Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts using the bibliometric analysis method. According to the results, it was found that the dissertations were studied on the topics of *Tourism and Nutrition* and the advisors most frequently had the title of Assistant Professor.

Cuhadar and Morcin (2020) examined 512 scientific studies conducted between 1990 and 2019 in the field of gastronomic tourism using the method of bibliometric analysis, including 268 papers, 161 articles, 17 projects, 1 artistic activity, 18 books and 47 dissertations. Accordingly, it was found that the scientific studies in this field are mainly in the field of social sciences and the studies consist mainly of essays and articles.

In his study, Ercan (2020) examined the articles on the topic of gastronomic tourism with a bibliometric analysis. In his study, 84 articles on the topic of gastronomic tourism in ULAKBİM between the years 2010-2020 were examined. It was found that the articles in the national literature increased with the year 2015 and more qualitative methods of analysis were used. At the same time, it was found that gastronomic tourism is most discussed in the provinces in the Marmara and Aegean regions.

Tayfun *et al.* (2016) analyzed 367 postgraduate theses on tourism between 1985 and 2016 using the method of bibliometric analysis. The results show that studies in the field of marketing were treated first, while in the following years, the dissertations were written on the discipline of management and organization. It was also found that postgraduate theses were more numerous than doctoral theses, that more dissertations were written in education in the supervision of institutes, and that more dissertation studies were conducted by advisors with the title of Assistant Professor.

## Method

The aim of this research was to reveal the development of literature on bibliometric analysis of postgraduate dissertations on local food in Turkey. The study is based on the results of the searches conducted on the website of the Thesis Center of the Council of Higher Education (<https://tez.yok.gov.tr>) between 2017 and 2021. Starting from September 07, 2021, all postgraduate theses found with the keywords *local food*, *local flavor*, *local cuisine*, *regional food*, *regional flavor* in the detailed scanning section of the Thesis Center were included in the study.

During the research, 68 postgraduate theses, including 60 master's theses and 8 doctoral dissertations, which are freely accessible in CoHE Thesis Center (YOKTEZ), were found and analyzed on the topic and/or research area. Since it was possible to access all dissertations, the full count method was used and all dissertations were included in the research. The theses achieved were examined within the framework of certain parameters. These parameters were evaluated based on various bibliometric parameters such as the type of dissertation, the year of the dissertation, the language in which it was published, the type of research, the university where the dissertation was produced, the department in which the dissertation was produced, the topic, the keywords and the scope of the dissertation. The results of these evaluations are shown in the tables with frequencies and percentages.

## Results

The tables below show the distribution of dissertations on regional food/flavor, local food/flavor/cuisine in the Thesis Center across different criteria.

**Table 1.** Distribution of Postgraduate Dissertations by Types

Type of Dissertation	n	%
PhD	8	11,7
Postgraduate	60	88,3
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** It was prepared by researchers in accordance with the data of YOKTEZ (2021).

As shown in Table 1, of the 68 postgraduate dissertations included in the study, 88.3% were master's theses and 11.7% were doctoral dissertations. It can be concluded that topics with the localness-locality theme were more preferred in master's theses.

**Table 2.** Distribution of Postgraduate Theses by Years

Year of Publication	Type of Dissertation				Total	
	Master's Thesis		Doctoral Thesis		n	%
	n	%	n	%		
2017	10	14,71	1	1,47	11	16,18
2018	14	20,59	3	4,41	17	25
2019	17	25	-	-	17	25
2020	14	20,59	4	5,88	18	26,47
2021	5	7,35	-	-	5	7,35
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>88,24</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11,76</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** It was prepared by researchers in accordance with the data of YOKTEZ (2021).

As shown in Table 2, 14.71% of the 11 dissertations published in 2017 were master's theses and 1.47% were doctoral theses. For the year 2018 and 2019, 17 dissertations were produced. In 2018, 20.59% were master's dissertations and 4.41% were doctoral dissertations, while in 2019, only the master's dissertation (25%) was produced. Among the dissertations listed chronologically, 2020 stands out with a maximum of 18 dissertations, accounting for 26.47% of all dissertations. Of the 18 dissertations, 77.78% were master's theses and 22.22% are doctoral dissertations. A total of 5 dissertations published at least in 2021 belong to master's theses (7.35%). Of the 68 dissertations, 88.24% are master's theses and 11.76% are doctoral dissertations.

**Table 3.** Language Distribution of Postgraduate Theses by Type

Type of Dissertation	Language				Total	
	Turkish		English		n	%
	n	%	n	%		
Master's Thesis	60	88,23	-	-	60	88,23
Doctoral	7	10,30	1	1,47	8	11,77
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>98,53</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1,47</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** It was prepared by researchers in accordance with the data of YOKTEZ (2021).

Table 3 shows the languages in which postgraduate dissertations were published. There are 67 dissertations written in Turkish. 88.23% of these dissertations were master's theses and 10.30% were doctoral theses. 98.53% of the total 68 dissertations were written in Turkish. There was no master's thesis written in English. There was only 1 doctoral dissertation written in English, which accounts for 11.77% of the 68 dissertations.

**Table 4.** Distribution of Postgraduate Theses by Research Methods

Research Method	Type of Dissertation				Total	
	Master's		Doctoral		n	%
	n	%	n	%		
Quantitative	12	17,65	4	5,88	16	23,53
Qualitative	46	67,65	4	5,88	50	73,53
Quantitative and Qualitative	2	2,94	-	-	2	2,94
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>88,24</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11,76</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** It was prepared by researchers in accordance with the data of YOKTEZ (2021).

Table 4 shows the distribution of theses according to research methods. Yıldırım and Simsek (2008) define qualitative research as “research that uses qualitative data collection techniques such as observation, interview, and document analysis and follows a qualitative process to uncover perceptions and events in a natural setting in a realistic and holistic way” (Karatat, 2015: 62).

Savran (2009), on the other hand, defines quantitative research as “research that investigates social phenomena through statistical analysis of data that can be measured numerically and aims to discover the laws of social order by uncovering cause-effect relationships between these phenomena”.

23.53% of the dissertations ranked by research method used the quantitative research method, 73.53% used the qualitative research method, and 2.94% used both methods. Of the 16 dissertations that used quantitative research methods, 17.65% were master's dissertations and 5.88% were doctoral dissertations. Of the 50 theses written using the quantitative research method, 67.65% were master's theses and 5.88% were doctoral theses. There were 2 master's theses produced using both methods and account for 2.94% of the total.

**Table 5.** Distribution of Postgraduate Theses by Universities

University where the Thesis was prepared	Type of Dissertation				Total	
	Master's		Doctoral		n	%
	n	%	n	%		
Afyon Kocatepe University	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
Akdeniz University	3	4,41	1	1,47	4	5,88
Anadolu University	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University	3	4,41	-	-	3	4,41
Atatürk University	1	1,47	1	1,47	2	2,94
Bahçeşehir University	-	-	1	1,47	1	1,47
Balıkesir University	3	4,41	1	1,47	4	5,88
Başkent University	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
Batman University	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University	2	2,94	-	-	2	2,94
Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University	1	1,47	1	1,47	2	2,94
Erciyes University	2	2,94	-	-	2	2,94
Eskişehir Osmangazi University	1	1,47	1	1,47	2	2,94
Gazi University	2	2,94	2	2,94	4	5,88
Gaziantep University	6	8,83	-	-	6	8,83
İstanbul Arel University	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
İstanbul Okan University	3	4,41	-	-	3	4,41
İstanbul Ticaret University	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
İstanbul University	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
İzmir Kâtip Çelebi University	3	4,41	-	-	3	4,41
Karabük University	4	5,88	-	-	4	5,88
Kastamonu University	6	8,83	-	-	6	8,83
Kocaeli University	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
Mersin University	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
Necmettin Erbakan University	4	5,88	-	-	4	5,88
Ondokuz Mayıs University	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
Sakarya University of Applied Sciences	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
Sakarya University	2	2,94	-	-	2	2,94
Selçuk University	2	2,94	-	-	2	2,94
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>88,24</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11,76</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** It was prepared by researchers in accordance with the data of YÖKTEZ (2021).

Table 5 shows the distribution of universities publishing postgraduate theses. Accordingly, Gaziantep University (8.83%) and Kastamonu University (8.83%) have published the most dissertations on local food, local flavor, local cuisine, regional food, regional flavor.

**Table 6.** Distribution of Postgraduate Theses by Departments of Institutes

Department	Type of Dissertation				Total	
	Master's		Doctoral		n	%
	n	%	n	%		
Nutrition and Dietetics	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
Geography	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
Gastronomy	2	2,94	-	-	2	2,94
Gastronomy and Culinary Arts	19	27,95	-	-	19	27,95
Business	1	1,47	1	1,47	2	2,94
Recreation Management	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
Sociology	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
Tourism Management	29	42,65	5	7,35	34	50
Tourism Management Education	-	-	1	1,47	1	1,47
Tourism and Hotel Management	2	2,94	1	1,47	3	4,41
Turkish Language and Literature	2	2,94	-	-	2	2,94
International Trade and Marketing	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>88,24</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11,76</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** It was prepared by researchers in accordance with the data of YOKTEZ (2021).

The above-cited table shows the distribution of the postgraduate dissertations by the departments of the Institute. There are 29 master's theses and 5 doctoral theses that belong to the Department of Tourism Management. Tourism Management is the department that publishes the most in the specified fields of study and accounts for 50% of all studies. This is followed by the Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts with 19 master's theses, which occupies second place with 27.95%. Two master's theses were published, each belonging to the departments of Gastronomy (2.94%) and Turkish Language and Literature (2.94%). In the Department of Tourism and Hotel Management, 3 dissertations were published, 2 of which are master's theses (2.94%) and 1 (1.47%) is a doctoral thesis. In the Department of Business, 1 (1.47%) master's thesis and 1 (1.47%) doctoral thesis was published. The departments of Nutrition and Dietetics, Geography, Recreation Management, Sociology, International Trade and Marketing each have 1 master's thesis, each accounting for 1.47% of total theses.

**Table 7.** Distribution of Postgraduate Theses by Subject of Study

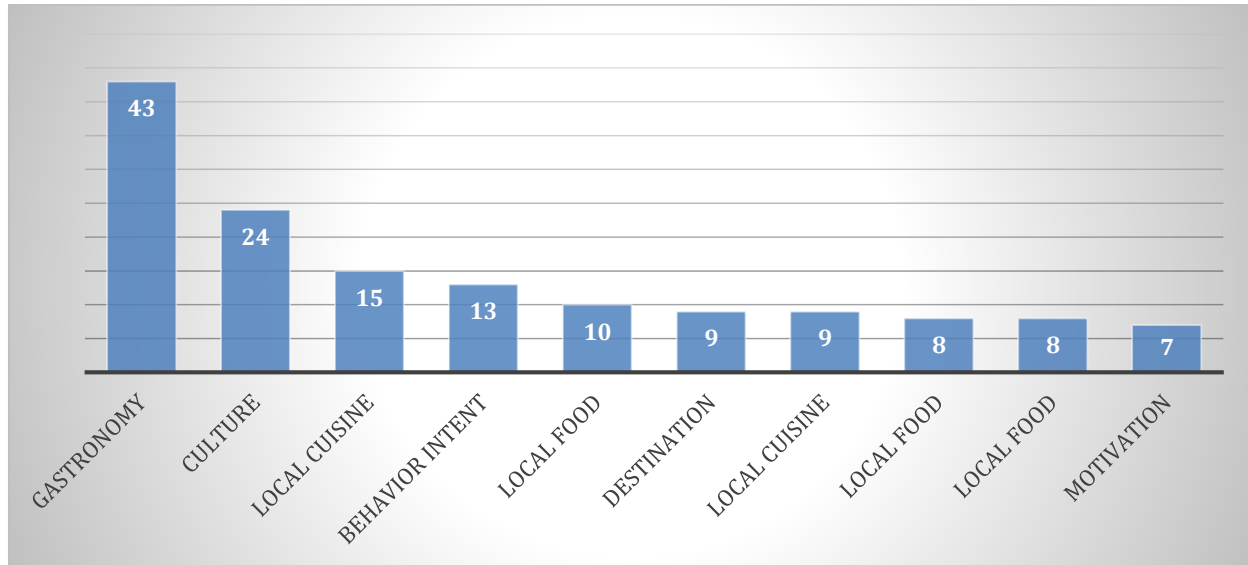
Subject of Study	Type of Dissertation				Total	
	Master's		Doctoral		n	%
	n	%	n	%		
Nutrition	2	2,94	-	-	2	2,94
Geography	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
Old Turkish Literature	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
Gastronomy	21	30,89	1	1,47	22	32,36
Gastronomy Tourism	28	41,18	3	4,41	31	45,59
Marketing	-	-	1	1,47	1	1,47
Sociology	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
Tourism	5	7,35	3	4,41	8	11,76
Turkish Language and Literature	1	1,47	-	-	1	1,47
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>88,24</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11,76</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** It was prepared by researchers in accordance with the data of YOKTEZ (2021).

In the table showing the distribution by the study subjects, gastronomy tourism has been studied the most. There are 28 master's theses and 3 doctoral theses and they account for 45.59% of all



study subjects. 21 master's theses and 1 doctoral thesis were conducted in the field of gastronomy, which accounts for 32.36% of the total number. Studies on tourism consist of 5 master's theses and 3 doctoral theses and they account for 11.76% of the total study subjects. There are 2 (2.94%) master's theses on nutrition. There are 1 master thesis on each of Geography (1.47%), Ancient Turkish Literature (1.47%), Sociology (1.47%), Turkish Language and Literature (1.47%). There is 1 doctoral thesis on marketing (1.47%).



**Figure 1.** Most Used Keywords in Graduate Theses

The most common keywords used in doctoral dissertations were listed in Graph 1. A total of 307 keywords were used in 68 dissertations on the topic of local flavor, local food, regional flavor and local cuisine. Among these keywords were gastronomy (43), culture (24), regional cuisine (15), behavioral intention (13), local flavor (10), destination (9), local cuisine (9), regional flavor (8), regional food (8) and motivation (7). Accordingly, it can be said that the topics in the corresponding theses were mostly related to culture and marketing.

**Table 8.** Application Regions in the Keywords of Graduate Theses

Keyword	Frequency	Keyword	Frequency
Gaziantep	5	Afyonkarahisar, Alaçatı, Alanya, Antalya, Aydın,	1
Kastamonu	4	Western Black Sea Cuisine, Bayburt Cuisine,	
Circassian Cuisine	3	Bodrum, Bulancak Region, Bursa Cuisine, Island	
Giresun	3	Cunda, Çeşme, Diyarbakır, Eastern Black Sea	
Turkish cuisine	3	Cuisine, Düzce, Edirne, Edremit Körfezi, Göçmen	
Kayseri	2	Mutfak, Gökçeada, Hatay, İzmir Cuisine, Karaman,	
Batman Cuisine	2	Kocaeli, Konya Cuisine, Marakeş, Mengen, Mersin,	
Trabzon	2	Mevlevi Cuisine, Mudurnu, Nazilli Cuisine, Ordu	
Sakarya	2	Province, Central Taurus, Seferihisar, Üsküp, Van,	
	2	Yalvaç	

As seen in Table 8, when the cuisines included in the keywords of the postgraduate theses were examined, it was seen that Gaziantep cuisine (5), Kastamonu (4), Circassian (3), Giresun (3), Turkish cuisine (3) were the most. In addition, when other keywords are examined, it is understood that the Black Sea region and Aegean regions were considered more in Turkish cuisine

## Conclusion

The study found 68 doctoral dissertations published between 2017-2021 by searching the words local food, local flavor, local cuisine, regional food, regional flavor in the CoHE Thesis Centre database. The type of dissertations, the year of publish, the language of publish, the research methods, the university which publishes the dissertation, the department in which the dissertation was published, the field of study of the dissertation, and the keywords used in the dissertations were examined using some parameters.

The study revealed that most of the studies on this topic were master's theses and most of the dissertations were written in 2020. Similarly, the articles in which Ayaz and Turkmen (2018), Tayfun *et al.* (2016), Tayfun *et al.* (2018) examined postgraduate studies on food and beverages, and Büyüksalvarcı and Keles (2019) examined tourism, it was found that most of the master's theses were on this topic. In their study examining postgraduate theses on tourism, Boyraz *et al.* (2020) found that most of the theses were written in 2019.

It was found that almost all of the doctoral theses were published in Turkish. It was found that most of the research methods used in the studied dissertations were qualitative research methods. The same result was also found in the studies of Ayaz and Turkmen (2018) and Ercan (2020). In contrast, Tayfun *et al.* (2018) concluded that more quantitative research methods were used in dissertations on food and beverage.

Regarding the universities where dissertations were published, it was found that most dissertations were written in Gaziantep University and Kastamonu University, and that the department in which the most thesis was published is Tourism Management. This result was in line with the studies of Sahin *et al.* (2018). In addition, Boyraz *et al.* (2020) concluded that most dissertations on the subject of gastronomy were written at Akdeniz University and Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Universities. The result regarding the department was similar to the studies of Ayaz and Turkmen (2018), Boyraz *et al.* (2020) and Tayfun *et al.* (2018).

As for the study subjects, most of the studies were conducted on gastronomic tourism and the terms gastronomy, culture, local cuisine and behavioral intentions were more commonly used based on keywords. This result was in line with the result obtained by Boyraz *et al.* (2020). Finally, it was found that Gaziantep, Kastamonu, and Circassian cuisines were treated with regional and local terms in the postgraduate theses written in the studies. Accordingly, it can be said that the cuisines of the Black Sea and Aegean regions were most frequently studied in dissertations. In the study of Ercan (2020), it was found that the Marmara and Aegean regions were the most studied in the articles on gastronomy.

It is believed that the study is important to show the current situation of postgraduate studies on local cuisine, which has come to the fore in the field of gastronomy in recent years and is a topic to which researchers attach importance. Accordingly, the fact that only the keywords local food, local flavor, local cuisine, regional food, regional flavor were used in the study is a limitation of the study. Examination of different keywords in other planned studies in the literature will reveal the developments in the field of gastronomy in a broader context. Finally, it is suggested that various areas waiting to be explored in the postgraduate studies written by determining the

deficiencies related to the topic covered in this study in the relevant departments should be addressed.

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