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Research Article

DETERMINING ACTORS FOR POTENTIAL KUŞADASI MARINE TOURISM CLUSTER[†]

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ABSTRACT

Industrial Clusters are regional concentrations of businesses and organizations that compete with each other, complement and depend on each other. Clustering phenomenon is developing rapidly both in the world and in Turkey. The reason for this is that clustering provides significant benefits to sectoral, regional and national competitiveness. In this study, it is aimed to determine the cluster actors of a potential Kuşadası Marine Tourism Cluster. Kuşadası Marine Tourism actors are determined by the face-to-face interview method, which is a qualitative research method, and studies in the literature. Kuşadası region have a cruise terminal, a marina, surface and underwater sports center, daily excursion tour operators, yacht manufacturing, maintenance and repair enterprises, food, beverage and entertainment businesses, yacht agencies, cruise travel agencies and tour operators, transportation businesses and small industrial sites, etc. The gathering of service providers in the value chain is not sufficient for clustering. Public institutions, chambers and associations, research institutions should also be included in the cluster ecosystem according to Porter's Clustering Theory. Potential Kuşadası Marine Tourism Cluster actors are examined in four different groups. These are service providers (firms), government/policymakers, hybrid organizations and academia. To sum up, it is of great importance to carry out the actor analysis carefully in a region where potential clustering may occur. Once the actors are identified, it is possible for the cluster to be implemented and to support regional development by providing competitive advantage and cooperation.

Keywords: Cluster, Cluster Actor, Kuşadası Region, Marine Tourism

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1. INTRODUCTION

The clustering approach, which increases sectoral, local and regional competitiveness and is seen as a regional and national development model, has become increasingly important recently. This approach, which finds an extremely wide area especially in developed countries, has started to be applied in some developing countries (Bulu and Eraslan, 2004).

Clustering theory was put forward in Porter's study "The Competitive Advantage of Nations" (1990) as a result of national competitiveness studies in various industrialized countries. Clustering is an approach that includes contemporary concepts and enables the creation of competitive structures at the regional level for both small and large companies. At this point, clusters bring together local governments, public authorities, private institutions, research institutions, non-governmental organizations and actors from other segments of society. Thus, planning and implementations are carried out with the participation of local actors, leaving the centrality. This process is aimed at selecting sectors and/or sectors with high competitiveness, completing the missing actors, ensuring communication between them, and ultimately increasing the international competitiveness of the sector (Erkut, 2011: 17).

While there are many examples of maritime and marine clusters in the world, no other example could be found in Turkey except for the Muğla Marine Tourism Cluster initiative and Fethiye region. Marine tourism clustering, which is the common area of maritime and tourism in the academy, have very limited academic studies. Existing studies have focused only on a single cluster actor. In order to fill this gap in the literature, it is aimed to determine the potential Kuşadası cluster actors holistically and to shed light on future studies. In this context, with face-to-face interviews with industry experts, an answer to the research question "Who are the actors for a potential marine tourism cluster that may occur in the Kuşadası region?" has been sought.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF CLUSTER AND CLUSTERING

Cluster is defined as "*a whole, set, group, a group composed of things that are similar to each other or of the same kind*" (Turkish Language Association, 2021) according to the Dictionary of Turkish Language Association. Almost all theoretical and applied studies dealing with new industrial production and geographies deal with the concept of industrial cluster and include many different definitions on the subject Table 1.

It is accepted that the industrial cluster started with Marshall, whose entry into literature on economics and business management. Marshall studied industrial concentrations (Şener Uzman, 2017). According to Alsaç (2010), the studies after Marshall focused mainly on the selection of location of enterprises. Until the 1970s, the positive externalities that would emerge with the network of businesses to establish were not taken into consideration. While many Fordist mass-producing industrial enterprises were adversely affected in the economic crisis that emerged in the 1970s, small and medium-sized enterprises in North / Central Italy survived the crisis successfully (Eraydın et al., 2005).

Table 1: Definitions of Clustering

Author, year	Definitions
Marshall, 1920	Three distinct motorists of agglomeration: labor market pooling, input-output linkages and knowledge spillover. Each of these mechanisms is associated with other or productivity advantages to enterprises.
Rosenfeld, 1997	A cluster is a formation that is formed by the concentration of similar, related and complementary business groups in a geographical area, is open to communal business activities, communication and dialogue, sharing common opportunities and threats by sharing specialized infrastructure, labor and services.
Porter, 1998	Clusters are the geographic position of affiliated enterprises, service manufacturers, specialized suppliers, enterprises in related industries and associated organizations (universities, think tanks, standards-setting agencies, trade associations and vocational training providers) that compete with each other in a particular field but also cooperate.
Simmie & Sennett 1999	The innovative clusters encompass a large number of interrelated industrial and service firms.
Enright & Roberts, 2001	Clustering is a combination of firms and organizations producing interrelated goods and services.
Bapista, 2001	Clustering can be defined as the gathering of sectoral concentrated enterprises in the same geographical area.
Bulu et al., 2004	Clustering is a regional concentration of businesses and organizations that compete, complement, and are interconnected.
Flowers & Easterling, 2006	Clustering is a combination of each other and affiliated companies and institutions that create a greater value than the sum of individual values.
Malmberg & Power, 2006	Clustering is the geographic proximity created by the cooperation of interrelated institutions and affiliated companies in a specific area.
Karataş, 2006	Clustering does not mean that the parties are together only in terms of geographical area. It also refers to a field of activity that includes competitiveness, collaborative activities, learning, innovation generation, information exchange and interaction processes.
OECD, 2009	Clusters are the geographic concentrations of institutions and organizations working in related activities.
Öcal and Uçar, 2011	Clusters constitute a specific area with easy information flows, face-to-face relationships, R&D activities, advanced services, skilled workforce, collaboration, and the ability to benefit from local social capital.
Saric, 2012	Clusters are a geographical concentration of linked firms and institutions that are interrelated in terms of a common resource base and / or product market.
Nallari and Griffith, 2013	An industrial cluster represents an agglomeration of diverse actors—firms, service providers, suppliers, and related companies—in a specific industry

The "*cluster model*" was reintroduced in the USA in the 1990s, within the scope of evaluation of international competition strategies (Karataş, 2006). Porter is the scientist who first conceptualized and

introduced the cluster. Porter (1990) searched for an answer to the question of "why a country has achieved international success in a certain industry" in *"The Competitive Advantage of Nations"* book. Porter identified the industries in which countries have a competitive advantage as part of the study. When the determined industries are examined in detail, determinants of competitiveness that are thought to bring success are defined. These determinants are defined as Diamond Model ("factor conditions; demand conditions; related and supporting industries; firm, strategy, structure and rivalry; government and chance"). In his study, Porter also found that the location of competitive industries in countries is not geographically dispersed. Clusters play a crucial role in competition and have significant consequences for businesses, governments, universities, and other institutions in an economy (Porter 1998). The concept has rapidly become popular in the world since 1998 and has provided the necessary infrastructure for companies to gain competitive advantage through external resources (Bulu, 2005).

Clustering is the geographical concentration of mutually dependent actors (businesses and supporting institutions and organizations) operating in the same sector, operating in the same value chain, cooperating, and competing with each other, having commercial relations between them. These actors are producers, suppliers, customers, information producing institutions, research centers, non-governmental organizations, consultancy companies, public institutions and/or organizations, local government institutions and / or organizations, media and financial institutions (Yüzak, 2008; Alüftekin et al., 2009; Bakan et al., 2009; Eraslan et al., 2010).

Since clustering does not have a common description, it is obvious that it has to have at least some features related to clusters (Göçen, 2013). Andersson (1985) determines the elements of the cluster as follows: (1) tougher factors such as geographical concentration, social capital and learning process, such as soft or external economic scale, (2) all players unite around specialization or a common core activity, (3) many players; clusters are made up of not only businesses but also public institutions, academic environment, financial sector players, (4) Cluster lifeline cycle (emergence, growth, change or disappearance of the cluster) and (5) Innovation, technological, commercial and / or organizational change.

According to Simmie (2004), the characteristics of the cluster are; agglomeration and interconnection. Interconnection is considered to be competitive and collaborative relationships that have arisen between local actors. Agglomeration reflects the geographical concentrations of industry and related activities.

In a regional economy, criteria of a success cluster are geographical scope, depth, breadth, activity base, innovative capacity, growth potential, governance structure, competitive position, cluster type and ownership structure (Enright, 2000). According to IGEME (2005: 14), factors of success clusters are strong initiative, regional and economic development strategies, partnerships, technology, competition, budgeting for recognition, mutual customer, supplier and service providers, infrastructure systems, qualified workforce and R&D centers.

The advantage of clustering is increasing of economic growth, increasing of productivity, easy access of public body and their services, measurement of performance and incentives (Porter, 1990; 2000, Baptista, 2001).

3. CLUSTER ACTORS

In Porter's definition of clustering, the links and complementarity relations between firms and other institutions and organizations are

emphasized. Attention is drawn to the importance of these connections and mutual relations in achieving the competitiveness of clusters (Kuah, 2002: 212). Based on the definitions of clusters, it is understood that the actors at the center of clusters are firms. It is known that companies are at the center of industrial zones and agglomerations. In this context, there are basic factors such as cooperation, trust environment and network structure that distinguish clusters from these concepts. This shows that the cluster includes different actors as well as companies (Temel, 2017). Clusters are formed with the participation of various actors such as education, research, public service organizations related to enterprises in the same value chain. Therefore, it would be useful to summarize the clustering actors and their relationship with cluster formation to understand the clustering phenomenon (Sevsay, 2016).

There are various methods such as stakeholder analysis in the literature to determine the actors in cluster and the relations between these actors. Wolfe and Gertler (2004: 15-16) classified the stakeholders of regional clusters as follows: "lead, smaller and mid-sized firms; industry associations, chambers of commerce, local political leaders and "civic entrepreneurship"; government agencies, universities, colleges and other institutions for research and training and financial sector". On the other hand, the most general clustering actors' classification in the literature; *firms, government/policymakers, academia, hybrid or "glue" organizations and financial actors* (Andersson et al., 2004: 25).

Firms: Firms are the actors that constitute the most important part of the cluster (Karahana, 2019). Firms play a central role in clustering activities and policies based on cluster definitions. (Sölvell et al., 2003:18). The main strength of the cluster consists of companies operating in limited geography and in a certain sector. Other actors of the cluster are auxiliary actors who perform their functions to provide and support synergy between companies (Karahana, 2019). According to Andersson et al. (2004), businesses should look after their interests. Their participation in the cluster should not be for the benefit of the public, but to increase their sales and profitability. Firms may avoid cooperation for fear of revealing their assets to competitors through joint ventures.

Academia: The existence of companies alone is not sufficient for cluster formation. Vocational schools, universities, technology centers, laboratories, which can be expressed as academic institutions or research societies; are the most important actors in the cluster after firms (Sölvell et al., 2003:18). Academic institutions provide information to companies and make policy recommendations and form a basis for interaction between companies (Aziz and Norhashim, 2008: 355). While universities, schools and institutes contribute to scientific and technological developments, media organizations also promote clusters to the world and support the creation of brands (Alsaç, 2010: 33; Kunt, 2010: 12). These actors have to produce the information needed by the cluster, make policy recommendations, and train the workforce that will work in the sector (Karahana, 2019). However, there are some problems regarding the participation of academic institutions in clustering activities. The most frequently mentioned problems are the lack of dialogue between the private sector and academic institutions, the different purpose functions of both groups, and the inadequacy of entrepreneurial experience (Andersson et al., 2004).

Government/Policy Makers: Public institutions in clusters are grouped under three categories as international, national and regional. At the international level, some actors provide funds to regional actors, contribute to the modernization of infrastructures and R&D cooperation between countries. At the national level, country authorities and local authorities can be counted (Andersson et al.,

2004: 94-95). The role of the public in the cluster is regulating and encouraging. Structural reforms necessary for the improvement of the business environment are made by the public. Supporting functions such as infrastructure, research laboratories, educational institutions, which the private sector cannot afford, are provided by the public, especially in the early stages of the cluster. In addition, by giving some incentives and making tax regulations, the public supports the sectors that it foresees to be clustered, especially in the initial stages (Karahana, 2019).

Financial Actors: Financial institutions include actors with their own goals, boundaries and portfolio preferences, such as banks, public pension funds, insurance companies, mutual funds and capital owners. To promote the improvement of clusters, financial institutions make applications such as loans and venture capital to existing or newly established companies (Andersson et al., 2004:99). Financial institutions, whether private or public institutions, should approach cluster actors with long-term service and solution proposals that will both improve the cluster and expand its existence in the long run, rather than short-term profit logic in providing the loans needed by the clusters (Şen, 2016).

Hybrid or “glue” organizations: Cooperation organizations are chambers of commerce, industry associations, professional associations, trade associations, technology transfer associations, quality centers, think tanks, university alumni associations, etc. organizations (Sölvell, 2008). These institutions play an active role in the creation and preservation of cluster identity (Andersson et al., 2004: 101). Especially in the first stages of clustering, they play a significant role in creating cluster identity, providing an environment of trust, setting goals and bringing companies together (Karahana, 2019). Companies can reach cheap training and consultancy services through these professional chambers, unions and non-governmental organizations, and these organizations can serve in a wider range in representing clusters. The services provided by these organizations have a crucial place in the formation and maintenance of successful clusters (Şen, 2016).

4. METHODOLOGY

According to Cluster Management Guide, 2007; DTM, 2009: Cansız, 2011; Erkut, 2011, the steps to be taken to identify the potential cluster are pre-Analysis for background information, **preparation of framework and internal organization**, financing and launching of cluster initiatives.

This study, it is aimed to determine the cluster actors of a potential Kuşadası marine tourism cluster. Kuşadası Marine Tourism Actors are determined by the face-to-face interview method, which is a qualitative research method, and the studies in literature.

Marine tourism clustering studies are very limited. Existing studies have examined clustering only for a particular actor. It is thought that the study, which will provide an overview of the marine tourism cluster actors, will make an original contribution to the deficiency in the literature. In order to fill this gap in the literature, it is aimed to determine the potential Kuşadası cluster actors holistically and to shed light on future studies. In this context, an answer to the research question “*Who are the actors for a potential marine tourism cluster that may occur in the Kuşadası region?*” has been sought. For the research design, primarily, the literature is searched for the perception of the cluster phenomenon. Considering the importance of defining cluster actors in cluster formation and policy, the marine tourism actors in Kuşadası region are determined by experts on a regional basis

For the use of roadmap to be implemented, an effective management unit must be established. This unit will provide coordination for the implementation of cluster activities and will also carry out monitoring and evaluation activities. For the healthy improvement of the cluster, it is essential to establish strong cluster management and coordination unit that communicates with all stakeholders and has its resources (DTM, 2009). Thanks to the created network, public institutions, non-governmental organizations and other supporting organizations that can obtain more reliable information about the economic problems and their causes will be able to continue their services more effectively (Kayasü and Yaşar, 2004). For this reason, it is of great importance to identify the actors in the Kuşadası Marine Tourism sector.

4.1. Sampling

To identify potential Kuşadası Marine Tourism cluster actors, face-to-face interviews are held with sector officials by making use of the information in the literature (see Table 2).

Table 2: Sample of the Study

Institutions and Organizations	Title of the Interviewer	The data and hours of the interview
Izmir Chamber of Shipping	Kuşadası Officer	18/10/2021 – 11:30-12:45
Kuşadası Chamber of Commerce	General Secretary	20/10/2021 – 10:30-11:15
Aydın Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism	Tourism Researcher	20/10/2021 – 14:00-15:00
Setur Kuşadası Marina	Marina Manager	03/11/2021 – 10:00 – 10:45
Kuşadası Surface Water Sports and Lifesaving Association	Vice-Chairman	03/11/2021 – 14:30-15:30
Adrenalin Water Sports – B.B.F Tourism	Entrepreneur	03/11/2021 – 16:00-16:30

Six experts are interviewed to identify the Kuşadası Cluster actors. One of the experts is an official from the ministry of culture and tourism, representing public institutions. On the other hand, meetings are held with three organizations representing non-governmental organizations. These are IMEAK Chamber of Shipping (DTO) and Kuşadası Chamber of Commerce (KUTO) and Kuşadası Surface Water Sports and Lifesaving Association officials. On the other hand, interviews are held with two service providers representing the sector; Setur marina and Adrenalin Water Sports – B.F.F Tourism. By explaining the general cluster actor list available in the literature to the experts in the sample, it is requested to determine the marine tourism stakeholders in Kuşadası.

5. FINDINGS

The study predicts that the clustering approach can be used to achieve a competitive advantage in the marine tourism sector. It is of great importance to identify cluster actors to reveal the clustering potential in the Kuşadası region and its contribution to the regional economy. In the Kuşadası region, there is an aggregation which operates in the marine tourism sector.

Kuşadası region has a cruise terminal, a marina, surface and under water sports center, daily excursion tour operators, yacht

manufacturing, maintenance and repair enterprises, food, beverage and entertainment businesses, yacht agencies, cruise travel agencies and tour operators, transportation businesses and small industrial sites. This region possesses all components of marine tourism. It is not enough for the companies in the value chain in the sector to come together for clustering. Public institutions, chambers and associations that provide public services that affect the sector and regulate them should be included in the cluster ecosystem. In addition, the involvement of research institutions to increase the innovation power and efficiency of the companies are important actors that make the cluster.

As a result of the interviews, potential Kuşadası marine tourism cluster actors are examined in four different groups. These are service providers (firms), government/policymakers, hybrid organizations and academia (see Table 3). Previously, no academic study has been found in which cluster actors are described in detail for any sector or industry and approached holistically.

5.1. Service Providers (Firms)

According to experts, service providers are divided into two main categories. These are main service providers and secondary service providers. Main service providers in Kuşadası marine tourism are Setur Kuşadası Marina, EgePort Kuşadası, Güvercinada and Güzelçamlı Daily Excursion Tour Operators and Surface and Under Water Sports Centers and Boats.

Kuşadası region possesses an institutional cruise terminal frequented by most cruise ships and passengers, an institutional marina with a high yacht mooring capacity, 32 surface water sports center, seven centers for underwater sports, and approximately 35 daily excursion tour operators.

Secondary service providers are yacht manufacturing enterprises, yacht maintenance and repair enterprises, yacht agencies, cruise travel and tour agencies, transportation enterprises, food, beverage, entertainment business, businesses in the mall, ship chandler, small business sites and other service providers.

In the Kuşadası region, yacht maintenance and repair operations are carried out at the marina dockyard and the industrial site in the region. There is one yacht manufacturing company in the region. It is also worked with other national and international companies for yacht manufacturing. There are approximately 20 yacht agencies and approximately five cruise travel agencies in the region. This region has EgePort – Scala Nuova Mall, Setur Kuşadası Marina Mall and Kuşadası Historical Bazaar.

5.2. Government / Policymakers

According to experts, this category is divided into public institutions and local government. The Marine Tourism sector must be connected with several ministries. These are Ministries of Transportation and Infrastructure; Commerce; Culture and Tourism; Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change; Interior; Treasury and Finance; Labor and Social Security.

In the Kuşadası region, the relevant units of the three ministries serve in their offices near the cruise terminal. These are Kuşadası Port Authority under the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Kuşadası Custom Directorate under the Ministry of Commerce and Kuşadası Tourism Information under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The Marine Tourism sector is also affiliated with Aydın National Real Estate Directorate under the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change, Coast Guard Command under the

Ministry of Interior, Privatization Administration under the Ministry of Treasury and Finance.

Table 3: Findings of the Study

Service Providers (Firms)
Main Service Providers
Setur Kuşadası Marina
EgePort Kuşadası
Güvercinada Daily Excursion Tour Operators
Güzelçamlı Daily Excursion Tour Operators
Surface and Under Water Sports Centers and Boats
Secondary Service Providers
Yacht Manufacturing Enterprises
Yacht Agencies
Yacht Maintenance and Repair Enterprises
Cruise Travel and Tour Agencies
Ship Chandler
Transportation Enterprises (taxi, bus, car rental)
Food, Beverage, Entertainment Businesses
Businesses in the EgePort-Scala Nuova
Businesses in the Setur Kuşadası Marina
Small Industries Sites
Other Service Providers (Insurance, Finance, Security, Health, Telecom etc.)
Government / Policy-Makers
Public Institutions
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure – Kuşadası Port Authority
Ministry of Commerce – Kuşadası Custom Directorate
Ministry of Culture and Tourism – Kuşadası Tourism Information
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change – Aydın National Real Estate Directorate
Ministry of Interior – Coast Guard Command
Ministry of Treasury and Finance – Privatization Administration
Ministry of Labor And Social Security
Local Government
Aydın Metropolitan Municipality – Maritime Department
Kuşadası District Governorate
Hybrid or “Glue” Organizations
IMEAK Chamber of Shipping – İzmir Branch and Kuşadası Responsible – Marine Tourism Working Group
Kuşadası Chamber of Commerce (KUTO)
Kuşadası Chamber of Tradesmen and Craftsmen (KESO)
Kuşadası Chamber of Drivers Craftsmen
Association of Turkish Travel Agencies (TÜRSAB)
Aydın Kuşadası Güzelçamlı Sea Recreational Boats Motor Carriers Cooperative
Aydın Kuşadası Sea Recreational Boats Motor Carriers Cooperative
Turkish Underwater Sports Federation (TSSF)
Kuşadası Surface Water Sports and Lifesaving Association
Academia
Adnan Menderes University – Tourism Faculty, Didim Vocational High School
Dokuz Eylül University – Maritime Faculty – Tourism Faculty
Ege University – Çeşme Tourism Faculty - Urla Vocational High School
High School (Adviye - Ertuğrul Acun Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School, Maritime Department)
GEKA – Development Agency
International Sports High School

Local authorities in Kuşadası region are Maritime Department under Aydın Metropolitan Municipality and Kuşadası District Governorate.

The government / policymakers act more as a policymaker in terms of clusters. However, to benefit the regional development of the sector, it should act in cooperation with cluster actors. Governments may have

broader visions and objectives, overview and coordination capacity than the private sector. The participation of the public sector in the cluster gives rise to a broader macro agenda. In this respect, it is necessary to balance the macro agenda with more specific micro-level analysis and prioritization.

5.3. Hybrid or “Glue” Organizations

According to the experts, these organizations related to Kuşadası Marine Tourism are divided into trade associations, a federation, special associations and cooperatives.

IMEAK Chamber of Shipping, Kuşadası Chamber of Commerce, Kuşadası Chamber of Tradesmen and Craftsmen and Kuşadası Chamber of Drivers Craftsmen are trade associations related to Kuşadası Marine Tourism Sector. IMEAK Chamber of Shipping, as an active chamber in the sector, deals with the problems and suggestions of the service providers in the region, thanks to İzmir Branch and the Kuşadası responsible. It also has Marine Tourism Working Group. Water sports centers have an association which is named Kuşadası Surface Water Sports and Lifeguard Association. Also, these centers communicate with the Turkish Underwater Sports Federation in terms of documentation and certification. These documents and certifications are printer personnel list, lifeguard, dive center authorization certificate, personnel licenses, etc.

Daily Excursion Tours have two different cooperatives which are named Aydın Kuşadası Güzelçamlı Sea Recreational Boats Motor Carriers Cooperative and Aydın Kuşadası Sea Recreational Boats Motor Carriers Cooperative.

5.4. Academia

In Kuşadası Region, institutions producing information are universities, high schools and a development agency. Universities are Adnan Menderes University (Tourism Faculty and Didim Vocational High School), Dokuz Eylül University (Maritime Faculty and Tourism Faculty) and Ege University (Çeşme Tourism Faculty and Urla Vocational High School). High Schools are Adviye - Ertuğrul Acun Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School, Maritime Department and International Sports High School. Development Agency in the region is South Aegean Development Agency (GEKA).

6. DISCUSSION

In the study conducted by the Muğla Governance, marine tourism actors are determined as service sector actors, non-governmental organizations, local and central administrations, information producing institutions, certification institutions and regional health tourism cluster (Erarslan et al., 2010).

In the study of Artun (2017), the marine tourism cluster was evaluated at the local level specific to Fethiye. In this study, primary data obtained from local actors in Fethiye and secondary data obtained from literature review are used to analyze the potential of the marine tourism cluster. The actors concern with the strategic governance for marine tourism are Governorships, Municipalities, NGOs, development agencies, accommodation businesses, food & beverage businesses, marina businesses, yacht maintenance businesses, boat trip businesses.

The basic question the study of Arseven and Yuzsever (2017) is “why Turkey cannot capture the competitive advantage in marine tourism”. The sample of the research is marine tourism sector in the Muğla Region. Service Sector (Supply Sector) Players, Food -

Beverage Businesses, Travel Agencies and Tour Operators, Entertainment Businesses, Transportation and Logistical Businesses, Small Industry Sites, Financial Agencies, Civil Society Organizations, Public and local Administration, Certification Institutions, Information Producing Institutions and media.

The main purpose of the study of Doğan (2019) is to determine the level of strategic governance practices in the marina enterprises located in the Muğla marine tourism cluster and to propose recommendations to increase the level of strategic governance. In this way, it is thought that the impact of the sector on local development can be increased. Doğan has examined marine tourism actors under three headings. These are public institutions, private sector representatives and non-governmental organizations.

In the study carried out by the Turkish Undersecretariat of Foreign Trade, within the scope of the Development of National Clustering Policy project, yacht manufacturing actors are determined in detail. This determination has been made only in terms of actors related to yacht manufacturing. It does not cover all marine tourism actors (DTM, 2009).

Unlike the studies in the literature, the potential marine tourism actors for the Kuşadası region, which is a region other than Muğla, Fethiye and Bodrum regions, have been analyzed in detail and holistically. Five main service providers and around 40 actors are identified. Five main service providers and around 40 actors are identified. 11 different service providers are classified as secondary service providers. Nine central and local governments and nine non-governmental organizations that are or should cooperate with the sector have been identified. Three universities and affiliated faculties, two high school institutions providing marine tourism education and a development agency are found. In the study, all marine tourism actors are given by regional privatization.

7. CONCLUSION

Industrial clustering has become a more prominent trend in Turkey in recent years. Clustering, which is also encouraged by ministries and institutions, benefits sector stakeholders. Businesses that operate in clusters are more innovative and productive than those that operate alone. Clustering also has a significant impact on the enterprise's performance. This is because clustering enables the formation of networks and partnerships based on collaborative working relationships with a diverse range of local suppliers, competitors, public institutions, universities, research centers, and non-governmental organizations operating within specified geographic boundaries.

This study aims to determine the cluster actors of the Kuşadası Marine Tourism sector which have a potential cluster by the help of having all components of marine tourism. For this purpose, face-to-face interviews are held with sector officials by making use of the information in the literature.

The actors in Kuşadası Marine Tourism can be classified into four categories. There are four types of organizations in this category: service providers, government / policymakers, hybrid organizations, and academia.

Service providers are classified into two broad categories: primary and secondary service providers. Principal service providers can have a better understanding of sector and assess business potential. They can adhere to the potential cluster's policies to receive targeted assistance and protection from foreign competition. If the potential cluster's long-term objectives conflict with their own, they prioritize their own. Service providers are at the center of any cluster actions or policies that

may be considered. Both primary and secondary service providers are critical for cluster formation and regional development.

Government/ policymakers are divided into public institutions and local government. The government / policymakers act more as a policymaker in terms of clusters. However, to benefit the regional development of sector, it should act in cooperation with cluster actors.

Hybrid organizations related to Kuşadası Marine Tourism are divided into trade associations, federation, special associations and cooperatives. This group of actors helps to connect and integrate the roles and functions of other actors. Today, trade associations explore opportunities to promote cluster development among their members and often adopt a local and cluster-focused perspective.

In Kuşadası Region, institutions producing information are universities, high schools and a development agency. Academia is characterized by independence and specialized communication skills, often combined with in-depth knowledge and analytical competencies. These competencies position academia to assume supporting roles throughout the clustering process: anchoring the strategic direction and actions of cluster initiative with evidence and analysis and facilitating trust and building social capital. Academia can play a role in the ongoing evaluation of goals and actions and provide a skilled workforce in the Kuşadası Marine Tourism Sector.

To summarize, it is critical to do an in-depth actor analysis in a region with a high likelihood of clustering. After identifying the actors, it is possible to establish the cluster and contribute to regional development through competitive advantage and cooperation. It is critical to understand the roles of actors to build effective policies and strategies and to ensure the cluster's success. Cluster initiative, which requires a framework and internal organization preparation, is the first stage of cluster life cycle. The stages of developing framework and internal organization are as follows: regional strategic positioning, the definition of objectives, duties, and activities, identification of accountable individuals, formation of a project team, formation of a cluster advisory board, and provision of information and communication. To ensure the success of each stage, it is vital to identify cluster actors, comprehend their collaboration, and clearly define the capabilities of institutions and organizations, as well as their roles in the sector. The identification of cluster actors is crucial for the establishment of potential clusters.

Theoretical Implications of the Study

The academic contribution of this study is to fill the gap in the literature by adding a holistic perspective to marine tourism cluster actors. Cluster actors such as main and secondary service providers, public institutions and organizations, local governments, non-governmental organizations, information producing institutions have been determined in detail and a broader perspective on clustering has been tried to be provided.

By determining the actors that form the backbone of clustering studies, a contribution to the literature has been made and it is aimed to develop a perspective that can guide future studies. It is predicted that it will contribute to the marine tourism literature, which is seen as a research gap, and will guide future studies.

Practical Implications of the Study

Thanks to the study, the stakeholders of marine tourism sector will be able to foresee their collaborators and competitors in the sector. They will be able to analyze who are the stakeholders that they can cooperate with in the sector (main and secondary service providers,

public institutions and organizations, local governments, non-governmental organizations and information producing institutions etc.). When they adopt a clustering approach to contribute to regional development, they will be able to make a conscious planning by seeing who the sector stakeholders are.

Limitations and Recommendations of the Study

Due to this study's limited duration and the seasonal nature of marine tourism, only a relatively small number of experts working with marine tourism stakeholders were contacted. This study focuses exclusively on the Kuşadası Marine Tourism sector.

The following studies will build strategies and policies for the region by conducting an in-depth cluster study of maritime tourism in the Kuşadası region. Comprehensive studies, including the overall marine tourism sector in Turkey, can be conducted.

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