

## Suggestion for Transition from Tourism Animation Associate Degree Program to Recreation Undergraduate Program\*

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to critically and descriptively analyze the problems of upgrading Associate of Tourism Animation degree to a Bachelor's degree. Of the total number of students, 42.9% were female and 57.1% were male. The mean age of the female students was  $20.67 \pm 2.94$  years and mean age of male students was  $20.88 \pm 1.36$  years. 13 item data collection instrument was designed by the researcher. Fifty percent said after graduation they will work in the profession (animation) in which they are studying; 21.4% said they were undecided about working in the profession. Also, 57.1% of the students reported Theatre, %21.4% Recreation, and 21.4% Tourism and Hotel Management as the potential upgrading bachelor's degree program for Tourism Animation associate's degree. Fifty percent of the students plan to complete an associate's degree and upgrade their degree to a bachelor's degree. Also, 50% of participants think bachelor's degree will contribute them in the workplace and 50% think that it will also contribute their academic career in the future. Results of the analysis showed that, 64.3% of the participants think that course contents of the Tourism Animation program and Recreation program is similar and 50% think that getting a bachelor's degree in Recreation is more advantageous than getting a associate's degree in Tourism Animation. It is suggested that bachelor's degree in Recreation should be provided as an upgrading program for the graduates of associate's degree in Tourism and Animation. This will help students to gain motivation, to improve their knowledge and skills for their future academic career, and to transition these knowledge and skill to future generations.

**Keywords:** Tourism animation, recreation, animation, associate's degree, bachelor's degree exam

## Turizm Animasyonu Önlisans Programından Rekreasyon Lisans Programına Geçiş Önerisi

### Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Turizm Animasyonu Önlisans Programlarında öğrenim gören öğrencilerin lisans programlarına geçişlere yönelik görüşlerinin incelenmesidir. Araştırmaya katılan öğrencilerinin %42.9'u kadın, %57.1'i erkektir. Kadın öğrencilerin yaş ortalaması  $20.67 \pm 2.94$ , erkek öğrencilerin yaş ortalaması ise  $20.88 \pm 1.36$ 'dir. Verilerin toplanmasında araştırmacı tarafından geliştirilen 13 soruluk anket kullanılmıştır. Araştırma bulguları öğrencilerin %50'sinin mezuniyet sonrası animatörlüğü meslek olarak yapmayı düşündükleri, %21.4'ünün de animatörlüğü meslek olarak yapmakta kararsız oldukları ortaya çıkmıştır. Öğrencilerin %57.1'i Tiyatro, %21.4'ü Rekreasyon, %21.4'ü de Turizm ve Otelcilik Programlarına geçiş haklarının bulunduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Önlisans öğrencilerinden Dikey Geçiş Sınavı ile lisans programına geçiş yapmayı öncelik olarak gören öğrenciler de tüm öğrencilerin %50'sini oluşturmuştur. Katılımcıların %64.3'ünün Rekreasyon Lisans Program içeriklerinin Turizm Animasyonu Önlisans Program içerikleri ile ilişkili olduğunu düşündükleri, %50'sinin Rekreasyon Lisans Programının, Turizm Animasyonu Programının devamı niteliğinde olduğunu düşündükleri de bulunmuştur. Turizm animasyonu önlisans programından mezun olan öğrencilere, Dikey Geçiş Sınavı ile Rekreasyon bölümlerine geçiş hakkı tanınmasının, Turizm Animasyonu Programın geleceği adına büyük kazanç olacağı düşünülmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Turizm animasyonu, rekreasyon, animasyon, önlisans, dikey geçiş

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## INTRODUCTION

The word "Animation" is defined as "Liveliness" and/or "impersonation" (Redhouse, 2004). Turkish Language Society [TLS] (2014) defines animation as "performing various games, demonstration for entertaining the guests in touristic places such as "hotel, holiday village etc.". The basis of animation is to deal with the customers and entertain and welcome them and to organize cultural, witty, artistic and sportive activities (Yurtsever, 2005). The animation concept is confronted in the form of recreational activities which are offered in the touristic enterprises and take place within the scope of the tourism that is a recreative activity on its own. In brief, Briefly, while the animation covers everything that provides an enjoyable holiday; it also takes place within the animation concept that includes facilities providing a quiet atmosphere, attractive physical spaces for touristic usage and various entertainments that can meet customer expectations and provides opportunities enriching the socialization skills and personalities (Yılmaz, 2007).

It is possible to define the animation in various forms in terms of tourism science. For example, in terms of leisure time evaluation (recreation); the animation is the leisure time evaluation activities which provide the tourist to participate to the different type activities with the aim to provide satisfaction and pleasure, are organized by the tourism enterprises by being planned in advance and are supervised and designed as the assisted services in the enterprises, and which include the pools and beach games, various competitions, excursions and entertainment nights. As can be understood from these explanations, animation is a type of recreation which is prepared in the form of supporting the services in indoor and outdoor areas such as restaurant, pool, beach, amphitheater and etc and is provided to the usage of the tourists (Hazar, 2003). There is a close relationship between animation activities and impersonation of recreation areas, and the necessity of benefiting from the animation

activities for impersonating these areas, is inevitable (Yılmaz, 2007).

According to the occupation definition Turkish Employment Agency [TEA], animator is a member of profession who designs, organizes and performs arts, fine arts, sports and game activities and performs role and/or takes duty in various stage performances such as theater, contest, dance and musicals for entertaining guests accommodating in the tourism establishments (TEA, 2014). The recreation instructor is a member of profession who graduated from recreation departments of universities and programs of the School of Physical Education and Sports, Sports Sciences and Technology / Faculties of the Faculty of Sports and Recreation, who can be employed in the Sport Tourism Sector, Sports Animation, Park and Recreation areas and who can provide leisure time activities services based on games and sports in each age and level (Sports Science Association [SSA, 2014). In addition, as per the resolution taken at the meeting of Higher Education Council [HEC] dated 12.04.2000 and 7/d-2. 7/4 articles of the law numbered 2880 amended with the law numbered 2547, it is observed that especially tourism sector takes the first place when considering the employment areas of the students to be graduated from the Recreation Departments decided to be opened under the body of the School of Physical Education and Sports [SPES] (Zorba, 2008). The commencement of recreation education in the field of tourism has been realized with the opening of the Faculties of Tourism. Tourism Faculties were established as a result of the closure of all Education Faculties in the field of Vocational and Technical Education in 2009 and after the establishment of the Tourism Faculty as per this decision, the Departments of Recreation Management started to be opened in Tourism Faculties (Kızanlıklı, 2014). It is known that in the tourism sector, recreators (graduates of recreation department) are employed in different positions, such as animator, animation chief, entertainment director due to the content of their education

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program. Accordingly, when it is considered that the animator profession in the definition of the graduates of Tourism Animation Associate Degree Programs is within the scope of recreative activities, it is observed that the graduates of both departments work in the same sector and in the same positions. In addition, it is observed that the courses in Tourism Animation Program pair with the courses of Physical Education and Sports Schools in comparison to the course contents of other higher education programs. Movement, Rhythm and Dance Training, Aerobic-Step, Recreation and Animation, Children Animation, Drama may be given as examples for these courses. However, it is thought by Assessment Selection and Placement Center (ASPC) that to identify the undergraduate programs which may be selected by graduates of Associate Degree of Tourism Animation in the Center as "Drama and Acting, Acting, Theater, Theater (Acting)" is contradictory and the said programs do not include the fields on which the graduates of Tourism Animation may apply their achievements obtained by during their Associate Degree educations. Despite this contradiction, in 2nd the second article of the National Education Basic Law no. 1739, it is mentioned "the general aim of Turkish National Education is to prepare all the individuals to the life by developing their, interests, abilities and talents through giving them the habit of teamwork and to make them happy and to have a profession that shall contribute to the happiness of the society "; in the 5th article of the same law titled "needs of individual and community", it is mentioned about the necessity that the students must take education in the departments where they are interested and can use their talents by using the expression "National education service is regulated according to the demands and capabilities of Turkish citizens and the needs of the Turkish society". It is clearly stated in the 6th article of the same law, it is mentioned "the individuals are educated by being directed to the various programs or schools in accordance with their interests, abilities and talents during their education" and it is clearly stated that the duty of directing these students to the departments and programs in accordance

with their talents and demands is within the responsibilities of the relevant institutions of the state (Ministry of National Education [MNE], 1973). In addition to this, in the d clause of 45th article of Higher Education Law numbered 2547, it is stated "students who graduate from vocational and technical secondary education institutions may be placed in vocational and technical associate's higher education programs which are the continuation of or close to the program they have completed without exams. The procedures and principles related with the placement of these students shall be determined by the regulation to be issued by the Council of Higher Education by taking the opinion of the Ministry of National Education". Thus the transition is allowed for the students who graduated from vocational and technical secondary education institutions to the associate degree programs which are the continuation or closest of their graduated program. In the e clause of same article, it is stated that the "vertical transition can be saved each year by the decision of the Higher Education Council, for associate degree graduates in the form not exceeding 10 percent of the quota determined in related undergraduate programs" thus it is clearly expressed that the associate degree graduates have the right to transition to the relevant undergraduate programs with the condition to be successful in the Vertical Transition Exam. Under the light of the above information, the aim of this study is to present the opinions of the students who are studying in the Tourism Animation Associate Degree Programs related with the transition to Recreation Departments of Physical Education and Sports, Sports Sciences and Technology Schools from the relevant Associate program with the Vertical Transition Exam which is held each year by ASPC.

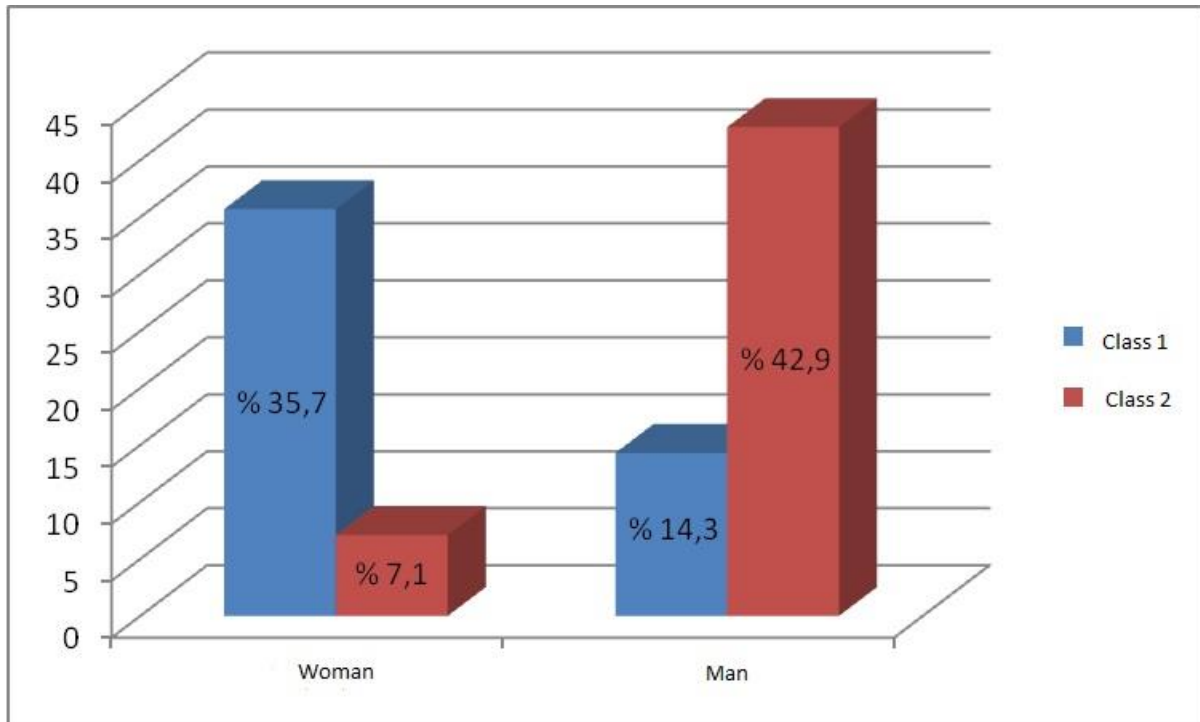
## **METHOD**

### ***Participants***

42.9% of the students of the Tourism Animation Program who participate to the research is female and 57.1% of them are female. 50% of the students are in the first grade and 50% are in the second grade. The age average of female students is  $20.67 \pm 2.94$

and the age average of male students is  $20.88 \pm 1.36$ . The data is collected from Mersin University (64,29%), Ege University (28,57%)

and Karabük University (7,14%) which have Tourism Animation Program.



Graph 1. Percentage distribution of the students of Tourism Animation program who participated to the research according to their genders and their grades.

### **Data Collection Tool**

A questionnaire developed by the research consisting of 13 questions is used for the purpose of collecting the data. In the questionnaire, there are questions related with the opinions of the students Tourism Animation Program on their programs, ideas on continuing to a postgraduate program, ideas about what kind of improvements they will receive from the recreation departments, information on whether they have a degree program related to their fields when they finish the program.

### **Data Collection Process**

Easy sampling method is used for data collection purpose. The reason of preferring this method is to provide the research to reach the sample group easily by preventing the loss of time, money and labor (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000). The questionnaire developed

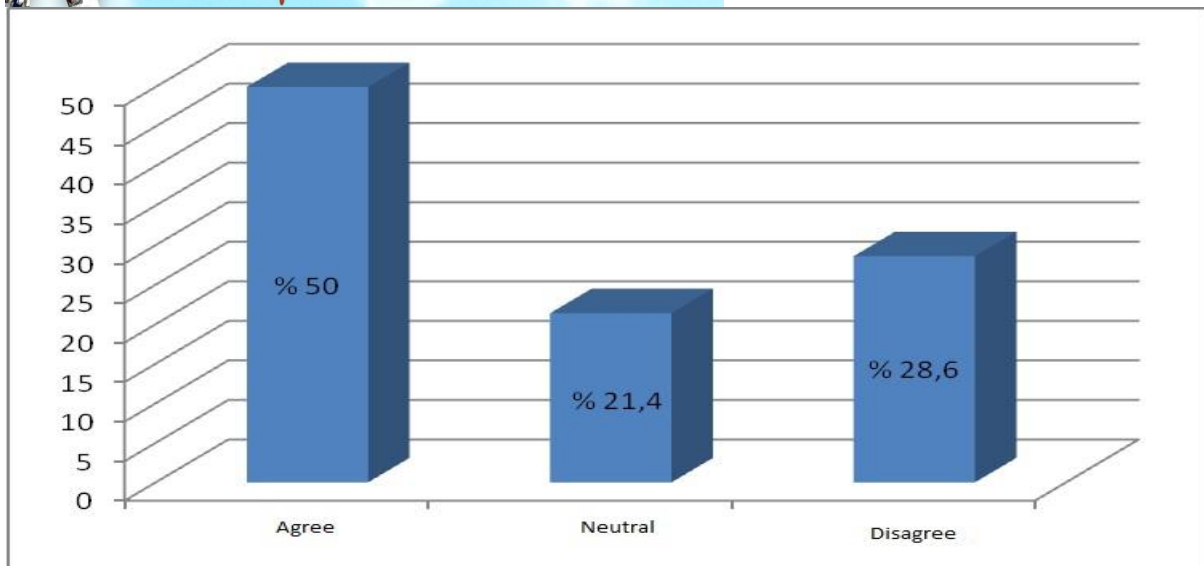
by the researcher is delivered electronically to the students who participate to the study voluntarily and data is collected via electronic media.

### **Analysis of Data**

Descriptive statistic analyses such as frequency, percentage are used in the analysis of the data.

### **FINDINGS**

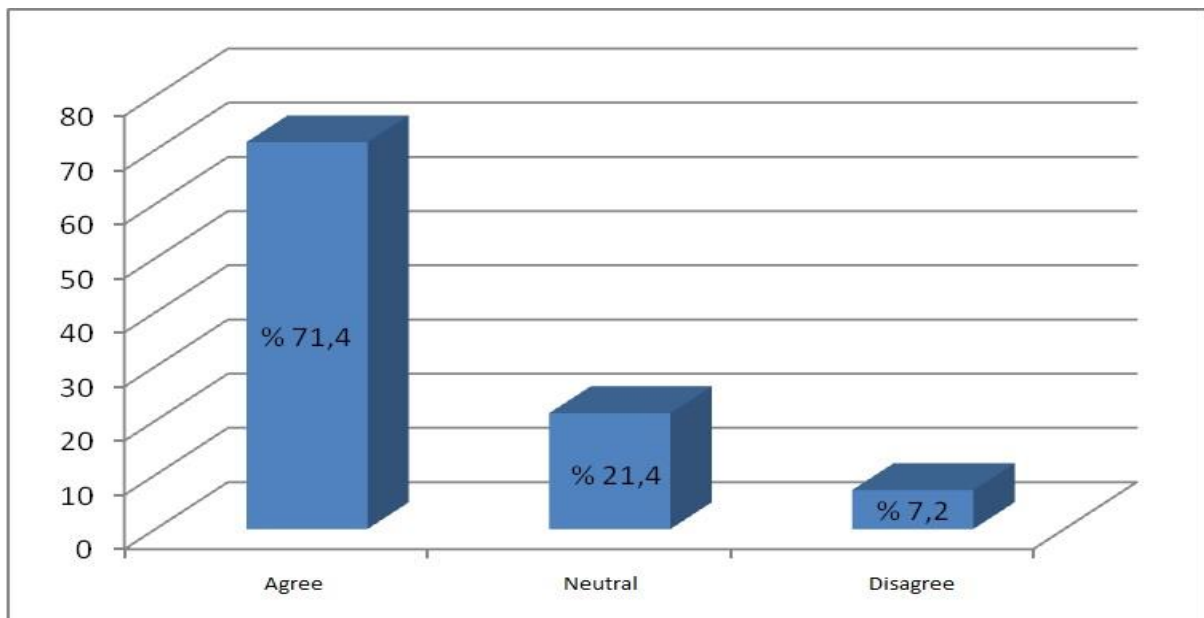
As a result of the replies given by the students of the Tourism Animation Program to the questionnaires; it is revealed that 50% of the students think of performing animation as profession after graduation, 21.4% of the students are indecisive in making animation as a profession and 28.6% do not think performing animation as a profession.



Graphic 2. Percentage distribution of the students who think to perform animation as profession after graduation.

In addition, it is found that students who think that they have a formal education program as a continuation of the program they had enrolled after graduation form 71.4% of all students, students who state that they are indecisive on

the same subject form 21.4% of all students and the students who think that there is no formal education program form 21.4% of all the students.



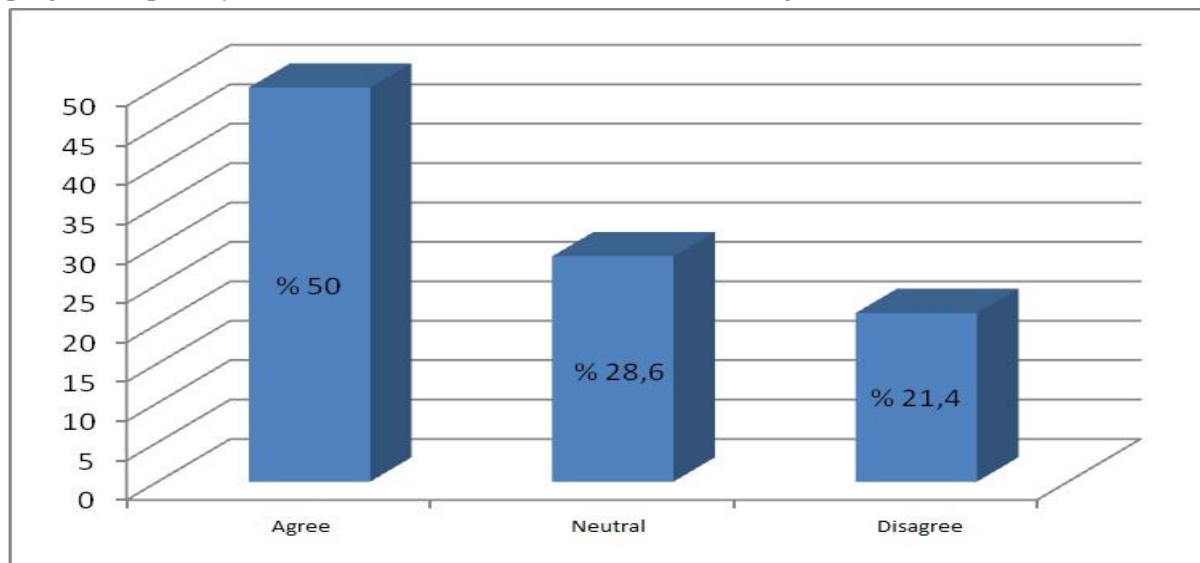
Graphic 3. Percentage distribution of the students who think that there is a formal education program in the form of a continuation of the enrolled program after graduation.

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While percentage of associate degree students who see transitioning to undergraduate program as priority, forms %50 of all students,

the percentage of the indecisive student is 28.6%, and the percentage of students not considering transition is 21.4%.



Graphic 4. Percentage distribution of students who see transitioning to undergraduate program from associate degree with vertical transfer exam as priority.

50% of the students state that having an undergraduate program will contribute to being a preferred personnel in the sector and %50 of the students state that it will have benefits for the academic career in their fields. The responses of the participants to the questions related with their opinions on Recreation Undergraduate Programs reveal that 64.3% of the students think that the content of the Recreation Undergraduate Program is related with the content of the Tourism Animation Associate Degree Program, 50% of the students think that Recreation Undergraduate program is the continuation of the Tourism Animation Program, 42.9% of them think that being the graduate of Recreation Undergraduate program will make them competent in the profession. In addition, 50% of the students state that being a graduate of undergraduate program is more advantageous than being a graduate of associate degree of tourism animation, and 71.4% of the students state that their recreation undergraduate graduates are luckier in findings jobs than the

graduates of Tourism Animation Associate Program

## DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

According to the findings obtained from the result of the questionnaire which is concluded in scope of this study aiming the present the opinions of students in Tourism Animation Associate Degree Programs related with the placement from the related associate degree program to the Recreation Departments of Physical Education and Sports, Sports Sciences and Technology Schools / Faculty of Sports and Technology through Vertical Transfer Examinations held every year by ÖSYM with a descriptive approach, it is determined that the majority of the students of Tourism Animation Associate Degree Program think that the content of the Recreation Degree Program is associated with the content of Tourism Animation Associate Degree Program and half of the students think that the Recreation Undergraduate Program is the continuation of the Associate Degree Program in Tourism

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Animation. It has also been understood that half of the students in the same study think that to continue recreational education after associate degree education will increase their motivation and that a large majority of recreational undergraduate graduates are more fortunate in finding a job than Graduates of Tourism Animation Associate Program. The definition of profession members that may be employed in the field of Sports Tourism Industry, Sports Animation, leisure time activity services based on Motion, Game and Sports at all ages and levels, parking and sports activities for all graduates of SSA universities for graduates of Physical Education and Sport, Sports Sciences and Technology Colleges / Faculty of Recreation Departments and Programs, is in the qualification of supporting these findings (SSA, 2014). In addition, when the employment fields of the students to be graduated from Recreation Departments which is planned to be opened under the body of Physical Education and Sports Schools as per the 7/d-2, 7/4 articles amended with the law numbered 2880 of the law numbered 2547 with the resolution of YOK dated 12.04.2000, is considered, Zorba's study which mentions that the tourism sector is in the first row, is in the qualification of supporting the same idea stating that the graduates of the relevant departments work in the same profession as well as the graduates of Tourism Animation program. (Zorba, 2008). In a study conducted by Yilmaz (2007), it was observed that one of the most common recreational activities in the surveyed hotel establishments is a fitness and aerobic step from land sports, and that the facilities had a swimming pool and a fitness center. This study is an indication of how much time the animators in tourist businesses spend on sportive activities, and in particular the professional dominance of the sport. It is thought that this can only be achieved by transferring to SPES Recreation departments, which is a section where they can take more comprehensive courses about sports.

Likewise, in study concluded by Saygin (1999), the recreation / animation activities with the highest attendance according to the program administrators in tourism enterprises are sports activities with 53.33%. 40% of the

sports animators working in the resort villages state that they had education about sportive recreation / animation and 60% said they did not take education. In the same study, 75% of sports animators state that they have taken the education in business environment, 18.18% in private courses and 6.81% in school. Under the light of the findings obtained from the study of Saygin (1999), it is found that the most participatory activities in the entity are sportive activities but only 40% of the animators working in the sector are educated, only 6.81% of them are from relevant Tourism Animation department. According to the results of the study concluded by Saygin (1999), when it is considered that the majority of the animators working in the sector are not educated in the relevant departments / programs, it is suggested that the necessary measures and arrangements must be taken for the students who prefer these programs to continue their education in a higher education institution.

Under the light of the obtained data, in case the students of Tourism Animation Associate Degree Program are the person who shall continue the profession and their course motivation increases, it is thought that to provide their transition with Vertical Transfer Examination to the Recreation Departments of Physical Education and Sports Schools and Faculties shall be a major gain for the future of Tourism Animation programs for being academicians who shall transfer the occupation to future generations by making academic career and for not confronting the problems of finding jobs and for becoming competent individuals.

While evaluating the results of this study, the limitation of sampling should be considered. It is recommended to carry out further studies with a larger sample.

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