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# ANALYZING COLLABORATIVE MARKETING NETWORKS FROM HOSPITALITY BUSINESS' PERSPECTIVES

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#### Abstract

A process of joint decision making among autonomous and key stakeholders of an interorganisational domain to resolve problems of the domain and/or to manage issues related to the domain. Collaboration is defined as the key strategy for tourism destinations and managements to be used for short resources and for meaningful and holistic experiences to meet tourists' needs. Within the tourism industry, this might involve joint decision making among all those parties having an interest or stake in tourism destination development and marketing. Networking is crucial in mobilizing information and resources as well as co-operation among tourism businesses. The studies conducted showed that in destinations in competitive and complicated environments such as tourism, businesses often develop collaborative relationships in order to gain rivalry advantages and consequently benefit from network advantages of businesses operating destinations. Due to this importance, collaboration at tourism destinations has been a topic investigated frequently since 90s. However, most of these studies focused on collaboration among destinations and businesses at destinations with a more static and autonomous point of view. Today, it is a general-accepted approach where the activities of businesses are influenced by the social context where also the other businesses are embedded. Therefore, it is accepted that using methods focusing on interaction creating a certain structure and framework is appropriate to examine the collaboration between a destination and its actors such as the network approach. Nevertheless, it is observed that although the number of studies focusing on social network approach for collaboration at tourism sector, the number of studies are still limited. Hence, the aim of the study is to analyze the collaborative network among hospitality businesses, public institutions and nongovernmental organizations in Eskisehir, which is developing in terms of tourism, within the scope of marketing efforts of businesses operating in tourism sector. In this study, the general collaborative network among hospitality business and other tourism business (catering and travel agencies), public institutions related with the sector, associations and NOG examined. Ucinet and Netdraw were used for developing and visualizing social network. Degree-centrality and betwenness centrality were employed to analyze the data.

Keywords: Collaborative Marketing, Social Network, Hospitality Business, Eskişehir.

### Introduction

Industrial clusters, close ties or alliances among the different actors and the degree of cooperation between tourism established are considered important elements to improve the competitiveness of destinations (Baggio, 2011: 183). The lack of coordination and cohesion within the highly fragmented tourism industry is a well-known problem to destination planners and managers (Jamal and Getz, 1995: 186). Collaboration has become a quite important topic in today's dynamic and hyper competitive market environment. To study collaboration relationships in a destination, the understanding of the patterns of linkages among the components and the evaluation of the system's structure are crucial issues (Baggio, 2011: 183). Collaborations was defined as a key strategy for tourism management for the use of scarce sources with holistically and individually meaningful experiences to meet the needs of tourists (Zach and Racherla, 2011: 28). Petit (1975: 53) defined collaboration as "the will of an individual to work together with other individuals for an aim". Wood and Gray (1991: 146) defined collaboration as "a group of autonomous stakeholder of a problem domain engaging in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms and structures to act or decide on issues related to the domain". "Collaboration is a process of joint decision making among autonomous and key stakeholders of an interorganisational domain to resolve problems of the domain and/or to manage issues related to the domain" (Robinson, 1999: 387). Schianetz et. al. (2007) defined collaboration in terms of tourism as informal collaboration. On the other hand, Jamal and Getz (1995:188) indicated that the concept of field of interest for organizations is significant to understand collaboration. From a developmental process perspective, collaborative relationships are socially contrived mechanisms for collective action, which are continually shaped

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and restructured by actions and symbolic interpretations of the parties involved. The development and evolution of a collaborative relationship should be viewed as consisting of a repetitive sequence of cooperation conflict, and compromise mechanisms, each of which is assessed in terms of the objectives each party in the relationship set forth in the beginning (Wang, 2008: 152-153)

The advantages of improving collaboration relationship between destination stakeholders are stated as avoiding the cost of long term conflicts among the interest groups (Arnaboldi and Spiller, 2011), improving the adherence campaigns which support the socio-economic growth in the region (Saxena, 2005), using natural resources and providing a definite adherence degree (Selin, 1993), benefiting from various actors' resources (Arnaboldi and Spiller, 2011) and reaching a wide-range of information stock, providing much more experience and extra job opportunities (Wang and Xiang, 2007; Selin, 1993). Robinson (1999) pointed that collaboration and partnership are important elements of sustainable tourism, both as a mechanism for achieving sustainable outcomes and as symbolic of new ways of working. In addition to these, it is pointed that the reason of the increasing interest for collaboration at tourism are, as a basic factor, organizations' and destinations' sharing information, specialty, capital, and other resources and creating competition advantage by gathering these together (Fyall and Garrod, 2005). Go and Govers (2000) claim that partnerships including collaboration between private and public sector at destinations are a prerequisite for sustaining the power of a destination to be able to compete. Bramwell and Sharman (1999) mention that there are many potential benefits collaborations between stakeholders in a destination. First, in long term collaboration helps to avoid the cost of resolving adversarial conflicts among stakeholders. Second, collaborative relations may be more politically legitimate if they give stakeholders a greater influence in the decision-making which affects their lives. Third, this collaboration improves the coordination of policies and related actions, and promotes consideration of the economic, environmental, and social impacts of tourism and efficient and sustainable results. Similarly, Huxham (1993) stated that businesses can obtain collaborative advantage by collaborating with other businesses in case they are not able to reach their goals on their own or reach their goals at all by using the term "collaboration advantage". Huxham (1993: 603) indicated that collaboration advantage is related to creating synergy among the organizations collaborating. Collaboration advantage can be defined as the synergy generated as a result of working together with other organizations for goals or aims which the business is not able to reach with its own resources (Huxham, 1993: 603). Collaborative arrangements in the tourism industry involves a number of stakeholders working interactively on a common issue or problem domain through a process of exchange of ideas and expertise and pooling of financial and human resources (Wang, 2008: 151). Collaborative network is one in which trading partners develop a long-term co-operative effort and common orientation toward meeting their individual and mutual goals. Collaborative trading partners recognize their mutual interdependence and more openly share information, engage in greater future planning, and tend to take a more constructive problem-solving approach to conflict resolution. Collaborative network is one in which trading partners develop a long-term co-operative effort and common orientation toward meeting their individual and mutual goals. Collaborative trading partners recognize their mutual interdependence and more openly share information, engage in greater future planning, and tend to take a more constructive problem-solving approach to conflict resolution (Ramayah, 2011: 414).

The World Travel and Tourism Council stated that there is a need to support the network between public and private sector strongly to be able to succeed competitive tourism and travel improvement effectively (WTTC, 2001). According to Jancsik and Mayer (2010), the role of network has become very significant within the sector. Besides comparative and competitive advantages, researchers state that "network advantage" has come into prominence. Network advantage is defined as the competition of a network for another network. According to this network advantage, it is supposed that tourism businesses defined as actors which have much more amount of networks and more powerful networks will be more successful in competing (Madarasz and Papp, 2013).

Collaborations can be several level such as local, regional, national or international level and can have several initiatives such as within organizations, across these local or area-based initiatives local-international collaborations for local level sustainability, national-international collaborations for global level issues or conservation concerns, within the country, and poverty alleviation as well as community development initiatives (Jamal and Stronza, 2009: 175). Fyall and Garrod (2005) pointed out that collaboration between organizations between stakeholders and public-private sector partnerships is a popular strategy for destination marketing organizations and their interest groups. According to the traditional organizations theory statement, the nodes in the network are non-profit and public institutions, and networks, on the other hand, are defined as

financial sources, physical facilities, customers or consumers and flow of funds described as service delivery. Thus, networks emerge as purposeful social systems aiming at coordination of source series which are different from each other for presenting a specific service type targeted at specific social problems (Araujo and Easton, 1996). Fyall and Garrod (2005) applied this point of view at collaborative relationship discussions at tourism industry. In this sense, collaborative destination marketing facilities include activities such as information collection, product development, product marketing and promotion, visitor management, training and employment facilities, creating network and promoting stakeholder support. The collaborative relationship among the individual organizations is explained in two basic point of views in general. One of them is static approaches which consist of resource dependence theories (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978), cost of transaction (Williamson, 1991) and strategic management theories and which focus on the relationship only between two organizations. However, these theories ignore the relationships among all the other organizations and institutions taking place in the sector. Also, despite the basic differences, almost all the approaches refer to specific mutual topics such as social interaction, social relationships, collaboration, collective action, trust and solidarity (Provan et. al., 2007: 480-481); nevertheless, their boundaries can be examined restrictedly because of their static structures. The second approach is social network theory which is accepted as one of the most appropriate approaches for analyzing the complex structure of tourism destinations (Baggio, 2013). The aim of the study is to analyze the collaborative network among hospitality businesses, public institutions and nongovernmental organizations in Eskisehir, which is developing in terms of tourism, within the scope of marketing efforts of businesses operating in tourism sector.

# 1. Social Network Theory

In tourism sector, destinations include a large number of businesses independent from each other; however, while evaluating a destination, tourists tend to evaluate it as a whole (Baggio, 2013). On the other hand, at destinations, during the production of the whole products, each business should be in coordination and collaboration with the other businesses since at the end total experience is presented by the destination on its own (Zach and Racherla, 2011:28). Therefore, the complexity of tourism destinations and business cannot be explained with economical actions, autonomous product, classic and neo-classic economy theories seen as actors based on unitary and profit and marketing theories (Shih, 2006). In addition to these, in terms of tourism, there are quite limited number of studies on the dynamic process of collaborative marketing at destination level (Wang, 2008; Fyall and Garrod, 2005; Saxena, 2005). According to Wang and Fesenmaier (2007), although the ratio of collaboration and cooperation at tourism is high, only few theories explaining the basic processes at collaborative destination marketing were developed. Collaboration is a common social interaction that consists of multiple actors and the relationships between them; this can be represented by the nodes and edges of a network graph (Ye et. al, 2012: 57). At this point, the concept embeddedness provides a beneficial theoretical starting point to understand the evolution of a business network (Halinen and Törnroos, 1998). Networks are examined as structures displaying commonly dynamic and constant change (Johnston et. al., 2006; Freytag and Ritter, 2005). Mattison (2002: 11) puts forward that external effects structure an important part of marketing at individual operation network. A change in a relationship depends on the change of other relationships. This network effect is a quite vital impetus for market dynamics. For this reason, there is a need for a dynamic approach to understand and examine the relationships in a network and how these relationships develop in time (Ravald and Grönroos, 1996; Ritter and Gemünden, 2003; Ritter et. al., 2004; Morton et al., 2004). A tourism destination can be thought as a social network with a group of players affecting each other an actor (an organization) having a relation with another (Shih, 2006). Therefore, social network theory is seen as the most appropriate approach to examine these relationships. Social network theory, as basis, focuses on interactions creating a specific structure and framework instead of individual behaviors, beliefs and attitudes. When it is accepted that the performances of individual organizations depend on other organizations' behaviors, the view that the performance of a tourism destination is based not only on specific peculiarities and qualifications of a destination itself but also on the connections among the various players (Chiappa and Presenza, 2013: 2). Examining collaborative structure at tourism destinations which is a formation including complex and embedded various types of businesses needs a more complex and dynamic method such as social network theory and social analysis (Baggio et al., 2010; March and Wilkinson, 2009; Scott et al., 2008). Social network theory puts forward that the strategic actions of organizations are influenced by the social context where the organizations and other organizations are embedded. In this sense, it includes relationships within the organization and among the organizations. Social network approach presents a powerful mathematical modelling device (Araujo and Easton, 1996). In tourism context, Shih (2006) used social network approach which

is a technical method measuring the connections among the nodes and is a quantitative method examining indicators and network characteristics to show the structural models of systems connected to each other. Scott et al. (2008) investigated the structural characteristics of networks among organizations within destinations via network analysis. Presenza and Cipolina (2010) studied the collaborative structure of tourism stakeholders' marketing and management activities in Molise region, Italy, by using social network analysis. Grama and Baggio (2013) used social network approach to examine the structural and dynamic characteristics of Sibiu destination. Researchers performed complete analysis of Sibiu destination which is different from the other studies usually focusing on small samples having a small number of actors and linages.

Social network theory is interested in the relationships within the social structure and presents a powerful mathematical modelling tool (Araujo and Easton, 1996). It includes various measuring and analysis tools to analyze and understand relational data. Relational data shows the relationship between the actors and components and the value of this relationship (Durland and Fredericks, 2006). As basis, social network theory is based on graph theory. Graphs are used to for networks mathematical display. It is expressed mathematically as following:

### $G = (V, E) \tag{1}$

Networks and graphs are displayed with (G), vertices with V, and edges with E. However, network analysis does not consist of only graphs and mathematic formulas. Networks can be related to different topics according to the values represented by the nodes and connections which form the network. For instance, nodes, people, are the most commonly known examples of social network whose connections are relationships. During social network analysis various measures are used to analyze a network. The first of them is the network size which is expressed as number by nodes between the businesses n, and lines l. Relationships can be reciprocal or directed, positive or negative. One of the basic applications of SNA is defining the important nodes in the network. The most important or prominent nodes generally occupy strategic locations within a network. The overall distribution of ties and their local concentration are important parameters and indicators of cohesion, which is a property of the whole network (Haythornthwaite, 1996). This measure displays the probability of the powerful social relationships among the network members, and the probability of network members reaching similar resources and information. Measures of cohesion, such as density and centralization, indicate the extent to which all members of a population interact with all others. The density of a network is the number of lines in a simple network, expressed as a proportion of the maximum possible number of lines (Gürsakal, 2009; Scott, et al., 2008). The excessiveness of the number of connections existing between the nodes in a network shows the density of that network. Network centrality refers to the position that an organization has within the network, as a consequence of the power it achieves through the network and is not connected to personal attributes (Scot et al., 2008). Network centrality is important because it helps researchers to assess the central role played by an individual organization within a network, which in turn influences the effectiveness of coordinating the network itself (Chiappa and Presenza, 2013: 4). Basically, there are three types of centrality measures: degree centrality, betweenness centrality and proximity centrality. Degree centrality is equal to the number of connections of an actor with another (Lewis, 2009:25). At degree centrality, the member or actors having the most connection number is generally the most active person and can be the member having the most advantageous position in the network (Delil, 2013). Another centrality measure which is called 'betweenness' is defined as the existence degree of an actor among the other actors. It shows to what extent a node is in direct connection with nodes which do not have a direct connection to each other. Betweenness centrality is an important indicator of the excessive information change within a network or the control of flow of resources (Knoke and Yang, 2008: 68). High betweenness centrality measure shows a hierarchical network structure where one or few nodes take place within the network showing more centrality tendency compared to other nodes (Ying and Xiao, 2011).

#### 2. Methodology

This study was conducted to analyze the collaborative network among the other hospitality businesses and destination stakeholders (private and public) at marketing efforts of hospitality businesses at Eskişehir tourism destination. According to Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 54 hospitality businesses with tourism business operating permit and municipality certificate are in service. Since the main population was small, complete inventory was carried out and on total 36 hospitality businesses were reached. Field research was conducted as data collection method in the study. The data of the study were collected through face to face survey technique with the managers of the hospitality businesses. The survey form in the study consists of three parts. In the first part, general information such as the type of the organization answering the survey, the field of facility and the department of the manager interviewed take place. The second part includes expressions related to organizations' marketing efforts which they collaborate and to the obstacles faced about this topic. In the third part, the participants are asked to state the degree of their relationships with other institutions and organizations to determine the collaborative connections within the network. During the data collection, "roster-call" method was used while the interviews were carried out with the managers. Roster-call method aims to collect full network data-as opposed to ego network data-on a pre-defined population of actors. In this method, each of the actors of the population is provided with a list of actors of the population. It is preferred that the list includes all the actors in the population. However, making a choice from a pre-listed actors in the roster can cause bias for organizations. For each of the pre-listed actors in the roster, the respondent actor has to indicate whether or not he had a relationship of a pre-defined type. In addition, the respondents is asked to recall all other actors they had this type of relationship with and add them to the list. This method ensures the identification of the complete network as long as all population actors take part in the survey. In addition, the 'recall' part of the method makes it possible for the respondents to add external linkages (Ter Wal and Boschma, 2009: 746).

Descriptive analysis was carried out by using the program SPSS 20.0 to measure the collaborative marketing efforts, their attitudes towards collaboration and obstacles among the hospitality businesses participants, other hospitality businesses and destination stakeholders. The collected data were entered to Excel to be able to analyze the collaborative networks among the institutions and data matrix for the collaborative network was prepared. While the data matrix was prepared, the rows were the hospitality businesses completing the survey, and the column was structured as a double one thesis-subject matrix where hospitality businesses and destination stakeholders (private-public) took place. In this matrix, if there is collaboration between the i th hospitality business with the j th destination stakeholder, it is defined as xij=1, and vice versa it is defined as xij= 0. Moreover, to examine and visualize the network structural characteristics of the prepared data matrix UCINET and NetDraw software were used. To analyze the structural characteristics of the collaborative collaborative links, network density, degree centrality and betweennness centrality measures were used.

# 3. Empirical Findings

# **3.1. Descriptive Findings**

In the light of the obtained data from the hospitality businesses, it was determined that 36 hospitality business were in collaboration with 53 actors (on total 89 actors). As seen in Table 1, it is showed that the other hospitality business at the hospitality business destination (H), travel agencies (TA), commercial and tourism organizations (CI), local authority (CA), university (U) and municipalities (LA) are in collaboration. While only ten of these stakeholders among the travel agencies were local travel agencies, 24 travel agencies were travel agencies which had national and international level of facilities. In addition, eight of the travel agencies do not have any offices in Eskişehir. Chamber of commerce, national and international tourism associations and other sectoral associations take place in the field defined as association. Local authorities such as Governorship, Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, District Governorship which hospitality businesses are in collaboration with six actors. Although there are two universities in Eskişehir, hospitality businesses stated that they are in collaboration with four universities of which two universities are from Ankara, the neighbor of Eskişehir. Also, Metropolitan Municipality and two county municipalities (Odunpazarı and Tepebaşı Municipalities) were stated as actors in collaboration with hospitality businesses.

Table 1: Hospitality Businesses and Other Stakeholders

Actors	п
Hospitality businesses	36
Travel Agencies	24
Associations (Chamber of commerce and other tourism associations)	16
Local authorities	6
University	4
Municipality	3
Total	89

When the marketing efforts which hospitality businesses are in collaboration with were examined, raising awareness, advertising work and branding efforts were defined as the most collaborated marketing efforts. Also, attending commercial exhibitions together, preparing joint advertising works, acting together to decrease the catalogue costs were stated as other marketing efforts which are mostly collaborated for. Especially, because of the excessive demands of the local tourist groups for weekends, sharing customers among the businesses was pointed out as another marketing effort because of the demands above the capacity.

The biggest obstacle for collaboration by hospitality businesses is shown as "the lack of collaboration understanding". Inter-organization mistrust, competition, the size and quality of the business, bureaucracy unwieldiness, getting ahead of personal interest for organizational vision, lack of finance/time resources, lack of qualified human resource and basic dissent were stated as the other obstacles for collaborative relationships.

### 3.2. General Network Findings

Collaborative network includes 15.980% of the total number of probable relationships for marketing activities. Since the network index was in the range of 0-1 (0-100%), it was determined that the value of the network density obtained was rather low, and there was low cohesion level among the actors. The diameter at network was determined as 6 feet. In Figure 1, the general view of the collaboration network created by among the hospitality businesses and the other hospitality businesses and destination stakeholders can be seen. Except H9, H10, H11, H19 and H20 in Figure 1 are isolated actors which do not have any collaborative relationship with any of the hospitality business and other stakeholders outside of the network.

The findings of degree centrality of collaborative network are displayed in Table 2. As seen in the table, Commerce Chamber (Actor CI1) has the highest out-degree. Regardless of what information was given and to whom the information was given, this actor can be considered as the most influential actor in the entire network. In Figure 1, Commerce Chamber (CI1) is the most known and recognized in the network as seen from the number of in-degree. Then, the second one is Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism (CA2) having the highest in-degree actor. This indicates the willingness of sharing information from other actors in the network with these actors. According to the obtained findings, local authority, commerce and tourism associations, universities and municipalities play a more special role in constructing collaborative relationships compared to the other actors in the network (travel agencies and other hospitality businesses). When the distribution of centrality is examined in the network, it is found that the average degree of actors in the network is 2.569, which is quite low.



Figure 1: Overall Network Graph Relative to Marketing Activity

This figure means that on average each actor had only two relationships with others. Max and Min values show the largest and smallest number of relationships. The maximum number of connection to the outside (OutDegree) in this network is 18, which is possessed by Commerce Chamber (CI1), while the minimum number of connection to the outside is zero. This means that there are actors who have absolutely no connection to the outside, only receiving without giving information to another party. For incoming relationship (InDegree), the maximum value is 18, while the minimum value is zero. This means that there are actors who only give information but do not receive information from the other party. From OutDegree and InDegree, the range of minimum and maximum values for InDegree is somewhat higher than the range of the minimum and maximum values for OutDegree. This suggests that in this network, actors prefer to receive rather than give information. In other words, the number of actors who receive information is more than the number of actors who give information. Figure 2 shows the sociogram based on the degree centrality.

Table 2: Degree Centrality (Top five Actors)

Actor	OutDegree	InDegree
CI1-Commerce Chamber	218.000	8.000
CA2- Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism,	217.000	1.000
U1-Anadolu University	216.000	0.000
LA3-Eskişehir Metropolitan Municipality	214.000	1.000
LA1-Odunpazarı Municipality	204.000	2.000
Descriptive Statistics	OutDegree	InDegree
Mean	2.569	2.569
Sd	3.862	1.477
Variance	11.189	4.179
Minimum	0.000	0.000
Maximum	18.000	18.000

Network Centralization (outdegree)= 15.843% Network Centralization (indegree)= 6.957%



Figure 2: Relationships between actors based on their degree centrality

When network centralization was analyzed by using betweenness arbitrary, it could be seen that Commerce Chamber (CI1) has the highest betweenness centrality, and then comes Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, Anadolu University, Eskişehir Governorship and Odunpazarı Municipalityin Table 3. According to betweenness centrality, it can be observed that tourism associations and local authorities, municipalities and universities are stakeholders playing a central role. When the descriptive statistics were examined, it can be seen that the maximum and minimum betweenness centrality in the network vary from 0 to 216.092, coefficient of variation (standard deviation divided by the mean) equals to 1.63. Despite the large variations in the values of betweenness centrality, the value of the overall network centralization is very low (3.83%). Depending on this, it can be stated that more than half of ties occur without the help of mediation.

Table 3: Freeman Betweenness Centality (Top five Actors)				
Actors	Betweenness	nBetweenness		
CI1-Commerce Chamber	216.092	4.279		
CA2- Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism	200.252	3.965		
U1-Anadolu University	173.978	3.445		
LA1-Odunpazarı Municipality	131.503	2.604		
CA1-Governorship	120.685	2.390		
Descriptive Statistics				
	Betweenness	nBetweenness		
Mean	24.676	0.489		
Sd	40.284	0.798		
Variance	1622.803	0.636		
Minimum	0.000	0.000		
Maximum	216.092	4.279		

#### Network Centralization Index= 3.83%

## 3.3. Network Findings of Collaboration among Hospitality Businesses

When the collaborative network set among the hospitality businesses were analyzed, network density was determined as 10.2%. When the determined network density for general collaborative network is compared (15.980%), it may be said that the collaborative network set among hospitality businesses is rarer, and the cohesion level among the actors is low. When all the active actors in the network were examined (out-degree), it can be seen that they are all local, three-star and boutique hotels, except two hospitality businesses. For incoming relationship (InDegree), the maximum value is 12, while the minimum value is zero. Similar to the general collaborative network, hospitality businesses act only as informative actors in their collaborative relationships; however, they do not get information from the other stakeholders. When the betweennes values are observed, it can be seen that the three actors (H4, H15, H1) have the highest centrality measure. Based on this, it may be stated that these three actors are the key actors which are active at high level in the whole network and that they act as a bridge among the other hospitality businesses.

Type	Actors	Outdegree	Indegree	nBetweenness
3 star	H4	12.000	12.00	13.304
Boutique	H15	12.000	8.000	12.710
Boutique	H7	11.000	10.000	7.774
3 star	H5	11.000	10.000	7.000
Boutique	H1	10.000	12.000	10.878
	Descriptive Statistics			
Mean Sd Variance Min	Mean	4.918	4.057	2.479
	Sd	3.206	3.349	3.243
	Variance	10.279	11.218	10.516
	Min	0.000	0.000	0.000
	Max.	12.000	12.000	13.304
Network Centralization: 15.061%			Network Centralization: 11.05%	

### Conclusion

The aim of the study was to analyze the current collaborative relationships and structure between other hospitality business and destination stakeholders (private/public) at marketing efforts of hospitality businesses in Eskişehir as a specific destination. It was determined that raising more awareness of hospitality businesses on destinations, commercial work and branding efforts of destinations were marketing efforts which have the most collaboration. The most important obstacles on collaboration were found as lack of collaboration understanding, inter-organization mistrust and competition. According to the findings related to collaborative network, collaborative network at destination level was defined as a sparse network with low level density value. Degree distribution findings, local authorities, commercial and tourism associations, universities and municipalities played a more special and important role in constructing collaborative relationships compared to travel agencies and other hospitality businesses. It was found that especially the collaborative network among the hospitality businesses is a scattered network having a lower density compared to the general collaborative network which includes the other destination stakeholders. When the hospitality businesses' collaborative network was investigated distinctively, it was found that three star hotels and boutique hotels were the most active actors in the whole network. These findings are in line with the findings of other studies. Chiappa and Presenza (2013) Costa defined the collaborative network as rare in marketing and management activities of Smeralda Gallura destination. Furthermore, they stated that public sector has a more important role in collaboration compared to private sector. The concept collaboration gains a distinct importance in fields defined as embedded social network both in public and private institutions, stakeholder clusters related to each other like tourism destinations (Baggio et. al., 2010; Scott et. al., 2008). As prior researches has underlined, a high degree of coordination and collaboration is one of the main factors for effectiveness and efficacy in destination governance, as well as in branding strategy and positioning (Chiappa, 2010, 2013; Wang and Xiang, 2007). Therefore, it is believed that it is important to develop collaborative understanding in destinations analyzed in the study, especially to emphasize the importance of collaboration in gaining competitive advantage among private sector stakeholders and in increasing productivity. This study has some limitations. Findings of the study are limited only to Eskişehir destination. Also, in the study, relationships among only single actors were analyzed methodologically, the groups and substructures in the destination were not analyzed. Future research is needed to analyze the case study in greater depth, using different approaches.

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