

**IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF AIR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT**

**MASTER THESIS**

**THE EFFECTS OF TURKISH PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN  
SUB SAHARAN FRANCOPHONE AFRICAN  
COUNTRIES ON THE BRAND IMAGE OF TURKISH  
AIRLINES: A QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH ABOUT  
TURKISH AIRLINES AS A SOFT POWER TOOL**

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**ISTANBUL 2022**

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by

**EMİN ASLAN**

**A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in  
Air Transport Management**

**THESIS SUPERVISOR  
ASST. PROF. SÜMEYYE KUŞAKCI**

**ISTANBUL 2022**

APPROVAL PAGE

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that, in our opinion, it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science in Air Transport Management.

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Opinion

Signature


This is to confirm that this thesis complies with all the standards set by the School of Graduate Studies of Ibn Haldun University.

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## ACADEMIC HONESTY ATTESTATION

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name Surname: Emin ASLAN

Signature:



## ÖZ

# SAHRA ALTI FRANKOFON AFRIKA ÜLKELERİNDEKİ TÜRK KAMU DİPLOMASİSİNİN TÜRK HAVA YOLLARI'NIN MARKA İMAJINA ETKİSİ: BİR YUMUŞAK GÜÇ UNSURLU OLARAK TÜRK HAVA YOLLARI ÜZERİNE NİCEL BİR ARAŞTIRMA

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Türk Hava Yolları bir devlet şirketi olarak kurulmuştur ve halen şirketin %49'u devlete aittir. Zaman zaman kar etmesine engel olsa da Türk Hava Yolları her zaman Türk dış politikasına uygun bir şekilde hareket etmiştir. Bu çalışmanın amacı; Havayollarının devletler için anlamını ve yumuşak güç unsuru olarak önemini açıklamak, ayrıca Türk diplomasisin Türk Hava Yolları'nın marka imajı üzerindeki etkilerini bilimsel metotlarla ortaya koyarak havayolu-devlet ilişkisini anlamaktır. Bu çalışma bölgedeki Türk imajı, Türkiye imajı ve Türk Hava Yolları imajı arasındaki bağlantıyı anlamlandırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmayı bilimsel temellere oturtmak adına, hedef kitlenin Türkiye ve Türk hava yolları algısını ölçen anket İstanbul havalimanında 24-27 Aralık 2021 tarihleri arasında 126 Afrikalı yolcuya uygulanmıştır. Anket sonuçları SPSS ile analiz edilmiştir. Sonuçlar Türkiye imajı, Türk imajı ve Türk Hava Yolları imajlarının arasında pozitif bir korelasyon olduğunu doğrulamaktadır. Alınan sonuçlara göre bu alanların her hangi birinde yapılacak pozitif bir aktivite diğer tarafların imajını da aynı oranda etkileyecektir. Alınan sonuçlarından anlaşılmaktadır ki, Türkiye'nin Afrika'da kurmuş olduğu uzun süreli ilişkiler Türk Hava Yolları'nın marka imajına pozitif olarak etki etmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kamu diplomasisi, Marka imajı, Türk Hava Yolları, Yumuşak güç

## ABSTRACT

### THE EFFECTS OF TURKISH PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN SUB SAHARAN FRANCOPHONE AFRICAN COUNTRIES ON THE BRAND IMAGE OF TURKISH AIRLINES: A QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH ABOUT TURKISH AIRLINES AS A SOFT POWER TOOL

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Turkish Airlines was founded as a state airline, and today, 49% of the airline belongs to the Republic of Türkiye. From the very beginning, Turkish Airlines acted in accordance with Turkish foreign policy even though it prevented the airline from making a profit. The purpose of this research is to understand the Government-Airline relations within the scope of Turkish Public Diplomacy's effects on Turkish Airlines' brand image with scientific methods. This study aims to understand the relation between Turkish image, Türkiye's image, and Turkish Airlines' image on the continent. To base this study on a scientific basis, a survey is conducted in Istanbul Airport between 24-27<sup>th</sup> of December 2021 with 126 Sub-Saharan African participants. Results are analyzed by SPSS. The study clearly reveals that there is a positive linear correlation between the images of Türkiye, Turkish people, and Turkish Airlines in African people. It can be concluded that the Turkish Government's long-lasting policies and activities in African countries have a positive effect on Turkish Airlines' brand image.

**Keywords:** Brand image, Public diplomacy, Soft Power, Turkish Airlines

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## LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AKP	Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)
ETOPS	Extended Range Twin-Engine Operations
EU	European Union
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
KMO	Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OWI	Office of Wartime Information
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
TL	Turkish Lira
TMV	Turkish Maarif Foundation
TSP	Tuükiye Scholarship Program
U.A.E.	United Arab Emirates
U.K.	United Kingdom
U.S	United States
UN	United Nations
USD	US Dollars
WWI	World War I
WWII	World War II
YTB	Yurt Dışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar Başkanlığı (Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities)

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

*“Omnes viae Romam ducunt”*

This Roman proverb means, “All roads lead to Rome,” and it describes a historical fact that all roads start/end in Rome. Roman Empire was the first state that gave importance to building a developed road system because, for them, the connection between two cities was a sign of power, and it showed how mighty the state was. Roman Empire built roads to all corners of the Roman Empire from its capital and connected Rome to the ancient World. Even though building roads did not have any positive economic impact (Laurence, 2002) -because the ancient trade routes were at sea and the roads were not safe enough to carry goods- Roman Empire made the roads built as a state policy. International trade was based on port cities, and the goods were distributed from big cities by the sea to the inner cities. On the other hand, building roads provided political and military power to the Roman Empire. The developed road network was a symbol of the might of the Roman Empire. Building roads to the most remote area of the Roman Empire was a clear message to the World that the it could reach every corner of the World.

Starting with the Roman Empire, connecting cities had always been a political issue to keep the cities in interaction not only commercially but also militarily and intellectually. In this regard, when the first railroad of the Ottoman Empire from Istanbul to Europe was planned, railroads needed to pass through the garden of Topkapı Palace. This was considered a big issue by the ministers. To answer these concerns, Sultan Abdülaziz said, “As long as there will be a railroad in my country, they can even build it on my back” (Çetin, 2010). After Sultan Abdülaziz, his brother Sultan Abdulhamid II made a great effort into building a railroad from Istanbul to Medina during his reign. Because this railroad could shorten the travel time from Istanbul to Holy Lands for the Hadj travelers, this railroad was also supposed to

increase trade and drive the regions' economy. Therefore, it would strengthen the central power of the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, it played an important role in logistics during the First World War.

After the foundation of the Republic of Türkiye, Turkish Government continued to invest in railroads. It is stated in the 10<sup>th</sup> Year March<sup>1</sup> (10. Yıl marşı) that the most significant source of pride was increasing the number of railroads to every corner of the country;

*“Demir ağlarla ördük ana yurdu dört baştan<sup>2</sup>”*

“We made a net of steel in every corner of our homeland.”

When the AKP (Justice and Development Party) administration got into power in 2002, they put maximum effort into road building and used it as a propaganda tool. During 19 years of governance, they built 26.764 km of highway. Furthermore, the total number of tunnels are raised from 83 to 367 (Yenişafak, 2019). Building new advanced road systems across the country has always been a source of pride for the AKP government, and politicians referenced the new highways in most speeches.

Briefly, having developed road systems has always been a source of pride for the countries, and it shows the capacity, power, and might of a nation. Today there is a way of connecting two cities without a continental bond, even if the cities are thousands of kilometers apart and situated overseas or it requires passing through several other countries: Air travel! It is today's most advanced logistic system, which shows how mighty the country is. Air connection between two cities allows transferring a person or a good to the most remote area of the World within hours. Airlines carry millions of people and thousands of tons of goods every day.

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<sup>1</sup> This march is written for the 10th anniversary of Republic of Türkiye

<sup>2</sup> Onuncu yıl marşı: 10th Anniversary March

## 1.1. The Problem Statement

Turkish Airlines is one of the biggest companies in the World in the air travel business, and it is a source of pride for the Turkish nation with its thriving business. Moreover, Turkish Airlines became one of the leading companies among hundreds of rival companies with its sustainable business modal. Today, airlines are not only a branch of the business World, but they are also a symbol of countries with their capacity to reach any part of the World.

Chicago convention considers aircraft as ambassadors of the country and as the soil of the state in which they are registered (ICAO, 2016). Which means that the Turkish flag on Turkish Airlines' tail is not just a tiny icon; it is the symbol of the Republic of Türkiye and makes the aircraft land of Türkiye. Therefore, each aircraft is widening Turkish borders each day and maintains connections with hundreds of other countries. To this end, flag carrier airlines are the face of countries.

Turkish Airlines is not only a private company but also a soft power tool for the Turkish republic that connects Türkiye to the World. In this regard, Turkish Airlines should considered not only as a private company. Therefore, Turkish Airlines should be considered the hand of Türkiye that reaches the World's edges. Without it, Türkiye would lose its connection with the World and be amputated. Therefore, Turkish Airlines and the Turkish republic cannot be discussed separately.

In the literature review section, it will be pointed out the significance of 'perception' and 'image.' Today how something is perceived is as equally important as what it is in reality. This makes the 'perception' exceptional for marketers, politicians, public relations, promoters, etc. Changing the truth is not always possible, and even if it would be possible, it may be expensive, complicated, or time demanding; but changing the perception is always possible, at least to some degree. Knowing it, perceptions are tried to be changed by systematic works such as cunning plans and messages. Besides commercial marketers, politicians and political communicators, diplomats, communication experts, promoters, and many others use the tools and techniques to shape the mind of their target groups and to create the desired images of their products (goods, services, ideas, etc.) in minds. The mind is important because it is the main

decision-making and acting mechanism of human being, such as buy, consume, do not buy, accept, reject, react, do not react, etc. As a result, the mind is the main area to work on to create and shape the perceptions in the desired way for many areas including, but not limited to, politics, international relations, and diplomacy, education, civil society, as well as business and trade. However, the first step knowing about the current state of perceptions and the image of the subject concerned.

As already been pointed out, the perception is how a product (a good or a service) is perceived and seen by the target groups. On the other hand, the image simply refers to the mental picture of the product created in the people's mind and is closely related to the perception. Marketers aim to create a positive perception and desired images of their products (de Chernatony, McDonald, & Wallace, 2013). However, this is mostly not an easy procedure. Consumers receive thousands of messages from different sources, including competitors, every single day about many kinds of goods and services. There is severe competition to have a place in their minds that is why, it is a challenging task to settle down and leave a mark in consumers' minds. Positive perceptions and desired images can only be created in people's mind by planned and well-crafted marketing messages through time, which sometimes takes many years. It may also require significant investments, like the case of brand building.

As the importance of public diplomacy has increased in recent decades, the degree of need to apply more effective tools and techniques has also increased largely. Thus, marketing tools and practices have been deployed widely in the area of public diplomacy mainly because i) their effectiveness is already proven and ii) both fields have much in common such as creating positive perceptions and good images (de Chernatony, McDonald, & Wallace, 2013), building strong brands, and changing the attitudes and behaviors of people towards a purpose.

Additionally, both marketing and public diplomacy are applied in complex environments, in which the expected results may be positively or negatively affected and even be determined by various external factors, some of which may be predicted,

some even may not be estimated at all.<sup>3</sup> This increases the risk of achieving the expected results, where some unexpected outcomes may also occur. However, it is known that, generally, there is a close relationship between the images of the country and the products of that country in international markets. (Karabulut, 2018) In other words, the country image and the product image affect each other, and it may contribute to creating new opportunities both for trade and diplomacy.

## **1.2. The Aim of the Study**

Airlines are among the most critical soft power tools owing to their capabilities, revenues, employment generations, and visibility in the international area. However, the complexity of airline management and the solid cash-burn nature of the aviation industry make airlines vulnerable and dangerous. It is hard to achieve being a profit-making airline in such a condition instead of being a burden to governments. Thus, as an airline is an important soft power tool, to be managed correctly, should airlines use all opportunities, including diplomatic and even political relations? Turkish Airlines did not only follow Türkiye's opening to Africa policy but it also did it in a profitable way, which makes this move very important. Because flag carrier airlines sometimes act as an organ of the state and open new routes by the state's interest whether that route is profitable or not. However, this is not sustainable for the air business. Turkish Airlines managed to create a sustainable network all around Africa while following Türkiye's foreign policy in the region. This is why; Africa became very important for the air travel business of Türkiye.

This study aims to clarify how important airlines are, as a tool for governments, and the thesis will focus on Turkish Airlines as a soft power tool of Türkiye. It will study government-airline relations.

For this reason, this study will focus on the relationship of Turkish Airlines between francophone African countries and the Turkish Government, and examine these

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<sup>3</sup> For instance, a company's competitor's wrong advertising or promotion campaign may affect its products' image or sale positively, as the reverse may also hold true. Similarly, a third party's activities may also contribute to the image of the company or the sale of its products, while the opposite may also be true.

relations contribution to air travel. In other words, this study is being done to expose the effect of diplomatic relations on the air travel business. This study will mainly focus on Turkish Airlines' operations in French-speaking (francophone) African countries. Therefore, his thesis investigates the Turkish Opening to Africa policy and the effect of diplomatic relations on bilateral trade and air transport business in the scope of Turkish Airlines.

The thesis will start by explaining the relations between the Government and means of transport to understand the relationship between diplomacy and the air travel business. Then it will study the relations between Turkish Airlines and Turkish Government. Next, "public diplomacy" and "soft power" concepts will be explained to understand Turkish Airlines' role in Türkiye's international relations. Afterwards, Türkiye's and Turkish Airlines' opening to Africa plans will be explained. Next, it will examine bilateral relations with 15 SSA countries. Finally, it will question whether there is a correlation between international relations and the air travel business by quantitative analysis.

In other words, this study examines Turkish Airlines as a soft power tool of the Turkish republic within the scope of international relations with 15 SSA (Sub-Saharan Africa) francophone countries.

The necessity of having positive perceptions and desired images of the countries and the products offered to or the brands taking place in the market is of great concern for company managers, diplomats, and of course, researchers to understand how those are perceived and what kind of images people have in their minds. It is also concerned with whether the perception and image of a brand (or a product) are affected by the activities (policies) of a country or a government, specifically by public diplomacy activities. Therefore, as an almost 90 years old and established international brand, this question is also valid for Turkish Airlines and should be researched mainly in the context of the Turkish government's new policy of opening implemented actively to African countries since 2010. In this context, *the research question* is whether or not the public diplomacy activities of the Turkish government in some African countries have any effect on the brand image of Turkish Airlines and what kind of perception

and image Türkiye and Turkish Airlines have in those countries. These two are main questions that need to be answered for academic, political, and managerial purposes.

### 1.3. The Research Questions

Airlines are one of the most critical soft power tools for many points, including; their nature, revenue and employment generation capabilities, visibility in the international area, brand development opportunity for countries, flexibility to connecting many destinations, and employability for commercial, political and diplomatic purposes in the short term. Besides those, the complexity of airline management and the solid cash-burn nature of the aviation industry make airline companies vulnerable and subjected to risk. It is hard to achieve a profitable company in such a condition instead of being a burden to the Government. Thus, as an important soft power tool, airlines are supposed to use all the tools and methods, including commercial, political, and even diplomatic ones.

Based on the research problem, the study aims to determine the Sub-Saharan Francophone African people's level of brand images of *Türkiye*, *Turkish People*, and *Turkish Airlines*, and whether or not the public diplomacy activities of the Turkish Government in those countries have any effects on the brand image of *Türkiye*, *Turkish People*, and *Turkish Airlines*.

In this context, the study also has the following purposes:

- 1 – Determine the brand image of *Türkiye*, *Turkish People*, and *Turkish Airlines* among Africans
- 2 – Determine if the brand images of *Türkiye*, *Turkish People*, and *Turkish Airlines* show any considerable differences concerning some demographic characteristics of Africans.
- 3 - *Understand* the level of egocentrism among African people concerning Turkish Airlines
- 4 - Determine if there are relationships among the images of *Türkiye*, *Turkish People*, and *Turkish Airlines*, and *the level of egocentrism of African people*.
- 5 – Determine if the egocentrism among Africans shows any significant differences based on some specific demographic features of African people.

#### **1.4. The Structure of the Study**

This thesis consists of two main parts and seven chapters. The first part; it discusses the theoretical background of this study. First chapter consists of a brief introduction to the thesis. In the second chapter, the academic background of the subject will be explained by focusing on “*public diplomacy*” and “*soft power*” concepts. The third chapter; it narrates Türkiye’s and Turkish Airlines’ opening to Africa plan. In the fourth chapter, a brief explanation of Türkiye’s relation with countries of interest and Turkish Airlines’ position in these countries will be taken part. In the second part, it conducts quantitative research, which was done in Istanbul Airport between 24-27<sup>th</sup> of December with 126 passengers from francophone SSA countries. In the fifth chapter, the methodology used will be introduced. The sixth chapter contains the quantitative analysis of the research and its results. In addition, the final chapter is created for the conclusion and discussions for future studies.

This study does not contain information considered trade secrets, such as passenger fares, revenues, load factors, and passenger numbers on a specific route. However, it will discuss the total numbers as much as possible. Another constraint for this study is the lack of information from the African side. Most African countries are not transparent in terms of trade statistics, diplomatic relations chronology, and air airline statistics. However, various data from international sources is used to verify official Turkish sources and complete the missing parts. After lengthy procedures, due to limited permission, the research was conducted at İstanbul Airport for four days and between 12:00 pm and 8:00 pm, from 24<sup>th</sup> of December, 2021 to 27<sup>th</sup> of December, 2021. The focus group was based on 16 francophone SSA countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Gabon, Guinea, Ivory Coasts, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Niger, Rwanda, and Senegal). But most of the samples are collected from the citizens of 8 targeted countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Ivory Coasts, Mali, Niger and Dem. Rep. of Congo). Only 19.8% of the samples are collected from the citizens of eight other countries. This created an inequality among samples.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section explains two main concepts of this study; “Public Diplomacy”, and “Soft Power,” which are crucial to understand the meaning of an airline for a government. As it will be explained in detail, these two concepts are vital for a government that wants to create a sustainable international relations strategy.

Public diplomacy is a way of diplomacy that occurs between governments and the public of other countries. This section explains why it is essential for governments to have direct relations with other publics and how it is done. The usage of airlines as a soft power tool by governments is also explained. Because power is not only achieved by having a large military. There are different ways to gain power. Today countries choose to affect other countries without using their army. Coercion leaves its place to influence, which is a more effective and long way to get the expected outcome. This section explains the “soft power” concept and how it is applied.

#### **2.1. Public Diplomacy**

After the cold war, the World transformed into a multipolar power-based that was bipolar before. Emerging technologies brought new instruments to the World of politics and diplomacy. The power of information and communication created new mechanisms in politics, and public opinion became more and more critical over the years. In such a World, societies became political subjects, and communication with the public became vital. Emerging technologies broke governments’ monopoly of information. Therefore, states are forced to adapt themselves to the changing nature and adopt a proper communication strategy with people. Countries which are able to adapt themselves to the new technology, use communication means to persuade public opinion in their favor. They also orient this transformation to their diplomacy. To earn public support, leaders started to use communication channels as a way of diplomacy.

Today most leaders use Twitter and other social media tools to convince or inform people about their agenda.

Old fashion diplomacy continues mostly behind the doors, and it is still a very important way of diplomatic relations. However, there are new players on the playground, and classical diplomacy is no longer enough in international relations. Because today there is another organism to convince societies in the international arena besides governments which is the people. As a result, new tools of diplomacy close the gap in international relations.

### **2.1.1. Components of Public Diplomacy**

Public diplomacy is a way of communication that occurs between states and targeted publics, unlike traditional diplomacy, which remains between states. Public diplomacy consists of five components: Listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, international news broadcasting, and exchange diplomacy (Cull, 2008).

Listening is collecting data about the public and their opinions. In other words, it is the attempt to know the mind of other people (Cull, 2008). Opening new embassies can be considered as a part of listening because by doing so, a country can start to learn about other countries through the reports from diplomats. Historical records show that during the middle age, Venetian diplomats in İstanbul wrote reports about social life, market prices, gossip, beliefs, etc. Thanks to these reports, Venetian governors knew a lot about the capital of the Ottoman Empire and they were setting their agenda according to this information flow.

In his article, Cull (2008) underlines that the need to listen in public diplomacy must be more than a rhetorical strategy. It has to be visible. In linguistics, a conversation does not have to be always verbal. Metalinguistic enables people to communicate without using a verbal statement. When someone says a word to another, he does not always expect to receive a verbal answer to maintain a correct conversation. Because an act can also be the answer. For example, if someone says, “Can you open the window” to another one, the expected response is not the sentence “Yes, I can.” Instead, it is expected from that person to go and open that window. In other words,

he expects action rather than words. It is the same in public diplomacy. The listening stage can only be meaningful with a move. People or governments do not need to hear that they are being understood. To be persuaded that the other side is listening to them, they want to be responded to by actions rather than words.

Advocacy is promoting a particular policy actively in an international area. Türkiye's aid to other countries can be seen as an example of advocacy policy. Because Türkiye wants to be known as a charitable country on the World stage. At the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, Turkish Government sent a lot of protective equipment such as masks, protective glasses, etc. to other countries including the most developed and rich ones such as France and U.S. With this act, Türkiye wanted to show the World that Türkiye is willing to share its resources with each country, whether they are in need or not, without even being requested for it.

What momentarily matters in advocacy policy is not the image but the identity. The image should represent the natural values of the country to convince people, or the state should transform itself into a better form of itself. Otherwise, its efforts will go in vain. It is impossible to make people believe a lie in a globalized World where people are able to reach all sources of information. States should not try to sell a fake image. Their advocacy policy should project the reality. As a famous Turkish poet and philosopher, Yunus Emre, said:

*“Either seem as you are or be as you seem.”*

**Cultural diplomacy** is about exporting the Culture to other countries to make other societies know them better. Language schools are the best examples of cultural diplomacy. Learning a language is the best way to learn a culture and feel like them. International seminars, exhibitions, and art events are also a part of cultural diplomacy. One of the latest examples of cultural diplomacy can be worldwide franchise museums. There is a Louvre Museum in Abu Dhabi, originally a French museum, yet re-created in the U.A.E. (United Arab Emirates). There is also a Madame Tussauds Museum in İstanbul which is also a branch of another French museum. These organizations make people know and admire other cultures.

The Foundation of “Alliance Française,” a Worldwide organization founded for teaching the French language abroad in 1883, was the very first public diplomacy move in history. France wanted to communicate with other nations by teaching them the French Language and the French Culture. Today France has great influence over francophone countries in terms of politics, economy, trade, and bureaucracy.

Diasporas and migrants are also a part of cultural diplomacy. Today, there are millions of people living out of their country, which is called as ex-pats or migrants. These people have political and economic power over the host countries. For example, 11 % of France’s population consists of migrants. There are also around 5 million Turkish migrants living in Germany. These migrants took their culture to these countries and made long-lasting connections with the host society. Besides, every summer, migrants travel to their countries and bring the culture and language they have learned abroad. However, this connectivity may help but does not guarantee sympathy for society (Cull, 2008). Racism, inequality, lack of social justice, and inequality in opportunity are some causes which may pave the way for disintegration and lead migrants to marginalization.

Exchange diplomacy means hosting or sending individuals to other countries for educational purposes. The exchange mechanism mainly contributes to both countries by creating long-lasting cultural bridges between two country. Exchange students become individual cultural ambassadors between countries. International scholarship programs such as Erasmus and Comenius are the most significant examples of exchange diplomacy. There are many other examples of scholarship programs such as the U.S. (United States) Fulbright program or Turkish scholarships program that Türkiye offers to international students who are willing to study in Türkiye. Türkiye scholarship program allows thousands of international students to study in Türkiye, and most of whom are from Africa.

International news broadcasting is the last component of public diplomacy. It requires a certain level of technology. In the 20th century, technology developed so fast that it created new ways of communication. State-funded news agencies and radio stations started to promote their countries worldwide. TV channels such as BBC are promoting their countries not only by diffusing international news but also by broadcasting TV

shows and series which create an image of the country. Lately, Turkish series have been exported to dozens of other countries. These series created a new image of Türkiye on people's mind, particularly in North Africa.

Another example is a survey conducted in France. In May 1945, just after WWII (World War II), research showed that 57% of the French thought that Russia contributed most to the German defeat, and there were only 20 % of French who gave credit to the U.S. for the victory. In 2004, the same study was conducted again. The result was shocking for some people but understandable for some others who are aware of the power of public diplomacy tools. The result was radically different; the U.S. was considered in first place this time, and French public opinion thought that Russia contributed only 20 % of the victory against the Nazis. This was quite the opposite of the first research. Researchers named this "The Hollywood Effect" because Hollywood movies changed the perception of French people. Today, most people think that the U.S. defeated Hitler in WWII, and Hollywood practically changed history and added a new victory to the U.S.

When the U.S. joined WW2, they created OWI (Office of Wartime Information) to inform the public with accurate information about the U.S., and they started to use Hollywood as a propaganda tool. Producers were also contended to step out of the country and reaching a broader audience (Nye, 2008). Therefore, American propaganda started, and it still continues.

Nye mentions in his article that the ones who ripped up the iron curtain by demolishing the Berlin wall were not artilleries (Nye, 2008). They were hammers and bulldozers used by ordinary people. With the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the Cold War ended with the victory of western countries. It is also considered a big win for the U.S. without firing a single bullet.

Emerging technologies are still creating new ways of communication, such as social media, which enables more accessible communication but makes it more difficult to control the information.

### 2.1.2. Main Concepts of Public Diplomacy

According to Ekşi (2017), public diplomacy built on four main concepts; Public opinion, civil society, soft power, and diplomacy.

In 2002, Turkish **public opinion** was against a war with Iraq, so Türkiye refused to send troops to Iraq or let U.S. soldiers use Turkish soil for the invasion of Iraq. Then, the U.S. changed its war plans and sent its forces through the Persian Gulf. Nye again affirms that, it was essential to gain public opinion by using public diplomacy tools, Even though foreign leaders are friendly and they agree with you.

As public diplomacy can be from state to public, it can also be from public to public. Relations between societies effects each other's opinions on a specific subject. The term **civil society** first used in Ancient Greece. It describes civil citizens who supervise states, discuss policies and create pressure on governors (Ekşi, 2017). Civil society consists of NGOs (Non-governmental Organizations), human rights organizations, universities, professors, artists, celebrities, etc. These people or organizations have a certain level of influence over others. For example, Cristiano Ronaldo did not want a can of Coca-Cola on the table during one of his press briefings, and Coca-Cola's shares went down on the stock market immediately. The company lost 4 billion \$ from its market price (Nagarajan, 2021).

**The soft power** concept was invented by Joseph Nye, a Harvard professor, in 1990. For the first time, he mentioned a source of power other than military power and economic power; "the power of affection." At first, some politicians did not believe this new concept, and some others avoided mentioning a "soft" version of power because of the potential risks of criticism from the public. Because the U.S. was (and still is) the biggest military power in the World, therefore some politicians thought speaking about a "soft" power would make them seem weak. Nye developed his soft power concept over the years, and eventually, most leaders put this new concept into their agenda. At first, Nye discovered the power of being admired and being taken as an example and put this into words. Later he developed this idea as a tool of public diplomacy.

**Diplomacy** is the implementation of foreign policy. It has transformed a lot since 1990. The end of the cold war and emerging technology reshaped global diplomacy. Individuals became more and more important. In addition, diplomacy actors started to involve individuals or civil organizations, which created public diplomacy.

### **2.1.3. Türkiye's Implementation of Public Diplomacy**

As mentioned above, some state actors underestimated the “soft power” idea. However, today most of the governments realized its importance. Turkish presidential spokesperson İbrahim Kalın wrote several articles and books about soft power and public diplomacy concepts. He explains Türkiye's involvement in global diplomacy and now claims a higher position for Türkiye in the international area.

As Türkiye engages new regions and emerging actors as well as continues relations with its old allies, it develops new capacities for the various elements of soft power and strategic communication in the regional and global context. (Kalın, 2011)

Kalın confirms that Türkiye takes the stage in World politics and becomes a newly emerging power to create a more democratic and fairer World. He thinks that people can live in harmony and prosperity only in a World where resources are fairly shared. Indeed, Türkiye's role in the international arena should be the defender of equality (Kalın, 2011).

Türkiye has a unique position with its history, culture, and lifestyle. Türkiye is both a European country and a Middle Eastern country. Türkiye is the only secular country whose population consists of 99% of Muslims. The Turkish republic comes from an ancestor which was one of the most significant and most long-lasting empires in history. Geographically and culturally, Türkiye is part of both the Islamic and European worlds at the same time. Türkiye is a member of the European Council, NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) as well as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. Briefly, Türkiye is a bridge between the West and East. Even though the World has long been managed by western countries with a western outlook, economic power, technology, and intellectual power are shifting toward Asia. Türkiye stands at a key point in this new non-Euro-centric World. Türkiye is a modern Islamic country

that embraces both the West and the East. It is a model for the Islamic World to adopt democracy, transparency, freedoms, and human rights.

To explain Türkiye's position in the international area, on 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2010, Türkiye institutionalized its public diplomacy activities by creating the Prime Ministry Office of Public Diplomacy (Turan, 2017) with the motto of "Türkiye has a word to say and a story to share." Szondi (2008) explains public diplomacy as influencing targeted countries public and making them force their governments to change their policies. In time, public diplomacy practices changed; once, the leading public diplomacy actor was government, but today, private companies, organizations, and NGOs took their place actively. At first, information distributed by radios and newspapers, then the TV came up, and it took their places. Today, the internet and social media are the most extensive information broadcasters. Before, there was propaganda of the state on the agenda, but today, governments create their agenda with cooperation and creating a national brand. States used to put forward their international image and prestige, but today they care about "soft power" and "national branding." They used to transmit only their message; today, they maintain bilateral communication and build relationships. Even though there are radical changes in practice, the aim of public diplomacy has always been to impress the targeted public. According to Nielsen, there are three critical activities in public diplomacy; reactive diplomacy, proactive diplomacy, and building relations. The reactive approach consists of following the information and news on the targeted public and taking quick action against any negative information. The proactive approach is the attempting to create a positive image by organizing exchange programs, sports organizations, etc., and staying in touch. The building relations approach is the longest, hardest but the most effective way of public diplomacy; scholarship programs, exchange of students or labors, etc.

In the information age, states became transparent, and the need for democratic accountability rose. Thus, traditional diplomacy channels evolved into a new form, and NGOs, corporations, media companies, and international organizations have become essential actors in diplomacy.

This situation created different kinds of diplomacies, such as:

- NGO diplomacy
- Diaspora diplomacy
- Political parties or political view diplomacy
- Brand diplomacy

Brand diplomacy is a way of diffusing national identity, values, and culture over national brands. Economy takes an important place in international relations for that matter, political and cultural relations pivot around trade relations. After WWII, there was a theory that trade relations could prevent wars. Developing bilateral trade in the Eurozone brought peace and prosperity to the continent. There are still a lot of articles about preventing conflicts through economic relations.

Furthermore, economic relations do not require any cultural or political proximity. They can flourish on their own. This makes trade a very potent communication tool. International brands interact with the people with whom they carry out their commercial activities (Köksoy, 2016). These people associate their perception of the brand with the country to which it belongs. These perceptions contribute to the brand image of that country, and the country's image contributes to all other brands of that country. While Italian brands represent mode and design, Japanese brands represent technology, France represents love and luxury, and Germany represents engineering. Nevertheless, what does Türkiye represent? Türkiye is well known for its hospitality and Turkish coffee but are these all about Türkiye? Türkiye has unique tourist destinations, and Turkish cuisine is very rich. The public diplomacy era started under Turgut Özal's administration in the 90s in Türkiye. Firstly, Türkiye communicated with central Asian countries with which Türkiye shares a common language, religion, culture, or blood. Then Türkiye developed relationships with Balkan, Middle Eastern, and North African countries that it has historical links. In the third step, Türkiye got in touch with African countries. Türkiye lately proved itself in another field, which is aviation. Türkiye become one of the most important aviation hubs in the World, and Turkish Airlines is the most critical Turkish public diplomacy tool because it makes the most significant contribution to Türkiye's brand image. Turkish Airlines has been awarded six years in a row as the best airline in Europe. It also won various

international prizes for inflight service quality, business class lounge, etc. Turkish Airlines also puts together each value of Türkiye and sells it to the World.

#### **2.1.4. Brand Diplomacy**

*Image is the impression that people leave on each other.* (Karabulut, 2018)

Every person and foundation has a positive or negative image that is formed naturally or created intentionally. Image is about how to be known, and can be controlled, shaped, and managed. Proper image management brings achievements. And the opposite could bring harm. For example, the Japanese are known for honesty and discipline. This image enables them to travel all around the World without any visa requirement. Corporate image and brand image play an important role in public communication. At this point, the image of a country affects the images of the brands that belong to that country and vice versa. Most German brands use the “German engineering” motto while promoting their brands. On the other hand, China has the capacity to produce the highest quality and high-tech goods. However, the sticker “made in China” brings to the mind a cheap and poor-quality product. Karabulut explains perception as a cumulative concept (Karabulut, 2018) formed by experiences. Shortly, systematic repetition builds perceptions. Whether they are positive or negative, it takes time and a lot of effort to change them. This is why, proactive perception management is highly important. The aim of creating an image is to gain a certain level of prestige or reputation. To achieve this goal; a correct communication strategy should be established at the right time, in the right way, to gain the support of the public.

A brand is the set of values that separates a corporation from its competitors. Turkish Airlines promotes itself as the airline flying more country than any other airline and builds its brand perception around this idea. Its last commercial, “Pangea,” emphasizes it once again. Despite having numerous characteristics which could be promoted, Turkish Airlines wants to be known for its network and effective schedule.

In the beginning, Turkish Airlines was a small regional company. When the labor exchange started between Türkiye and Europe, Turkish airlines adopted the mission

of carrying Turkish migrants between Türkiye and big European cities. Then Turkish Airlines put itself for transporting anyone willing to travel to/from Türkiye. Until 2006, Turkish Airlines remained a small regional company. In 2006, Turkish Airlines decided to grow its fleet and network and become a global player. Since that day, Turkish Airlines has been evolving from a minor aviation actor to a global playmaker and made İstanbul one of the most important aviation hubs in the World. While growing fast, Turkish Airlines used ethnic instruments such as Turkish coffee, Turkish cuisine, and hospitality to create a brand image. It even created a brand called “We’re from Türkiye” to promote Turkish products. In this way, Turkish Airlines became the most important actor for Turkish public diplomacy and a soft power tool for Türkiye. Turkish Airlines draw its strenght from its hub, İstanbul, which was the capital city of two empires for 1500 years, and it is the cultural and economic capital of Türkiye. Turkish Airlines promotes its brand through the history of İstanbul and promotes İstanbul by connecting this magnificent city with more countries than any other airline does. While Turkish Airlines represent local values, it also cooperates with globally known celebrities such as Kobe Bryant, Lionel Messi, and Morgan Freeman to reach each individual on Earth. It uses international mottos; “globally yours!”, “widen your World” and “discover.” In 2015 Turkish Airlines defined itself as “Türkiye’s ambassador of taste in the sky.” (Turkish Airlines, 2016) This proves that Turkish Airlines is a tool of Türkiye’s brand diplomacy. When Turkish Airlines became the airline that flies more countries than any other airline, it gave a worldwide advertisement. Köksoy (2016) points out the importance of this advertisement, because it used the Turkish national anthem in the publicity; musicians from different parts of the World were playing Turkish national anthem with their local instruments. This advertisement was proof that Turkish Airlines represents Türkiye.

NGOs and companies take a significant role in public diplomacy. They are more trustable and effective but hard to control. Turkish Airlines carries the Turkish flag all around the globe with their aircraft. It also has publicity broadcasts on hundreds of different countries. In remote areas of the World, such as Latin America, Africa, and the far East, where people barely know about Türkiye, these publicities give people an image of Türkiye. Turkish Airlines connects African countries to the World and offers them a high-quality service with Turkish hospitality. This supports the Turkish mission in Africa to give Africans positive thoughts and feelings about Türkiye. Turkish

Airlines takes part in most aid campaigns in Africa organized by the Turkish government or NGOs. Turkish Airlines is the only airline that flies to Somalia. Regardless of economic, technical, and security problems, Turkish Airlines does not discriminate against any African country, and serves most of them equally. This makes the Turkish image stronger in Africa. In addition, Türkiye's opening to Africa policy and Turkish NGOs activities in Africa contributes to Turkish Airlines' brand image on the continent.

## **2.2. Soft Power**

In this section, an intangible version of power will explained. It is hard to measure, but it is as effective as hard power when used correctly. Power is the ability to affect others to get the outcome that one wants. Nye says that one can do it in three ways. In addition to the carrot or stick equation, he invented a new dimension of power, which is attraction. In other words, besides coercion and payment, there is a third source of power. It is called "attraction" or "persuasion." It serves the purpose of convincing others to get the desired outcome (Nye,1990). These intangible power resources are culture, ideology, economy, technology, democracy, education, etc.

### **2.2.1. Definition**

What is power? According to Joseph Nye (2009), a Harvard professor and inventor of the soft power concept, power is the ability to achieve one's purposes or goals. The ability to control others is the outcome of power, and gives various advantages to those who hold it. The classical power of the states was based on military and economic power, which is now called hard power. Those days, it was easier to measure power because it based on population and territory: Population meant workforce and soldiers, and territory meant natural resources and nutrition. However, today military power gives its place to technology, education, and economic growth. Today, one does not have to control territory to have natural resources. These resources are accessible thanks to trade, international relations, and technology. Today, the most important resource is oil. However, most countries with have oil reserves do not have the technology for changing crude oil to gasoline. Therefore, for a country, having resources is not enough to be strong in the international arena. Military power loses its

importance day by day against human resources, intellectual accumulation, geographical advantages, etc.

Power shifts and changes its form day by day. It evolves from one shape to another; it shifts from military-rich to capital-rich and then information-rich. Therefore, information becomes the most significant source of power, and capital follows it. Raw materials are also losing importance against organizational skills. Today most companies are building production lines in Asia, but the mastermind behind the design of the product stays in western countries. In such an organization, the producer and raw material providers are less important than the patent owner of the product. This proves the importance of knowledge and talent.

Kalin (2011a) defines soft power as getting something done that you want without using hard power but convincing them to have the same goals. Soft power is a slow process, but it is permanent. Briefly, soft power is a value-based notion of power.

Historical connections and cultural similarities or the ability of one country to influence another in terms of economic emergence and political stability, translate into distinct advantages when it comes to establishing stable, consistent bilateral relations. (*Uslu, 2015*)

Uslu explains soft power as a set of advantages over other countries when used accordingly. Historical boundaries, sharing a common culture, or having advanced values that make others envy, the level of prosperity and purchasing power of the society turns into severe advantages on the international stage.

Soft Power is a way of attraction that occurs between countries. In other words, one country convinces the other one by showing its attractive sides to get the outcome it wants. In such a case, the seduced country acts according to the seducer country's demand of its own will. Here, there is not any kind of coercion. A country's culture, values, economy, wealth, and prosperity level draws other countries. They can all admire or envy its economy, technology, democracy or prosperity, or the combination of all of these. Knowing how to use these features is the subject of "soft power." With appropriate use of its potential such as France and Japan, a country can make all other countries admire them and benefit from this admiration in the international area. The

public diplomacy is an old tool of soft power strategy, but it concerns the relations with civil society rather than the states. To properly use these tools, countries should set a schedule to attract other countries and societies by using every feature of their country.

Nye (2008) resumes the ability of “soft power” with one sentence in his article; “If I can get you to want to do what I want, then I do not have to force you to do what you do not want.” Shortly, soft power is the ability to make others want what you want. Admitting that sometimes countries cannot get the outcomes they wish to even after winning the war, soft power can be mightier than any military. For example, France and U.K. (United Kingdom) thought there would be peace on the continent after winning WWI (World War I), but it brought only another World War, which was the bloodiest and wildest that Europe saw. This outcome of WWI was not expected, and it did not succeed in finishing the wars against Germany. Nevertheless, today Europe lives in harmony thanks to diplomacy and communication. Countries admire each other and try to collaborate rather than fight with each other.

To this end, countries do not have to use military or economic power to achieve the outcome that they want. They can simply set an agenda to attract other countries and their public. Shortly, soft power stands for an intangible source of influence that can persuade or attract individuals.

### **2.2.2. Application of Soft Power**

A country may obtain the outcomes it wants in World politics because other countries want to follow it. They may display this desire by admiring the country's values, level of prosperity, technology, or culture. Using Culture as a source of power strengthens relations with other countries. Cooperation among governments is essential against new threats. European Union is a top-level organization of collaboration among 26 countries. When it comes to trade wars or bilateral trade agreements EU (European Union) comes to the table as a single country and obtains the same conditions for each country within the union.

After the cold war, the nature of power changed. Today technology and economic growth are more important than population and raw materials. The power does not come from natural resources anymore; it comes from the ability to change the behavior of states. Social awakening made it more difficult to use military power. Russia had been planning to invade Ukraine for a long time, and on 23<sup>th</sup> of February 2022, it started military action against Ukraine. Ukrainian people shared stories and videos from the conflict zone. Moreover, people shared the horror of the war in Ukraine all around the World and showed their attitude against Russia. Even thousands of Russian people protested the war on the streets<sup>4</sup>. On 25<sup>th</sup> of February 2022, Russian newspaper Novaya Gazeta published its daily newspaper in two languages, Russian and Ukrainian. On the cover page, they wrote, “War is madness,” and “We do not see Ukrainian language and people as the enemy.” Even though a country would be at war with another, its population can now see what is happening on the battlefield, react against their government, and push them to stop the war.

On the other hand, during the conflicts, the President of Ukraine, Volodimir Zelenskiy, asked for help from other countries to put pressure on Russia to stop this war. Surprisingly, he also asked for help from Elon Musk himself. Because of conflicts, Ukrainian communication infrastructure was damaged, and Zelenskiy asked Elon Musk to send Starlink satellites over Ukraine to maintain the internet connection in the country, which has a vital role in both military and public communication. This situation shows that soft power tools, technology, and communication even effects in wars.

During this war, NATO member countries did not react as they were threatened. Nevertheless, they started another war against Russia using tools other than the military. First, they announced Putin’s greed for Ukraine all over the World and supported Ukraine in the international public opinion. Secondly, they started a set of sanctions against Russia. They removed Russia from the Swift system, which allows countries to transfer money. They banned Russian airlines from European, Canadian, and U.S. air spaces. Russian airlines ceased their operations in Europe and America.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/World/europe/russia-protests-putin.html>

Russian aircraft are grounded and retained (Hepher & Freed, 2022). Federal Aviation Authority of the U.S. announced that they would no longer let Russian pilots fly in the United States. Russian billionaires' properties retained in Germany, U.S., and U.K. (Lambert, 2022).

Briefly, a new concept of war was born with this war, which occurred away from the war front. As soft power tools are considered as a source of power, western countries are now attacking Russia with full force. However, the power they are using is not military. They use every single bullet of their soft power, and they have already caused such a big loss for Russia that this war is no longer sustainable. These practices will probably open a new page in the history of politics and become the new type of war. In addition, maybe there will be the birth of new terminology which will be named **“Soft War.”**

In bilateral relations, trade becomes a source of power because most countries do not want to lose money, connections, or resources. In each relation, there is a vulnerable part which will be affected more than the other part, if the relationship breaks down (Nye, 1990). Therefore, trade and relations became a source of power. For example, Turkish Airlines is the only international airline flying to Somalia. Anyone who wants to go to Somalia has to take a Turkish Airlines flight. Therefore, they do not want to conflict with Turkish Airlines. On the other hand, Turkish Airlines earns money from this business, and it does not want to lose its market. This situation creates a power balance between parties. In sum, trade power is bipolar in contrast to military power. The economy is considered as one of the soft power tools though it is also listed among hard power tools. It is because the economy can be considered as a hard power tool and a soft power tool at the same time. When a country uses its economy to coerce other countries through sanctions, blockades, etc. economy becomes a source of hard power. On the other hand, when a country builds deep economic relations with another country, and raises bilateral trade, the trade becomes a source of soft power. Neither the sides want to lose this trade. To keep the trade safe, both countries will be eager to keep the peace, or sometimes the vulnerable country can be more sensible to keep it. This creates a source of influence, which can be explained as “soft power.”

Furthermore, in today's World there are many companies having more budgets than dozens of countries. These budgets allow a certain level of power to companies. For example, Turkish airlines generated 13,229 Billion USD in 2019, which is more than 66 countries' GDP (Gross Domestic Product). In other words, Turkish Airlines is richer than 66 countries. This budget makes Turkish Airlines powerful on the international stage.

A superpower can influence but cannot control other parts of the World. Soft power applications are attractive ways of getting the expected outcome. Parents know that if they can shape their children's beliefs and preferences when they are young, their power will be greater and more enduring over their children. Even their children would act as expected because they would embrace the same values as their parents. Using soft power tools in developing countries resembles this example. Developed countries shape other countries' standards, beliefs, values, public orders, etc. On the other hand, using hard power can be too costly and damages both sides. The wiser way to get the outcome one wants is using soft power tools and influencing others.

According to Nye (2009), there are three dimensions of power. First: Military power; U.S. is the biggest power in the World with its large military. Second: Economic power; Europe and Asia share this power with U.S. Third: Transnational relations; it is outside the control of any government. Nobody is in charge, and power is organized chaotically between different actors. This dimension cannot be managed by military or economic power, and it has its own dynamics. The only way to deal with it is cooperation among governments. Moreover, this requires "soft power" to attract others.

### **2.2.3. Türkiye and Soft Power**

According to Kalın (2011), after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Türkiye found itself in a new situation where Türkiye should discover its political, economic, and diplomatic power. Europe and U.S. accepted Türkiye as a strategic ally under NATO against the Soviet threat during the cold war. However, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, this threat is gone. The ending of the cold war started a new era for International Relations. After decades, the World got rid of a bi-polarized system, and the age of a

multi-polarized globe has begun. In such an environment, there was no doubt that Türkiye would step up in the World of diplomacy and bring back its importance to the region.

Therefore, Türkiye diversified its foreign policy and rose as a soft power through its economy, culture, and history in the Middle East, Balkans, and Turkic countries. On the other hand, economic crises, weak coalition governments, and terrorist activities in the 90s kept Türkiye from developing a foreign strategy at first. The rising economy after 2003 allowed Türkiye to adopt a broader foreign policy.

Soft power also requires a strong economy. Without a strong economy, it is not possible to allocate resources to influence other countries. It is not a coincidence that Türkiye accelerated the speed of opening to Africa project after 2009 because Türkiye made big economic progress until 2009. According to Kalın (2011a), there are three principles of Turkish foreign policy:

- Political and economic justice,
- The balance between security and freedom,
- Trade and economic development.

The primary purpose of soft power is to strengthen a country's position in the international arena. Each country has a different way of applying its soft power policy because they all have different historical backgrounds, sources, and potential. Türkiye's young population, growing economy, old historical ties, deep cultural relations, emerging technology, and geographical location can be considered as sources of its soft power potential. This potential enables an alternative to Eurocentric power in Africa.

This study focuses on Africa because Türkiye started to raise its influence over Africa during the last decade, and it uses all of its soft power tools over the continent to develop close relations. Why is Africa so important for both Türkiye and Europe? Africa is important for Türkiye for two reasons; first of all, a big proportion of Africa was ruled by Türkiye's ancestor "Ottoman Empire," and Türkiye wanted to reestablish

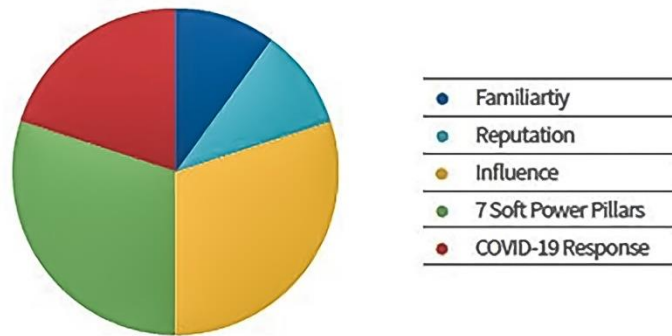
the historical boundaries with Africa. Because Africa had suffered a lot during the last century and Türkiye wants to bear a hand with these countries. Second, there are many Muslim African countries, and Türkiye feels close to these countries culturally and wants to create new boundaries and long-lasting relations with them. In the end, Türkiye decided to create ties with all African countries without exception.

Africa is also important because it is a promising continent in terms of natural resources. However, it does not have the technology to convert the raw material into the product. For example, SSA holds 7 % of the World's oil and 6 % of natural gas (Uslu, 2015). The continent is very promising in terms of fossil energy resources. Yet, except for South Africa, the production of the whole continent is half of the consumption of New York City. This means 700 million Africans out of 900 million does not have access to electricity. This makes Africa a good resource provider and an excellent market to sell products. Turkish involvement in Africa can turn into a win-win situation for both sides by putting together Africa's sources and Turkish infrastructure capability. **Global Soft Power Index**

Brand Finance is an independent brand valuation agency that makes the broadest research on a global scale, and each year, it ranks countries and international brands by the result of its survey. The survey includes more than 75,000 people in 102 countries. They are surveying 90 % of the public and 10 % of expert opinions to rank countries. It evaluates countries based on six main topics; Familiarity, Reputation, Influence, 7 Soft Power Pillars, and Covid-19 Response. Seven soft power pillars are as follows:

**Business and trade:** In this topic, Brand Finance evaluates the economy, brands, business, trade, taxation, investments, infrastructure, and the growth rate of the country. Making an easy trade with the government, having a sustainable and robust economy, Worldwide known brands and products, and the growth potential are essential.

**Global Soft Power Index Structure**



**Figure 2.1. Global Soft Power Index Structure (Brand Finance, 2022)**

**Governance:** Brand Finance takes into consideration of its constitution, human rights, the rule of law of the country. Crime rates and the security level of the country are also contributing to this topic. Having a respected leader in the international area and being politically stable are necessary. High ethical standards should apply during the administration of the country, and there must not be room for corruption. A safe and secure atmosphere in the country that is backed up with respect to law and human rights is also essential.

**International relations:** Diplomatic relations, being part of international organizations, resolution of conflicts between other countries, contributing to global aid campaigns, and acting against climate changes are the components of international relations topic. In this section, countries are evaluated by their influence in diplomacy, their attitude toward protecting the environment, their relation with other countries, and their generosity to other countries when they are in need.

**Culture and heritage:** Under this topic, Brand Finance evaluates countries with their food, music, film, literature, sport, tourism, fashion, etc. It is important to influence other countries through art, entertainment, and literature. Having famous cuisine and tourist destinations, diverse cultural heritage, and charming lifestyle contribute to the country's attraction.

**Media and communication:** Social and traditional media capacity of countries with marketing affects its influence. For gaining respect from other countries, a country

should have trustworthy media that provides close information about any subject. Governments should facilitate communication for people. In addition, it should be transparent and clarify all question marks that people have.

**Education and science:** The quality of higher education, and the level of technology and science are other determinants of the soft power capacity of a country. Having a high quality education and inventing cutting-edge technologies are the most essential qualifications for any government. These lead the country to improve and get rich. They have a significant impact on its soft power potential.

**People and values:** Finally, the most critical component of a country, and most important pillar of soft power potential is its people and values. The character of people, their values, and their reliability play a significant role in the country's perception. Having generous, fun, friendly, and trustworthy people raises its worth in the international area.

Additionally, Brand Finance added a last measure to assess the soft power impact after the pandemic: **Covid-19 response**, economic stability or growth despite the Covid-19 pandemic, coping with the diseases, and providing healthcare to people became a criterion of soft power index assessment.

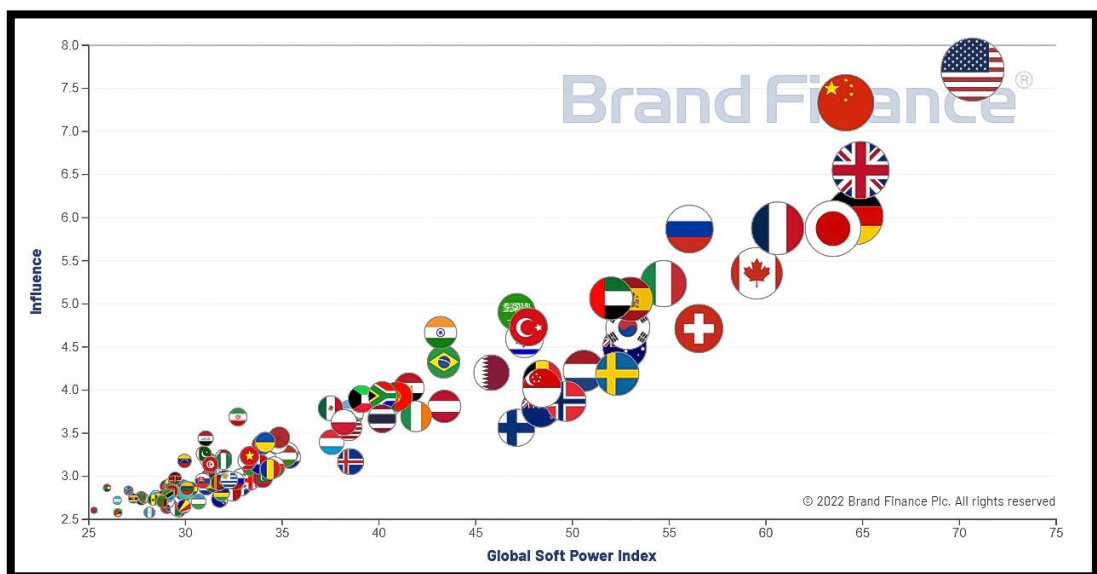


Figure 2.2. 2021 Global Soft Power Index (Brand Finance, 2022)

Brand Finance determines the global soft power index each year. In Figure 2.2. The Global Soft Power Index chart for 2021 is shown. While the X-axis shows the global soft power index, Y-axis shows the influence of countries. Moreover, the size of flags shows the business and trade of countries. As can be seen on the chart, the U.S. has the biggest influence over other countries, but Germany is ranked first on the soft power index and followed by Japan. Türkiye has the 27th rank on the list this year.

#### **2.2.4. Conclusion**

Easy access to the latest technology and information changed societies dramatically and made them hard to control. Nye argues in his article that the technology that people can access for free today, used to cost millions of dollars for the U.S. government in the 70s. Besides, only a few countries could communicate or monitor any place around the globe in those days (Nye, 2009). Today the Internet is one of the most powerful tools for both people and governments. People have direct access to the latest news, but they are also vulnerable against disinformation. Large numbers of people can cooperate by using social media and show their power against any organization, including governments. Social media firestorms can damage companies financially within a very short time. In April 2017, American Airlines kicked a passenger out of the aircraft by force. Legally, the airline had the right to do it. However, the video of this event went viral on social media. 3.5 Million tweets posted with the “boycott American Airlines” tag. First, the shares of American Airlines on the stock market took a dive, and the airline lost 1 Billion \$ on its market value. Moreover, thousands of passengers canceled their tickets, and for a few weeks, American Airlines’ ticket sales went down dramatically (Bever, 2019). As a result, it is estimated that the total loss of the airline is around 4 billion \$.

People can also subvert governments. Therefore, it is extremely important to use soft power tools to convince a mass of people. Nye foresees that the future of power will be based on cyber activities (Nye, 2011). Considering the American airlines' case, it is impossible to object to this argument. Social media expanded within a few years and became one of the most vital sources of power. Therefore, all kinds of organizations and governments should consider it and create a social media strategy to promote themselves and prevent disinformation.

## CHAPTER III

### TÜRKIYE'S/TURKISH AIRLINES' OPENING TO AFRICA

Africa had commonly been neglected for a long time by Türkiye because of several reasons. The Republic of Türkiye was founded after long years of fighting against the western countries and the victory in the independence war. But, the young Republic had lost its historical relations and connections with North Africa and the Horn of Africa, which was once under Ottoman Empire hegemony, because these areas had already been colonized by western countries before World War I. The new Republic was healing its wounds of war and gathering its strength in economic and industrial areas. Then the Second World War started, and it led Türkiye into a defensive position against the Nazi threat. Shortly after WWII, the Cold War began, and this time Türkiye had to protect itself from the communist threat. During all these years, Africa was known for poverty and hunger (**Özkan, 2010**) because of colonialization. Most African countries were not even independent. However, today Africa is a promising continent for Türkiye in terms of diplomacy, raw resources, population, and trade.

The geographical and historical proximity with the Northern African countries such as Egypt, Libya, and Algeria allowed Türkiye to continue its diplomatic and economic relations with these countries. Furthermore, these are Mediterranean Countries. They have always been a part of Mediterranean culture and trade. Throughout written history, there has always been a connection between the Mediterranean cities; Carthage, Smyrna, Ephesus, Alexandria, Gaza, Nicaea, Utica, Byzantium, etc., and it never ceased. However, Türkiye lost its connection with Sub-Saharan Africa over decades.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Türkiye could finally define its way in international politics and open up to new horizons to show itself on the World stage.

In 1998, Türkiye declared the “Opening to Africa Action Plan” to restart political, economic, and cultural relations with all African countries. However, on the 17<sup>th</sup> of August 1999, Türkiye experienced the worst natural disaster of its history: The earthquake of Gölcük, which mainly affected the Marmara region, the pioneer of the Turkish economy and industry. Turkish economy and infrastructure took a big hit, and Türkiye had to lick its wounds one more time and help its citizens in need. In such circumstances, Türkiye had to postpone its international agenda for a few years. While Türkiye was recovering, the economic crisis in 2001 hit the plans again. In 2002, the government changed, and Türkiye started a new era of transformation. AKP government came into power in 2002, and they put into action “*opening to Africa*” plans.

Türkiye declared 2005 as “the year of Africa,” and obtained observer status at the African Union. The same year, African Summit held in İstanbul for the first time. All African leaders, except for three (Özkan, 2010), were brought together on Turkish soil and signed the “İstanbul Declaration,” which took Türkiye-Africa relations into a new dimension. In 2008 Türkiye became a non-regional member of the African Development Bank (Bilgiç & Nascimento, 2014), and Türkiye was declared strategic partner. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2020)

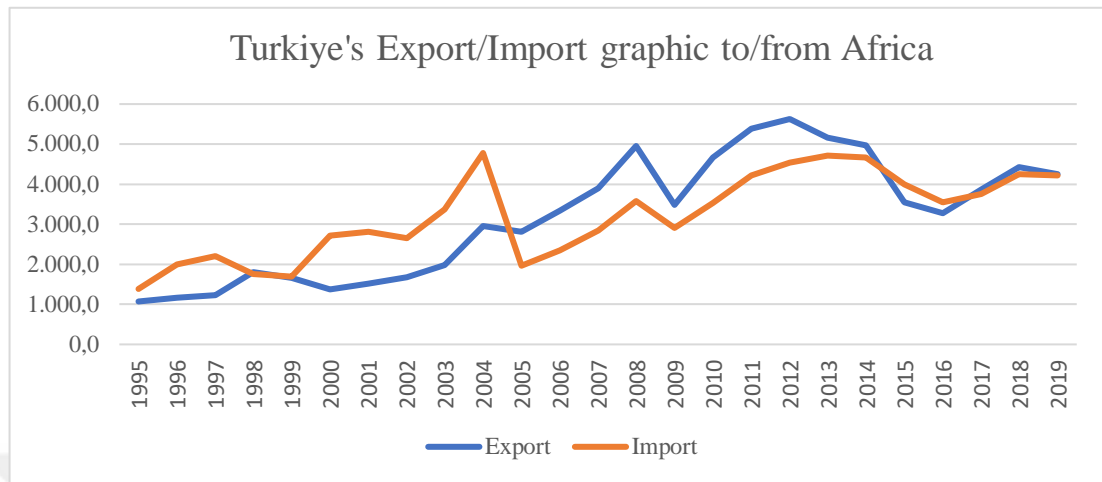
President of Türkiye, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, has visited 28 African countries (Algeria, Djibouti, Chad, Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, Ivory Coasts, Republic of South Africa, Gabon, Ghana, Gambia, Guinea, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Mali, Egypt, Morocco, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, and Zambia) during his duties as Prime Minister and President of the Republic (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2020). Most of these visits are the highest level diplomatic visits ever made to African countries.

**Table 3.1. Türkiye's Trade with African Countries (TUIK, 2022)**

<b>Trade with African Countries (Million \$)</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>Export</b>	<b>Import</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Rate</b>
1995	1.071,4	1.384,3	2.455,7	
1996	1.159,1	1.993,2	3.152,3	28,37%
1997	1.232,2	2.197,4	3.429,6	8,80%
1998	1.812,1	1.758,7	3.570,8	4,12%
1999	1.655,4	1.687,7	3.343,1	-6,38%
2000	1.372,6	2.714,0	4.086,6	22,24%
2001	1.520,7	2.818,5	4.339,2	6,18%
2002	1.681,7	2.645,6	4.327,3	-0,27%
2003	1.979,9	3.372,1	5.352,0	23,68%
2004	2.949,3	4.778,6	7.727,9	44,39%
2005	2.816,1	1.966,1	4.782,2	-38,12%
2006	3.335,9	2.352,8	5.688,7	18,96%
2007	3.892,2	2.849,6	6.741,8	18,51%
2008	4.951,5	3.574,9	8.526,4	26,47%
2009	3.484,5	2.913,4	6.397,9	-24,96%
2010	4.667,9	3.536,7	8.204,6	28,24%
2011	5.383,3	4.211,5	9.594,8	16,94%
2012	5.627,6	4.532,0	10.159,6	5,89%
2013	5.161,7	4.714,2	9.875,9	-2,79%
2014	4.977,7	4.673,5	9.651,2	-2,28%
2015	3.554,3	3.996,3	7.550,6	-21,77%
2016	3.281,9	3.552,8	6.834,7	-9,48%
2017	3.874,1	3.759,1	7.633,2	11,68%
2018	4.419,2	4.248,7	8.667,9	13,56%
2019	4.254,8	4.224,6	8.479,4	-2,17%

In 1995, Türkiye's trade with African countries was only 2.5 billion dollars, and it increased to 7.7 billion dollars in 2004, shortly after the initiation of the Action Plan.

On 2019, Türkiye's trade with African countries has risen to 8.4 billion dollars, and it keeps growing.



**Figure 3.1. Türkiye's Export/Import from/to Africa (TUIK, 2022)**

Turkish Statistical Institute has been publishing detailed information about Türkiye, including imports and export. The trade with Africa peaked in 2012, and the bilateral trade went volatile. There are several reasons for these declines. For example, it is not a surprise that there was a fall in 2009 after the global economic crisis at 2008. On the other hand, Turkish companies operated gold mines in several African countries, and Türkiye bought some of these golds to increase the national gold reserve until 2014. In the beginning, Türkiye's import was more than its export, and this created a trade deficit for Türkiye. Then, Türkiye started to sell more and buy less beginning from 2005. This creates another inequality to the detriment of Africa. It can be seen on the graph that beginning from 2014, Türkiye has adopted a balanced policy on trade with Africa, which can prove that Türkiye does not have colonial ambitions in Africa.

Türkiye did not follow a colonialist policy towards African countries as European countries did, which puts Türkiye in a different position than the other countries. Africa suffered from colonialist implementations for hundreds of years. Finally, Türkiye is the only country that creates a policy based on equality with African countries, in contrast to European countries. Türkiye suffered from colonial countries during the last years of the Ottoman Empire and the foundation of the Republic of Türkiye. Therefore, being an anticolonial country is one of the main pillars of

Türkiye's foreign policy (Bilgiç & Nascimento, 2014). As an example of Europe's vision over Africa, Mohamed Badine El Yattoui points out that France does not intend to give up its unequal and unfair relations with Africa (El Yattoui, 2020). According to the article, France is keeping half of the foreign currency reserves of 15 African countries, and these countries' currencies are being issued by France. French President Emmanuel Macron declared his intention to create a new common currency called Eko for 15 African countries. El Yattoui draws attention that after 60 years of independence, Africa still is not independent without its money.

Among the World countries, Türkiye became the largest donor of humanitarian aid, and the most considerable proportion of the resources has sent to African countries. Türkiye donated 8,399 Billion \$ in 2018, which is 0.79% of the national GDP and puts Türkiye in the first rank in the World. This makes Türkiye the most generous country in the World (MFA, 2020).

To increase relations with Africa, the Turkish Government has opened 30 new embassies in the region since 2002. The total number of Turkish embassies in Africa is now 42, which was only 12 in 2002. In return, African countries replied to Türkiye's goodwill by opening new embassies in Türkiye, and Ankara is hosting 36 African embassies today, which were only 10 in 2002 (MFA, 2020). Today, many Turkish agencies, companies, and non-governmental organizations continue their activities in the continent, and Turkish Airlines is one of them. Moreover, Turkish Airlines increased its African network up to 48 destinations in 31 countries (Turkish Airlines, 2020a).

### **3.1. Turkish Aid in Africa**

Turkish culture includes empathy and relief towards others, and Turkish people have always been merciful to others throughout history. The Covid-19 Pandemic deeply affected global trade and circulation. Countries closed their borders to each other. When nations and people need solidarity the most, they all find themselves dealing with the spread of the virus on their own. During the pandemic days, Türkiye has been the most generous country by helping 156 other countries by sending the necessary materials such as masks, equipment like respiratory machines, and even

money (MFA, 2020a). Türkiye helped countries all across the World regardless of their GDP or development level. African countries always have a privileged place among all other countries in terms of getting aid by their need for particular sources. During the Covid-19 pandemic, they are still on the attention of Türkiye.

### **3.2. Türkiye Scholarships Program**

Türkiye started a scholarship program in 2012 for international students willing to study in Türkiye. The “Türkiye Scholarships Program” was founded within the scope of YTB (Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities), founded in 2010 to support and coordinate Turkish citizens and related communities abroad and also international students in Türkiye. Türkiye Scholarship Program is designed for successful international students and financed by the Turkish Government. It aims to increase bilateral relations and global knowledge (YTB, 2020).

TSP received around 40.000 applications in the year that it was founded, in 2012. Over time, the program got around 150000 applications in 2019 (YTB, 2020a), and 4731 students benefitted from the scholarship.

TSP is the most important and the biggest project of YTB, that 245 Million TL (Turkish Lira) is spent on international students’ activities while the total budget of YTB is 353 Million TL (YTB, 2020c).

SSA is the second biggest zone after the Middle East in the TSP. Students from SSA got more than 21% of the total scholarship in 2019; in other words, 1013 out of 4731 scholarship was entitled to them (YTB, 2020c). Because, Türkiye gives particular importance to the least developed countries, and 34 out of 46 least developed countries located in SSA. Also, 11 out of 15 countries chosen for this research are among the least developed countries.

### **3.3. Turkish Airlines’ Opening to Africa**

Though the Opening to Africa Action Plan was signed and implemented 1998, Turkish Airlines’ opening to Africa did not realize before 2009. Turkish Airlines could only

start to grow its fleet and become a global player within a decade. The aviation industry requires a long time of planning and high investment. Turkish Airlines took advantage of a clear start while other airlines were struggling with the effect of the global economic crisis in 2008. Before 2008, Turkish Airlines had a limited fleet size of around 100 aircraft. Only 12 of them were wide-body aircraft, including seven A340s and five A330s. Besides, it was flying only to some major cities in the World within the limits of its fleet.

Turkish Airlines' "opening to Africa" could not happen before 2006. Until the deliveries of B737-900ER aircraft, Turkish Airlines were flying to only some major African cities such as Johannesburg, Cape Town, Khartoum, Lagos, Addis Ababa, Nairobi, and Dakar in the SSA.

In March 2010, Turkish Airlines finalized 10 Boeing 737-900ER aircraft orders with an additional 10 B737-800 (Kaminski-Morrow, 2010), allowing Turkish Airlines to connect small African cities to the World with a narrow-body fleet. This agreement was worth \$1.6 billion, invested in widening its horizon over Africa, which is the continent of the future for Turkish Airlines. Later, Turkish Airlines ordered another five Boeing 737-900ER Aircraft. Today these 15 Aircraft are mainly flying to Africa.

The reason for this late start to Africa flights is also technical. Turkish Airlines was already flying to North African countries such as Libya, Algeria, Tunis, and Egypt with narrow-body aircraft. However, for the Sub-Saharan African countries, Turkish Airlines needed wide-body aircraft, which are too costly to operate for tiny routes. Nevertheless, Turkish Airlines had only a few wide-body aircraft before ordering the new Boeing 777-300ER and Airbus 330 Aircraft. That's why Turkish Airlines' long-haul flight network was very restricted in 2009. There were only four destinations in America, which are New York, Chicago, Toronto, and Sao Paolo, and it was flying only major cities in Asia such as Hong Kong, Shanghai, Beijing, Tokyo, Osaka, Seoul, and Bangkok. The company could not use its restricted fleet source for flying to Africa instead of America and the Far East. Compared to today, Turkish Airlines used to have a very weak network.

In 2007, Boeing released its newest narrow-body option, B737-900ER (Boeing, 2020), the new version of the legendary 737 series, the biggest of the series with the most



range. Turkish Airlines can cover most of Africa with a narrow body fleet. Most other airlines have to operate wide-body aircraft to Africa, which raises the operation costs. Turkish Airlines can offer cheaper fares on these flights and become more profitable than the other airlines. This is why operating Boeing 737-900ER aircraft are so crucial for Turkish Airlines.

Depending on fleet availability, Turkish Airlines started to increase its network on the continent, especially in SSA countries, in parallel to opening embassies in Africa and following civil air transport agreements. Figure 3.3. shows the opening of Turkish Embassies and Turkish Airlines routes in Africa.

### **3.4. Turkish Airlines and Turkish Government Relationship**

Turkish Airlines was founded in 1933 by the Turkish Government under the name State Airline Administration, and it received the name of Turkish Airlines in 1955 (Turkish Airlines, 2020a). In the beginning, Turkish Airlines was a corporation of the Turkish republic, and today the government still owns 49% of the company shares and the golden stake, which allows the government to have total control over the company. The privatization of Turkish Airlines started on 25<sup>th</sup> of February 1990. It continued linearly until 2006, when the company had its last shareholding structure (Turkish Airlines, 2006): 51% of the company is being traded on the stock market, and 49% of the company belongs to the Turkish republic. For a long time, Turkish Airlines remained a small airline that primarily aimed to carry Turkish citizens on domestic flights and offered an alternative for the Turkish laborers who are going to Europe. It also offered flights to Turkish citizens who wanted to travel to the capital or primary cities such as Paris, Frankfurt, New York, and Tokyo. Therefore, Turkish Airlines' network and fleet were very restricted.

Shortly after AKP came into power in 2002, the government intended to create a dynamic economy in the country by attracting foreign investors (Lebel, 2020). To achieve this goal, the government used Turkish Airlines as a soft power tool, and parallel to the economic boost, Turkish Airlines have begun to expand its fleet and horizon.

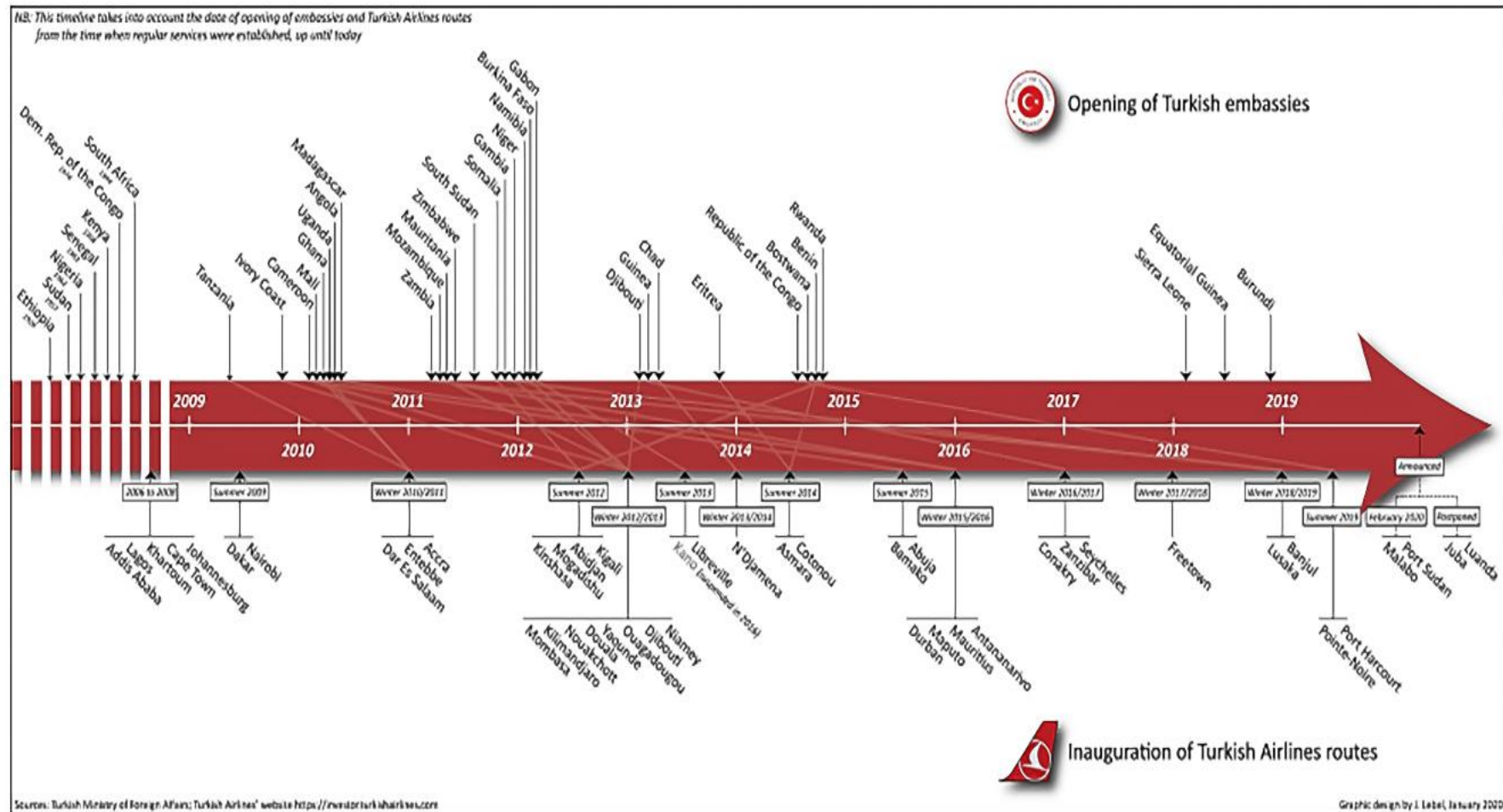


Figure 3.3. Opening of Turkish Embassies in Africa and Inauguration of Turkish Airlines Routes (Lebel, 2020)

Turkish Airlines is both an asset and a tool for the Turkish republic to carry the Turkish flag Worldwide and maintain a direct line with other countries. Flag carrier airlines considered the face of their country. This is why flag carrier airlines are under threat most of the time, because they are considered an organic part of the state. Any act against an airline will be regarded as an act against the targeted country. This makes airlines a target because airlines link countries to the World. Any threat against the companies will have a global effect. (Lebel, 2020) This is why, Turkish Airlines have been threatened by terrorist organizations several times. On 27<sup>th</sup> of July 2012, 15 militants of the PKK terror organization attacked a Turkish Airline's office in Vienna (Bayraklı, Yalçın, & Yeşiltaş, 2019). Bayraklı also mentions that there had been other attacks on Turkish Airlines offices in other European countries during operations held by the Turkish military against PKK. Turkish Airlines was also targeted by other terrorist organizations. In 2014, Turkish Airlines' security chief was murdered in Mogadishu. This was considered a message against the Türkiye-Somalia relationship. As Turkish Airlines became the image of the country, and maintain air link all across the globe, all attacks against THY csn also considered as an attack on the Turkish republic itself.

It is well known that the Turkish government backs up Turkish Airlines whenever it is in need like any other government does to their flag carrier airline. However, sometimes government may also receive help from a flag carrier airline. Gülenist terror organization attempted a coup on 15<sup>th</sup> of July 2016. Following this attempt, around 300 pilots fired from the air forces (Lebel, 2020), which led to a shortage of military pilots in the Turkish Air Forces. Later, Turkish Airlines signed a protocol of exchange with the government to let the airline's former air forces pilots join the army again. This time Turkish Airlines helped its country as expected.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **TÜRKIYE’S RELATION WITH AFRICAN COUNTRIES AND TURKISH AIRLINES IN AFRICA**

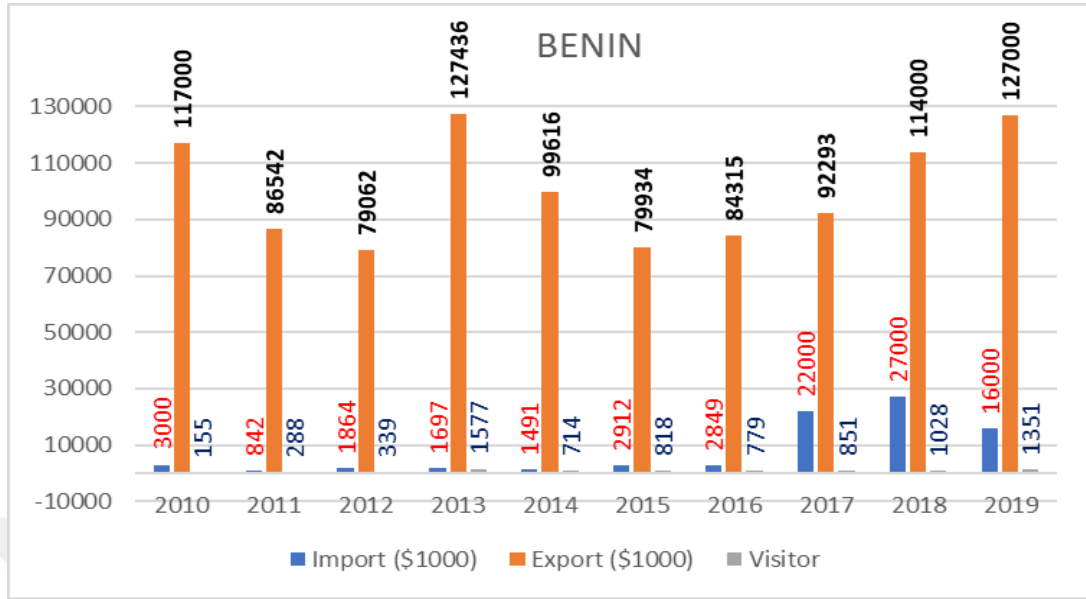
This section will focus on Türkiye’s relationship with 15 Francophone SSA countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Djibouti, Gabon, Guinea, Ivory Coasts, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Niger, Rwanda, and Senegal.

For the presentation of each country, each chapter will start with the chart of imports, export, and visitor number to Türkiye from these countries between 2010 and 2019. It will continue by indicating the starting date of direct flight in these routes, and comments on the impact of these three variants. The data is obtained from the website of the Ministry of Trade (Ticaret Bakanlığı, 2020) and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (Minister of Culture and Tourism, 2020).

Afterward, the diplomatic relations between the relevant country and Türkiye starting from 2009 to the end of 2020 will be stated briefly. Detailed information is obtained from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA, 2020b). The study will conclude by arguing the relations and impacts of diplomatic relations on the bilateral trade, circulation, and air transport business.

Turkish Airlines is the only carrier that serves from Türkiye to SSA countries. This unique position increases the importance of Turkish Airlines in the region for bilateral relations and trade. On the other hand, this provides a significant opportunity for the company thanks to the emerging markets of the region. Turkish Airlines not only carries passengers and cargo between SSA countries and Türkiye, but it also carries transit passengers and cargo. Considering its wide network, Turkish Airlines is connecting the region to the World.

#### 4.1. Benin



**Figure 4.1. Türkiye & Benin Trade and Visitors (TUIK, 2022; TURSAB, 2022)**

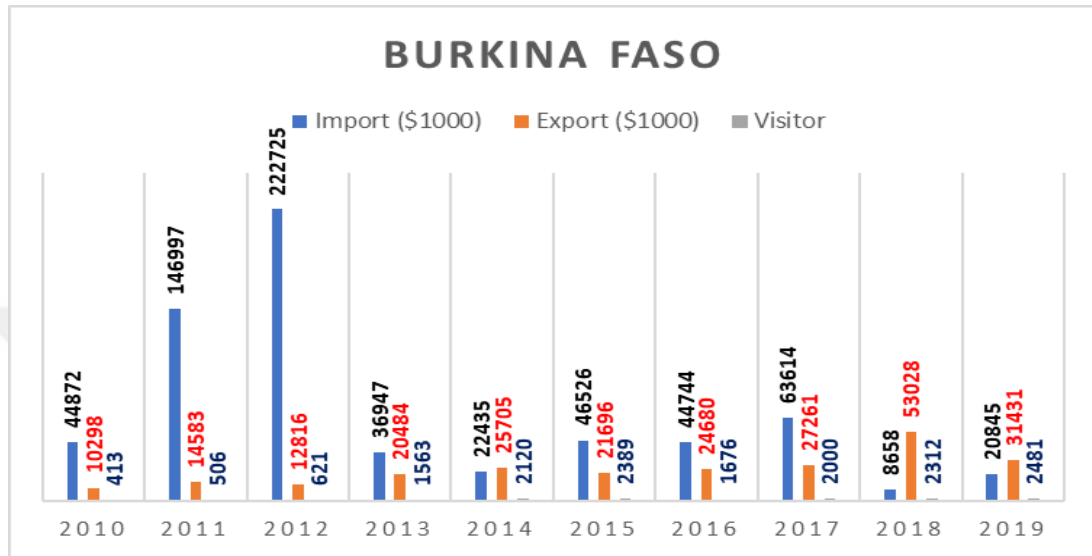
The graphic above shows the number of visitors from Benin to Türkiye, and the numbers of imports and export between Türkiye and Benin. Türkiye opened an embassy in Cotonou in 2013, and Turkish Airlines started flying to Cotonou in June 2014. The impact of direct flights on bilateral trade and Beninese visitors is shown in the graph. In 2013, when Türkiye opened an Embassy, there was a significant rise in both visitor numbers and export. After a fall, bilateral trade started to increase in all aspects.

Türkiye is carrying out the relations with Benin within the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. The President of Benin has visited Türkiye twice up to now. The second visit was just after the coup attempt in 2016 and was a sign of support for Turkish democracy. During these visits, diverse bilateral agreements are signed. The primary goods exported to Benin are iron, steel, and construction materials, and Türkiye imports cotton from Benin. Türkiye's scholarship program has been available for Beninese students since 1992 (MFA, 2020c). Turkish Airlines operates daily flights to Cotonou.

The relations with Benin occurred at the highest level of both countries most of the time. the commerce between the two countries is increasing each year. Considering

that Turkish Airlines is the only company that flies between Cotonou and İstanbul, it is inevitable that Turkish Airlines got its share from this trade both commercially and intangibly.

#### 4.2. Burkina Faso



**Figure 4.2. Türkiye & Burkina Faso Trade and Visitors (TUIK, 2022; TURSAB, 2022)**

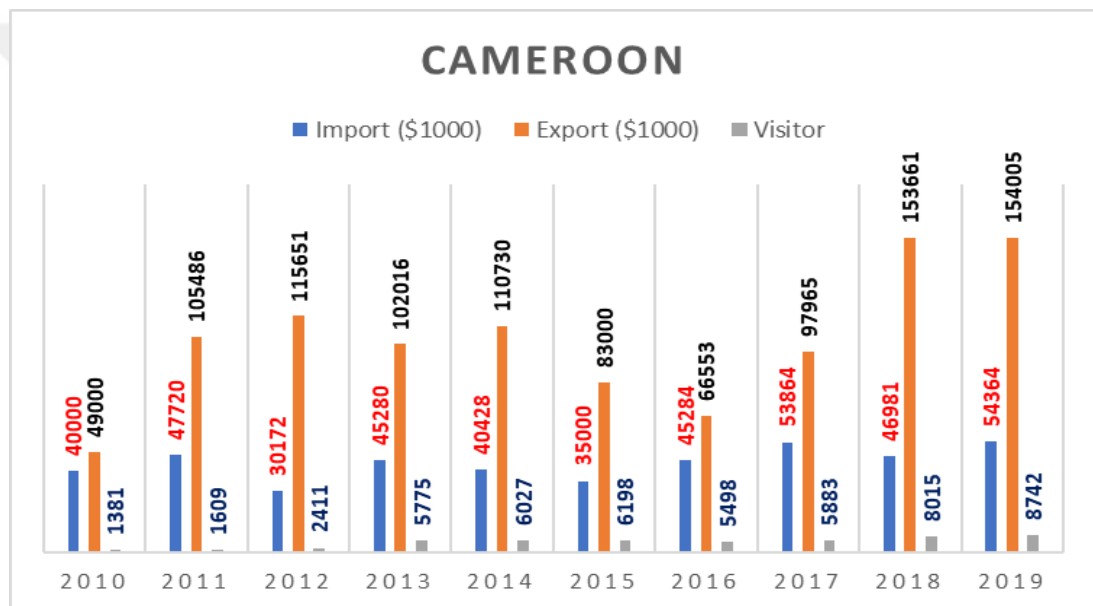
Direct flights of Turkish Airlines to Ouagadougou started in October 2012 with four weekly flights. As seen in the graphic, there is a significant increase in visitor numbers. Turkish Airlines is the only company operating direct flights between Türkiye and Burkina Faso.

Burkina Faso has rich gold mines. In 2011 and 2012, there was a significant import because Turkish companies run gold mines in Burkina Faso and Türkiye bought large amounts of gold from Burkina Faso in these years to raise the national reserves. In 2012 Türkiye stopped buying gold from Burkina Faso.

Türkiye and Burkina Faso were temporary members of the UN Security Council in 2009. Türkiye opened an Embassy in Ouagadougou in January 2012, and Burkina Faso opened its Embassy in Ankara in February 2014. These rapprochements between the two countries boosted bilateral cooperation and trade. Since 1992, Türkiye has offered a scholarship program for students from Burkina Faso.

The first meeting at the highest level between the two countries was held on 9-11 April 2019 which was the visit of President Roch Marc Christian Kabore, whom President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan received. During the meeting, relations between the two countries were discussed in all dimensions. Regional and international improvements were discussed. Protection and support for the investments were decided, and three new agreements were signed about the further cooperation in industry and the media. Turkish Airlines reopened the İstanbul-Ouagadougou route in August 2020, which was temporarily closed because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### 4.3. Cameroon



**Figure 4.3. Türkiye & Cameroon Trade and Visitors (TUIK, 2022; TURSAB, 2022)**

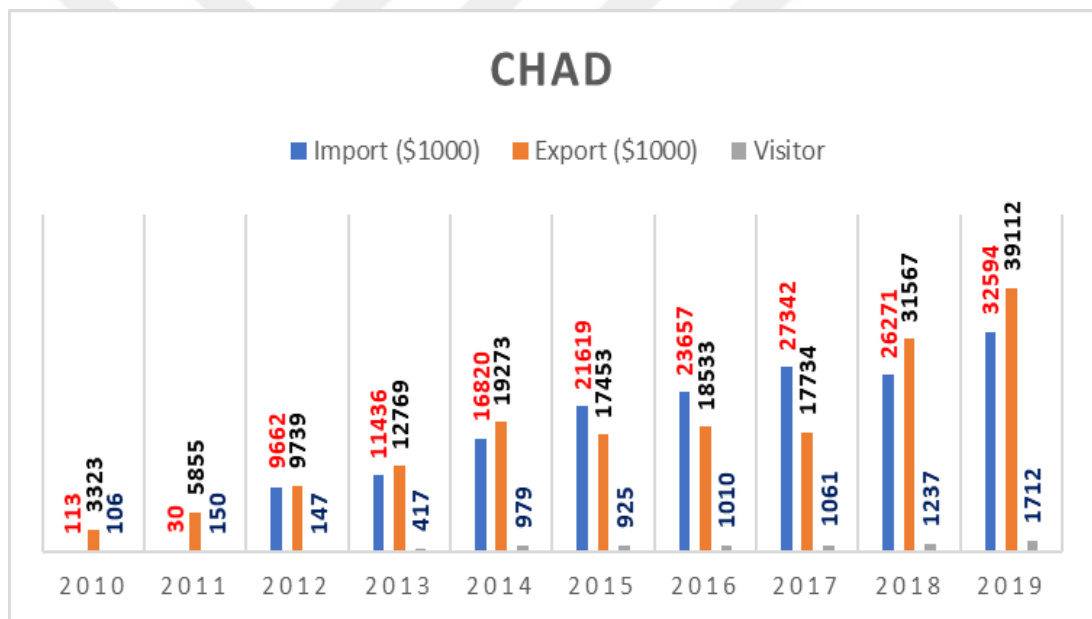
Direct flights between Cameroon and Türkiye started in 2012, and Cameroon is the only Francophone SSA country that Turkish Airlines is flying to two points; Yaoundé and Douala. Turkish Airlines operates daily flights to Douala and Yaoundé. The sudden increase in visitors after the start of direct flights can be seen in the table above. In 2013, the visit of President Paul Biya resulted in a rise in sympathy for Türkiye, and the number of visitors raised continuously. The purposes of these visits are mainly education, health, tourism, and trade.

Turkish Maarif Foundation (TMV) has 14 schools in Cameroon and 1281 students (TMV, 2021).

The first visit to Cameroon on the level of the Presidency was held on 16-17 March 2010. In March 2013, the visit of President Paul Biya, which was the first highest level visit from Cameroon, increased the interest for Türkiye in Cameroon’s public opinion.

Turkish Airlines restarted flights to Cameroon in August 2020, which were temporarily closed because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

#### 4.4. Chad



**Figure 4.4. Türkiye & Chad Trade and Visitors (TUIK, 2022; TURSAB, 2022)**

Direct flights to Chad started in 2013. As can be seen from the graph, before 2013, the number of visitors from Chad was very restricted. However, after 2013, it increased over time.

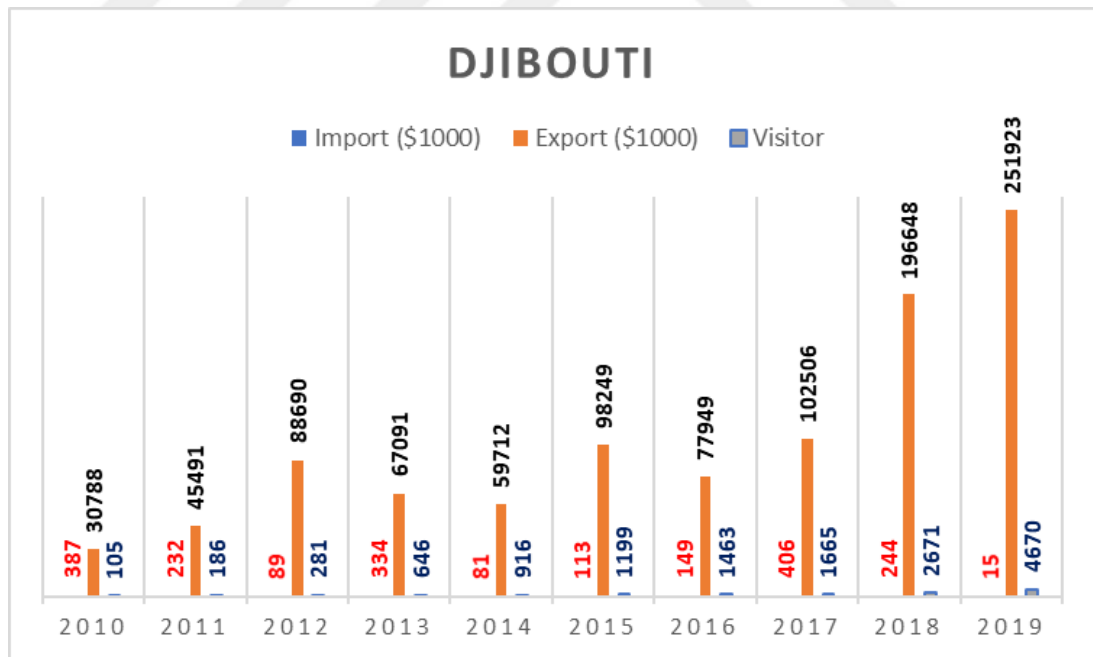
Among the SSA countries, Chad is one of the countries in that Türkiye has the oldest relations. These relations go back to the 16th century while The Ottoman Empire, The Ancestor of the Turkish republic, was ruling the east and the north coasts of Africa.

The Turkish republic recognized Chad’s independence on the same day it declared, on 11<sup>th</sup> of August, 1960. Diplomatic relations between Chad and Türkiye started in 1969. In addition, the Former President of Chad, Mr. Idriss Déby Itno, visited Türkiye in April 2000 by accepting the invitation of his counterpart, Mr. Süleyman Demirel.

However, when Türkiye started the Opening to Africa policy, the Turkish Government prioritized creating connections with those countries that Türkiye did not have diplomatic relations before. Therefore, Türkiye’s opening to Chad delayed until 2013. Türkiye’s N’Djamena Embassy opened in March 2013, and Chad opened its Embassy in Ankara in December 2014. TMV operates six schools in Chad and educates 675 students.

Turkish Airlines restarted its N’djamena flights in August 2021 that were suspended because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

#### 4.5. Djibouti



**Figure 4.5. Türkiye & Djibouti Trade and Visitors (TUIK, 2022; TURSAB, 2022)**

Direct flights between İstanbul and Djibouti started in 2012, the same year the Djiboutian Government opened its Embassy in Ankara. A year later, the Turkish

Embassy in Djibouti got into service. The sudden increase in export to Djibouti could be related to the new era of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Although there are some fallbacks in export numbers, the trend line of bilateral trade is increasing over time. There is also a constant increase in visitor numbers from Djibouti.

The first visit on the Presidency level to Djibouti was held on the 23-24<sup>th</sup> of January 2015. During this visit, nine different agreements and protocols are signed in various fields such as education, security, sport, etc. In return, The President of Djibouti, Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, visited Türkiye on the 19-20<sup>th</sup> of December 2017, and four more agreements were signed during the visit.

In 2020 Türkiye’s total export to Djibouti is 320 million \$ which is 7% of Djibouti’s total imports. Türkiye is on the third row by this number. The biggest proportion of Türkiye’s export is grease and herbal oil. In the second row, Türkiye exports iron and steel to Djibouti. (Ministry of Trade, 2021)

Türkiye Scholarship program has provided scholarships to Djibouti citizens since 1992. Two hundred forty-three students from Djibouti have benefitted from this program so far.

#### 4.6. Gabon

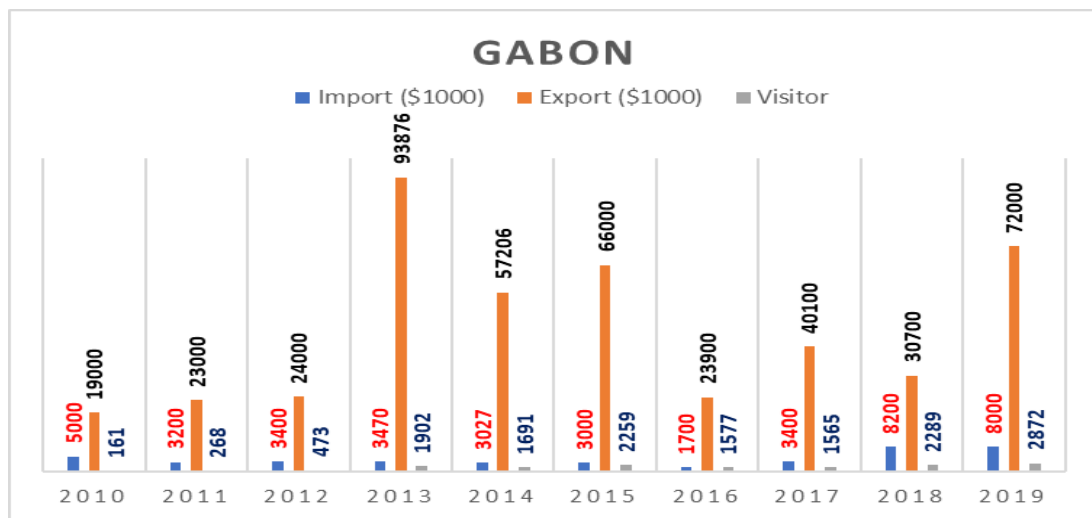


Figure 4.6. Türkiye & Gabon Trade and Visitors (TUIK, 2022; TURSAB, 2022)

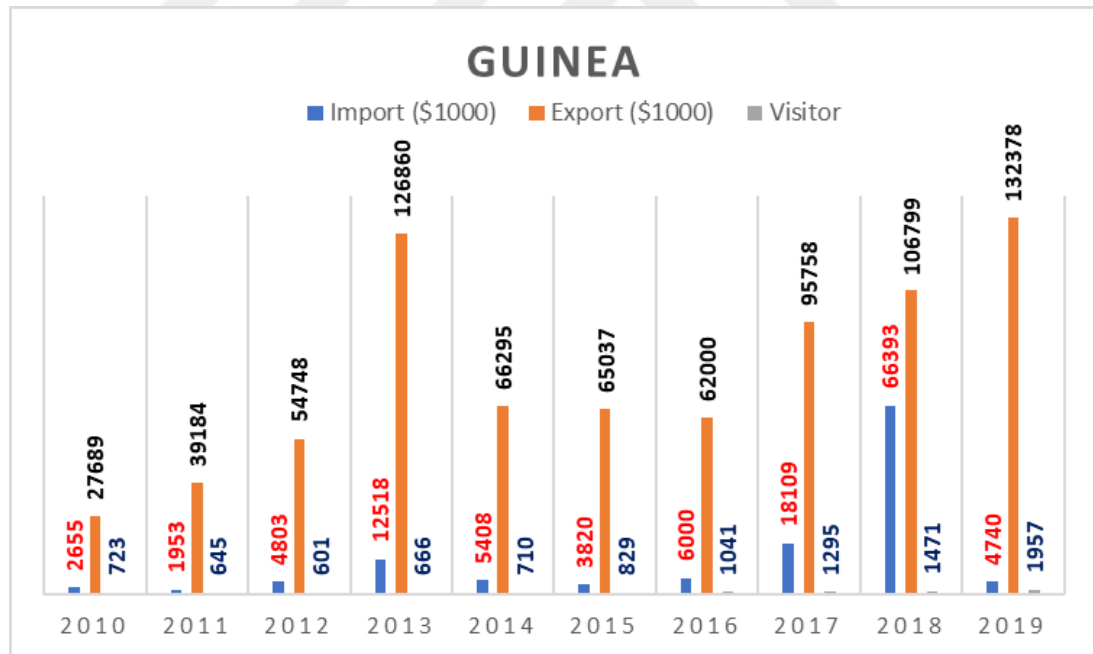
Turkish Embassy in Libreville got into service in 2012, and Turkish Airlines started to fly to Gabon in 2013. With the start of direct flights, there has been a significant increase in visitor numbers and bilateral trade. Gabon opened its Embassy in Ankara in December 2015.

On 11<sup>th</sup> of October, Türkiye-Africa Economy and Business Forum was held in İstanbul. The Minister of Commerce of Gabon, David Mbadinga, represented Gabon at the Forum.

In 2020, Türkiye’s export to Gabon was 52 Million \$, which is 2% of Gabon’s total imports. Gabon buys mostly construction materials, iron, and steel from Türkiye.

TMV is in service in the country with four schools and 507 students. In addition, Türkiye has been providing scholarships to Gabonese students since 1992.

#### 4.7. Guinea



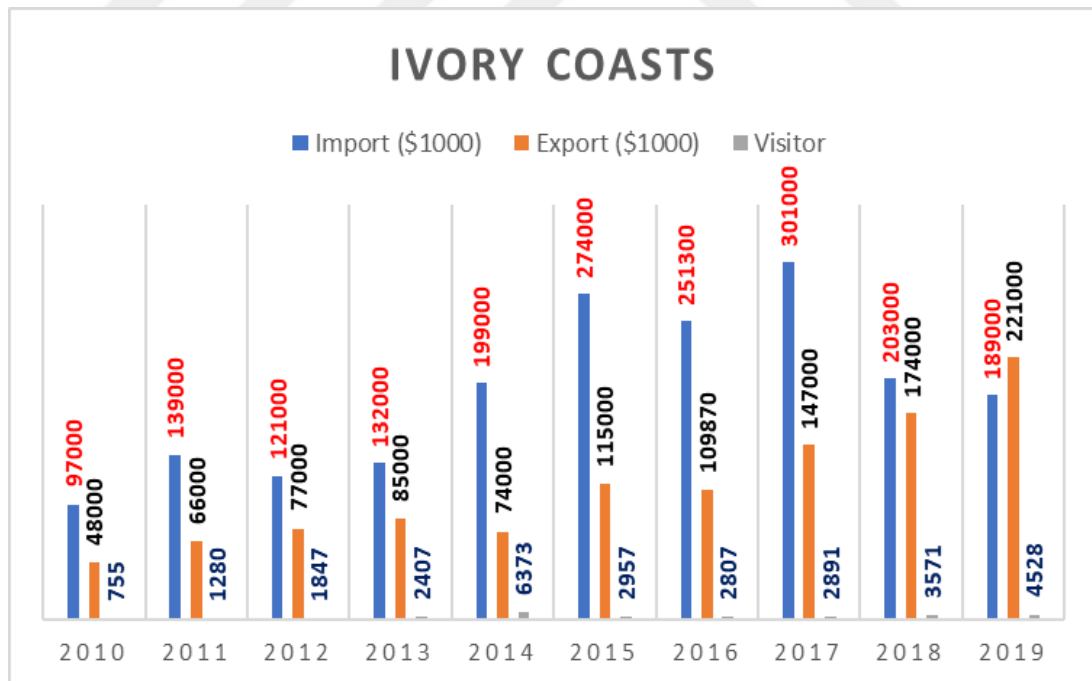
**Figure 4.7. Türkiye & Guinea Trade and Visitors (TUIK, 2022; TURSAB, 2022)**

Türkiye and Guinea opened their Embassies simultaneously at the beginning of 2013. Turkish Airlines could only start its flights to Conakry on 30<sup>th</sup> of January, 2017. The rise of the Guinean visitors began even before the direct flights. Turkish Airlines

operates wide-body aircraft operations in Conakry. It can also use the seventh freedom right in Guinea, which means carrying passengers between two countries without landing in the home state of airlines. Therefore, Turkish Airlines operates direct flights from/to Conakry to/from Jeddah and Medina and transports Guinean Hadj travelers. In February 2016, The President and the First Lady of Guinea visited Türkiye and met with President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Turkish First Lady Ms. Emine Erdoğan. A month later, President Erdoğan started a West Africa tour and visited Guinea on 3<sup>rd</sup> of March. This was the first visit that a Turkish President made to Guinea. Erdoğan was rewarded with the most important medal of Guinea, the “Grand Croix,” for his contributions to bilateral relations. During the meetings, nine agreements were signed, and Türkiye-Guinea Business Council was founded.

TMV has ten schools and two dormitories in Guinea and educates 721 students. In addition, Türkiye has been providing scholarships for Guinean students since 1992.

#### 4.8. Ivory Coasts



**Figure 4.8. Türkiye & Ivory Coasts Trade and Visitors (TUIK, 2022; TURSAB, 2022)**

The relations between Türkiye and Ivory Coasts started in 1964. Until 2009, the Turkish Embassy in Dakar was accredited to Ivory Coasts. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of November,

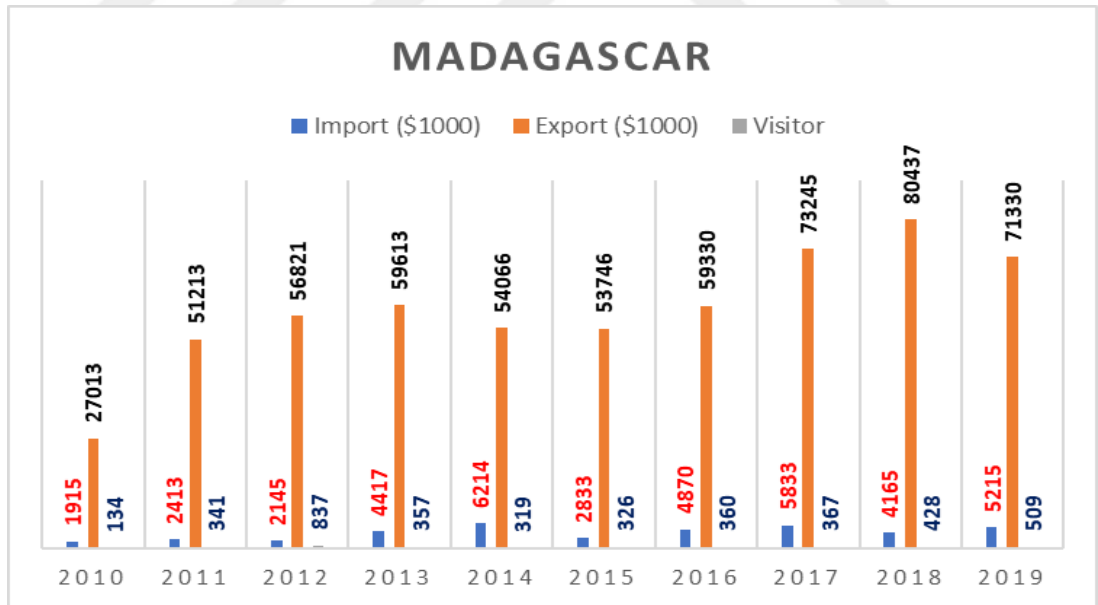
2009, Türkiye opened an Embassy in Abidjan, and Ivory Coasts opened an Embassy in Ankara in February 2013. Turkish Airlines started its direct flights to Abidjan in 2013.

Ivory Coasts is a crucial market for Turkish businesspersons because of the high trade volumes. Ivory Coasts was the only SSA francophone country in that Türkiye had a trade deficit. Until 2019, Türkiye imported more goods from Ivory Coasts than its export.

On the other hand, Ivorian visitor numbers are increasing each year, and Turkish Airlines is the only operator between Türkiye and Ivory coasts. For these reasons, this is a profitable market for Turkish Airlines.

TMV has four schools in Ivory Coasts and 81 students. Türkiye has been providing scholarships to Ivorian students since 1992.

#### 4.9. Madagascar



**Figure 4.9. Türkiye & Madagascar Trade and Visitors (TUIK, 2022; TURSAB, 2022)**

Within the Opening to Africa policy, Türkiye wants to improve relations with Madagascar which has considerable economic potential. Türkiye opened an embassy in Antananarivo in April 2010. The same year Madagascar sent a diplomatic note

concerning its intention to open an embassy in Türkiye. Today, Madagascar's Embassy in Rome is accredited to Türkiye. Madagascar is one of the three African countries which does not have an embassy in Türkiye. Turkish Airlines started Madagascar flights in 2015. As can be seen in the table, bilateral trade and circulation develop very slowly.

The first Presidential level contact was held in İstanbul in May 2016 by the attendance of the President of Madagascar, Mr. Hery Rajonarimampianina, to the World Humanitarian Summit. Within a few months, the Turkish President visited Madagascar in January 2017, and four separate agreements were signed during meetings.

TMV has three schools and 53 students in Madagascar. In addition, Türkiye provides scholarships to Madagascan students, and 119 students have benefitted from these scholarships so far.

#### 4.10. Mali

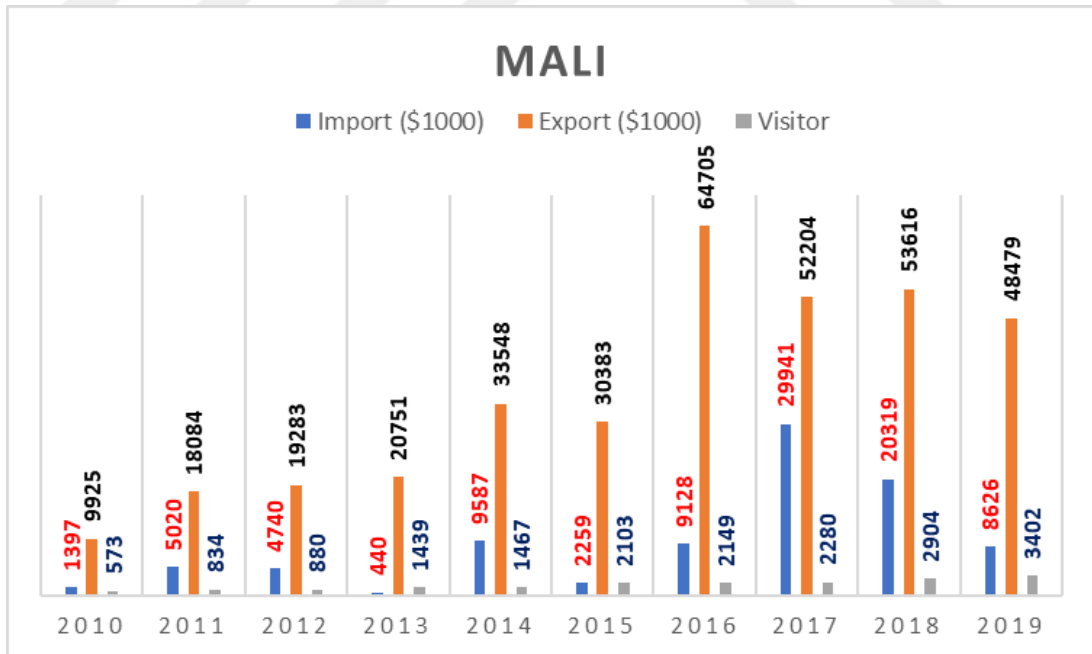


Figure 4.10. Türkiye & Mali Trade and Visitors (TUIK, 2022; TURSAB, 2022)

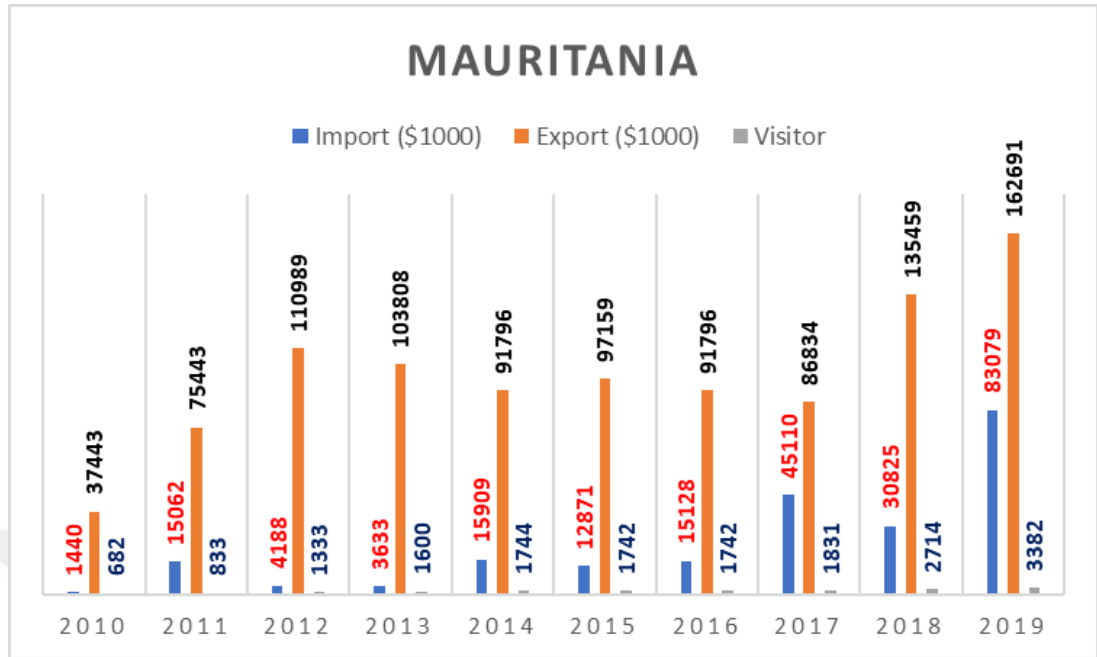
The first initiative for improving bilateral relations with Mali was taken in 1998. However, the Turkish Embassy in Bamako could only get into service on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2010. Four days later, the Turkish Ambassador addressed the letter of credence to the President of Mali. In return, Mali opened its Embassy in Ankara in June 2014, and Malian Ambassador Mr. Soumare addressed the letter of credence to the Turkish President within two weeks.

As can be seen in the graph, bilateral trade volume with Mali is increasing each year, also the number of Malian visitors to Türkiye. Turkish Airlines started direct flights to Bamako in May 2015, and operated daily flights. The chart above shows the details of increasing trade and visitor numbers.

The first visit to Mali by the Turkish President was in February 2018. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan started a West Africa tour with a large committee consisting of MFA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and government officials. During the visit, eight agreements were signed about fishing, agriculture, protection of investments, tourism, energy, education, transport, informatics technologies, sports, health, and religion.

TMV is very active in Mali, with 21 schools and one dormitory. TMV educates 1791 students in Mali. In addition, Malian students have benefited from Turkish scholarship programs since 1992.

#### 4.11. Mauritania



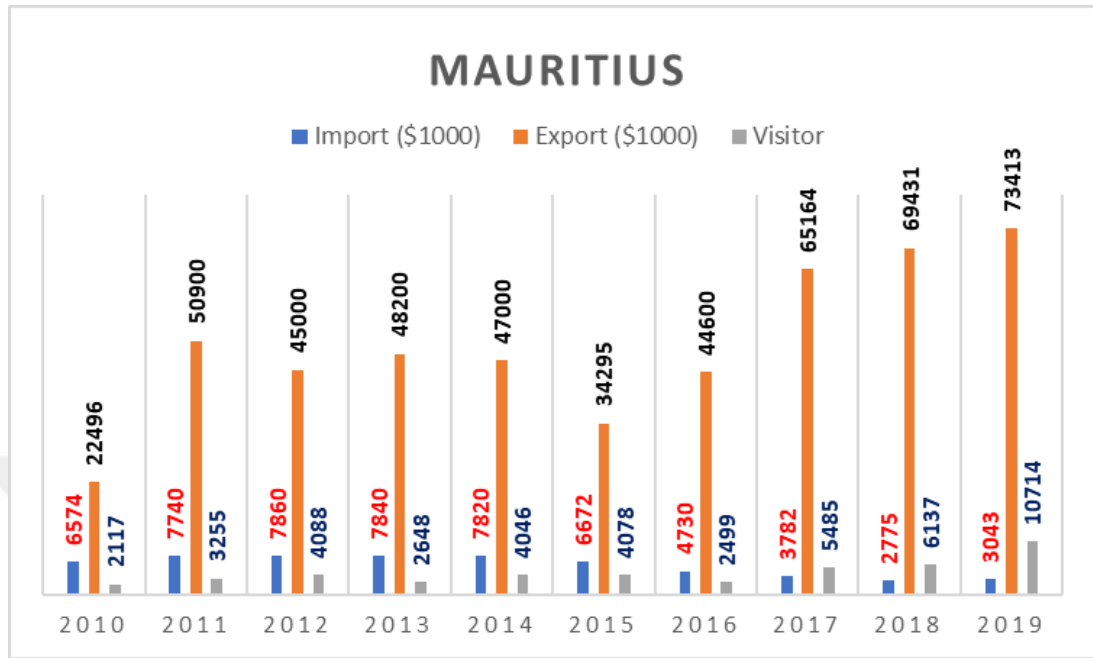
**Figure 4.11. Türkiye & Mauritania Trade and Visitors (TUIK, 2022; TURSAB, 2022)**

Despite the historical relations with Mauritania, Türkiye and Mauritania did not develop bilateral relations until 2008, except for the visit of the Founding President of Mauritania, Mokhtar Ould Daddah, in 1974. Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs visited Mauritania in March 2008 in order to increase diplomatic relations into another dimension. The second visit from the Mauritanian President was in January 2010, and both countries decided to open embassies during the visit. The Turkish embassy in Nouakchott opened in 2011, and Turkish Airlines started direct flights from İstanbul in 2012.

Mauritania has a prosperous fishing industry, which attracts Turkish fishing companies to invest in Mauritania. Turkish Airlines currently operates five flights per week to Mauritania.

TMV has nine schools in Mauritania and educates 1045 students. Moreover, Türkiye has provided a scholarship program for Mauritanian students since 1992.

#### 4.12. Mauritius



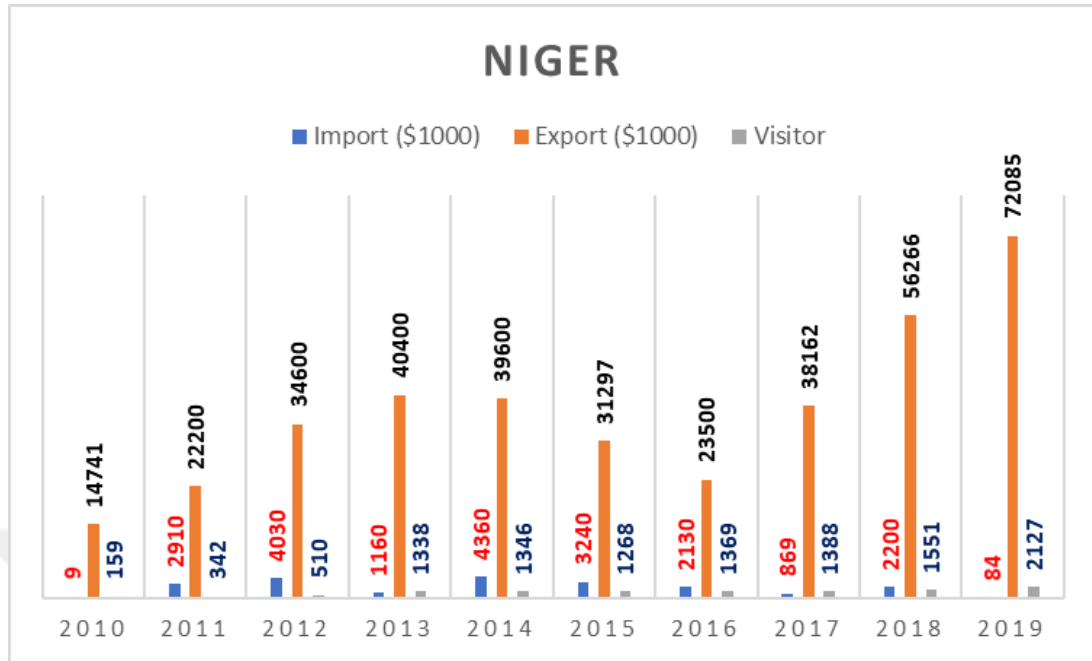
**Figure 4.12. Türkiye & Mauritius Trade and Visitors (TUIK, 2022; TURSAB, 2022)**

Mauritius is one of the three countries in Africa in which Türkiye does not have an embassy. Turkish Embassy of Antananarivo is accredited to Mauritius, and the Berlin Embassy of Mauritius is accredited to Türkiye. There is only an Honorary Consul General in Port Louis.

Turkish Airlines has operated direct flights to Mauritius since the 15<sup>th</sup> of December 2015. As can be seen in the graph, there is a considerable increase in Mauritanian visitors to Türkiye, which was volatile before direct flights. There is also a constant increase in export numbers starting from 2015.

Türkiye has provided a scholarship program for students from Mauritius since 1992. 54 students have benefitted from this scholarship so far.

#### 4.13. Niger



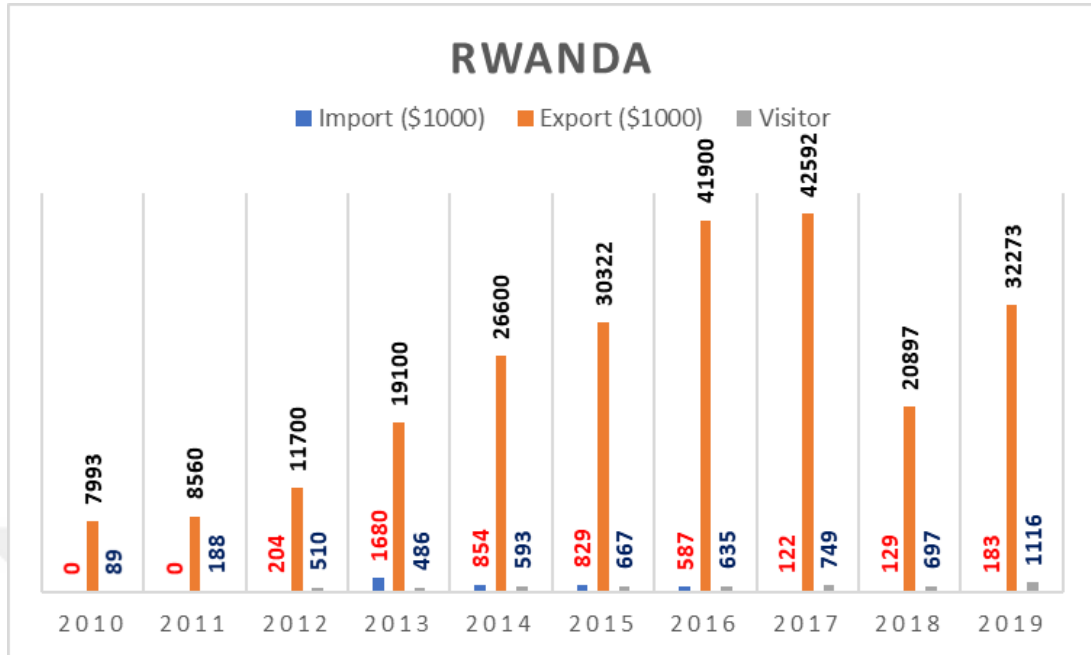
**Figure 4.13. Türkiye & Niger Trade and Visitors (TUIK, 2022; TURSAB, 2022)**

Diplomatic relations with Niger started in 1967. However, it remained limited for a long time. With Türkiye's Opening to Africa Plan, bilateral relations gained importance. Niger opened its Embassy in Ankara in October 2012, and Türkiye opened its Embassy in Niamey in January 2012. Niger also has Honorary Consuls in İstanbul, Bursa, and Antalya.

Though a limited fallback in export between 2014 and 2016, Türkiye recovered from the lost business and increased trade with Niger. Türkiye's export to Niger was 59 Million \$ on 2020, which makes 5% of Niger's total imports. With this number, Türkiye is the 6<sup>th</sup> biggest exporter of Niger. Türkiye sells mainly cereals, milk, flour, electronics, and machine parts to Niger.

Around 400 Turkish citizens live in Niger, and bilateral relations increases yearly in various dimensions. For example, Türkiye offers free health care for 50 Nigeriens each year. Moreover, Türkiye has provided scholarships for Nigerien students since 1992. Today, TMV has 11 schools, and two dormitories in Niger, and educates 933 students.

#### 4.14. Rwanda



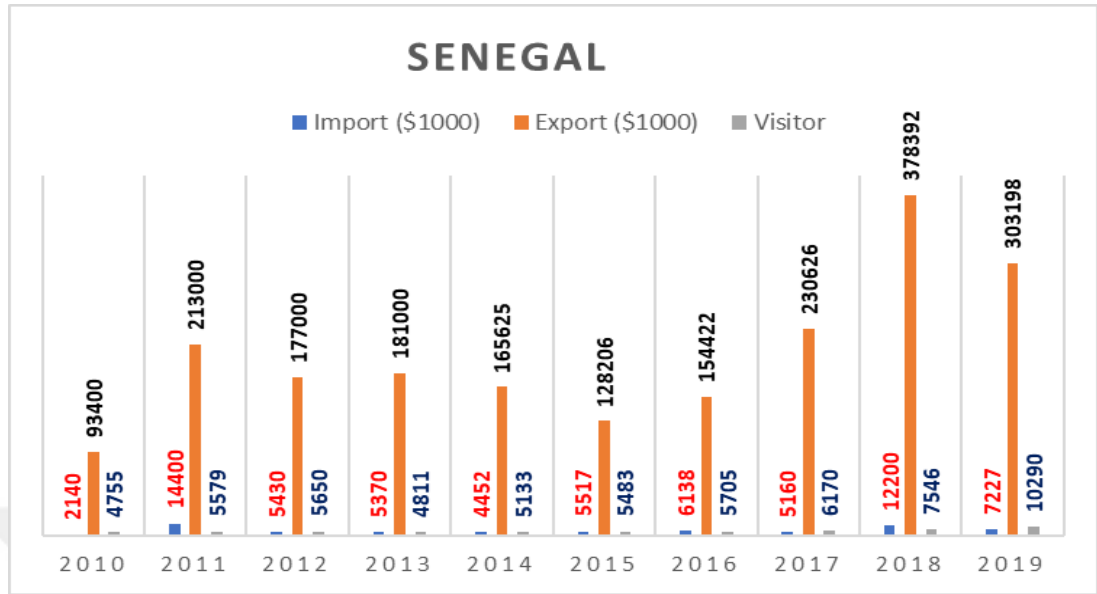
**Figure 4.14. Türkiye & Rwanda Trade and Visitors (TUIK, 2022; TURSAB, 2022)**

Rwanda is one of the most developed countries in Africa. After the Genocide of 1994, Rwanda recovered quickly and admired by other countries for this rapid development. Turkish Airlines started direct flights to Kigali in 2012. Rwanda opened its embassy in Ankara in August 2013, and Türkiye opened its embassy in Kigali in December 2014.

As can be seen on the graph that Rwanda is an important country for Türkiye in terms of the trade balance. Türkiye's import is very restricted from Rwanda. In contrast, Türkiye raised its export over the years. It is seen on the graph that before direct flights, visitor numbers from Rwanda were restricted, but after 2012, there had been a severe improvement in visitors from Rwanda.

Türkiye is an essential market for Rwandan producers. Türkiye is in the first place for Rwanda's export with 54 million \$ which is 17% of Rwanda's total export because Türkiye buys gold and coffee from Rwanda. On the other hand, Türkiye's export to Rwanda is only 27 million \$ which is only 3% of its total import.

#### 4.15. Senegal



**Figure 4.15. Türkiye & Senegal Trade and Visitors (TUIK, 2022; TURSAB, 2022)**

Senegal is the most critical SSA country for Türkiye. As can be seen on the graph, Senegal has the biggest proportion of Türkiye's trade among these 15 SSA countries. Türkiye's export makes up 4% of Senegal's total import, with 280 million \$ in 2020. Türkiye buys raw materials from Senegal, such as oil and ores, and sells mostly iron and steel to Senegal.

The Turkish Embassy in Dakar got into service in 1962; this was one of the first embassies in Africa. In return, Senegal opened its embassy in Ankara in 2006 (MFA, 2022). Even during the Covid-19 pandemic, there had been diplomatic visits to Senegal from the top of the Turkish Government. This visits proves the importance of Senegal, and Africa for Turkish foreign policy. Turkish companies invest highly in Senegal. For example, Limak constructed the new airport of Dakar in 2017 with a 575 million € investment. Turkish Airlines has eight passenger and four cargo flights weekly to Dakar. That makes Dakar the busiest airport in SSA for Turkish Airlines.

Türkiye has provided scholarships to Senegalese students since 1992. TMV has 13 schools in Senegal.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **THE METHODOLOGY**

Research methodology refers to the nature of the research problem, the hypotheses tested, the sampling and sampling methods, the research tools and techniques, and the procedures applied during the research. In this frame, this specific chapter presents the research methods applied in the study. Firstly, it is introduced the research problem and the purpose of the study, followed by the hypotheses determined in the light of the study's purpose. Thirdly, the sampling and sampling methods applied in the study are discussed. It is followed by the discussion of data issues, including the data collection procedure and tool (scale), the analyses applied and analytical tools used for the analyses. Finally, it includes some concluding remarks about the chapter.

#### **5.1. Research Problem and Purpose of the Study**

As it is mentioned above, this research questions whether or not the public diplomacy activities of the Turkish Government in some African countries have any effect on the brand image of Turkish Airlines and what kind of perception and image Türkiye and Turkish Airlines have in those countries. Because, it is known that the image of a country or brand image of a company affects people's perception and behavior towards the concerned brand, and also it affects the customer's behavior. Even though changing reality is very difficult or sometimes impossible, changing the perceptions is possible. To change the perceptions, one should know the actual status first. Therefore, doctors suggest treatment only after a diagnostic. For this reason, this study is pioneer of research on this specific subject and aims to identify the perception of the areas of interest. In other words, this study's outcome can be considered a diagnosis of the perception of Türkiye and Turkish Airlines in SSA Francophone countries.

Besides having commercial objectives, airlines are also used for political and diplomatic purposes. While doing this, it is hard to be a profit-making airline. In fact, it is not always obligatory to make a profit, at least for some routes. For example, most

airlines fly to New York City, the capital of finance and trade, whether this route makes a profit or not. Making a profit on this kind of route is less important than connecting the capital of World finance to one's country. From this point of view, following diplomatic missions while making a profit is precious. This approach makes Turkish Airlines' presence in Africa special. To understand this presence in detail, this study aims to determine the level of brand images of *Türkiye*, *Turkish People*, and *Turkish Airlines* of the people in the Sub-Saharan Francophone African Countries and whether or not the public diplomacy activities of the Turkish Government in those countries have any effects on the brand image of *Türkiye*, *Turkish People*, and *Turkish Airlines*.

## 5.2. Hypotheses

The following hypotheses have been determined in line with the purposes of the research:

- 1 – Türkiye has a negative image in the African countries of interest.
- 2 – Turkish people have a negative image in the African countries of interest.
- 3 – Turkish Airlines has a negative image in the African countries of interest.
- 4 – The African people's level of egocentrism is not negative or neutral for Turkish Airlines<sup>5</sup>.
- 5 - The image of Türkiye does not differ significantly based on specific demographic characteristics (*gender, age, nationality, occupation, education level, having the experience of Türkiye, having the experience of Turkish Airlines, willingness to re-visit Türkiye, and willingness to re-fly with Turkish Airlines*) of African passengers flown with Turkish Airlines. ( $\mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 = \mu_4 = \dots = \mu_n$ , where  $\mu$  is the population mean regarding the relevant demographic feature)
- 6 – The image of Turkish people does not differ significantly based on specific demographic characteristics (*gender, age, nationality, occupation, education level, having experience of Türkiye, having experience of Turkish Airlines, willingness to re-visit Türkiye, and willingness to re-fly with Turkish Airlines*) of African passengers

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<sup>5</sup> In this context; African people do not have negative egocentric feelings towards Turkish Airlines.

flown with Turkish Airlines. ( $\mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 = \mu_4 = \dots = \mu_n$ , where  $\mu$  is the population mean regarding the relevant demographic feature)

7 - The image of Turkish Airlines does not differ significantly based on specific demographic characteristics (gender, age, nationality, occupation, education level, having experience of Türkiye, having experience of Turkish Airlines, willingness to re-visit Türkiye, and willingness to re-fly with Turkish Airlines) of African passengers flown with Turkish Airlines. ( $\mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 = \mu_4 = \dots = \mu_n$ , where  $\mu$  is the population mean regarding the relevant demographic feature)

8 - The level of egocentrism of African people does not differ significantly based on specific demographic characteristics (gender, age, nationality, occupation, education level, having experience of Türkiye, having experience with Turkish Airlines, willingness to re-visit Türkiye, and willingness to re-fly with Turkish Airlines) ( $\mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 = \mu_4 = \dots = \mu_n$ , where  $\mu$  is the population mean regarding the relevant demographic feature)

9 – There are no relationships between the image of Türkiye, Turkish People, and Turkish Airlines.

10 – The image of Türkiye, Turkish People, and Turkish Airlines are not related to the level of egocentrism of African people.

### **5.3. The Sampling and Sampling Method**

The population of interest for such a study was all the passengers who flew with Turkish Airlines between 2010 and 2019. However, since it was practically impossible to reach all the passengers in terms of time, availability, practicality, and cost, it was necessary to sample from the population. It is known that a good sample, drawn out of the population, carries the population characteristics and represents it quite rightly. Therefore, the sample parameters are said to be good estimators of population parameters under investigation, which means that as long as it is obtained the proper sample from the population, it is not necessary to study the whole population to understand its main characteristics and features.

There are many probability and non-probability sampling methods in the literature, such as simple random, systematic, stratified, cluster, and multi-stage sampling (the examples of the former type) and easy sampling (the example of the latter type), to

choose among depending on the nature of the study (Ajay S. & Micah B., 2014). Each one has its own rules and procedures that are needed to apply in order to have a good sample of the population. When the conditions are suitable (e.g., sufficient financial, time, and labor resources available and the population elements are reachable), the probability sampling methods are generally more preferred to the non-probability sampling methods. When the opposite is true, carrying out the study is much better than not doing it at all, and the researcher does not have a viable solution. It has to be sufficient with a non-probability sampling method, and the study may have to be carried out with it.

In this study, almost all the limitations (e.g., availability of financial resources and time, and population elements' reachability) hold true, and it was not possible to choose one of the probabilities sampling methods, yielding the necessity of selecting a non-probability sampling method. Therefore, it was evaluated that the easy sampling method was best suited to the study under the current circumstances.

Unlike the probability sampling methods, the easy sampling method does not require probability selection procedures and criteria to be applied during the sampling (Ajay S. & Micah B., 2014). Since it is a non-probability sampling method, every population element is not necessarily have an equal chance of being selected for the sample. Thus, the researcher has more freedom to choose among the population elements, and he/she generally behaves to choose among the best available features for the sample.

For the field research, Istanbul Airport has been chosen as the application area. A total of 126 passengers from 15 SSA francophone African countries were selected by using the easy sampling method between the 24<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> of December 2021.

#### **5.4. Data Collection Tool and Data Collection**

A survey questionnaire has been developed to collect the data required for the study based on the literature, especially those by Koçak and Bayraktar's (2019) egocentrism scale, Tanyeri and Kodal's (2015) image scale, and Swaen and Chumpitaz's (2008) trust scale, which were used with the knowledge and permission of the authors.

The questionnaire consisted of four main parts: The *first* one included five demographic questions, including sex, age, education, nationality, and occupation; the *second* part included four categorical questions about if the respondents previously had any experience with Türkiye and Turkish Airlines; the *third* part included 16 Likert type questions in total about the perception and the image of Türkiye and Turkish people, and the *fourth* part included 12 Likert type question about the perception and the image of Turkish Airlines, and additionally egocentrism level of participants.

Istanbul Airport has been determined as a venue for data collection. Participants have been informed directly during the application of the survey questionnaire simultaneously, where pre-prepared and printed questionnaire forms have been applied to the sample elements chosen at the site, between 12:00 pm and 8 pm due to limited permission, based on the easy sampling by face to face interviewing method. The survey questionnaire was applied between the 24<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of December 2021, during which time it was interviewed 126 participants in total from 15 SSA francophone African countries.

The countries chosen are as follows: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Gabon, Guinea, Ivory Coasts, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Niger, Rwanda, and Senegal. However, most of the samples have been collected from the citizens of 8 countries, namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Ivory Coasts, Mali, Niger, and Dem. Rep. of Congo, 19.8% of the samples has been collected from the citizens of eight other countries. This created inequality among the countries' representation in the sampling. The researcher did not have much control over the sampling, and the samples to be chosen due to the time constraint, and the limited permission from the airport authority. Unfortunately, such scenes can be observed in the method of easy sampling.

## **5.5. Analyses**

After the data collection phase, the questionnaire was coded, and the raw data were transferred to the computer accordingly. Following that, the data were analyzed by using a statistical software package, SPSS, after control, editing, and some corrections.

The analyses were performed by considering the purposes of the study. First, descriptive analyses were applied in order to determine, and describe the main features of the data and the research case. Then it was applied relevant tests needed to examine the states of interest by using the appropriate tools such as independent samples t-test in cases where it is needed to test the gap between two groups, and one-way ANOVA in cases where it is needed to test the gaps among three or more groups, in order to test the hypotheses of the research. (The significance level is determined at ( $\alpha=0,05$ ) for the tests.) Additionally, it was applied a correlation analysis (Pearson Correlation) for the cases where it was needed to determine the relationships between the variables of interest, such as the image items, and between the image items and the levels of egocentrism. Furthermore, graphical analyses are used in cases where it was thought to be more beneficial for presenting the data and the findings.

## 5.6. Reliability

To determine reliability of the scales, the reliability coefficient has been calculated for each of the construct subscales based on the data collected. The results are presented in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1. The Reliability Coefficients for the Constructs (and Sub-Constructs) for the Image of Türkiye, Turkish People, Turkish Airlines, and Participants' Egocentrism**

	Cronbach's Alpha
Image of Türkiye from the outside	0,848
Image of Türkiye from the inside	0,816
Image of Türkiye (general)	0,882
Image of Turkish people	0,887
Image of Turkish Airlines	0,901
Participants' egocentrism level	0,769

*p<0,05, Reliability analysis*

The reliability coefficients calculated for the constructs and sub-scales are between 0.76 and 0.84. According to the general acceptance, a construct (scale) is considered reliable if the reliability coefficient is  $0.60\alpha \leq 0.80$  and highly reliable if it is  $0.80\alpha \leq 1.0$ . The reliability coefficients calculated show that all the scales are 'highly reliable,' being only the egocentrism scale 'reliable.'

## **5.7. Limitations of the Study**

As with many research studies, this study has also been performed within certain borders and, of course, with some limitations. It would be helpful to know the borders within which this study has been conducted in understanding and interpreting the results and findings. First, the study does not contain any information considered trade secrets, such as passenger fares, revenues, load factors, and passenger numbers on a specific route; however, the issues are discussed by the total numbers as much as possible. The second constraint is related to lacking sufficient information from the African side. Most African countries are not transparent in terms of trade statistics, diplomatic relations chronology, and airline statistics. Besides this, the study contains various data from international sources that verify Turkish ones by which it completes the missing parts.

On the limitation side; the research was conducted during the Christmas Holiday, and the airport authority's permission was only four days for the survey after dealing with lengthy bureaucratic procedures. Because of that time limitation, the research was able to consist of only 126 samples, not equally distributed among different nationalities. A homogeneously distributed sample could be more meaningful for the study, but the conditions produced the data available at best.

## CHAPTER VI

### ANALYSIS OF DATA AND FINDINGS

In this part, the results of statistical analyses performed is presented on the data collected. The respondents of the research study are combined of citizens of 15 African countries who use Turkish Airlines, and the findings obtained from those analyses. *First*, the chapter presents the results of descriptive analyses of the variables of interest in the same order in the survey questionnaire, which was intentionally designed in a specific order, to increase understandability. *Second*, the chapter presents the results of factor analysis of the scales used to collect the data in order to show if the same structure of the constructs holds true for the current research domain. *Third*, the chapter presents also the results of the tests to question the research hypotheses, in the same order with them. The chapter is divided into some main and sub-titles to increase the presentation and understandability of the subjects.

#### 6.1. Demographic Characteristics of the Survey Respondents

Demographic characteristics of the sample are already known to profoundly affect their attitudes, preferences, behaviors, and decisions. Therefore, examination of the demographic characteristics of the sample data is central for understanding the main demographic features of the samples. Understanding data features helps us better to understand and interpret the results of the analyses and draw sound conclusions.

Table 6.1 shows the demographic features of the survey participants investigated in the survey. Of the 126 participants took place in the survey, approximately 56% are men, and 47% are women, indicating that men and women are closely represented in the sample.

Regarding age groups, the 26-35 group has the highest rate of nearly 38%, followed by the 36-50 and the 18-25 group. These three age groups form almost 90% of the participants, indicating that about 90% of the passengers are younger than 50.

**Table 6.1. Demographics of Participants**

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	71	56,3
	Female	55	43,7
Age	18-25	31	24,6
	26-35	48	38,1
	36-50	33	26,2
	50 +	14	11,1
Nationality	Benin	14	11,1
	Burkina Faso	5	4,0
	Cameroon	37	29,4
	Chad	3	2,4
	Ivory Coasts	19	15,1
	Mali	11	8,7
	Niger	4	3,2
	Democratic Republic of Congo	8	6,3
Other	25	19,8	
Occupation	Student	31	24,6
	Education, training	5	4,0
	Sales and related operations	8	6,3
	Engineer/ Architecture	12	9,5
	Healthcare	5	4,0
	Aviation, transports, logistics	5	4,0
	Arts, design, sports, media	4	3,2
	Computer science or coding	9	7,1
	Management	10	7,9
	Government-related occupations	8	6,3
	Other	29	23,0
Education	High School	42	33,3
	Bachelor	38	30,2
	Master	39	31,0
	Ph.D.	7	5,6

According to the nationality of the survey participants, almost 30% are from Cameroon, followed by Ivory Coasts (15%) and Benin (11%). Nearly 2/3 of the respondents are from these three countries.

In terms of the occupation of the respondents, 25% are students, followed by engineers/architects (9,5%), management (8%), and computer science and coding (7%), which these four groups form nearly 50% of the respondents.

## 6.2. The Factor Structures of the Image of Türkiye, Turkish People, Turkish Airlines, and Participants' Egocentrism Level

In measuring the brand image, it is essential to understand the factor structure of the scales used (or developed) to do it, and whether or not it is really suitable for that specific task. Although the current scales used in this research are already tested and used in different researches, it is still needed to make sure whether they are suitable for this specific research domain of the brand image or not. For this reason, a factor analysis has been applied to the scales with which the data is collected in order to understand the factor structure of the scales. And see whether they are appropriate to use also for the current study. The results of the factor analysis are presented in Table 6.2. for the image of Türkiye.

In the analyses, it has been used the principal component analysis (PCA) and varimax rotation to determine the factor items, item correlations, and factor loads of the scales utilized. *First*, for the image of the Türkiye scale, results of the analysis show that the variables (items) have been gathered under two main factors, explaining almost 59% of the total variance. Additionally, it is observed that all the items in the scale have intermediate or high correlations, yielding statistical significance at a 0.01 level. The factor loadings show that the classified items belong to the same factor and measure the same construct. Besides these, only the item “Türkiye is a beautiful country” should better be dropped from the scale because, its factor loading is less than 0.50, which is probably the item represented by the other variables in the scale in this specific research domain. (KMO Measure = 0.87 shows that the sampling adequacy is sufficient for the analysis.) The results of the analysis show that the scale can be used for measuring the image of Türkiye in the current research.

**Table 6.2. The Results of Factor Analysis of the Image of Türkiye**

Factor 1: Image of Türkiye from outside (Explained variance=30,56)	Mean	Standard deviation	Item test correlation	Factor loads
I respect Türkiye	4,44	0,88	,572**	0,817
I like Türkiye	4,22	0,88	,706**	0,815
I trust Türkiye	3,80	1,07	,771**	0,723
Türkiye takes responsibility in global affairs	3,62	0,90	,757**	0,637
Türkiye attaches importance to ecology	3,52	0,84	,669**	0,615

**Table 6.2. (cont.)**

Factor 1: Image of Türkiye from outside (Explained variance=30,56)	Mean	Standard deviation	Item test correlation	Factor loads
Türkiye is a country where educated people live	3,83	0,87	,666**	0,601
Factor 2: Image of Türkiye from inside (Explained variance=28,39)				
Türkiye has a rich history	3,83	0,89	,621**	0,787
There is social and cultural diversity in Türkiye	4,07	0,89	,603**	0,772
Türkiye is a developed country in the fields of transportation, education, health and communication.	3,78	0,87	,689**	0,731
Türkiye offers many activities to people	3,72	0,90	,727**	0,635
Türkiye supports social responsibility and aid programs	3,95	0,84	,663**	0,634
<i>KMO Measure = 0,87 Total variance: 58,95</i>				

*Second*, in Table 6.3., the results of the analyses for the image of Turkish people show that the items are gathered under a single factor, explaining almost 74,74% of the total variance, where item factor loadings are also high for all the items. Similarly, all the items have high correlations, being statistically significant at the 0,01 level. The KMO (Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin) measure of 0,76 also shows that the sample size is adequate. It can be drawn from these results that the scale can be used for measuring the image of Turkish people in the current research.

**Table 6.3. The Results of Factor Analysis for the Image of Turkish People**

Turkish Image (Explained variance=74,74)	Mean	Standard deviation	Item test correlation	Factor load
Turkish People are honest	3,52	1,02	,888**	0,891
Turkish People are kind	3,77	1,00	,873**	0,872
Turkish people are trustable	3,43	0,95	,851**	0,856
Turkish People are hospitable	3,75	1,03	,845**	0,838
<i>KMO Measure = 0,760</i>				

*Third*, in Table 6.4., for the image of Turkish Airlines, the results of the analysis show that all the items are gathered under a single factor again, explaining 62.98% of the total variance. Similarly, the majority of the items have high correlations by being statistically significant at the 0.01 level. The KMO Measure of 0.85 shows that the

sample size is adequate for the analysis of the construct. The results imply that the scale can be used for measuring the image of Turkish Airlines in this research domain.

**Table 6.4. The Results of the Factor Analysis for the Image of Turkish Airlines**

Image of Turkish Airlines (Explained variance =62,989)	Mean	Standard deviation	Item test correlatio n	Factor loads
I would suggest Turkish Airlines to my friends	4,03	1,02	,857**	0,862
I am satisfied with my flight experience with Turkish Airlines	4,01	1,06	,821**	0,823
THY is a high-quality brand	3,94	0,99	,809**	0,81
THY respects its customers	4,00	1,11	,811**	0,806
Turkish Airlines is a trustable airline	3,91	1,03	,783**	0,784
I would fly with Turkish Airlines once again	4,02	1,05	,782**	0,782
THY is a popular company among African people	3,99	0,94	,681**	0,676

*KMO Measure = 0,854*

*Fourth*, for the participants' egocentrism level, the results in Table 6.5. depicts that all the items are again grouped under a single factor, indicating the factor loadings to the single factor and explaining 52.87% of the total variance. The items have medium to high correlations, being statistically significant at 0.1 level. The KMO Measure of 0.85 also shows that the sample size is adequate for the analysis of the construct. The results of the analysis indicate that the scale is suitable for measuring the level of participants' egocentrism in this research domain.

**Table 6.5. The Results of the Factor Analysis for the Participants' Egocentrism Level**

Egocentrism Scale (Explained Variance =52,873)	Mean	Standard deviation	Item test correlation	Factor Load
Flying with Turkish Airlines harms African airlines	2,41	1,07	,781**	0,808
Using foreign airlines is not an act for African People	2,69	1,13	,745**	0,754
I don't like that Turkish Airlines generates revenue from my country	2,20	1,07	,720**	0,749
I only fly with Turkish Airlines while there is no alternative African airline	2,87	1,33	,749**	0,727
It is important to fly with an African/domestic airline	3,36	1,16	,622**	0,576

*KMO Measure = 0,854*

### 6.3. The Experiences of the Survey Respondents About Türkiye, Turkish Airlines, and Turkish People

The survey respondents' existing experiences of Türkiye and Turkish Airlines are very relevant to their perceptions and the image of those subjects under study. If the previous experiences are positive, then it is likely that the responses may have more positive perceptions and brand image of Türkiye and Turkish Airlines. The existence of the previous experiences is more likely to affect the respondents familiarity with the country and its airline company. It can naturally be expected that the higher the level of information about the country gets, the more positive its image becomes. Therefore, examining the previous experiences of the respondents about the subject under study is highly relevant for the research. Additionally, it is also one of the concern to determine how the respondents' experiences affect their behaviors towards Türkiye and Turkish Airlines, which can easily observed by revealing if the respondents want to re-visit Türkiye and want to fly with Turkish Airlines again. These two questions yield sufficient answers to these points under investigation.

**Table 6.6. The Descriptive Statistics About the Respondents' Experiences of Türkiye and Turkish Airlines**

	Response	Frequency	Percent
Have you ever been to Türkiye?	Yes	46	36,5
	No	80	63,5
Have you ever flown with Turkish Airlines?	Yes	110	87,3
	No	16	12,7
Do you want to (re)visit Türkiye?	Yes	112	88,9
	No	14	11,1
Do you want to (re)fly with Turkish Airlines?	Yes	113	89,7
	No	13	10,3

Table 6.6. shows that nearly 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the 126 respondents have previously been to Türkiye, but about 87% of them have already flown with Turkish Airlines. This means that the majority of the respondents have flown with Turkish Airlines not only to Türkiye but also to other countries. That means many of those who have not been to Türkiye also have used Turkish Airlines to travel to other countries. The replies to the question regarding 'whether they want to re-fly with Turkish Airlines,' the final item in the table, clearly illustrate that almost 90% of the respondents want to fly with Turkish Airlines again. It should be noted that the 'Yes' rates given to the second and

fourth items are almost the same, which can be interpreted as the respondents who have flown with Turkish Airlines to somewhere before are most likely probable that they will prefer flying with it again.

The respondents' reply to the final (the 3<sup>rd</sup>) item (in the table) regarding whether the participants want to re-visit Türkiye, indicates that almost 90% want to visit it again. Considering all four items together, the findings show that Türkiye's and Turkish Airlines' attractiveness to the participants are very high. They also have good experiences with Türkiye and Turkish Airlines, and they have positive images of both subjects. (Besides these positive results, the remaining nearly 10% who do not want to re-visit Türkiye and who do not want to fly with Turkish Airlines again should be closely examined why they do not want it again.)

#### **6.4. The Image of Türkiye, Turkish People, Turkish Airlines, and Participants' Egocentrism Level**

To understand the image of the four subjects of interest mentioned, the relevant data is analyzed, and the results are presented in Table 6.3. The statistics in the table show the calculations over the sum-up values of the responses, where the maximum value is different for each item because of the number of items existing in the sub-scale. Therefore, the mean weight within the max, or Mean/Max ratio, is more meaningful in the context as separately calculated in the table.

**Table 6.7. Some Descriptive Statistics About the Image of Türkiye, Turkish People, Turkish Airlines, and Egocentrism Levels of the Participants**

	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Mean/Max</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Image of Türkiye from outside	126	3,90	0,781	0,68
Image of Türkiye from inside	126	3,87	0,774	0,66
Image of Türkiye (general)	126	3,89	0,778	0,60
Image of Turkish people	126	3,61	0,724	0,86
Image of Turkish Airlines	126	3,98	0,797	0,81
Participants' egocentrism level	126	2,70	0,541	0,83

According to the findings, the Mean/Max ratio is around 0.77 for the image of Türkiye for all three image items (from outside, inside, and general) ( $3.33 \leq s \leq 6.67$ ). Similarly,

the ratio is 0.72 for the image of Turkish people ( $s=3.45$ ), and it is almost 0.80 for that for Turkish Airlines ( $s=5.2$ ), the highest of all six image items. The ratio regarding the egocentrism level of participants is just over 0.50 ( $s=4.16$ ), being the lowest of all, shows that the general level of participants' egocentric feelings is getting closer to neutrality but from the negative side, which means that there is some sort of egocentric negative feeling against Turkish Airlines. Still, they are not high or strong (Table 6.12. presents variable-based details about the participants' egocentrism level to clarify the issue in detail. That is why, it is recommended that this table is read together with the results in that specific table.) The table reveals that the image of Türkiye, Turkish people, and Turkish Airlines levels are high among the respondents.

In the following tables, the details of the descriptive statistics for each of the image items are presented separately. The mean values for all of the sub-variables are higher than the average value of '3' in the 5-scale Likert-type measurement is used, which corresponds to a 'positive image' for Türkiye, Turkish People, and Turkish Airlines. On the other hand, the mean values of the sub-variables for the egocentrism level are below '3', meaning that the egocentrism level of respondents is low but not too low, except for the only variable of 'It is important to fly with an African/domestic airline,' whose mean value is higher than '3', corresponds to a positive egocentrism level (Table 6.7.).

**Table 6.8. The Descriptive Statistics About the Image of Türkiye from Outside**

	Statistic	
	Mean	Std. Deviation
I respect Türkiye	4,44	,881
I like Türkiye	4,22	,884
I trust Türkiye	3,80	1,066
Türkiye is a country where educated people live	3,83	,874
Türkiye takes responsibility for global activities	3,62	,902
Türkiye takes responsibility for ecological policies	3,52	,836

**Table 6.9. The Descriptive Statistics About the Image of Türkiye from Inside**

	Statistic	
	Mean	Std. Deviation
Türkiye is a developed country in terms of its transportation, education, health, and communication infrastructure	3,95	,838
Türkiye is a country with social and cultural diversity	3,83	,892
Türkiye has a profound history	4,07	,887
Türkiye offers a lot of entertainment activities	3,78	,866
Türkiye supports social responsibility and charity programs	3,72	,900

**Table 6.10. The Descriptive Statistics About the Image of Turkish People**

	Statistic	
	Mean	Std. Deviation
Turkish People are honest	3,52	1,018
Turkish people are trustable	3,43	,950
Turkish People are kind	3,77	,997
Turkish People are hospitable	3,75	1,025

**Table 6.11. The Descriptive Statistics About the Image of Turkish Airlines**

	Statistic	
	Mean	Std. Deviation
Turkish Airlines is a trustable airline	3,91	1,028
I would suggest Turkish Airlines to my friends	4,03	1,019
I am satisfied with my flight experience with Turkish Airlines	4,01	1,062
THY is a popular company among African people	3,99	,942
THY respects its customers	4,00	1,110
THY is a high-quality brand	3,94	,990
I would fly with Turkish Airlines once again	4,02	1,054

**Table 6.12. The Descriptive Statistics About Respondents' Egocentrism Level**

	Statistic	
	Mean	Std. Deviation
I only fly with Turkish Airlines while there is no alternative African airline.	2,87	1,327
It is important to fly with an African/domestic airline.	<b>3,36</b>	1,163
Using foreign airlines is not an act for African People.	2,69	1,135
Flying with Turkish Airlines harms African airlines	2,41	1,068
I don't like that Turkish Airlines generates revenue from my country	2,20	1,066

## 6.5. Testing the Hypotheses

The hypotheses to be tested are already stated in the previous chapter. In this part of the thesis, the results of the relevant tests (one-sample t-test, independent samples t-test, ANOVA, and correlation analysis) are presented for the hypotheses tested, and the findings are presented accordingly. To avoid repetition, it should be stated that the hypotheses are already tested at the ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) level. Still, the results are also reported for the cases where the significance level fits to test the relevant hypothesis at the ( $\alpha=0.01$ ) level. Due to the scale applied, most of the time, the hypotheses are tested to see whether the mean values of the images of the specific items of interest are equal or smaller than '3', ( $\mu \leq 3$ ), at the ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) level, where ( $\mu=3$ ) corresponds to the state of neutrality (indecisiveness) and ( $\mu < 3$ ) corresponds to the state of a negative image in the scales (or sub-scales) used to collect the data. Only the case 'the level of egocentrism of African people' is tested with a slightly different approach (due to the scale), but it has been made clear explanations about it in footnotes. Below are the results of the hypothesis tests:

### 6.5.1. Testing the Image Items

#### 6.5.1.1. Image of Türkiye

The relevant *null and alternative hypotheses* can be expressed as follows:

H<sub>0</sub>: Türkiye has a negative image in African countries. ( $\mu \leq 3$ )

H<sub>1</sub>: Türkiye has a positive image in African countries. ( $\mu \geq 3$ )

It has been applied one-sample t-tests for testing the hypothesis, and the results are presented in Table 6.13. for all the variables of interest.

**Table 6.13. The Results of One-Sample T-Test of the Variables of the Image of Türkiye**

	Test Value = 3			
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
I respect Türkiye	18,305	125	,000	1,437
I like Türkiye	15,512	125	,000	1,222
I trust Türkiye	8,441	125	,000	,802
Türkiye is a country where educated people live	10,702	125	,000	,833
Türkiye takes responsibility for global activities	7,703	125	,000	,619

**Table 6.13. (cont.)**

Türkiye takes responsibility for ecological policies	7,031	125	,000	,524
Türkiye is a developed country in terms of its transportation, education, health, and communication infrastructure	12,762	125	,000	,952
Türkiye is a country with social and cultural diversity	10,484	125	,000	,833
Türkiye has a profound history	13,558	125	,000	1,071
Türkiye offers a lot of entertainment activities	10,080	125	,000	,778
Türkiye supports social responsibility and charity programs	9,006	125	,000	,722
Türkiye is a beautiful country	21,061	125	,000	1,381

The test results show that the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected at the ( $\alpha=0.01$ ) level, where the pre-determined significance level is 5%, ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). In other words, the p-values for all the variables regarding the image of Türkiye are smaller than the pre-determined significance level at ( $\alpha=0.05$ ), being (all the p-values  $< \alpha=0.05$ ). Additionally, the mean differences for all the variables ( $\mu_{\text{Image of Türkiye}} - \mu=3$ ) $>0$  show that *the image of Türkiye is positive* regarding all the variables, and all the p-values are ( $=0.00$ ) indicate that the mean differences are statistically significant at ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). Therefore, we **reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ )** that “*Türkiye has a negative image in the African countries.*” and conclude that “*Türkiye has a positive image in the African countries.*”

### 6.5.1.2. Image of Turkish People

The relevant *null and alternative hypotheses* can be expressed as follows:

$H_0$ : Turkish people have negative image in African countries. ( $\mu \leq 0$ )

$H_1$ : Turkish people have positive image in African countries. ( $\mu \geq 0$ )

It has been applied one-sample t-tests for testing the hypothesis, and the results are presented in Table 6.14. for all the variables of interest.

**Table 6.14. The Results of One-Sample T-Test of the Variables of the Image of Turkish People**

	Test Value = 3			
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Turkish People are honest	5,690	125	,000	,516
Turkish people are trustable	5,063	125	,000	,429
Turkish People are kind	8,665	125	,000	,770
Turkish People are hospitable	8,255	125	,000	,754

Again, the test results show that the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected at the ( $\alpha=0.01$ ) level because all the p-values of the variables of interest are ( $p=0.00 < \alpha=0.05$ ). Similarly, the mean differences for all the variables ( $\mu_{\text{Image of Turkish People}} - \mu=3 > 0$ ) show that *the image of Turkish People is positive* regarding all the variables and all the p-values=0,00 indicate that the mean differences are statistically significant at ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). Therefore, we **reject the null hypothesis** ( $H_0$ ) that “*Turkish People have a negative image in the African countries.*” and conclude that “*Turkish People have a positive image in the African countries.*”

### 6.5.1.3. Image of Turkish Airlines

The relevant *null and alternative hypotheses* can be expressed as follows:

$H_0$ : Turkish Airlines has a negative image in African countries. ( $\mu \leq 3$ )

$H_1$ : Turkish Airlines has a positive image in African countries. ( $\mu \geq 3$ )

It has been applied one-sample t-tests for testing the hypothesis, and the results are presented in Table 6.15. for all the variables of interest.

**Table 6.15. The Results of One-Sample T-Test of the Variables of the Image of Turkish Airlines**

	Test Value = 3			
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Turkish Airlines is a trustable airline	9,968	125	,000	,913
I would suggest Turkish Airlines to my friends	11,362	125	,000	1,032
I am satisfied with my flight experience with Turkish Airlines	10,653	125	,000	1,008

**Table 6.15. (cont.)**

THY is a popular company among African people	11,818	125	,000	,992
THY respects its customers	10,113	125	,000	1,000
THY is a high-quality brand	10,704	125	,000	,944
I would fly with Turkish Airlines once again	10,901	125	,000	1,024

The test results indicate that the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) should be rejected at the ( $\alpha=0.01$ ) level, because all the p-values of the variables of interest are ( $p=0.00 < \alpha=0.05$ ). Similarly, the mean differences for all the variables being ( $\mu_{\text{Image of Turkish Airlines}} - \mu=3$ ) $>0$  show that *the image of Turkish Airlines is positive* regarding all the variables and all the p-values=0.00 indicate that the mean differences are statistically significant at ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) that “*Turkish Airlines has a negative image in the African countries.*”, giving the opportunity to conclude that “*Turkish Airlines has a positive image in the African countries.*”

#### **6.5.1.4. The Level of Egocentrism of African People**

The relevant *null and alternative hypotheses* can be expressed as follows:

$H_0$ : The African people’s level of egocentrism is not negative or neutral for Turkish Airlines ( $\mu \geq 3$ )

$H_1$ : The African people’s level of egocentrism is negative or neutral for Turkish Airlines ( $\mu \leq 3$ )

It has been applied one-sample t-tests for testing the hypothesis, and the results are presented in Table 6.16. for all the variables of interest. There is a negative correlation between the level of egocentrism and the probability of a passenger’s choice of Turkish Airlines. This is why reverse coding is applied while analyzing the data.

**Table 6.16. The Results of One-Sample T-Test for the Variables of the Level of Egocentrism of African People**

	Test Value = 3			
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
I only fly with Turkish Airlines while there is no alternative African airline.	-1,075	125	,285	-,127
It is important to fly with an African/domestic airline.	3,449	125	,001	,357
Using foreign airlines is not an act for African People.	-3,062	125	,003	-,310
Flying with Turkish Airlines harms African airlines	-6,174	125	,000	-,587
I don't like that Turkish Airlines generates revenue from my country	-8,441	125	,000	-,802

According to the test results, *the null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) should be rejected* at the ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) level that “*The African people’s level of egocentrism is not negative for Turkish Airlines,*” because of being four out of the five variables’ p-values ( $p=0.00 < \alpha=0.05$ ) except one variable, which is “*I only fly with Turkish Airlines while there is no alternative African airline.*”, whose ( $p\text{-value}=0.285 > (\alpha=0.05)$ ), which indicate that we can not reject the null hypothesis at the ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) level for this variable only. Accordingly, the mean differences for all the variables except one are ( $\mu_{\text{the level of egocentrism}} - \mu=3 < 0$ ), showing that *the level of egocentrism of African people is negative or neutral against Turkish Airlines,*<sup>6</sup> (the overall mean of all the variables is 2.70, smaller than 3), and all the p-values=0.00 indicate that the mean differences are statistically significant at ( $\alpha=0.05$ ), in fact, at ( $\alpha=0.01$ ). Therefore, we *reject the null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>)* that “*The African people’s level of egocentrism is not negative or neutral for Turkish Airlines,*” and conclude that “*The African people’s level of egocentrism is negative or neutral for Turkish Airlines.*”

<sup>6</sup> For the current scale, the Likert type scale of 1-5 measure should be interpreted differently from the other scales or subscales due to the current scale’s application, where 1 meant ‘I totally agree,’ 3 meant ‘Neutral,’ and 5 meant ‘I totally disagree.’ In this sub-scale, low scores represent the respondents’ higher agreement with the statements. Therefore, a general score of  $\mu \leq 0$  means that African people’s level of egocentrism is positive (means they have negative feelings) for Turkish Airlines, while a score of  $\mu \geq 0$  means that African people’s level of egocentrism is not positive (means they do not have negative feelings) for Turkish Airlines.

### 6.5.2. Testing the Differences Based on Demographic Features

Demographic features are almost always important in shaping human attitudes and behavior. Therefore, the effects of demographic characteristics are of particular importance in the context of the study. It takes more discussions about the demographic features in the pages below, but in order to avoid repetition, it has been preferred to state the hypotheses to be tested as follows:

H<sub>0,1</sub>: The image of Türkiye does not differ based on specific demographic characteristics (*gender, age, nationality, occupation, education level, having the experience of Türkiye, having the experience of Turkish Airlines, willingness to re-visit Türkiye, and willingness to re-fly with Turkish Airlines*) of African passengers who have been flown with Turkish Airlines. ( $\mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 = \mu_4 = \dots = \mu_n$ , where  $\mu$  is the population mean regarding the relevant demographic feature)

H<sub>0,2</sub>: The image of Turkish people does not differ based on specific demographic characteristics (*gender, age, nationality, occupation, education level, having experience of Türkiye, having experience of Turkish Airlines, willingness to re-visit Türkiye, and willingness to re-fly with Turkish Airlines*) of African passengers flying with Turkish Airlines. ( $\mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 = \mu_4 = \dots = \mu_n$ , where  $\mu$  is the population mean regarding the relevant demographic feature)

H<sub>0,3</sub>: The image of Turkish Airlines does not differ based on specific demographic characteristics (*gender, age, nationality, occupation, education level, having the experience of Türkiye, having the experience of Turkish Airlines, willingness to re-visit Türkiye, and willingness to re-fly with Turkish Airlines*) of African passengers flying with Turkish Airlines. ( $\mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 = \mu_4 = \dots = \mu_n$ , where  $\mu$  is the population mean regarding the relevant demographic feature)

H<sub>0,4</sub>: The level of egocentrism of African people does not differ based on specific demographic characteristics (*gender, age, nationality, occupation,*

*education level, having experience of Türkiye, having experience of Turkish Airlines, willingness to re-visit Türkiye, and willingness to re-fly with Turkish Airlines)* of African passengers flying with Turkish Airlines. ( $\mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 = \mu_4 = \dots = \mu_n$ , where  $\mu$  is the population mean regarding the relevant demographic feature)

**H<sub>1.1,2,3,4</sub>:** The image of Türkiye, Turkish people, Turkish Airlines, and the level of egocentrism of African people do not differ based on specific demographic characteristics (*gender, age, nationality, occupation, education level, having the experience of Türkiye, having the experience of Turkish Airlines, willingness to re-visit Türkiye, and willingness to re-fly with Turkish Airlines*) of African passengers flying with Turkish Airlines. ( $\mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 = \mu_4 = \dots = \mu_n$ , where  $\mu$  is the population mean regarding the relevant demographic feature)

In the pages below, hypotheses are tested for each of the demographic features sequentially.

### **6.5.2.1 Participants' Gender**

Gender is known to have significant effects on humans, particularly on consumer behaviors. Men and women approach issues in different ways. They are affected differently and at varying levels by, for instance, advertisements and occurrences around them. There are major differences in how they perceive the World and their environments. Their needs and consumptions quite differ from each other (de Chernatony, McDonald, & Wallace, 2013). Women are known to be more emotional than men in many cases. And there are many other differences that come from their nature, but those are sufficient to point out the differences for now. All these features make men and women think, feel, and act differently. The literature is vast in evidence concerning the differences between men's and women's approaches to the same subject. That is why it is noteworthy to analyze in order to see whether there are any statistically significant differences or not between men and women in the image of Türkiye, Turkish people, Turkish Airlines, and the egocentrism levels of the

respondents. To reach the answer, an independent t-test has been applied. The results are presented in Table 6.17.

**Table 6.17. The Results of the Independent T-Test Based on the Gender of the Brand Images of the Subjects Under Study**

	Gender	n	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value
Image of Türkiye from outside	Men	71	23,54	4,44	0,761
	Women	55	23,31	3,69	
Image of Türkiye from inside	Men	71	19,41	3,31	0,845
	Women	55	19,29	3,38	
Image of Türkiye (general)	Men	71	42,94	6,75	0,776
	Women	55	42,60	6,62	
Image of Turkish People	Men	71	14,62	3,65	0,578
	Women	55	14,27	3,19	
Image of Turkish Airlines	Men	71	28,42	5,62	0,257
	Women	55	27,25	5,82	
Participants' egocentrism level	Men	71	13,80	4,29	0,409
	Women	55	13,18	4,01	

*p<0,05, Independent samples t-test*

According to the results in the table, it seems that there is not any statistically significant difference between the genders in any of the images or the participants' egocentrism level within the scope of the study at ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) level. Since all the p-values of the image subjects are greater than ( $\alpha=0.05$ ), it indicates the existing differences in the means of the genders are not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Therefore, ***the null hypothesis can not be rejected*** at ( $\alpha=0.05$ ), which means that the image of Türkiye, Turkish people, Turkish Airlines, and the level of egocentrism of the respondents do not show statistically significant differences based on gender.

### 6.5.2.2 Participants' Age Groups

Similar to the gender case, age is also an important factor that affects human thinking, feeling, and acting (behavior). A young person thinks and acts in a different way than an old person does. People behave pretty differently throughout different ages. Therefore, it is worthy to analyze whether or not there are any statistically significant differences based on the participants' age groups regarding the image of Türkiye, Turkish people, Turkish Airlines, and the participants' egocentrism levels. To

determine those, an ANOVA test has been applied. (because having more than two groups to test the differences among) The results are presented in Table 6.18.

**Table 6.18. The Results of ANOVA Based on the Age Groups of the Participants About the Brand Images of the Subjects Under Study**

	Age	n	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value
Image of Türkiye from outside	18-25	31	23,42	4,16	0,898
	26-35	48	23,75	3,80	
	36-50	33	23,03	4,85	
	50 +	14	23,36	3,46	
Image of Türkiye from inside	18-25	31	19,00	3,32	0,776
	26-35	48	19,29	3,40	
	36-50	33	19,85	3,17	
	50 +	14	19,21	3,68	
Image of Türkiye (general)	18-25	31	42,42	6,84	0,981
	26-35	48	43,04	6,71	
	36-50	33	42,88	7,10	
	50 +	14	42,57	5,65	
Image of Turkish People	18-25	31	14,74	3,88	0,766
	26-35	48	14,54	3,33	
	36-50	33	14,48	3,44	
	50 +	14	13,57	3,08	
Image of Turkish Airlines	18-25	31	27,23	7,07	0,836
	26-35	48	28,44	4,95	
	36-50	33	27,88	5,71	
	50 +	14	27,71	5,28	
Participants' egocentrism level	18-25	31	13,42	4,31	0,219
	26-35	48	14,44	3,60	
	36-50	33	12,52	4,78	
	50 +	14	13,07	3,85	

$p < 0,05$ , ANOVA

The results show that there are no statistically significant differences among the age groups regarding the brand images or the participants' egocentrism level within the scope of the study at ( $\alpha=0.05$ ), where all the p's are greater than  $\alpha$ , that is  $p > (\alpha=0.05)$  for the age groups of each image item. Therefore, there is ***no sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis*** that the *image of the items of interest and the level of egocentrism does not significantly differ according to the age groups.*

### 6.5.2.3. Participants' Nationality

Nationality is one of the most robust identities that produce solid feelings and a sense of belonging with people who live in specific but different cultural and social structures, which shape their way of living, thinking, feeling, and acting. Identities (including national identity) and cultures shape their members' behavior and approach to the issues. Therefore, it should be analyzed to see whether or not there are any statistically significant differences among the participants of different nationalities regarding the image of Türkiye, Turkish people, Turkish Airlines, and their egocentrism levels. To determine these, a one-way ANOVA test has been applied. The results are presented in Table 6.19.

**Table 6.19. The Results of ANOVA Based on the Nationality of the Participants About the Brand Images of the Subjects Under Study**

	Nationality	n	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value	Post Hoc
Image of Türkiye outside	Benin	14	21,71	2,89	<b>0,003</b>	Mali > Benin, Cameroon, Ivory Coasts, Other
	Burkina Faso	5	22,40	5,03		
	Cameroon	37	22,95	3,81		
	Chad	3	27,00	2,00		
	Ivory Coasts	19	22,84	3,17		
	Mali	11	<b>28,00</b>	1,67		
	Niger	4	25,00	3,16		
	DRC	8	24,88	3,60		
	Other	25	22,17	5,28		
Image of Türkiye inside	Benin	14	16,50	2,44	<b>&lt;0,001</b>	Mali > Benin, Ivory Coasts, Other; Cameroon > Benin
	Burkina Faso	5	18,00	4,06		
	Cameroon	37	19,81	3,22		
	Chad	3	21,00	1,00		
	Ivory Coasts	19	18,63	3,27		
	Mali	11	<b>22,82</b>	1,99		
	Niger	4	21,50	2,89		
	DRC	8	20,25	3,58		
	Other	25	18,30	2,53		
Image of Türkiye (general)	Benin	14	38,21	4,14	<b>&lt;0,001</b>	Mali > Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ivory Coasts, Other
	Burkina Faso	5	40,40	8,53		
	Cameroon	37	42,76	6,64		
	Chad	3	48,00	1,00		
	Ivory Coasts	19	41,47	5,89		
	Mali	11	<b>50,82</b>	3,52		
	Niger	4	46,50	5,00		
DRC	8	45,13	6,98			

**Table 6.19. (cont.)**

	Nationality	n	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value	Post Hoc
Image of Turkish People	Benin	14	12,29	2,13	<b>0,001</b>	Mali > Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon
	Burkina Faso	5	12,60	5,98		
	Cameroon	37	14,51	3,19		
	Chad	3	17,33	3,06		
	Ivory Coasts	19	14,58	2,43		
Image of Turkish Airlines	Mali	11	<b>18,09</b>	2,21	<b>&lt;0,001</b>	Benin < Cameroon, Ivory Coasts, Mali, Niger, Oher
	Niger	4	14,50	3,00		
	DRC	8	16,13	3,44		
	Other	25	13,22	3,77		
	Benin	14	21,29	8,38		
	Burkina Faso	5	24,80	7,16		
	Cameroon	37	28,24	4,50		
	Chad	3	31,00	4,36		
	Ivory Coasts	19	28,79	3,61		
	Mali	11	30,82	4,38		
	Niger	4	<b>32,75</b>	2,22		
	DRC	8	32,13	3,87		
	Other	25	27,13	5,15		
Participant's egocentrism level	Benin	14	14,21	3,21	0,202	
	Burkina Faso	5	13,40	1,82		
	Cameroon	37	12,54	4,27		
	Chad	3	17,67	1,53		
	Ivory Coasts	19	13,26	4,42		
	Mali	11	13,45	4,78		
	Niger	4	10,25	4,65		
	DRC	8	13,38	4,60		
	Other	25	15,04	4,02		

*p*<0,05, ANOVA

According to the results, for each of the brand images, the differences in the means of the participants' nationalities show statistically significant differences at the ( $\alpha=0.01$ ) level, where all ( $p$ -values <0.01) but those for the participants' egocentrism level does not show any statistical significance at ( $\alpha=5\%$ ) level, where ( $p>0.05$ ), within the scope of the study. In other words, participants from different nationalities have different image perceptions. There are significant differences among the levels of image perceptions of Türkiye, Turkish People, and Turkish Airlines; however, this finding is not relevant to the participants' egocentrism levels, whose  $p$ -value (0.20) is greater than is  $\alpha$  (0.05). Therefore, according to the findings, there is *sufficient evidence to*

*reject the null hypothesis.* The images of the items of interest do not show any statistically significant differences according to the nationality of the respondents, meaning that there are significant differences among the perceptions of the images of Türkiye, Turkish people, and Turkish Airlines at ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) level. In other words, the respondents from different nationalities have different degrees of images of the items of interest. However, it is not possible to say that the level of egocentrism of the respondents differ significantly for different African nationals.

The post hoc analyses performed also prove that the respondents from some specific countries have a higher (or lower) image of Türkiye, Turkish People, and Turkish Airlines compared to the others. The high differences in the means show that the



**Figure 6.1. The Respondents from Mali Have a Higher Image of Türkiye Than Those from the Other SSA Countries**

nationalities' highest and lowest image means are considerably parted away, indicating considerable image differences between the respondents of the specific countries. For instance, the first three items' results suggest that the image differences between those of Mali and those from Benin, Cameroon, Ivory Coasts, and other nationalities are significant. The remaining results in the table can be read in similarly by comparing the means of the respondents between different nationalities, where higher means correspond to a higher image for the first five items. Still, it corresponds to a higher egocentrism level for the last item.

On the other hand, respondents from Benin have the lowest image of Turkish Airlines compared to the respondents from Cameroon, Ivory coasts, Mali, Niger, Democratic

Republic of Congo, and other nationalities. Again, the means can be compared between different nationalities to understand which of the African nationalities holds higher or lower image perceptions of Turkish Airlines.



**Figure 6.2. The Respondents from Benin Have a Lower Turkish Airlines Image Than Those of the Other SSA Countries**

#### 6.5.2.4. Participants' Occupation

The occupation also affects how people think, feel, and live. People's behaviors are shaped at large by their professions. For instance, teachers, doctors, lawyers, and police officers all have their patterns of approaching to issues not only their occupational matters but also life occurrences. In this frame, the brand image of a country, its people, and its products (goods and services) can be affected by occupations. That is why it should be analyzed to see whether or not there are any statistically significant differences in the image of Türkiye, Turkish people, Turkish Airlines, and their egocentrism levels among the respondents having different occupations. To determine the mean differences regarding the images, a one-way ANOVA test has been applied to the data, and the results have been presented in Table 6.20.

**Table 6.20. The Results of ANOVA Based on the Occupations of the Respondents About the Brand Images of the Subjects Under Study**

	Occupation	n	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value	Post Hoc
Image of Türkiye from outside	Student	31	23,26	4,20	0,846	
	Education, training	5	23,60	4,88		
	Sales and related operations	8	23,75	4,17		
	Engineer/ Architecture	12	24,17	4,55		
	Healthcare	5	21,80	4,15		
	Aviation, transports, logistics	5	24,20	4,09		
	Arts, design, sports, media	4	19,50	9,15		
	Computer science or coding	9	23,44	3,13		
	Management	10	23,20	3,85		
	Government-related occupations	8	23,25	3,45		
	Other	29	24,03	3,60		
	Image of Türkiye from inside	Student	31	19,39		
Education, training		5	19,60	4,10		
Sales and related operations		8	19,75	3,20		
Engineer/ Architecture		12	19,75	3,74		
Healthcare		5	18,60	1,95		
Aviation, transports, logistics		5	17,20	4,87		
Arts, design, sports, media		4	19,50	3,11		
Computer science or coding		9	19,44	3,09		
Management		10	18,80	3,36		
Government-related occupations		8	19,00	2,45		
Other		29	19,76	3,72		
Image of Türkiye (general)		Student	31	42,65	6,89	0,972
	Education, training	5	43,20	8,87		
	Sales and related operations	8	43,50	7,13		
	Engineer/ Architecture	12	43,92	7,75		
	Healthcare	5	40,40	5,59		
	Aviation, transports, logistics	5	41,40	8,44		
	Arts, design, sports, media	4	39,00	9,06		
	Computer science or coding	9	42,89	5,40		

**Table 6.20. (cont.)**

	Occupation	n	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value	Post Hoc
Image of Turkish People	Management	10	42,00	6,00	0,668	
	Government-related occupations	8	42,25	5,47		
	Other	29	43,79	6,62		
	Student	31	14,45	3,66		
	Education, training	5	15,60	2,97		
	Sales and related operations	8	16,88	3,14		
	Engineer/ Architecture	12	13,67	3,47		
	Healthcare	5	12,60	2,19		
	Aviation, transports, logistics	5	14,60	4,10		
	Arts, design, sports, media	4	13,00	6,06		
	Computer science or coding	9	15,00	2,69		
	Management	10	14,40	2,12		
	Government-related occupations	8	13,88	2,64		
	Other	29	14,48	3,84		
Image of Turkish Airlines	Student	31	27,32	6,70	0,683	
	Education, training	5	31,20	2,86		
	Sales and related operations	8	30,25	5,99		
	Engineer/ Architecture	12	25,92	4,62		
	Healthcare	5	24,20	4,38		
	Aviation, transports, logistics	5	28,40	5,64		
	Arts, design, sports, media	4	28,75	2,87		
	Computer science or coding	9	29,22	4,63		
	Management	10	28,40	4,50		
	Government-related occupations	8	28,25	7,94		
	Other	29	27,93	5,82		

**Table 6.20. (cont.)**

	n	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value	Post Hoc
	31	13,03	4,05		
Education, training	5	10,80	2,05		
Sales and related operations	8	12,88	2,10		
Engineer/ Architecture	12	13,50	5,09		
Healthcare	5	<b>16,60</b>	7,37		
Aviation, transports, logistics	5	<b>15,00</b>	5,24	<b>0,046</b>	Computer science or coding > Management
Arts, design, sports, media	4	12,50	3,70		
Computer science or coding	9	<b>17,33</b>	2,92		
Management	10	11,20	3,22		
Government-related occupations	8	<b>15,00</b>	2,33		
Other	29	13,31	4,05		

*p*<0,05, ANOVA

The results show no statistically significant differences at the ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) level among the means of different occupations of the respondents regarding the image items of interest, where all ( $p$ -values  $>0.05$ ). In other words, the image perception levels of the participants of different occupations do not diverge significantly regarding the images of Türkiye, Turkish People, and Turkish Airlines. However, this finding does not hold for the egocentrism levels of the respondents, which there are statistically significant differences among the mean levels of different occupations, where the ( $p<0.05$ ), indicating that the respondents from various professions have different levels of egocentrism, where the ‘computer science or coding’ (17.33), ‘healthcare’ (16.60), and ‘aviation, transport, logistics (15.00) and ‘government-related occupations’ (15.00) have the highest three egocentric occupations, within the scope of this work. In short, there is *no sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis* that *the image of the items of interest does not differ significantly based on the occupation of the respondents* at the ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) level. Still, the *null hypothesis can be rejected for the level of egocentrism of the respondents based on the occupation*, which means that the people of different occupations have a different level of egocentric feelings for Turkish Airlines.

### 6.5.2.5. Participants' Education Level

Without doubt, education affects and shapes almost every single aspect of human life. Therefore, it is a sound concern to examine whether or not the image perceptions of the respondents show any statistical differences based on educational level. a one-way ANOVA test has been applied, and the results have been presented in Table 6.21.

**Table 6.21. The Results of ANOVA Based on the Educational Background of the Respondents about the Brand Images of the Subjects Under Study**

	Education	n	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value
Image of Türkiye from outside	High School	42	23,98	4,11	0,690
	Bachelor	38	23,47	4,37	
	Master	39	22,95	3,86	
	Ph.D.	7	22,71	4,57	
Image of Türkiye from inside	High School	42	19,50	2,90	0,882
	Bachelor	38	19,39	3,61	
	Master	39	19,05	3,46	
	Ph.D.	7	20,00	4,00	
Image of Türkiye (general)	High School	42	43,48	5,88	0,806
	Bachelor	38	42,87	7,30	
	Master	39	42,00	6,69	
	Ph.D.	7	42,71	8,44	
Image of Turkish People	High School	42	15,10	3,73	0,427
	Bachelor	38	13,97	3,76	
	Master	39	14,46	3,02	
	Ph.D.	7	13,43	1,51	
Image of Turkish Airlines	High School	42	28,50	5,24	0,793
	Bachelor	38	28,00	5,78	
	Master	39	27,21	6,40	
	Ph.D.	7	27,86	4,74	
Participants' egocentrism level	High School	42	13,45	4,13	0,862
	Bachelor	38	14,00	4,15	
	Master	39	13,21	4,24	
	Ph.D.	7	13,29	4,68	

*p*<0,05, ANOVA

Based on the results in the table, it is **not** possible to say that there are statistically significant differences at the ( $\alpha=5\%$ ) level among the means of the respondents regarding the images of Türkiye, Turkish People, Turkish Airlines, and the participants' egocentrism levels, where ( $p>0.05$ ) for all the image items. It means that the respondents having different levels of education do not diverge significantly in terms of their image perceptions. Therefore, it is **not possible to reject the null hypothesis** at the ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) level that *the perceptions of the images of the items concerned (or the level of egocentrism of the respondents) do not show statistically significant differences based on the educational level of the respondents.*

### 6.5.3. Participants' Türkiye Experience

People's attitudes and behavior are also likely to differ based on their level of information and experience on a subject. If someone is knowledgeable or has previous experience with something, they may act differently compared to those who are without knowledge or experience. From this, it can be assumed that personal experience is more likely to affect the images of interest. Therefore, it should be tested whether or not the respondents who have been in Türkiye, have different image perceptions about Türkiye, Turkish People, Turkish Airlines, and the participants' egocentrism levels. The test results are presented in Table 6.22.

The test statistics in the table depict that none of the items has a p-value lower than ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). It can be concluded that the respondents' ever being in Türkiye does not make any statistically significant difference in the mean values of the images of the items concerned. In other words, whether or not the respondents have been in Türkiye does not make any statistically significant differences in their image perceptions. This is also a valid conclusion for the respondents' egocentrism. Therefore, it can be concluded that there **is no sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis** (for any of the variables) that *the image perceptions of the items of interest do not show any statistically significant differences based on the respondents' having Türkiye experience* before.

**Table 6.22. The Results of the Independent Samples T-Test of the Respondents Who Have Been in Türkiye Regarding the Images of the Subjects Under Study**

	The case of ever being in Türkiye	n	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value
Image of Türkiye from outside	Yes	46	23,72	3,77	0,563
	No	80	23,28	4,32	
Image of Türkiye from inside	Yes	46	19,65	3,27	0,452
	No	80	19,19	3,37	
Image of Türkiye (general)	Yes	46	43,37	6,37	0,465
	No	80	42,46	6,85	
Image of Turkish People	Yes	46	14,50	3,76	0,938
	No	80	14,45	3,28	
Image of Turkish Airlines	Yes	46	28,41	6,01	0,459
	No	80	27,63	5,56	
Participants' egocentrism level	Yes	46	13,24	4,42	0,552
	No	80	13,70	4,03	

*p<0,05, Independent samples t-test*

#### 6.5.4. Participants' Experience of Flying with Turkish Airlines Before

In the discussions about 'the effects of participants' having Türkiye experience' in the previous sub-title, it has been pointed out the likely effects of the previous experiences and knowledges of participants. It is questioned whether or not there are any significant differences in the items' mean levels of the image of the participants who have ever been in Türkiye. It has been found that there are no significant differences. The same issue should be tested with respect to the participants' ever flying with Turkish Airlines. An independent samples t-test has been applied, and the results have been tested at the level of ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). The results are demonstrated in Table 6.23.

**Table 6.23. The Results of the Independent Sample T-Test of the Respondents Who Have Flown with Turkish Airlines Regarding the Images of the Subjects Under Study**

	The case of ever flying with Turkish Airlines	n	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value
Image of Türkiye from outside	Yes	110	23,51	4,18	0,606
	No	16	22,94	3,71	

**Table 6.23. (cont.)**

Image of Türkiye from inside	Yes	110	19,45	3,36	0,437
	No	16	18,75	3,11	
Image of Türkiye (general)	Yes	110	42,95	6,71	0,480
	No	16	41,69	6,50	
Image of Turkish People	Yes	110	14,44	3,56	0,787
	No	16	14,69	2,68	
Image of Turkish Airlines	Yes	110	28,17	5,38	0,182
	No	16	26,13	7,63	
Participants' egocentrism level	Yes	110	13,65	4,18	0,388
	No	16	12,69	4,08	

The test statistics indicate that *none* of the items of interest has a p-value lower than ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). From this, it can be concluded that there are no statistically significant differences in the mean levels of the images of the items concerned. In other words, the images held of the respondents who have flown and not flown with Turkish airlines are not significantly different from each other for all the items of interest. This is also a valid finding for the respondents' egocentrism within the scope of this research. Therefore, there is *no sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis* that *the perceptions of the images of the items of interest do not show statistically significant differences* according to the *respondents' having the experience of flying with Turkish Airlines* before.

#### 6.5.5. Participants' Willingness to Re-visit Türkiye

Another concern of the study is to determine if there are any statistically significant differences in the means of the images of the items interested in concerning the respondents' willingness to re-visit Türkiye. An independent samples t-test has been applied, and the results have been tested at the level of ( $\alpha=0.05$ ), which are presented in Table 6.24

**Table 6.24. The Results of the Independent Samples T-Test of the Respondents Willing to Re-visit Türkiye Regarding the Images of the Subjects Under Study**

	Willingness to visit Türkiye (again)	n	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value
Image of Türkiye from outside	Yes	112	23,79	3,82	<b>0,005</b>
	No	14	20,57	5,35	

**Table 6.24. (cont.)**

Image of Türkiye from inside	Yes	112	19,47	3,30	0,270
	No	14	18,43	3,52	
Image of Türkiye (general)	Yes	112	43,27	6,49	<b>0,023</b>
	No	14	39,00	7,13	
Image of Turkish People	Yes	112	14,69	3,39	<b>0,043</b>
	No	14	12,71	3,54	
Image of Turkish Airlines	Yes	112	28,33	5,20	<b>0,020</b>
	No	14	24,57	8,38	
Participants' egocentrism level	Yes	112	13,28	4,22	0,052
	No	14	15,57	3,16	

*p*<0,05, Independent samples t-test

According to the t-test results, there are statistically significant differences with the means in four of the six image items, where ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) for four p-values for the items 'image of Türkiye from outside', whose p-value being statistically significant at 0.01 level ( $p \leq 0.01$ ), 'image of Türkiye (general),' 'image of Turkish people,' and 'image of Turkish Airlines,' whose p-values being statistically significant at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), where ( $p' s \leq 0.05$ ). However, the mean level of the respondents' egocentrism does not show any statistically significant difference ( $p \geq 0.05$ ). The mean values show that the respondents willing to re-visit Türkiye have higher image perceptions; four of the six items are statistically significant. Therefore, there **is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis** that *the images of the items concerned do not show any statistically significant differences based on the participants' willingness to re-visit Türkiye* (for four of the six image items). However, the remaining two items' image values do not show statistically significant differences according to the respondents' willingness to re-visit Türkiye. In short, there is **no sufficient evidence to reject the null hypotheses** for those *two items*, 'Image of Türkiye from inside' and 'Participants' egocentrism level.'

#### **6.5.6. Participants' Willingness to Re-fly with Turkish Airlines**

One further point to test whether there are any statistically significant differences in the means of the images of the items interested with respect to the respondents' willingness to re-fly with Turkish Airlines. An independent samples t-test has been

applied at the level of ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) to test the mean differences between the groups. The results are presented in Table 6.25.

**Table 6.25. The Results of the Independent Sample T-Test of the Respondents Willing to Fly with Turkish Airlines Regarding the Images of the Subjects Under Study**

	Willingness to Re-fly with Turkish Airlines	n	Mean	Standard deviation	p-value
Image of Türkiye from outside	Yes	113	23,82	3,81	<b>0,005</b>
	No	13	20,08	5,20	
Image of Türkiye from inside	Yes	113	19,59	3,34	0,270
	No	13	17,31	2,50	
Image of Türkiye (general)	Yes	113	43,42	6,54	<b>0,023</b>
	No	13	37,38	5,35	
Image of Turkish People	Yes	113	14,81	3,33	<b>0,043</b>
	No	13	11,46	3,13	
Image of Turkish Airlines	Yes	113	28,90	4,48	<b>0,020</b>
	No	13	19,31	7,98	
Participants' egocentrism level	Yes	113	13,53	4,13	0,052
	No	13	13,54	4,61	

*p<0,05, Independent samples t-test*

Based on the test results, there are statistically significant differences with the means in the **same four** of the six image items at the ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) level, where ( $p\leq 0.05$ ) for the four of the p-values. Similar to the previous test, the means of the level of the respondents' egocentrism do not show any statistically significant differences, where [ $p>(\alpha=0.05)$ ]. The mean values of the groups 'Yes' and 'No' indicate that the respondents' willingness to re-fly with Turkish Airlines has higher image values in the same four of the six items that are statistically significant. On the other hand, the remaining two items, namely 'image of Türkiye from inside' and 'participants' egocentrism levels,' do not show any statistically significant differences in the means ( $p\text{-values}>0.05$  for both items). Therefore, there is **sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis** that 'the images of the items concerned do not show any statistically significant differences based on the **participants' willingness to re-fly with Turkish Airlines** (for four of the six image items) but not for the remaining two items, for which the images of those items do not show statistically significant differences, implying that there is **no sufficient evidence to reject the null hypotheses** for those, 'Image of Türkiye from inside' and 'Participants' egocentrism level.'

## 6.6. The Correlation Analysis of the Image Items (Image of Türkiye, Turkish People, Turkish Airlines, and Respondents' Egocentrism Level)

The correlation analysis demonstrates the degree of linear relationships between the items of interest and how strong that relationships are. In this study, it is concerned if there is any linear relationship between the image items. And it reveals how strong they are if there is a relationship. For this purpose, it has been applied correlation analysis in order to determine the relationships<sup>7</sup> between the variables and, if they exist, whether or not they are statistically significant at the ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) level. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 6.26.

**Table 6.26. The Results of the Correlation Analysis of the Image Items of Interest**

	Image of Türkiye from outside	Image of Türkiye from inside	Image of Türkiye (general)	Image of Turkish People	Image of Turkish Airlines	Participant egocentrism level
Image of Türkiye from outside	r 1	,602**	,917**	,725**	,464**	,019
	p	<0,001	<0,001	<0,001	<0,001	,837
Image of Türkiye from inside	r	1	,870**	,596**	,526**	-,063
	p		<0,001	<0,001	<0,001	,480
Image of Türkiye (general)	r		1	,745**	,549**	-,020
	p			<0,001	<0,001	,822
Image of Turkish People	r			1	,634**	-,022
	p				<0,001	,803
Image of Turkish Airlines	r				1	-,151
	p					,092
Participants' egocentrism level	r					1
	p					

*p<0,05, Pearson Correlation Analysis*

According to the results, all the image items have positive and strong correlations between them, where all the 'r's are greater than 0, indicating positive relationships, and most of them are bigger than 0.50, indicating strong relationships. Except the relationship between items 'image of Türkiye from outside' and 'image of Turkish

<sup>7</sup> If the correlation coefficient calculated, (r), where ( $-1 \leq r \leq +1$ ), is greater than 0, it shows a positive relationship, and if it is smaller than 0, it shows a negative relationship between the variables of interest. When the r value gets closer from  $\pm 1$  to 0, it implies that the relationship is getting weaker, but when it gets closer to  $\pm 1$ , it implies a strong relationship. When  $r=0$ , it means there is no relationship at all, and when  $r=\pm 1$ , it means there is a perfect relationship between the variables of interest.

Airlines' ( $r=0.464$ ), which is also positive and close to 0.50. Additionally, all the relationships between the image items are statistically significant at the level of ( $\alpha=0.01$ ), where all the ( $p\text{-values}\leq 0.01$ ) indicate both a strong relationship between the variables and that there is **sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis** that '*there are no statistically significant relationships between the image items of interest.*'

The findings also indicate that *there is a positive correlation between the image of Türkiye (general) and the image of Turkish Airlines* ( $r=0.549$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), indicating that these two images move together in the same direction, which means when one increases the other one also increases. A similar finding is available between the images of Türkiye (general) and Turkish people ( $r=0.745$ ;  $p<0.001$ ). There is a stronger positive relationship existing between these two image items. *When the image of Türkiye increases, so does the image of Turkish people, and vice versa.* Similar findings are also available for the items 'image of Turkish people' and 'image of Turkish Airlines, and between the other image items of Türkiye (combined, outside and inside) between them. All these findings are not surprising, but they have already been approved by this study in such a context.

Besides these, the correlation coefficients of the image items and the participants' egocentrism level are very small almost for all the relationships. They are very close to 0, indicating a very weak negative relationship for most of the items, which can be read on the table. The existing relationships are also not statistically significant at ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). Therefore, there is **no sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis** that '*the image of Türkiye, Turkish People, and Turkish Airlines are not related to the respondents' egocentrism level.*'

## CHAPTER VII

### DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

#### 7.1. Discussion of the Results

As Türkiye rang the curtain on its opening to Africa plan, academic studies in this field increased over the years. However, most studies do not include field research. Most articles contain generic information about Türkiye's road map in Sub-Saharan Africa or relations with one specific country. In his article, Shinn (2015) mentions that Türkiye is the first country who has an embassy in each country in the Horn of Africa. He also refers to the Türkiye & Somalia relationship and Turkish aid in Africa. Also, Bilkay and Yılmaz (2017) explain the airline & state relationship and the usage of airlines as a soft power tool. They state Turkish Airlines' history and draw attention to the parallelism of Turkish Airlines' network growth according to Turkish foreign policy from the beginning. It is evident that, political chronology overlaps with airline policy.

As an example of quantitative research in a similar field, Koçak (2019) investigated the effect of a country's brand management on brand image and willingness to buy. His focus group was also Africa, and he conducted his research on Turkish brands in Egypt. He created an egocentrism scale for Egyptian consumers. This scale is also used in this study to understand the egocentrism level of African consumers and its effect on their willingness to buy.

However, it is tough to find similar quantitative research on Sub-Saharan African countries related to this study's subject. There are two reasons for this lack of research. First, most companies conduct several kinds of field research, but the results of these researches are considered as trade secret, and they are not open to the public. On the other hand, Africa is the least developed region in the civil aviation market. Therefore, researchers are primarily focused on different regions. As the African market is less

developed than any other region of the World, similar field researches are very limited. While conducting the survey, it was noticed that most participants had never experienced such a survey. This situation explains why there is not enough academic publication in this field.

This field research reveals important findings for government officials and the managers of Turkish Airlines, both for policy development and activity planning. The results show that the image of Türkiye, Turkish people, and Turkish Airlines are positive and high among African people. The findings show that the images of Türkiye, Turkish people, and Turkish Airlines overlap. There are also very close linear relationships among those image components, indicating that if one increases, the other one also increases in the same way and vice-versa. This positive and strong relationship may ease to the government officials and the company managers (e.g. marketing managers) of Turkish Airlines in policy and strategy development towards those countries. In the planning and application phases, all three image components' close relationship with each other provides high flexibility to the decision-makers so that they may act on each component individually or collectively based on the time and conditions.

According to the results of the hypothesis testing, gender does not seem to be an important factor in the images of Türkiye, Turkish people, Turkish Airlines, or the level of egocentrism of the participants. Therefore, the image works of the government officials, or the company managers do not need to be differentiated based on gender. This eases the work of those parties by simplifying their required activities. Similarly, the image of the items of interest and the level of egocentrism of the respondents does not show any statistical differences among the age groups. The perceptions of the image of Türkiye, Turkish people, Turkish Airlines, or the level of egocentrism do not differ based on the age of the respondents. Therefore, there is no need to make any differentiation in the image works to be organized by (e.g., marketers or the government officials) towards the African countries, African people, or African market.

Besides these, the findings illustrate that the African people of different nationalities hold different perceptions of the image of Türkiye, Turkish people, and Turkish

Airlines. It means that the respondents of some nationalities have higher image perceptions than others. It is probably due to the fact that the degree of awareness (or knowledge) of Türkiye, Turkish people, and Turkish Airlines in some countries is lower compared to some others, especially in those where the Turkish Government opened embassies only in the recent years and Turkish Airlines started to fly more recently. It is already known that some parts of the African continent have been neglected for a long time. The current findings suggest that both the Turkish Government and Turkish Airlines should concentrate on their promotional activities more in those countries.

Another finding about if the image perceptions of the respondents differ significantly based on their *occupations* indicates that, there is no statistically significant differences in their image perceptions, but their level of egocentrism for Turkish Airlines does show considerable statistical deviations in occupation base. This implies that the level of egocentrism is high in some occupational groups (including healthcare, aviation, and government-related occupations), and they can be targeted at the promotional activities of Turkish Airlines or the Turkish government. On the other hand, the highest level of egocentrism scale is for the question “*It is important to fly with an African/domestic airline.*” This means that the target group could switch from Turkish Airlines to a national or African airline if possible. Today Turkish Airlines has no African competitor in the SSA market, but there may be one or more in the future. In such a case, Turkish Airlines should reconsider its strategy in the market.

The perceptions of the image components concerned and the level of egocentrism also do not show any significant differences based on the respondents’ *educational level*. This is mainly because the general academic level of the respondents flying with Turkish Airlines is relatively high and almost evenly distributed among the high school, college, and graduate levels. This broad level of education of the respondents is likely to receive and understand the messages sent by the Turkish government officials and the managers of Turkish Airlines with ease. This is also a valuable information that the field research reveals to the decision-makers.

The findings of the study also prove that the respondents’ image perceptions do not show statistically significant differences based on *having Türkiye experience* and the

*experience of flying with Turkish Airlines before*; however, they do show significant differences for most of the image items concerning the *participants' willingness to re-visit Türkiye* except two items, the one being *the respondents' level of egocentrism* and the other *being the image of Türkiye from inside*. It shows that *the participants' willingness to re-visit Türkiye* is a point of consideration that needs to be taken into account by the decision-makers.

The field research also illustrates that African people's egocentric feelings are negative for Turkish Airlines. However, the degree of egocentrism is not high, just below the degree of neutrality, implying that there is still a good chance of changing it with some long-term work on it. It should be remembered that the determined level of egocentrism should be seen as normal to a certain extent because of the existing thoughts of nationalism in countries. Such a picture could be seen almost in any country in the World. In countries such as African ones, which have been the colonies of other countries for a long time, the nationalistic thoughts should be seen with tolerance but be treated with care and a positive approach. The decision-makers should avoid any kind of acts that make the people of those countries remember the past; they should rather make them feel equal and valued partners. However, the last item of the egocentrism scale is relatively higher than the other items, which is "It is important to fly with an African/domestic airline." Though the total score of egocentrism level shows that it is not an obstacle for Turkish Airlines in the African market, these results should be examined in detail. Considering that there is not any African competitor in these countries, Turkish Airlines competes with European or Middle-Eastern airlines in the region. But the results show that some customers tend to switch in case of the emergence of an African alternative. Thus, the decision-makers should consider that the appearance of new local players on the market can be a game changer. In such a case, the necessity for new researches on the region would show up. Therefore, decision-makers should reconsider their marketing and communication strategies in order not to lose their market.

Concerning the relationships among the image components and the level of egocentrism of the respondents, the study reveals valuable findings. The correlation coefficients of the image components and the level of egocentrism show a very weak, negative, and statistically unimportant relationship among those two groups of items.

It indicates that the participant's egocentrism level is not related to the image components, which means that the increases in any of these items are almost entirely independent of the other one. In other words, -for instance- in case of an improvement in the images of the image components, it is little likely to observe a relative increase in the level of egocentrism of African people or a change in the preference of Turkish Airlines. Therefore, the decision-makers are suggested to evaluate the image components and the level of egocentrism separately and independent from each other in their decisions, planning, and activities.

## **7.2. Conclusion**

The purpose of this research is to examine the effects of Turkish public diplomacy applied in the Sub-Saharan African countries on the brand image of Turkish Airlines as a soft power tool. The study consists of two main parts: The *first part* consists of four chapters, and it is a comprehensive theoretical study including the relationships between governments and the airline industry (or air transport), the use of airlines as soft power tools of policy, and the relationships between Türkiye and the African countries of interest. The first chapter is an introduction and the second chapter contains literature review, the third chapter is reserved for opening to the Africa plan of both Turkish Airlines and Türkiye. And the fourth chapter explains the relations of Türkiye with countries of interest. The *second part* contains three chapters. These chapters consist of the results and findings of field research applied to determine the effects of soft power tools on the image of the country, its people, and its soft power medium of airlines, namely Turkish Airlines, in the context of African outlook on the images of those entities. The fifth chapter explains the methodology used and the sixth chapter consists of an analysis of the survey. Finally, the last chapter is the conclusion of the thesis.

The field research included an application of a survey questionnaire in order to collect the data required for the quantitative analyses planned to measure the brand images of Türkiye, Turkish people, and Turkish Airlines based on a scale designed for the purpose by depending on some major works in the literature. The data were collected by applying the survey questionnaire to 126 passengers from 15 SSA francophone African countries by easy sampling method in Istanbul Airport between the 24-27<sup>th</sup> of

December 2021. The sample distribution shows that population elements are –not evenly but- closely distributed by gender, age, and education level; but unevenly by nationality and occupation due to the time limit given by the Istanbul Airport authority to complete the survey questionnaire in the field.

According to the findings, roughly 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the respondents have been to Türkiye before, but a significant majority have flown with Turkish Airlines, want to re-visit Türkiye, and intend to re-fly with Turkish Airlines. Among the survey participants, the image of Türkiye, Turkish people, and Turkish Airlines is high. Besides this, it also proved by hypothesis tests that there is some degree of egocentric feelings of the respondents for Turkish Airlines. It is thought to be mainly because of nationalist feelings, but not too negative yet. It can also be recoverable because of the level of egocentrism is just below the neutral line.

The test results indicate that the images of Türkiye, Turkish people, and Turkish Airlines are positive among African countries. These images do not show any significant differences based on gender, age groups, occupation, education level, participants' ever having Türkiye experience, participants' ever having experience of flying with Turkish Airlines. However, the images of Türkiye, Turkish people, and Turkish Airlines show significant differences based on nationality, participants' willingness to re-visit Türkiye, and their willingness to re-fly with Turkish Airlines in most of the image items.

The study clearly reveals a positive linear correlation between the images of Türkiye, Turkish people, and Turkish Airlines in African people. In other words, any positive activity in African countries for improving the image of either Turkish Airlines or Türkiye would directly affect the other part's image accordingly.

It is clear from the research findings that Türkiye and Turkish Airlines have positive images among the majority of the survey participants is not a coincidence. It can be concluded that this result could be the product of the Turkish Government's long-lasting policies and activities towards African countries, including opening new embassies in many countries in the last decade and making new and meaningful connections. It seems that Turkish Airlines has benefitted the most from it, which

makes it pursue profitable operations and considerable growth in the continent. Today Turkish Airlines flies over all the countries in Africa except two.

### **7.3. Contributions of the Study**

This research study has several important contributions. *Firstly*, it contributes to closing the existing gap in the literature, in which it has been seen in the literature review that there are very few similar studies, as this issue has already been pointed out in the literature review section. *Secondly*, the study not only points to the image side of the problem, such as the image of Türkiye, Turkish people, and Turkish Airlines but also considers the soft power effect on the images of the items of interest. *Thirdly*, the study explores the image issue for non-commercial (Türkiye and Turkish people) and commercial entities (Turkish Airlines) together, which is also an important contribution of the study to the literature. *Fourthly*, the soft power tools used by governments are generally studied in a theoretical frame in the literature. However, this study includes a quantitative field study, which differs from many studies in its approach to the issue. And *finally*, the study presents new looks and dimensions both for airline company managers and government officials in policy development and operations thanks to the findings of the field research.

#### **7.3.1. Practical Implications**

The study has many practical implications for airline sector managers and government officials, including foreign policy developers and implementers. *Firstly*, an important portion of the respondents, nearly  $\frac{1}{4}$ , are students, showing that the image of Türkiye, Turkish People, and Turkish Airlines is quite positive among the young people. This can be considered as a compelling investment for Türkiye and Turkish Airlines in the future. *Secondly*, the educational distributions of the respondents show that those who fly with Turkish Airlines and those who have a positive image about the items of interest are combined with educated people. The majority of the respondents are also younger than 50. Taken all these findings together, the current state of the positive image existing in African countries supports the idea of ‘effective investment’ for Türkiye and Turkish Airlines. The findings related to the majority (nearly 90%) of the respondents’ willingness to re-visit Türkiye and to re-fly with Turkish Airlines imply

that Turkish government officials and Turkish Airlines' managers should continue their opening (or current) policies towards Africa. The existing low egocentrism level of African people also shows that those policies are little likely to meet resistance from the people in those countries. And *finally*, the findings suggest that Turkish Airlines should continue to support and maintain its positive image in African countries and try to convert it to a competitive advantage against other airline companies. The current state of the images of Türkiye and the Turkish people can help Turkish Airlines to maintain and sustain its position against other airlines. It can also make Türkiye a more attractive destination for African people with its high and positive image. Indeed, the activities of Turkish Airlines and the public policy applications of the Turkish Government create mutual support for the positive images for the country, its people, and its companies. The findings clearly show that the images of all three entities are highly and positively correlated, which means that –for instance- when the image of Türkiye increases, so does the image of Turkish Airlines. In other words, those entities affect each other's image in the same direction, implying that supporting one of the entities' image affects positively the other's.

Furthermore, the images of Türkiye, Turkish people, and Turkish Airlines are comparably lower in some African countries. The government officials and Turkish Airline managers are suggested to concentrate more on those countries, and improve the promotional activities in order to increase their perceptions.

### **7.3.2. Recommendations for Further Studies**

This study has been performed in the African context, and it has produced important findings about the image of Türkiye, Turkish People, Turkish Airlines, and egocentrism level of African people; and the relationships between those image items and the level of egocentrism. It is thought that the study should be extended to some other geographical places in order to see whether or not the findings of this study also hold true (or if it does, to what extent) for those new geographical and national domains such as Central Asia, Balkans, etc. to where Turkish Airlines fly and Turkish Government uses soft power tools. Additionally, this study has just attempted to explore the image side of the subjects of interest and the relationships between those image items. A further research can explore the image issue more in detail by

examining what other factors affect (contribute to) the image of Türkiye, the Turkish People, and Turkish Airlines from the government's soft power point of view, except for the egocentrism of the people in the countries concerned. Both a qualitative and quantitative nature of studies that investigate the issue deeply would make considerable contributions to both the literature and industry. It is also suggested to repeat the research with more homogenous data sets in which all the nationalities are represented proportionally at least to their –for instance- population, economic development level, etc. Finally, Africa is a promising continent by its growing population and GDPs. More research is needed to understand it and its capacity, and its market opportunities, especially in the field of aviation.



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# APPENDIXES

## APPENDIX A

### SURVEY QUESTIONS

*This survey is created for academic purposes and aims to understand the relationship between Turkey's public diplomacy and Turkish Airlines' brand image. Your personal information isn't required.*

*Cette enquête est crée pour des raisons académiques et a le but de comprendre la relation entre Diplomatie publique de la Turquie et l'image de marque de Turkish Airlines. On n'a pas demandé vos informations personnelles.*

#### Questions/ La questionnaire

##### Gender/ Quel est votre sexe?

Male	
Homme	
Female	
Femme	

##### Age/ Quel âge avez-vous?

18-25	
26-35	
36-50	
50+	

##### Nationality/ Quelle est votre nationalité?

Benin	
Burkina Faso	
Cameroon/ Cameroun	
Chad / Tchad	
Djibouti	
Gabon	
Guinea / Guinée	
Ivory Coasts / Côte d'Ivoire	
Madagascar	
Mali	
Mauritania/ Mauritanie	
Mauritius/ Maurice	
Niger	
Rwanda	
Senegal	
Other / Autre	

##### Occupation / Dans quell domain travailler vous?

Student Etudiant(e)	
Education, training Education	
Sales and related operations Ventes	
Engineering and Architecture occupations Architecture ou Ingénieur	
Healthcare Santé	
Food preparation and service related occupations Restauration	
Aviation, transport or logistics Aviation, transport et logistiques	
Arts, Design, Entertainments, Sports or Media occupations Art, Design, Sport, Media	
Computer science or coding Informatique, Coding,	
Management Management	
Government related occupations Fonctionnaire	
Other Autre	

##### Education/ Cursus Scolaire

High school Bac	
Bachelor Licence	
Master Master	
PhD	
Doctorat	

Have you ever been to Turkey?

Etes-vous déjà venu(e) en Turquie ?

Yes/Oui	<input type="checkbox"/>
No/non	<input type="checkbox"/>

I would like to travel to Turkey (again).

Je voudrais (re)visiter la Turquie

Yes/Oui	<input type="checkbox"/>
No/Non	<input type="checkbox"/>

Have you ever flown with Turkish Airlines?

Avez- vous pris Turkish Airlines ?

Yes/Oui	<input type="checkbox"/>
No/Non	<input type="checkbox"/>

I would like to fly with Turkish Airlines (again).

Je voudrais (re)prendre Turkish Airlines

Yes/Oui	<input type="checkbox"/>
No/Non	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please classify the statements below from "I totally agree to I totally disagree"

Veuillez classer les déclarations au-dessous entre "Je suis entièrement d'accord et je suis totalement désaccord"

	I totally agree/ Je suis entièrement d'accord	I agree/ Je suis d'accord	Neutral/ Je suis Neutre	I disagree/ Je suis désaccord	I totally disagree/ Je suis totalement désaccord
I respect Turkey Je respecte la Turquie					
I like Turkey J'aime la Turquie					
I trust Turkey Je fais confiance à la Turquie					
Turkey is a beautiful country La Turquie est un beau pays					
Turkey is a country where educated people live La Turquie est un pays où le peuple est éduqué					
Turkey is a developed country in terms of its transportation, education, health, and communication infrastructure La Turquie est un pays développé par son éducation, son transport en commun, son système de santé.					
Turkey is a country with social and cultural diversity La Turquie a une diversité sociale et culturelle					
Turkey has a profound history La Turquie a une histoire riche					
Turkey offers a lot of entertainment activities La Turquie offre beaucoup d'activités de divertissement					

Turkey supports social responsibility and charity programs La Turquie soutient la responsabilité sociale et les programmes de charité					
Turkey takes responsibility for global activities La Turquie a la responsabilité pour les activités globales					
Turkey takes responsibility for ecological policies La Turquie donne l'importance pour l'écologie					

Please classify the statements below from "I totally agree to I totally disagree"

Veillez classer les déclarations au-dessous entre "Je suis entièrement d'accord et je suis totalement désaccord"

	I totally agree/ Je suis entièrement d'accord	I agree/ Je suis d'accord	Neutral/ Je suis Neutre	I disagree/ Je suis désaccord	I totally disagree/ Je suis totalement désaccord
Turkish People are honest Les Turcs sont honnêtes					
Turkish people are trustable Les Turcs sont dignes de confiance					
Turkish People are kind Les Turcs sont gentils					
Turkish People are hospitable Les Turcs sont accueillants					

Please classify the statements below from "I totally agree to I totally disagree"

Veillez classer les déclarations au-dessous entre "Je suis entièrement d'accord et je suis totalement désaccord"

	I totally agree/ Je suis entièrement d'accord	I agree/ Je suis d'accord	Neutral/ Je suis Neutre	I disagree/ Je suis désaccord	I totally disagree/ Je suis totalement désaccord
Turkish Airlines is a trustable airline Turkish Airlines est digne de confiance					
I would suggest Turkish Airlines to my friends Je suggère Turkish Airlines à mes amis					
I am satisfied with my flight experience with Turkish Airlines Je suis satisfait(e) par mon expérience de Turkish Airlines					
THY is a popular company among African people					

Turkish Airlines est une société populaire entre les Africains					
THY respects its customers Turkish Airlines respecte ses clients					
THY is a high-quality brand Turkish Airlines est une marque de haute qualité					
I would fly with Turkish Airlines once again Je voudrais prendre Turkish Airlines encore une fois					

Please classify the statements below from "I totally agree to I totally disagree"

Veuillez classer les déclarations au-dessous entre "Je suis entièrement d'accord et je suis totalement désaccord"

	I totally agree/ Je suis entièrement d'accord	I agree/ Je suis d'accord	Neutral/ Je suis Neutre	I disagree/ Je suis désaccord	I totally disagree/ Je suis totalement désaccord
I only fly with Turkish Airlines while there is no alternative African airline. Je prends Turkish Airlines seulement s'il n'y a pas une autre alternative d'une société Africaine					
It is important to fly with an African/domestic airline. Il est important de choisir une société de mon pays ou Africain					
Using foreign airlines is not an act for African People. Prendre des vols par des société non-africaines n'est pas très Africain					
Flying with Turkish Airlines harms African airlines Prendre Turkish Airlines nuit les sociétés aériennes Africains					
I don't like that Turkish Airlines generates revenue from my country Je n'aime pas que Turkish Airlines gagne l'argent dans mon pays					

## APPENDIX B

### PERMISSION FOR CONDUCTING A SURVEY AT ISTANBUL AIRPORT

İbn Haldun Tarih ve Sayısı: 24.11.2021-8587



T.C.  
İSTANBUL VALİLİĞİ  
İstanbul Havalimanı Mülki İdare Amirliği



Sayı :E-11767438-903.13-132814  
Konu :Anket Çalışması (Emin Aslan)

24.11.2021

#### DAĞITIM YERLERİNE

İlgi : 12.10.2021 tarihli ve E-71395021-044-7219 sayılı yazı.

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Mehmet İlker HAKTANKAÇMAZ  
(Vali-Mülkiye Başmüfettişi)

Mülki İdare Amiri

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## CURRICULUM VITAE

Name, Surname:

Emin ASLAN

Education:

Since Sept. 2019	MBA Air Transport management – Ibn Haldun University
Sept. 2014 -June 2016	Master 2 French language teaching - University of Toulouse 2 – Jean-Jaurès.
Sept. 2013- June 2014	Master 1 Foreign languages teaching – University of Strasbourg
Sept. 2012- May 2013	French language studies DELF B2 – University of Strasbourg
Sept. 2006- June 2011	Bachelor’s degree French language teaching - Marmara University

Experience:

Since July 2021	Instructor and examiner of foreign languages (English, French) at Turkish Airlines (Turkey)
Feb. 2016 -June 2021	Flight Attendant for Turkish Airlines. (Turkey)
Jan. – June 2015	Internship as a French language teacher for immigrants at Town Hall Axe-Sud (France).
Nov. 14- Jan 15	Drama teacher for French classes at University of Toulouse. Teaching French language by drama. (France).
Jan. - May 2014	Internship. Teaching French and English languages at Strasbourg International High School. (France)
Oct. – Dec. 2013	Internship. Teaching French language at the prison of Strasbourg to foreign prisoners. (France)
Apr.2010 - Sep. 2012	TGS Airport Passenger Services Staff. Responsible for international flights (Turkey).
Oct. 2010 - May 2011	Internship. Observation and micro education of French Language at «Kâzım İřmen Lisesi» (Turkey)
June – Dec. 2009	Turkish Airlines, Part-time passenger services staff (Turkey)