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A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH ON THE ROLE OF FESTIVALS IN PROMOTION CULINARY CULTURE

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ABSTRACT

This research was designed as a qualitative study to determine the role of gastronomy festivals organized in Turkey in the promotion and research of food culture, for this purpose, semi- structured interviews were held between February and March 2021 with 10 people from the field of gastronomy who had previously taken part in festival. the people to be interviewed were selected from purposive sampling using the maximum diversity method. While the universe of the research was composed of people working in the gastronomy sector, the sample of people from the gastronomy sector who participated in festivals. The diversity of sources, the repetition of the answers given, the suitability of the findings to be analyzed in certain themes were accepted as proof of validity and reliability the results obtained at the end of the interviews were evaluated by categorizing. according to the research, festivals are very effective in promoting and marketing culinary culture and contribute to the country's economy. Of the last section, recommendations are presented on line with the results obtained.

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INTRODUCTION

Festivals are tools that contribute to the local people, the economy, the image of the region and the sustainability of the local cuisine. They also help promote local culture and develop tourism in the region (Chang, Kim and Kim,2018). Festivals are one of the most important tourist attraction elements. There has been an increase in the revenues of the sector due to the festivals held in recent years and therefore the investments made in the cities (Akbaba and Çetinkaya, 2018). Gastronomy festivals and events are shown as one of the most effective ways to promote a food culture or develop the city's economy.

In this study, a qualitative research was conducted on the research and awareness of Turkish Cuisine culture, thoughts on promotional activities, and the role of festivals on this issue.

Gastronomy festivals

Litvin and Fetter (2006), the general definition of the festival is explained as follows; The festival is a set of events that create events for food and beverage and accommodation businesses and ensure the participation of tourists. Festivals are events where local shows, products and services are presented. In festivals, themes such as balloons, kites, music and movies can be processed. Around 30% of festivals worldwide are gastronomic festivals. It is known that this rate increases every year (Doğdubay and İlsay, 2016). Food festivals held around the world include a wide variety of food production, food tasting, food presentation, recipes, food rituals and culinary traditions (Cohen and Avieli, 2004).

“Food Festivals” around the world are often based on traditional farming techniques and the seasons. Food festivals are about the food culture of a region, whether through the preparation of the food served or the time period in which the festival is celebrated. Food festivals are regarded as empowering agents of local cultural heritage and celebrate this cultural heritage while commodifying it for a wider national or international audience (Kim, 2015). A food festival is an event that usually features a variety of foods available to taste or purchase. The food featured at one of these festivals may be a specific ingredient, such as vegetables or meat, or a cooking style. It may also focus on a particular cuisine or region of the world. Many of these festivals also feature cooking shows, performances by renowned chefs, or cooking competitions. Some events offer wine or beer to match the food served. Such festivals are usually held outdoors and different stands can be set up for each vendor (Demirbilek, 2018)

Contemporary food festivals are often associated with commercial or non-profit organizations, and their success is measured by how much revenue they generate for the local community, region. A large amount of marketing is done for their festivals. Food tourism, which uses modern food festivals, food festivals and regional cuisine to support the broader tourism industry of a given region, is a big part of this industry (Wu et al, 2014). So food tourism itself is an important part of the tourism industry worldwide. Food festivals are also an important part of destination branding for many regions, creating an event-based reason for individuals to promote local products and services outside of an urban product setting (Lee and Arcodia, 2011). Various case studies have shown that food festivals can potentially improve social sustainability while also greatly supporting the tourism and hospitality industries (De Jong and Varley, 2018). Research shows that interaction with food tourism indicates that an individual will participate in festivals again in the future, and participation in food tourism and food festival is a collaborative element (Chang, Kim, & Kim, 2018).

The types of food served at food festivals vary widely. Some events focus on cuisines such as Italian, French or Chinese cuisine. Others focus on the type of food that is in season during the event, such as a gathering celebrating corn or garlic. Some food festivals may also emphasize a cooking style such as barbecue or a general concept such as local or organic food. Restaurants, chefs or local farmers may have booths at a food festival. Such a station typically includes a table and portable cooking equipment. Each vendor usually has tasting samples from those who visit the festival. Some vendors may also offer at festivals products such as full-size meals ready for sale or sauces or spice mixes that can be purchased and used later. A food festival may also include wine and beer tastings (Hall and Sharples, 2003).

It is observed that the food and beverage products and activities in the destinations affect the satisfaction and motivation of the tourists. The motivation to discover new tastes, the principle of experimentation and the desire to try are important elements of satisfaction, motivation and happiness in tourists' destinations. The relationship of tourists with local food during their travels and the satisfaction of meals play an important role for the tourist to revisit the destination in the guest cycle process. Thanks to the satisfaction of gastronomic elements, tourists can visit the same destination again (Demirbilek, 2018; Büyükipekçi, 2019).

The Place of Festivals in Turkish Culture

As a result of the increase in the level of welfare in the world, tourism activities have developed. Tourism; It is possible to diversify according to accommodation, travel time, average tourist age and the means of transportation used (Atalay, 2017). When Turkey is evaluated from a touristic point of view, it has come to the fore with the trio of sea, sand and sun. In addition, historical, cultural and natural beauties also help to get a share from tourism (Türkben et al., 2012). Varieties developed in different tourism areas called 'new tourism' have become active in Turkey as well as in the world. Alternative tourism types include health, faith, hunting, plateau, cave, mountain, culture and river tourism. It also includes alternative tourism, ecotourism, winter tourism, thermal tourism, health tourism, congress tourism, educational tourism, sports tourism and faith tourism (Aydın, 2017; Albayrak, 2013). Festivals can be included in cultural tourism as well as in event tourism.

Recognizing the importance of gastronomy in recent years, tourism in Turkey has shown an important development in the field of gastronomy. One of the important areas of this development is festivals. Especially gastronomy-themed festivals attract the attention of the world. When we examine the table gastronomy festival in Turkey, its tracks and features can be explained better. It is known to be close to nearly 100 known gastronomic festivals in Turkey. These festivals can be heard in national or international media depending on their promotion status. It is seen that the festivals organized especially in cities such as Istanbul, Izmir, Antalya and Ankara attract more attention and take place in the media (Erciyas and Yılmaz, 2021).

With the participation of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Gaziantep's creative cities network, the city's culinary culture, food varieties and table manners came to the fore and became known in the world. For this reason, tens of thousands of people from all over the world and Turkey attend the 'Gaziantep international gastronomy festival ' held in Gaziantep every year. In order to understand the importance of international networks, Hatay and the city, the hometown of UNESCO, were included in the creative gastronomy network after Turkey joined Afyon. It is expected that these two cities will

come to the forefront with festivals like Gaziantep in the future. Today, there are not enough gastronomic events and festivals in these cities (Cömert and Çetin, 2017).

Culinary culture and habits of countries have become one of the important tools of tourism marketing. The presentation and preparation of dishes applied in culinary cultures is a part of tourism (Güneli , 2012). Gastronomic activities such as recipes or quality food and beverage establishments should be viewed from a broader perspective, without narrow scope. Gastronomy activities include cooking schools, gastronomy tours and guides, gastronomy-related media (TV, magazines, etc.), wineries, cheese shops, beverage producing places, producing fields and gardens (Çağlı, 2012).

Festivals are generally linked to the culture of the local people. Localizations and legacies can be organized on topics such as ethnic culture, popular culture, art and artists (Helgadóttir, 2018). For this reason, it has been arranged to reflect the lifestyle of the local people in general. It is important that festivals reflect the local culture without losing its originality and meaning (Cohen, 1979). During the organization of festivals, roles will be changed and quality of life will be increased by presenting local visitors as visitors and providing recreational development (Saarı and Gün, 2018).

The gastronomy festivals organized in recent years have accelerated the tourism sector. Festivals may differ according to their purpose. These goals include promotion, social goals, and support for various foundations (Yeoman et al., 2012). In addition to the many effects of the festivals, it cannot be denied that the number of visitors to the region increased, its recognition increased and the image of the region improved (Getz, 2000; Lee et al., 2008, Kim et al., 2010). Considering the economic effects of gastronomic festivals, it can be said that it has an important contribution to the country. An example of this is the ' Charleston Wine and Food Festival ' in the United States (Yılmaz, and Akay, 2020).

The festival contributed 7.3 million dollars to the Turkish economy in 2011 (Doğdubay and İlsay, 2016). This income is above the tourism income of many countries. The power of the festival to attract the target audience, target audience, media promotions, event infrastructure, venue and organizers are among the important criteria (Jayswall, 2008). After the gastronomic festivals became widespread, it became the main goal for tourists to get to know the culinary culture of the region they travel to. Realizing this, many of the destinations have started to use their culinary culture as a power of attraction (Hung and Tsai, 2012).

If the festivals are considered according to dates, the number of festivals is quite high in April, June, July, August, September and October. It is thought that there is an agglomeration during these months due to the continuing tourism season and easy access to domestic and foreign tourists. In addition, the participation of local and foreign tourists visiting a region in festivals means that the tourists contribute financially to the local people. Reported dates are expected to be high in aggregates in general due to the harvest period. The number of festivals decreased in January, February, March, May, November and December. Since these dates are not a holiday period, the number of festivals is less. At the same time, the low number of harvested products during these periods also contributed to the low number of festivals (Cömert and Çetin, 2017).

Gastronomy festivals will especially contribute to the development of the field of tourism. Most of the festivals are actually local produce festivals. This situation shows the richness of Turkish geography in terms of local products (Doğdubay and İlsay 2016).

When examined on the basis of provinces, it is seen that many gastronomy festivals are organized in Izmir, Istanbul, Muğla and Antalya. In these cities, in addition to local product festivals (honey, cheese, wild herbs, etc.), it is seen that festivals are organized to draw attention to products that are widely consumed in the world such as chocolate, coffee and waffles. Among Anatolian cities, Ankara, Mersin and Bursa have more gastronomic festivals than other provinces. It is known that festivals were organized as a result of the active work of local institutions and organizations in Mersin and Bursa. In these cities, it is seen that more festivals are organized especially for local products. Apart from these cities, one or two gastronomy festivals are held in cities such as Konya, Nevşehir, Kayseri, Eskişehir and Kütahya. This shows that Anatolian cities are not well organized and do not have enough experience in organizing festivals. Almost all of the festivals held in these cities are about local products and dishes. Considering the provinces in the Black Sea region, Samsun, Zonguldak, Giresun and Rize are among the provinces where festivals are held, but the fact that only one gastronomy festival is organized shows that the region has not developed much in terms of festivals. The Black Sea region stands out especially with its natural beauties and lakes. The region, which receives abundant rainfall, is the most important region of Turkey with the Aegean Region, especially in terms of edible weed diversity. For this reason, it is important to organize gastronomic festivals about weeds and dishes made from weeds in the region (Cömert and Cetin, 2017).

The feast period of these products, which are organized in festivals, is usually the period when they are harvested. It is known that festivals are held in different periods when the harvest period is not suitable for the festival. However, the following festivities are not as effective as the festivities held during the harvest period. Especially coffee raw materials grown in Turkey for a longer period of time are of great importance in Turkish culture. For this reason, it is one of the most important products of festivals. Chocolate festivals are mostly held in the west and presented to consumers and festival participants with different presentations. However, it has been observed that some chocolate festivals have been organized in the eastern province of Turkey in recent years. It is thought that the chocolate and chocolate industry is effective in the organization of chocolate festivals in western provinces (Doğdubay and İlsay2016).

METHOD

In the research, firstly, written and recorded documents were examined and then the case study design was used (Türnüklü , 2000). In this study, an answer has been sought to the problem of whether festivals have an effective responsibility in promoting Turkish Cuisine to the world. Within the scope of the study, interviews were held with gastronomy experts and these interviews were supported by literature review. The people to be interviewed were selected from purposive sampling using the maximum diversity method. While the universe of the research was composed of people working in the gastronomy sector, the sample consisted of people from the gastronomy sector who participated in festivals. The diversity of sources, the repetition of the answers given, the suitability of the findings to be analyzed in certain themes were accepted as proof of validity and reliability.

descriptive and qualitative data analysis in scanning model. A descriptive survey model was used in this research. The study was conducted by one-on-one interviews by the researchers. Interview questions were prepared by the researcher and his supervisor. Before the interviews, expert evaluation was made with 10 people and the interview questions were revised after the

opinions of the experts. Istanbul for interviews Ethical conformity certificate was obtained from Ayvansaray University Ethics Committee Presidency (E-31675095-100-2100001388).

In semi-structured interviews, the sample size is between 5-25 people (Saunders et al., 2012). In this study, 10 people were interviewed between February and March 2021. After the interviews were recorded, the data were analyzed. In the interview technique, the answers were evaluated by categorization due to the small number of people and clear answers. The participants were given codes between K1 and K10.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this research, interviews were conducted with 10 gastronomy experts, aged between 28-62, who participated in festivals, using semi-structured interview forms. 40% of the participants are male and 60% are female. The answers given as a result of these interviews were divided into certain themes and the themes were evaluated under subheadings. The themes created; Thoughts on Turkish Cuisine Culture, research and awareness of Turkish Cuisine Culture, promotional activities, the place of gastronomy festivals in promoting Turkish Cuisine to the world, and what to do to increase food festivals at home and abroad.

The theme of your thoughts on turkish culinary culture:

Under this theme, the participants were asked questions about your thoughts on Turkish Culinary Culture and the distribution of the answers given on these issues is given in the table below (Table 1).

Table 1. Opinions about Turkish Culinary Culture

Theme	Child Theme	Answers Given	n (Frequency)
Thoughts on Turkish Culinary Culture	It is one of the few cuisines in the world.	It is a rooted and large kitchen	3
		<i>Among the top three cuisines</i>	2
		<i>It is among the richest cuisines.</i>	1
		<i>Can be better Does not reflect reality</i>	1
		3	

Some of the opinions of the participants on this subject are given below:

“ Turkish Cuisine has a deep-rooted and diverse culinary culture, as it is the legacy of an empire that ruled over a wide continent for many years”. K3

“Turkish cuisine is among the cuisines that can be considered rich among other world cuisines. “K10

“The richest cuisine or the top three determinations do not reflect the truth, this is a subjective and chauvinistic approach. “K7

The theme of research and awareness of Turkish Cuisine culture

Under this theme, the participants were asked questions about the research and awareness of Turkish Cuisine Culture, and the distribution of the answers regarding these issues is given in the table below (Table 2).

Table 2. Research and awareness of Turkish Cuisine Culture

Theme	Child Theme	Answers Given	n (Frequency)
Research and awareness of Turkish Culinary Culture	Investigating	<i>There are not enough resources</i>	4
		<i>Not researched enough</i>	3
		<i>Limited publicity in general</i>	2
	Awareness	<i>There is an interest compared to the past</i>	1
		<i>I don't think you know</i>	3

Some of the opinions of the participants on this subject are given below:

" Food and culinary cultures of Turkish cuisine were not considered as important as wars in written historical sources and could not be recorded." K7

"The lack of sufficient resources to be concrete and proof is the biggest limitation of our kitchen." K1

"Although it has increased in recent years, its promotion in general has remained limited. K2

"Turkish people have an interest and curiosity compared to the past. But this situation reveals that the sufficient level of consciousness has not been fully reached.

"It is not thought that academics, chefs and folklorists research and know Turkish culinary culture as much as world cuisine." K8

" Research and culinary articles written in Turkish only talk about the Ottoman Empire and the culinary culture of the last 100 years, and for some reason, a wide variety of flavors that are much deeper are not brought to light." K9

"It was reported that there were many Turkish cuisine presentations in French and Japanese, but they were not translated." K4

"It is seen that people with a lack of knowledge are also limited in the promotion of Turkish cuisine." K4

"Sometimes, social networks bring bad examples with serious sensational news and negatively affect Turkish cuisine." K5

Do you find Turkish Cuisine Promotion Activities sufficient?

Under this theme, the participants were asked whether they found the Turkish Cuisine Promotion Activities sufficient or not, and the distribution of the answers given regarding these issues is given in the table below (Table 3).

Table 3. Promotion Activities Theme

Theme	Child Theme	Answers Given	n (Frequency)
Promotion Activities	Gained momentum	<i>Promotional activities of national and international private organizations have increased.</i>	4
	Insufficient	<i>Limited publicity in general</i>	2
		<i>There is an interest compared to the past</i>	2
		<i>I don't think you know</i>	2

Some of the opinions of the participants on this subject are given below:

"Turkish cuisine has gained a good momentum especially in recent years in terms of promotional activities carried out by diplomatic, national and international private organizations, but the recent epidemic has negatively affected this situation." K4

"The promotion of Turkish cuisine is not sufficient in general terms. In this context, there is a great effort, but more promotional activities should be carried out not only in the culinary field, but also in many cultural fields." K2

" Many people who come to Turkey come because of gastronomy tourism. One of the purposes of people going to a country is gastronomy tourism. The orientation to local products is thanks to these promotions." K6

"Almost the only product advertised in Japanese intercultural exchange projects and Turkish restaurants in Ukraine and Moldavia is doner kebab. Döner, on the other hand, revealed itself as a recipe that emerged in Germany in a not too distant period. Promotional activities are not enough." K9

The theme of the place of gastronomy festivals in promoting Turkish Cuisine to the world:

Under this theme, the participants were asked questions about the place of Gastronomy festivals in promoting Turkish Cuisine to the world, and the distribution of the answers given on these issues is given in the table below (Table 4).

Festivals attended in Turkey

Istanbul Gastronomy Festival, Gaziantep Gastronomy Festival, Beypazarı Gastronomy Festival, Cappadocia Gastronomy Festival, Istanbul Culinary Cup.

International and Abroad festivals

Gaziantep International Gastronomy Festival, International Beypazarı and Its Region Festival, Sihra Gastronomy Festival, Gastromasa Gastronomy Festival, Spain - Alicante De Festival, London - Gastronomy Festival, Vienna - Gastronomy Festival, France - Local Flavors Festival, Germany - October Festival, Italy - Ice Cream Entertainment festival.

The Place of Festivals in the Promotion of Turkish Culinary Culture to the World

Table 4. The Place of Gastronomy Festivals in the Promotion of Turkish Culinary Culture to the World

Theme	Child Theme	Answers Given	n (Frequency)
The Place of Festivals in the Promotion of Turkish Culinary Culture to the World	adds strength	<i>Economic gain ensures the continuity of cultural heritage</i>	4
	Enabled	<i>Awareness created by festivals positively affects gastronomy tourism.</i>	6

Some of the opinions of the participants on this subject are given below:

"The rich culinary culture will strengthen the promotion of the festivals."

"The festivals prepare the ground both to show the right culture in our country and to enable visitors and chefs from abroad to use our products in their own countries." K5

"Festivals with high participation play a much more active role in promotion." K 3

"Festivals organized within the scope of gastronomic tourism also provide the opportunity to promote destinations, economic gain, continuity of cultural heritage and revisit." K2

"Product promotion and will ensure that our culinary culture reaches millions of people in the right way." K 1

"It will both provide foreign currency inflow and contribute by enabling the tourists to use these products in their own countries and in their kitchens." K 7

"Awareness created with festivals positively affects gastronomy tourism." K 10

"It is seen that festivals are the only phenomenon that keeps gastronomic tourism alive." K8

The theme of what should be done to increase Food Festivals at home and abroad

Under this theme, questions were asked to the participants about what should be done to increase Food Festivals at home and abroad, and the distribution of the answers given on these issues is given in the table below (Table 5).

Table 5. The theme of what to do to increase Food Festivals at home and abroad

Theme	Child Theme	Answers Given	n (Frequency)
Actions to be taken to increase Food Festivals at home and abroad	Detection of products	<i>products that may be in contact with the festival should be identified .</i>	5
	The role of stakeholders	<i>Public, private and public institutions should play a role</i>	
			2
		<i>Due to limited resources, it needs to be supported by the state.</i>	
	Support of government		1
		<i>Food Events should be made fun , the public should be informed</i>	
	Information		3

Some of the opinions of the participants on this subject are given below:

“In order to increase Food Festivals both at home and abroad, first of all, the products that can be the theme of the festival in Turkish culinary culture should be determined.” K5

“Festivals should be organized with a working group in which the local people of the destinations with the products in question, private and public organizations, in short, all stakeholders assume responsibility.” K2

“Since festivals are high-cost organizations, destinations with limited local opportunities should be supported by the state.” K3

“Festivals should be made by making cooking and cooking much more fun and exciting. At this point, in the medieval fair held in Europe, the clothes, meals and cooking methods are made in accordance with the medieval period, making the fair popular from many countries and being an eagerly awaited event.” K6

the answers received from the participants to the question of what can be done in addition to the promotion of Turkish Cuisine in festivals, it is thought that similar international festivals organized in our country can be made on digital platforms or in different countries. It has been underlined that gastronomic products and venues can be included more in movies with gastronomy or other Turkish films, TV series or documentaries.

Some of the opinions of the participants on this subject are given below:

“Incentives can also be created for national or international companies operating in Turkey to use logos using local products, albeit within a certain period of time.” K2

“It is necessary to provide more accurate information to more people in the light of technological developments by following many digital platforms.” K7

“There is a thought that it is necessary to define many of our drinks, such as kumiss and kefir, which have been used in history and are about to be forgotten today, and that ethnic promotion can be made while these are being made. To give an example, it can be served in an open oba tent. The idea that a little bit of exaggeration, storytelling and embellishment with mythology can create much more effective results on digital platforms has been dominant.” K3

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Gastronomy basically combines culture and food under a single title. Considering the gastronomic festivals, it will be seen how great the value and advantages it adds to the destination. With this study, it has been determined that organizing the festivals beyond the usual tourism diversity will contribute significantly to the image and sustainability of the region. In addition to bringing different regions to tourism with festivals, it is also thought that places that already have the characteristics of tourism regions will increase the attraction factor. As a result, gastronomy festivals organized in Turkey and in the world will contribute to the country both socially and economically. In addition, with this study, it was stated as a common idea that many of our values, which have been forgotten today, should be introduced. Awareness created by festivals will positively affect gastronomic tourism.

The suggestions that can be given to increase the contribution of the festivals to the promotion are as follows.

Organizing gastronomy festivals will contribute to the formation of new destinations in tourism activities that have standardized alternative tourism activities that will serve in Turkey.

The October period usually starts in April, providing 12 months for the tourism activities ending in Turkey. This will contribute to the development of the welfare level of the local people and will increase the socioeconomic level.

It will contribute to the recognition of local and domestic food, beverages and products produced in the region in Turkey and in the world. After this recognition, local job opportunities will increase and migration from village to city will decrease.

Forgotten or forgotten dishes and customs, which are one of the topics discussed at local festivals, will be remembered and brought to the present day and have the chance to be recorded.

Gastronomy festivals will not only provide food and drink, but also cultural development and transfer of culture to new generations.

Organizing gastronomy festivals in an unknown area will contribute to the increase of national and international recognition of many unknown destinations and to attract more visitors.

Due to the necessity of landscaping and infrastructure arrangements before the festival to be held in a region, it is thought that arrangements will be made due to the festival.

Once the festival becomes comprehensive or interesting, it will attract media attention and increase awareness of the destination.

Considering the importance of the brand in tourism, the branding process of the festival area or the product will begin and the added value of the product will increase.

It will contribute to the tourists who come to a region once, to visit the same region in the next period.

As a result of the increase in the interaction of tourists and local people, a friendly atmosphere will be created and this will provide confidence in product marketing.

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