



The Roles of Gastronomy Festivals on Travel Motivation and Value Perception: A Study on Domestic Tourists Attending GastroAntep

Gastronomi Festivallerinin Seyahat Motivasyonu ve Değer Algısı Üzerindeki Rolü: GastroAntep'e Gelen Yerli Turistler Üzerine Bir Araştırma

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Abstract

Gastronomy-themed festivals provide destinations with some advantages in publicizing and marketing gastronomic experiences. The way to effectively benefit from these advantages is to know the factors that shape tourists' behaviors and to carry out the management of the processes of festivals by taking these experiences into account. This research was conducted in Gaziantep to determine the role of gastronomy festivals on travel motivation and value perception. For the objective of the study, a form with semi-structured and open-ended questions was applied to 88 domestic tourists aged 18 and over who participated in the Gaziantep 5th International Gastronomy Festival. As a result of the analysis made on 79 usable forms, gastronomy festivals contain 8 themes that shape travel motivation: organic foods, local foods, local beverages, geographically marked products, street foods, the desire to know different cultures, innovative applications, and famous chefs; on the other hand, it has been concluded that gastronomy festivals include many factors that shape the value perception, such as taste, diversity, attractiveness, difference, naturalness, etc.

Keywords: Festival, Gastronomy Festival, Travel Motivation, Value Perception, Gastrofest.

Özet

Gastronomi temalı festival organizasyonları destinasyonlara, sahip oldukları gastronomik birikimin tanıtımı ve pazarlanması noktasında bir takım avantajlar sağlamaktadır. Söz konusu avantajlardan etkin bir biçimde yararlanmanın yolu ise turist davranışlarını şekillendiren unsurları bilmek ve festival organizasyonlarına ilişkin süreç yönetimini bu unsurları göz önüne alarak yürütmektir. Bu araştırma gastronomi festivallerinin seyahat motivasyonu ve değer algısı üzerindeki rolünü belirlemek amacı ile Gaziantep'te yürütülmüştür. Araştırmanın amaçları doğrultusunda Gaziantep 5. Uluslararası Gastronomi Festivaline katılan 18 yaş ve üzeri 88 yerli turiste içerisinde yarı yapılandırılmış ve açık uçlu sorular bulunan araştırma formu uygulanmıştır. Kullanılabilir durumdaki 79 form üzerinden yapılan analizler neticesinde gastronomi temalı festivallerin destinasyon seçimi üzerinde önemli bir etkisinin olduğu; bu festivallerin organik gıdalar, yöresel yiyecekler, yöresel içecekler, coğrafi işaretli ürün varlığı, sokak yemekleri, farklı kültürleri tanıma isteği, İnovatif uygulamalar ve ünlü şefler olmak

üzere seyahat motivasyonu şekillendiren 8 unsuru bünyesinde barındırdığı; söz konusu unsurların ise lezzet, çeşitlilik, çekicilik, farklılık, doğallık gibi değer algısını şekillendiren çok sayıda faktörü içerdiği sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Festival, Gastronomi Festivali, Seyahat Motivasyonu, Değer Algısı, Gastrofest.

1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of festival (Nişanyan Sözlük, 2022) derived from the Latin word “festivus” meaning “celebration” and is generally defined as thematic organizations with social, political, economic, touristic, and cultural functions organized periodically by individuals or institutions (Erciyas & Yılmaz, 2021). Festivals, which are shaped around themes such as dance, drama, comedy, film, music, various arts, handicrafts, ethnic or local cultural accumulation, religious traditions, historically important events, food and wine, religious ceremonies, and agricultural products, provide destinations today. It is seen as an important marketing argument by local governments and tourism planners due to its advantages (Ekin, 2011:20). There are many interrelated reasons behind this view. It is possible to list these reasons under two headings as economic reasons and social reasons. Economic reasons are related to the development and sustainability of destinations. The expenditures of the festival visitors, the expenditures of the decision-makers, and executives on the infrastructure of the festival can be evaluated within this scope. Social reasons are related to socio-cultural sensitivities. Contributing to the image of destinations, increasing awareness, strengthening social identity, encountering different cultures, and acquiring new knowledge and skills are some of these sensitivities (Sert, 2017).

No matter what theme the festivals are shaped around, they contain many elements that can be associated with life, such as food and beverage, music, clothing, and decoration (İmirgi, 2005). This situation makes festivals an attraction that can affect all types of tourists at different levels. The tendency of destinations to use this attraction causes an increase in the number of festivals that focus on specific topics and products. The festival organizations with the highest increase are gastronomy festivals, which center on the elements of food and drink and highlight the cultural formations shaped around these elements.

The present study was conducted in Gaziantep to determine the role of gastronomy festivals on travel motivation and value perception. For the objectives of the study, firstly, the literature on gastronomy festivals, travel motivation, and value perception was scanned, and the findings overlapping with the study subject were listed under the title of the conceptual framework. After this process, the data collected from the sample group were evaluated by means of the research form containing structured and open-ended questions, and the results were interpreted with tables.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Gastronomy-Themed Festivals

Gastronomy festivals are events that are held at certain times of the year in order to ensure the sustainability of the local foods of a destination and where local food experiences are made (Keskin & Sezen, 2022). These organizations, which are based on food and human interaction, have a wide range in terms of form and content. Presentation of region-specific food products, production, tasting, recipes, and cultural food rituals are some of the elements in this spectrum (Cohen & Avieli, 2004). In addition, it is seen that entertainment elements such as performing arts, dance, and music activities are included in the festival programs.

Gastronomy festivals are seen as one of the important components of gastronomic tourism today. These events, which can appeal to almost every audience, make the destinations known and contribute to their development. It is also seen that the said festivals play an important role in bringing tourist destinations that do not have natural and historical attractions. In addition to these,

it can be stated that gastronomy festivals are helpful in branding the destination (Lee & Arcodia, 2011); they can create the necessary awareness to protect and maintain cultural values (Yılmaz & Çullu, 2012); and they commercialize traditional cuisine practices by turning them into touristic products.

Nowadays, gastronomy festivals are organized with various approaches in terms of fiction. These approaches center on two basic elements, time and content. Time refers to the period in which the festivals are held, and the content refers to the level of representation of eating and drinking elements. From this point of view, it is possible to classify the festivals in question as follows.

Thematic Gastronomy Festivals: The gastronomy festivals included in this classification are organizations that focus on one of the imaginary flavors of the destinations. Thematic gastronomy festivals are far from periodic and can be held at any time deemed appropriate. Sausage, rice, or dessert-themed festivals can be given as an example to this group. However, the existence of seasonal festivals can also be mentioned (Giritlioğlu, Olcay, & Özekici, 2015). Adana Watermelon Festival is among the seasonal festivals.

Non-Thematic Gastronomy Festivals: In such organizations, the focus is on all or most of the gastronomic accumulation of the destination rather than a specific food and beverage element. GastroAntep, which aims to promote its culinary culture with all its components and to increase its visibility with various activities, can be given as an example of such organizations.

Gastronomy-themed festivals are social organizations that center the imaginary flavors of the destinations they are held. In addition to the elements of food and drink, these organizations also carry many attractive elements related to the gastronomic accumulation of the destinations. These elements, which we can consider as sub-components of gastronomic tourism, vary according to the regions where the festivals are held. Cooking competitions, food tastings, local fruit and vegetable collections, participation of famous chefs, visual shows of the chefs, kitchen utensils, food recipes, cooking methods (Erciyas & Yılmaz, 2021), workshops, performing arts, ethnic cuisine practices are some of the elements in question.

Gastronomy-themed festivals reinforce the current image of the destinations they are held and make the gastronomic accumulation of destinations more visible. In a way, gastronomy festivals are a part of perception management for destination marketing. This process, which is carried out on the expectations of taste, difference, diversity, and innovative applications, is designed in a way that can appeal to every tourist type.

2.2. Travel Motivation and Value Perception

The concept of motivation is generally defined as all of the power and efforts that activate human activities and that are necessary to direct these activities in the desired direction and to ensure their continuity (Ak, 2022). The strength and direction of the motivational elements are closely related to the formation of the intention towards the behavior at the desired level. Travel motivation is one of the subsets of motivation; it is the total web of biological and cultural power that guides choice, behavior, and experience (Pearce, 2011). This network, which is only one of many variables (for example, perceptions, cultural conditioning, and learning) that can contribute to explaining tourist behavior, is considered a critical variable as it is the driving force (Fodness, 1994). Crompton (1979) categorizes the motives that play a role in destination selection in two ways: socio-psychological motives and cultural motives. The socio-psychological motives of the researcher are the desire to get away from the living environment, to discover oneself, to relax, to gain prestige, to seek new relationships, to develop close friendships and social interaction; cultural motives are listed as the search for innovation and education. Middleton and Clarke (2001) consider the basic motives of travel and tourism from a more general perspective and from work to faith; from

entertainment to ethnicity, and they associate many elements from personal training to physiological needs with travel motivation.

Values emerge as criteria in the thoughts, attitudes, behaviors, and works of the individual, and they constitute an inseparable element of social integrity (Dilmaç, Bozgeyikli, & Çıkılı, 2008). This item has two dimensions: tangible dimension and intangible dimension. While the material dimension is shaped by elements such as money, time, and labor, the intangible dimension expresses spiritual saturation against any element. Another aspect of the perception of value is that it can vary according to consumers (Dölarslan, 2013). In other words, the situation, person, or event that an individual attributes value may not mean the same for another individual. When the literature on tourism is examined, it is understood that the perception of value is generally associated with behavioral intention (Dülger & Ünlüönen, 2019; Küpeli, 2014; Lee, Namkung, & Yoon, 2013; Chang, 2013; Ahn & Kwon, 2020).

2.3. The Relationship Between Gastronomy Festivals' Travel Motivation and Value Perception

Gastronomy tourism is a form of tourism with the aim of gaining new food and beverage experiences (Küçükkömürler et al., 2018). This form of tourism, which can also be evaluated within the scope of event tourism, offers a number of advantages to local people and destinations with its wide scope and high awareness effect (Bucak & Araç, 2013). Countries that are aware of this, use their culinary culture and the basic components of this culture as an attraction at every opportunity and tend to activities that can motivate different types of tourists in order to promote, develop and market local tastes (Çekiç, 2021). One of the most obvious extensions of this trend today is the organization of gastronomy-themed festivals. When the relevant literature is examined, it is seen that there are studies that address the relationship between the travel motivation of gastronomy-themed festivals and the value perception that shapes this motivation.

In their study, Büyüksalvarcı and Akkaya (2018) revealed that individuals with different dietary habits participate in gastronomy festivals for the purposes of experiencing food and beverage, spending their spare time/having fun, and tasting the food of different regions. In the study conducted by McDowall (2011), Kargiglioğlu and Kabacık (2017) within the scope of the gastronomy festival, it was concluded that 74.3% of the tourists who went to Urla between 29 April-1 May 2016 traveled to participate in the Artichoke Festival. In a study by Park, Reisinger, and Kang (2008), it was determined that the travel motivations of visitors who attended the South Beach Wine and Food Festival for the first time were to taste new wine and food, enjoy the event, increase social status, escape from routine life, meet new people, spend time with family, and meet famous chefs. In a study conducted to determine the relationships between festival perceptions, satisfaction, perceived value, and destination belongingness of individuals participating in the Eskişehir street flavors festival, it was determined that festival satisfaction and perceived value of the festival positively affect tourists' destination belongingness (Demirci, Yılmazdoğan, & Yavaşmezkalender, 2020). Similarly, Akhoondnejad (2016) found that the perceived value of individuals participating in other local festivals has positive effects on satisfaction, trust, and loyalty (Akhoondnejad, 2016). In this context, it is possible to say that the motivational sources that shape the intention to participate in gastronomy festivals interact with the perception of value.

This research was carried out to determine the role of gastronomy festivals on travel motivation and value perception. In line with the objective of the study, answers were sought for the 4 questions listed below.

- Do gastronomy-themed festivals have an impact on destination selection?
- What are the advantages that gastronomy festivals provide to the destinations where they are held?
- What are the factors that shape the intention to participate in gastronomic festivals?
- Do gastronomy-themed festivals have an impact on value perception?

3. METHOD

This research, which has a qualitative design in terms of the method, was designed with an exploratory orientation in line with its aims. The exploratory orientation provides opportunities for researchers who want to explore new perspectives, ask new questions about a phenomenon, and reveal elements related to that phenomenon (Gürbüz & Şahin, 2016: 103). In exploratory research, data can be collected by using different methods such as literature reviews, interviews, and expert opinions. In this study, a semi-structured interview form was used as a data collection tool. In this type of interview, the researchers are guided by a series of questions and topics that they determined before the interview. The difference between semi-structured interviews and unstructured interviews is that the participant has limited permission to go out of the researcher's research guide (Gürbüz & Şahin, 2016: 188).

The form used in the research consists of three parts. In the first part of the form, there is information about the research subject and the declaration of volunteering. In the second part of the form, there are statements shaped to determine the demographic characteristics of the participants. The third part of the form consists of open-ended and multiple-choice questions.

The universe of the research was determined as the tourists visiting the gastronomy-themed festivals in Turkey. The sample group of the research consists of domestic tourists aged 18 and over who participated in the Gaziantep 5th International Gastronomy Festival. In this context, the research form was applied to 88 participants between September 15 and 18, 2022; 79 appropriately filled forms were included in the evaluation.

4. RESULTS

Data on demographic characteristics, travel motivations, and value perceptions of the participants are tabulated and interpreted below.

4.1. Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Participants

The data regarding the gender, age, educational level, and income level of the participants are listed in Table 1. When the table is examined, it is seen that 41.77% (n=33) of the participants are female and 58.22% of them are male. Considering the age ranges in the table, 34.17% of the participants are between 18 and 24 years old (n=27), 24.05% of them are between 25 and 34 years old (n=19), 16.45% of them are between 35 and 44 years old (n= 13) and the number of people aged 55 or higher is lower than the specified age ranges (n=9; 11.39%). The data on the educational status in the table indicates that a significant part of the participants received education at the undergraduate level 41.77% (n=33) and high school. In addition to these, the aforementioned data has presented that 15.18% (n=12) of the participants have an income level of 3001-5000-TLs (Turkish Liras), 21.51% (n=17) of them have an income level of 5001- 7000 TLs, 27.84% (n=22) of them have an income level of 7001-10000 TLs, and 31.64% of them have an income level of 10000 TLs or more.

Table 1. Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Participants

Gender	n	%
Female	33	41,77
Male	46	58,22
Age		
18-24	27	34,17
25-34	19	24,05
35-44	13	16,45
45-54	11	13,92
55 or higher	9	11,39
Educational Level		
Primary School	-	-
Middle School	3	3,79
High School	24	30,37
Associate's Degree	9	11,39
Bachelor's Degree	33	1,77
Postgraduate Degree	10	12,65
Income Level		
3000 TLs and less	3	3,79
3001-5000 TLs	12	15,18
5001-7000 TLs	17	21,51
7001- 10000 TLs	22	7,84
10000 TLs or more	25	1,64
TOTAL	79	100

4.2. The Effects of Gastronomy Festivals on Destination Selection

In Table 2, statistical data on the answers to the question: "Do the gastronomy-themed festivals have an effect on the destination selection?" are presented. When the data in the table is analyzed, it is seen that 74.68% (f=59) of the participants stated yes, 16.45% (f=13) of them stated no, and 7% (f=7) of them said they had no idea. This situation reveals that a significant part of the participants sees gastronomy festivals as an essential attraction factor affecting destination selection.

Table 2. The Effects of Gastronomy Festivals on Destination Selection

	Options	f	%
Do gastronomic festivals have an impact on destination selection?	Yes	59	74,68
	No	13	16,45
	I have no idea	7	8,86
	Total	79	100

4.3. The Contributions of Gastronomy Festivals to Destinations

In Table 3, the participants' data related to the content analysis of the answers given to the question: "What kind of advantages do gastronomy festivals provide to destinations? are presented. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that the participants made a total of 111 statements; the identified themes were found to be clustered under 6 themes: sustainability (n=7, 6.30%), publicity (n=55, 49.54%), regional development (n=21, 18.91%), branding – image creation (n=113, 11.71%), employment (n=9, 8.1%).

Table 3. The Advantages of Gastronomy Festivals to Destinations

	Themes	f	%
What advantages do gastronomy festivals provide to destinations?	Sustainability	7	6,30
	Publicity	55	49,54
	Regional development	21	18,91
	Branding, image creation	13	11,71
	Employment	9	8,1
	Preservation of the cultural heritage	6	5,4
	Total		111

When an analysis is made regarding the themes specified in Table 3, it is stated that the prominent themes are publicity, regional development, and branding-image creation; it is understood that the theme of the preservation of cultural heritage remains in the background. Some of the statements related to the aforementioned themes are listed below.

"...I think gastronomy festivals contribute to the publicity of the region, the customer potential of the tradesmen, the mobility of the city, and the vision of the city (P.13)."

"...These events enhance the publicity of the taste of the region where they are held and the recognition of the city (P.9)."

"...Gastronomy festivals contribute to the preservation, transmission, and dissemination of a city's culinary culture (P.32)."

"...Thanks to the food and culinary culture that introduces the city, the attention given to the city increases (P.49)."

"...Destinations with geographical indications that contribute to gastronomic tourism gain recognition and provide great advantages in domestic and foreign trade (P.14)."

"... These festivals increase our international recognition. It supports our economic development. It enables us to have experience in terms of publicity (P.55)."

"...Gastronomy festivals both contribute to the economy and provide socialization (P.67)."

"...Gastronomy festivals help individuals coming from different places to know the destination well and to promote the destination in the places they visit (P.29)."

"...These festivals provide an advantage in promoting the local products of the city (P.37)."

"...Gastronomy festivals help to promote the city worldwide and increase the number of tourists coming to the city (P.44)."

"...Gastronomy festivals increase the visibility and recognition of the city (P.61)."

"...The recommendations of individuals who visit gastronomy festivals increase the tourist potential of the city. It contributes to the image of the city (P.39)."

"...Gastronomy festivals have a great contribution to the survival of the culinary culture (P.53)."

"...It contributes significantly to the publicity of the common culture in the context of cuisine (P.34)."

"...The contribution of gastronomy festivals to local tradesmen is important. Thanks to the opening of new business areas, the need for labor is an important contribution (P.22)."

"...Gastronomy festivals are very essential as they help cities to publicize their rich culinary cultures and become well-known cities (P.68)."

During the content analysis, some statements were also found that gastronomy festivals put destinations at a disadvantage. It is possible to classify these statements as the *price-value relation* and *image-price relation* of gastronomy festivals.

Price-Value Relation

"...Food prices are exaggerated at gastronomic festivals. This prevents everyone from purchasing these products (P.74)."

"...Gastronomy festivals provide nothing but costliness (P.21)."

"...Festivals increase prices. Increasing prices do not decline again. Something that costs 30 Turkish Liras turns out to be 70 Turkish Liras (P.16)."

Image-Price Relation

"...Tourists attending gastronomy festivals find the prices high. Thus, the image of the city is tarnished. For example, the name of Gaziantep is known as an expensive city (P.18)."

4.4. Factors Shaping Intention to Attend Gastronomy Festivals

In Table 4, the analysis of the answers to the questions of "What are the factors that shape your intention to attend gastronomy festivals?" and "Which features of these elements shape your intention to attend gastronomy festivals?" is presented. As a result of the analysis of the aforementioned data, it is determined that the participants have declared a total of 166 statements. Eight factors have been determined, and these factors can be listed as organic foods (n=11, 6.62%), local dishes (n=59, 35.54%), local beverages (n=19, 11.44%), presence of geographically marked products (n=13, 7.83%), street foods (n=17, 10.24%), desire to know different cultures (n=21, 12.65%), innovative applications (n= 23, 13.85%), and famous chefs (n=3, 1.8%).

Table 4. Factors Shaping Intention to Attend Gastronomy Festivals

Factors	n	%	Statements (n)
Organic foods	11	6,62	Taste (n=7), naturalness (n=9), reliability (n=5), quality (n=6), health (n=8), and nutritiveness (n=1).
Local dishes	59	35,54	Variety (n=13), attractiveness (n=9), difference (n=6), flavor (n=44), ingredient (n=29), accessibility (n=11), texture (n=7), scent (n=21), uniqueness (n=17).
Local beverages	19	11,44	Flavor (n=11), aroma (n=13), traditional presentation (n=4), diversity (n=3).
Presence of geographically marked products	13	7,83	Location (n=7), taste (n=3), source (n=1), distinctness (n=3), uniqueness (n=2), and curiosity (n=4).
Street foods	17	10,24	Place (n=5), presentation (n=7), cooking methods (n=3), use of local products (n=2), price (n=4), variety (n=3), flavor (n=8), and smell (n=6).
Desire to know different cultures	21	12,65	Experience (n=14), learning (details, descriptions, methods) (n=9), comparison (n=5), and interaction (n=4).
Innovative applications	23	13,85	Following innovations (methods, technology, new recipes) (n=13), tactility (n=4), experience (n=9), and awareness (n=6).
Famous chefs	3	1,8	Meeting with the chefs and field experts (n=3).
TOTAL	166	100	—————

Considering the statements in Table 4, it is possible to say that local foods and beverages, the desire to know different cultures, and innovative applications have significant impacts on the shaping of behavioral intentions of the participants, compared to other factors. Some of the expressions that contain the aforementioned statements are listed below.

Organic foods: When the data in the table is examined, it is seen that 11 participants associate 6 concepts, namely taste, naturalness, reliability, quality, health, and nutritiveness, with organic foods. When the frequencies of the aforementioned concepts are taken into account, it is understood that the lowest perception explaining organic foods is the nutritiveness (n=1).

“...I think organic foods are beneficial for health. Organic foods can be absolutely trusted (P.21).”

“...It's great that organic foods are natural. Since they are natural, their high prices limit the purchasing power (P.21).”

“...Organic products mean high-quality products. High-quality products are also more nutritious than others (P.21).”

Local Dishes: According to the data in the table, it is seen that 59 participants associate a total of 9 concepts, namely variety, attractiveness, difference, flavor, ingredient, accessibility, texture, scent, and uniqueness, with local dishes. When the frequencies of the aforementioned concepts are taken into account, it is understood that the highest perception explaining local dishes is flavor (n=44), and the lowest perception is texture (n=7).

“...Local dishes are very tasty. The spices used give them flavors (P.58).”

“...The presence of local dishes shows the differences and varieties of foods of the region they belong to (P.29).”

“...I prefer local foods because their flavors and smells intrigue me (P.36).”

Local beverages: The data in Table 4 reveal that 19 participants associated three concepts in total, namely flavor, aroma, traditional presentation, and diversity, with local dishes. Considering the frequencies of the aforementioned concepts, it is understood that the highest perception explaining local dishes is the aroma (n=13) and the lowest perception is the diversity (n=3).

"...The aromas of local beverages are very nice; their flavors are very good. They represent their regions (P.66)."

"...The presentation of licorice sherbet in Gaziantep is very nice. Presentations are made in traditional attires. I think this is impressive (P.13)."

Presence of geographically marked products: The data in Table 4 indicate that 13 participants associate the presence of geographically marked products with the concepts of location, taste, source, distinctness, uniqueness, and curiosity. When the frequencies of the aforementioned concepts are taken into account, it is understood that the highest perception explaining local dishes is the location (n=7), and the lowest perception is the source (n=1).

"...Geographically marked products are identified with the places where they are found. Although there are similar ones, they are not found elsewhere. That's why such products are very important (P.50)."

Street foods: It is possible to list the concepts that the participants associate with street food as place (n=5), presentation (n=7), cooking methods (n=3), use of local products (n=2), price (n=4), variety (n=3), flavor (n=8), and smell (n=6). Among these concepts, it is seen that the highest number of repetitions is determined in the concept of taste (n=8) and the lowest number of repetitions are determined in the concept of the use of local products (n=1).

"...Street foods taste different. You don't get the same flavors when you make them at home (P.41)."

"...Street foods are cheaper than other meals because they are considered as snacks. The situation is not the same at gastronomy festivals. Prices are higher there (P.21)."

Desire to know different cultures: The data in Table 4 reveals that 21 participants associate 4 concepts, namely experience, learning (details, descriptions, methods), comparison, and interaction, with the factor of desire to know different cultures. When the frequencies of these concepts are examined, it is seen that the highest perception explaining the factor of desire to know different cultures is the experience (n=14) and the lowest perception is the interaction (n=4).

"...We can learn about different culinary cultures at gastronomy festivals. We can learn the cooking methods of different cultures. You can learn the tricks of the profession (P.19)."

Innovative applications: It is possible to list the concepts that 23 participants associate with innovative practices as following innovations (methods, technology, new recipes), tactility, experience, and awareness. Among these concepts, the highest number of repetitions are determined in the following innovations (n=13).

"...I see all the innovations in the field of gastronomy at gastronomy festivals. I am trying to implement them. I find the opportunity to try new applications (P.72)."

Famous chefs: The data in Table 4 also reveals that 3 participants referred to the factor of famous chefs.

“...Chefs and participants come from all over to the gastronomy festivals. Experts from all fields attend the gastronomy festivals. You meet famous chefs. It’s a great opportunity to take pictures and talk with them (P.33).”

4.5. Value Perception

Table 5 presents the data revealing the value perception levels of the sample group towards attending gastronomy festivals. When the aforementioned data is analyzed, it is seen that the act of visiting gastronomy festivals is worth the money spent (77.21%), time allotted (87.34%), effort spent (88.6%), and struggle endured (84.81%). This shows that most of the participants have high-value perception levels towards gastronomy festivals. Among the value factors in the table, the one with the lowest percentage is the money factor.

Table 5. Factors Shaping Intention to Attend Gastronomy Festivals

	Statements	N	%
Money	Yes	61	77,21
	No	10	12,65
	I have no idea	8	10,12
	Total	79	100
Time	Yes	69	87,34
	No	6	7,59
	I have no idea	4	5,06
	Total	79	100
Effort	Yes	70	88,6
	No	6	7,59
	I have no idea	3	3,79
	Total	79	100
Struggle	Yes	67	84,81
	No	7	8,86
	I have no idea	5	6,33
	Total	79	100

CONCLUSION

This study was conducted in Gaziantep to determine the role of gastronomy festivals on travel motivation and value perception. The raw data used in the instrumentation were collected from domestic tourists aged 18 and over who participated in the 5th International Gastronomy Festival (GastroFest) through an interview form that included semi-structured and open-ended questions.

The analysis made on the aforementioned data, firstly, revealed that 74.68% of the participants saw gastronomy festivals as a factor that has an impact on the choice of destination. This means that gastronomy-themed festivals are seen as one of the attractive elements that shape behavioral intention. Therefore, while planning tourism activities, variables (perceptions, attitudes, subjective norms, etc.) with which behavioral intention interacts should be taken into consideration. Some studies on gastronomic festivals support this finding (Bekar, Kocatürk, & Sürücü, 2017; Wan & Chan, 2013; Vesci, M., & Botti, 2020).

The second finding reached as a result of the analysis is related to the advantages that gastronomy festivals provide to the destinations where they are held. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that the participants made 111 notifications about the gastronomy festivals' advantages; It was seen that the notifications determined were clustered under 6 themes in terms of the content. It is possible to list these themes as publicity, regional development, branding-image

creation, employment, sustainability, and protection of cultural heritage. Publicity (49.54%) and regional development (18.91%) are the highest percentages among the specified themes.

The factors that shape the intention of the sample group to participate in gastronomic festivals were found in the study as organic foods, local dishes, local drinks, the presence of geographically marked products, street foods, desire to know different cultures, innovative practices, and meeting famous chefs. Among these factors, the ones with the highest repetition level are local foods (n=59), innovative applications (n=23), the desire to know different cultures (n=21), and local beverages (n=19). In addition to these, it is possible to state that the statement with the highest repetition level among the causal statements from the participants regarding the specified factors is related to the perception of taste.

The last finding reached as a result of the analysis is related to the value perception levels of the sample group towards festival participation. When these data are examined, it can be said that the value perception levels of the participants are generally high. It is seen that the level of value perception towards the money spent is low (77,21%) compared to other value factors. It can be said that this situation is related to the reflection of the brand value created by the gastronomy festivals on the product prices.

Results of the study indicate that gastronomy festivals contain various motivational elements, and many factors related to these elements positively affect the perception of value and behavioral intention. This situation reveals that gastronomy-themed festival organizations should be planned and managed with approaches that consider tourist motivations as a relational continuum. From this point of view, it is important for sector representatives and tourism planners, especially local governments, to organize gastronomy festivals that increase the awareness of destinations and tourist mobility, taking into account the factors that shape tourist behaviors and take the necessary precautions so that tourists can have unique gastronomic experiences. It is important to carry out future studies on the subject on different sample groups in terms of obtaining comparative results.

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