

Chef and sommelier's share in Michelin star success: The case of Denmark

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Chef,
Sommelier,
Michelin Star,
Denmark.

Enjoying a meal at a Michelin restaurant is quite a satisfying experience for consumers; working at one of these prestigious restaurants is similarly satisfying for a chef and sommelier. Chefs have long been the dominant factors in restaurants. In recent years, it has been observed that the sommeliers have become the partners of chefs in this important role. This study includes executive chefs, head chefs, sommeliers, and head sommeliers working at 11 different Michelin restaurants in Denmark with 1 and 2 stars. The findings confirm the recent contribution of sommeliers, which is mentioned in the related literature. In addition, the findings of this study indicate that the success of a chef in receiving a Michelin star and keeping it is mostly affected by the physical elements such as crew, materials, and presentation. Sommeliers, on the other hand, contribute to this success through abstract service elements such as the harmony of different elements on the table, food & wine harmony, menu tasting and increasing experience quality. It has also been determined that the impact of sommeliers on restaurant management will increase soon as they are the faces, in a sense 'models' of restaurants and they make unique contributions to customer satisfaction.

Article History:

Submitted: 30.11.2021

Revised: 02.09.2022

Accepted: 03.10.2022

Published Online: 01.11.2022

1. Introduction

The trend of Michelin star, which has become a significant system used for defining the qualified restaurants all around the world, was established by André Michelin in 1900. It used to be a kind of guide prepared to help travelers who travel around France with vehicles. Helping tourists to carry out the maintenance of vehicles, find comfortable places to stay and good food in France were the purposes of this guideline. There were important points that ease the life of travelers such as the places of tire stores and gas stations. Michelin Guide was started to be defined with the symbol of a star in the distinguished restaurants in 1926. Starting from the 1930s, the number of stars started to increase to two and three, and the modern form of Michelin was established (Subakti, 2013, p.292).

In general terms, a single star in Michelin system denotes a very good restaurant in its category that continuously present highly qualified food. Two stars indicate restaurants that present excellent cooking and experience that is worth a detour; three stars indicate exceptional cuisine and extraordinary experience that is worth a special journey (Michelin Travel, 2012). In the scope of these criteria, it can be said that Michelin stars are the results of a system of evaluating what is on the table such as the

quality of the products, delicacy, and craftsmanship in cooking. However, in today's ever-changing world, with the effects of globalization and new culinary movements, the vision of modern people about the culinary experience has changed. The restaurants today are not simply associated with food; they are rather social environments that present the customers' unique experiences with distinguished service and ambiance (Subakti, 2013, p.291).

Attribution of a different meaning to restaurant experiences and associating food with the concept of socialization (Walker, 2010) have also changed the meaning attributed to Michelin Guide. The restaurants that are distinguished by Michelin stars have become the symbols of prestige; they serve in the scope of many quality criteria and visitors gain prestige (Subakti, 2013, p.291). Some of these quality criteria are ambiance, physical conditions of a restaurant, service quality, quality of personnel, and richness of the menu, wide, rich, and modern wine cellar (Lane, 2010).

The elements that are evaluated in the frame of different quality criteria and rewarded with Michelin stars have been the restaurants until recently. There has been a new trend in the sector and the concept of "Michelin star chef" has become important to qualify chefs (Cousins et al., 2010, p.403). This approach is based on the understanding that

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Research paper

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the chef is the basic factor that determines the success of a restaurant. This understanding has been important since the 1970s and is based on the trend of “nouvelle cuisine” which is conceptualized as the new kitchen. This trend allows chefs to develop a personalized style and thus get the chance to shine out. On the other hand, with the new culinary trend, courses are neater, presented in small portions with creative and aesthetic styles. The prepared plates have become pieces of modern art with strong visual aesthetic elements. Food photography and design studies have become important and the meaning of food has transformed in a sense; this process has given chefs the chance to increase their reputations and become “stars” (Gillespie, 1994, p.22).

Molecular culinary trends that are based on culture, fusion, nature, and science have emerged in recent years. These trends prioritize the product and culture (Cousins et al., 2010, pp.401-405). The modern culinary understanding has a gastronomic structure with an understanding that gives importance to food and human at the same time. In this process, especially Michelin star restaurants have created a unique industry; they started functioning under the same roof, including crew members with different job definitions. These restaurants combine traditional and global factors in the product developing process and have a creative entertainment process (Miklós, 2019, p.32-38).

Along with the understanding of production embraced by this new culinary trend, the perfectionist approach of product presentation has increased the importance of sensual analysis and the rule of well-matched taste of food and drinks has become prominent. There are now sommeliers in restaurants to help chefs for ensuring this match; the customers now seek different experiences and there are changes in the industry resulting from the impacts of job definition in restaurants and effects of the new culinary trend. Sommeliers, who are wine experts, support chefs in terms of wine representation in restaurants; the importance of their position in the culinary world has been increasing every day in parallel with the increase in the role of chefs (Scander et al., 2020). The recent emergence of business owner/sommeliers similar to the business owner/chef combination can be associated with this increase in the importance of sommeliers' role in the sector.

Although a sommelier is defined as a drinks expert, the position is usually related to wine (Parr & Mackay, 2010). In general terms, sommeliers are responsible for buying and selling drinks, managing wine stocks, and evaluating the quality of wine; they are also expected to have special skills in matching food and beverages and have knowledge about the current consumer tendencies (MacNeil, 2015; TASI, 2015). Besides, adding wine choices to the menu, educating the personnel about wine, increasing the sales of drinks by using different sales techniques are some other responsibilities of sommeliers (Manske & Cordua, 2005, p.569). On the other hand, it is expected that sommeliers

will have a wider job description in the frame of the changeable restaurant business; besides being wine experts, they are expected to widen their knowledge and domain and include alcohol-free drinks such as tea and coffee, tobacco products such as Cuban cigar and snacks such as cheese (Stelzer, 2011).

Although there have been some changes in the job definition of sommeliers in time, they have always been one of the key elements in the success of restaurants with their ability to combine drinks, specifically wine, with food and thus make a great contribution to gastronomic experience (Oliveira-Brochado, & da Silva, 2014). Sommeliers are the inseparable elements of restaurants along with chefs as they combine drink and food. The knowledge of the person that combines food and wine about the use of spices, herbs, or seasonings in a course, and the cooking process of the food plays a key role in having a holistic quality in the representation (Simon, 1996). This is why, sommeliers and chefs should have successful coordination and work together in a harmony (Green, 2003). Researches about the issue in the literature reveal that a successful food and wine combination has a positive impact on customer quality perception (Scander et al., 2020). Based on this fact, it can be said that combining food with a tasteful wine increases the value of the gastronomic experience. Because of the great importance of combining wine and food, sometimes chefs have to make some changes in the menu; they sometimes change some of the ingredients or the recipe to ensure a successful combination with a drink (Ottenbacher, & Harrington, 2007).

Another factor in restaurants that indicate the importance of the sommelier position is consumer behaviors. According to the studies in the literature about the issue, having a sommelier in a restaurant affect consumer preferences in terms of selecting high-level restaurants, including the Michelin star ones. Restaurants that have successful sommeliers are preferred more by consumers as it is believed that the gastronomic experience becomes more enjoyable with a successful food and wine combination. Studies in the literature indicate that consumer satisfaction and loyalty increases with sommeliers (Manske, & Cordua, 2005; Harrington, 2005; Dewald, 2008; Meng, & Kevin, 2008, p.575; Alonso, 2014; Johri, 2014, p.24-25; Lau et al., 2019). To make these contributions to restaurant success, besides their knowledge about drinks, sommeliers should have good social relations, cultural background, and professional skills (Scander et al., 2020).

In recent years, Scandinavian countries have become more popular with Michelin restaurants. The trend started with Noma restaurant in Denmark has formed the basis of Scandinavian success in the sector of restaurant and pioneered Michelin star restaurant success in the area (Jenkins, 2017). This study aims at evaluating the role of chefs and sommeliers in the success of Michelin stars; the

Michelin restaurants in Denmark are taken into consideration in this process of analysis and evaluation.

2. Methodology

The purpose of this research is to present the roles of chefs and sommeliers working at Michelin star restaurants in Denmark in the process of receiving a star and keeping it. The qualitative research method and descriptive analysis is used in this study to obtain results. Qualitative research methods, one of the methods used in social sciences studies, have become very popular in recent years. Insufficiency of a unidirectional viewpoint because of the changeable structure of humans and society and the necessity of a holistic approach to social phenomena required these newly popular research methods (Karataş, 2015, p.62).

The interview method is used in this research during the phase of data collection. The interview method is based on recording and analyzing the information obtained through conversation, question-answer, and similar communication activities with individuals or groups in the scope of the predetermined topics (Arıkan, 2012).

Interview form prepared with semi-structured interview technique is used in this study throughout the process of interviews. The semi-structured interview is based on a process in which the questions are pre-set in a way that they can be rearranged according to the feedback; it is partially a flexible data collection process allowing for a discussion with the interviewee rather than a straightforward question and answer format (Ekiz, 2013).

The interviews in the scope of this research study are carried out with chefs and sommeliers working at restaurants with 1 and 2 Michelin stars in Denmark. The country is specifically chosen as it is a pioneer in Scandinavian cuisine, home of many famous chefs and

sommeliers (Jenkins, 2017). The prepared interview form involves a total of 22 chefs and sommeliers working at 11 different Michelin restaurants. Face-to-face interviews were held by considering the workload of the participants; researchers made appointments and interviews were made when the participants were available. The interview process was between May 2021 and November 2021. The research has approved by Balıkesir University Social and Human Sciences Ethnic Committee meeting dated 15.11.2021 and numbered 2021/05.

3. Findings

According to the demographic information of the chefs and sommeliers who participated in this research study, the ages of the participants vary between 28 and 42. The average age of the participants is 35. 4 of the 11 chefs in the study own the restaurant they work while 5 of the 11 sommeliers own their workplace. The positions of the chefs interviewed in the scope of this study are the executive chef and head chef. The titles of sommeliers are sommelier and head sommelier. All of the participants had formal or informal training in the fields of gastronomy, cuisine, or wine except for one participant who is both sommelier and owner. When the occupational experience of the participants is analyzed, it can be seen that the average year of experience for chefs is approximately 13 years while it is 11 years for sommeliers. The demographic information of the participants is presented in Table 1.

Firstly, specific questions were prepared to obtain information from the chefs and sommeliers to receive their ideas and considerations about the impacts of their positions on the restaurants they work in and their careers. After this process, mutual assessments of chefs and sommeliers were obtained and it was targeted to reach a more comprehensive result about the contribution of these positions in the success of the restaurant and

Table 1. Demographic information of the participants

Code	Age	Position	Professional Education	Occupational experience
C1	32	Head Chef	Culinary Academy	10 years
C2	33	Executive Chef/ Owner	Culinary Bachelor Degree	15 years
C3	33	Executive Chef	Culinary Academy	10 years
C4	40	Executive Chef	Culinary Bachelor Degree	22 years
C5	32	Head Chef	Culinary Academy	14 years
C6	38	Executive Chef/ Owner	Culinary Academy	13 years
C7	42	Executive Chef/ Owner	Culinary Bachelor Degree	14 years
C8	29	Head Chef	Culinary Bachelor Degree	10 years
C9	29	Head Chef	Culinary Academy	8 years
C10	36	Executive Chef/ Owner	Culinary Academy	13 years
C11	38	Executive Chef	Culinary Academy	14 years
S1	36	Sommelier / Owner	Gastronomy Master Degree	16 years
S2	28	Sommelier	Sommelier Certificate	5 years
S3	38	Sommelier / Owner	Sommelier Certificate	15 years
S4	36	Sommelier / Owner	-	14 years
S5	35	Head Sommelier	Sommelier Certificate	7 years
S6	36	Sommelier / Owner	Sommelier Certificate	16 years
S7	28	Head Sommelier	Bachelor Degree / Certificate	4 years
S8	42	Head Sommelier	Sommelier Certificate	17 years
S9	30	Sommelier	Sommelier Certificate	5 years
S10	32	Sommelier	Wine Bachelor Degree	6 years
S11	42	Sommelier / Owner	Bachelor Degree	16 years

Source: Created by the authors.

receiving/keeping Michelin star. The views about the evaluations were compared to the feedback of customers obtained by chefs and sommeliers and the findings were confirmed.

Views on the contribution of working at a Michelin star restaurant to the career

All of the chefs participated in this research study mentioned that Michelin star made great contributions to their career. According to the chefs, Michelin star increased their popularity, attracted the attention of the sector, increased their prestige and popularity in social media, and served as a way of advertisement. The chef coded C4 explains these effects very clearly: “...absolutely. Having a Michelin star has a big role in increasing popularity. Some many magazines and newspapers wanted to meet and have interviews with me when I got the first Michelin star. Lots of people started to follow me on social media.” Sommeliers who evaluated the contribution of working at a Michelin star restaurant to their career have a different approach to the issue. According to the sommeliers who participated in the study, working at a Michelin star restaurant increases personal development, ensures permanency and job assurance, and disciplines the worker. Besides these, sommeliers mentioned that working at these restaurants increases workload and responsibility. Participant S5 has these different viewpoints and says that: “Working at a restaurant in Michelin list is very important for self-development. The person wants to increase his/her professional knowledge and continuity efforts to meet the demands of customers; I mean the position brings serious responsibilities with it and prevents you from leaving down the discipline.”

The views of participants about whether or not their position makes any contribution to the popularity or value of the restaurant vary. The chefs stated that they contributed to the popularity of their restaurant. On the other hand, 7 chefs stated that chefs and restaurants comprise a whole and make a variety of contributions to one another. C1 states that: “There is a mutual interaction in this process. This place increased my reputation, people started to recognize me, and now the popularity of the restaurant increases because of me.” One of the sommeliers said that the contribution of the restaurant to his career is bigger than his contribution to the restaurant. The other 10 participants think that they contributed to the popularity of the restaurant they work. On the other hand, according to 4 sommeliers, their success at sommelier competitions contributed to the restaurant recognition. S8 states his opinions about the issue and says that: “Of course I contributed to the restaurant. This place is like a home and I want to do everything I can for this place. The award I receive from the competitions doesn't merely belong to me; it is also the restaurant's reward. These are surely plus points for a restaurant.”

Views on the most significant elements of success at a Michelin restaurant

According to the chefs who participated in this study, the most important elements in Michelin success are having a great team, using quality and fresh products, and not repeating oneself. Besides these, coordination, giving importance to small details, standardization, extensive wine menu are the elements necessary for continuing Michelin success. Statements of C3 reflect the views of the participant chefs in general: “If you are doing the best you can in your job, the success will naturally follow. Chefs should make sure that they are using good products. Using the right product at the right season and having a crew that can properly and successfully process them is significant. It is also important to have a rich wine menu. Food is not enough on its own.” Sommeliers on the other hand mention that factors based on harmony and combination such as wine and food combination, the harmony of the products on a plate, and coordination are important elements besides sensorial factors such as flavor. Besides, the emphasis on local, disciplined, respectful, and happy co-workers are important according to the participants. S3 mentions that food and wine combination is crucial and the flavor of the wine is very important. His statements support the idea that food isn't the only factor that determines the success of a course: “What brings success to a restaurant is the flavor of the product on a plate, local products, harmony of different elements and food and wine combination. Food on a plate isn't simply enough for the success of a restaurant. What we call a 'menu' is made of food and beverages. The menu-tasting process of sommeliers is the biggest evidence of this.”

Views of chefs about the roles of chefs and sommeliers in Michelin star success

8 chefs who participated in the interview think that good food is the most important criterion in the evaluation of Michelin star; this is why having a professional, successful chef is the biggest element that contributes to the evaluation of a restaurant. 3 chefs stated that co-workers of a chef are also important. C1, one of the participants who stated that Michelin star is a result of chef success, said that: “Chef means everything in a restaurant and the most important standard of Michelin Guide is food.” On the other hand, all of the chefs mentioned that wine experience is as important as food in Michelin success and sommeliers are the keys to this success. 5 of the chefs who participated in this study stated that sommeliers are the workers that carry the quality of food experience to success. C2 said that: “Wine is just as important as food in Michelin Guide. Sommeliers are the responsible ones at this point. Sommeliers make correct combinations and bring the experience to the top.”

Views of sommeliers about the roles of chefs and sommeliers in Michelin star success

Almost all of the sommeliers in the study associated the importance of the chef in Michelin success with the concept, presentation, and creativity. On the other hand, some sommeliers emphasized the high importance of chefs as workers in the process of receiving a Michelin star and keeping it. S3, one of these sommeliers said that: *“In the scope of the Michelin Guide, innovation, quality, the harmony of products and concept creativity are all created through the hands of chefs. Both chef and his co-workers are responsible for ranking among the successful restaurants in the Michelin list and staying in it.”* Sommeliers also made some statements and associated the success of their position with receiving Michelin star and keeping it. They believe that evoking the feelings of customers, giving them the chance to have unique experiences, and ensuring customer satisfaction indicate that sommeliers make great contributions to restaurants. S2 discussed the importance of sommeliers in Michelin success and reflected the general view about the issue with these words: *“Success of a sommelier is the success of a restaurant. For example, having the title of the best sommelier increases the importance of the restaurant. Sommeliers are as important as chefs in keeping the Michelin star.”*

Views on including the chef and sommelier in the process of menu-creation and their responsibilities in this process

Chefs stated that they received help from sommeliers in the process of creating a menu and deciding the food to be placed in it; they also mentioned that this help is limited with determining the acid-sugar balance of the food to be placed the menu. 2 chefs, on the other hand, mentioned that the process of creating a course is the job of chefs and sommeliers should only be responsible for the wine. However, sommeliers believe that their contribution to the menu-creation process is quite big. According to these sommeliers, especially the tasting process while forming a menu is important in reaching a successful menu. Tasting is not simply a process of making food and wine combination and it has a role in determining a menu according to S2. He said these about the issue: *“... very much. In most Michelin restaurants, sommeliers are responsible for the tasting process. Deficiencies are determined and menus are created through these tastings”*

The efficiency of chefs in the wine selection process is asked of the participant chefs. 7 of 11 chefs said that they work as a team and they are a big part of the food and wine combination process. 4 chefs stated that sommeliers are responsible for this combination and it is a part of their job definition. Statements of S5 reflect this viewpoint: *“The position of sommeliers is a little more specific. Chefs cannot be expected to participate in the issue of wine*

except for being supplementary elements. They can only have a role in cooking food that will taste good with wine.”

Views on the elements that are appraised and complained the most by restaurant customers throughout their visits

8 of the 11 chefs who participated in the study process mentioned that food is the most interpreted element in the restaurant. According to the chefs, customers either complain about the food or appraise it in their restaurant. Besides, 3 chefs said that they received opinions both about food and wine. The sentences of C7 summarize the general viewpoint: *“The reasons why customers go to a restaurant are having a good meal and enjoying the time spent. At this point, customers mostly state their opinions about the food.”* 7 of the 11 sommeliers said that customers' interpretations about a restaurant are mostly based on food and wine. 4 sommeliers said that wine is a complementary element and customers mostly interpret food. On the other hand, neither chefs nor sommeliers said that they receive negative feedback. The general viewpoint of sommeliers is summarized by S3: *“I guess our customers don't make any negative interpretation as they are satisfied with the service they get from the restaurant. However, there are usually many customers who mention that they are satisfied with both food and wine at the end of the night. Most customers order food and wine together.”*

Views on the scope of the duties and coherence of chefs and sommeliers in the functioning of a Michelin restaurant

Based on the frequency of statements of chefs and sommeliers, it is possible to say that chef's position in a restaurant is beyond simply preparing a plate and developing a product; a chef is rather responsible for the whole functioning of the restaurant, creating program and ensuring workers follow it. Almost all of the sommeliers who participated in the study emphasized the dominance of chefs in the whole functioning. The statements of S5 exemplify this viewpoint: *“A chef is not merely responsible for the kitchen of a restaurant. We can say that chefs are in charge of the entire functionality of a restaurant and it is impossible to interpret its elements separately. Sometimes chefs describe the food that they serve to customers. They have an important role in the success and functioning of the whole restaurant. Besides they should present the food in coordination with sommeliers.”* Sommeliers, on the other hand, have many responsibilities besides selecting, buying, and serving wine, and combining food and wine; according to the participants, sommeliers are responsible for the overall functioning of service as a service manager, maximizing flavor and experience, and enriching customer satisfaction. The statements of C11 bring a different viewpoint to the duties of a sommelier in a restaurant: *“Sommeliers have a big role in terms of the impression of a restaurant on customers as they individually*

communicate with customers; because of that they should be extra careful.” Coordination between chefs and sommeliers in the frame of their job definition is necessary for receiving and keeping Michelin stars according to all of the participants.

Views of chefs and sommeliers about the impact of their co-workers (chefs and sommeliers) on choosing their workplace

10 of 11 chefs and 9 of 11 sommeliers interviewed in the scope of this study stated that chef/sommeliers with whom they work won't affect their choice while deciding on a workplace. At this point, some of the important criteria according to chefs while choosing a workplace are having an environment in which they can improve their skills, and feel comfortable while sommeliers, in general, prioritize the general success of a restaurant and a happy work environment.

Findings of the related issue are evaluated and it is determined that features such as owning a restaurant, being merely a worker at a restaurant, or professional experience, which are demographical features, didn't cause any difference in answers.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

It is seen that chefs and sommeliers working at Michelin star restaurants in Denmark are mostly directors. On the other hand, approximately half of them own the business they work for. Chefs are generally graduated from the undergraduate programs about their profession while sommeliers are mostly trained in certificate programs. It is observed that all of the participants have an average of 12 years of professional experience in the sector. This indicates that individuals who received education about food or beverage can be placed in important positions such as executive chef, head chef, or head sommelier in Michelin restaurants. This finding is important as it can be a reference for individuals who want to work at Michelin restaurants in their careers.

According to the findings obtained in the scope of this study, working at a Michelin restaurant has contributed to the career of chef and sommeliers; all of the participants accepted that the restaurants they work for contributed to their career. Chefs adopted a personal approach to the issue and specifically mentioned that the restaurant they work for especially contributed to their popularity. The increase in the number of followers on social media is an important contribution to their career. Sommeliers on the other hand stated that working at a Michelin restaurant supported their personal development, ensured continuity and work security, and gave them the skill of being disciplined. These findings indicate that when compared to sommeliers, chefs' expectations about professional development decreased when they received Michelin stars and they focused more on personal prestige. Besides, chefs focused on gaining popularity while sommeliers focused on the

reflection of their success in competitions on the restaurant they work; this difference in viewpoints confirms these findings.

Another finding indicates that chefs at Michelin restaurants are mostly responsible for physical elements that bring success to restaurants such as plates, crew, and materials while sommeliers usually focus on food and wine combination, the combination of products, flavor and happiness of workers. Based on these findings, it can be said that sommeliers who focus on sensual elements in a restaurant feature abstract elements and prepare the factors that create the soul of service in a restaurant. This finding shows that the harmony between chefs and sommeliers is crucial and necessary for the success of a restaurant.

One other finding obtained from this study is about the importance of chefs and sommeliers in the business. Chefs believe that they are the most important factors that determine the success of a restaurant; on the other hand, they think that sommeliers are responsible for increasing the food and beverage experience to an upper level. Sommeliers on the other hand accept the dominance of chefs in restaurants, however, they mention that the success of a restaurant is related to the success of the sommelier. Sommeliers also emphasize that while chefs work behind closed doors, their role is unique as they communicate with customers face-to-face. This finding indicates that chefs or sommeliers aren't superior to one another, they are rather important elements and contribute to the overall success in the scope of their domain.

In terms of deciding the place to work, chefs mentioned sommelier with whom they will work isn't important while similarly, sommeliers said that the chef with whom they will work isn't significant. It can be said that Michelin restaurants, which are the highest representatives of the food and beverage sector, naturally have workers that are highly professional because of their organizational structure; this is why chefs and sommeliers don't necessarily worry about their co-workers in general. Besides, chefs and sommeliers want to know the personnel who work for them. This situation indicates that two positions don't meet often because of the different positions they have and there is little chance of conflict.

Based on the research findings, it can be said that the most important point at which chef and sommeliers' paths cross in a Michelin restaurant is the phases of creating a menu and tasting. It can be said that this is the most important activity which might oppose chefs and sommeliers in terms of their responsibilities in a restaurant. Chefs clearly stated that they don't want anybody to interfere in their business while creating menu and sommeliers contribution to meals is limited with some specific elements such as acid and sugar balance. Sommeliers stated that the food tasting process is mostly carried out and controlled by them and they have great contributions in this respect. In addition to this, chefs said that they aren't involved in the wine selection process and sommeliers agreed to this statement.

Based on the obtained findings, it can be said that involving sommeliers who are responsible for the sensual elements and values in a restaurant into the process of menu creation might support the success of the menu. Similarly, the limited contribution of chefs, who are usually associated with the physical aspects of restaurants, to wine selection is natural.

As a result, findings obtained from the research explain the reasons why there is an increase in the importance given to the position of sommeliers and the reasons behind the attitude of chefs to this fact. In this respect, the study makes an important contribution to the literature. When the findings are interpreted, it is seen that chefs expect to dominate the functioning of the restaurant they work. On the other hand, it is seen that sommeliers are almost the sole dominants of restaurants in terms of harmony, aesthetics, sensual ability and social relations. These important elements are today essential parts of restaurants as they increase the quality of customer experience and ensure their satisfaction; it can thus be said that sommeliers will certainly share the role of chefs in terms of the dominance in restaurant functioning which has started with nouvelle cuisine movement. It is determined that the owners of the Michelin restaurants analyzed in the scope of this study are mostly sommeliers; this situation indicated that this hypothesis might be approved in short term. Future research focus on similar research in other destinations with a strong culinary industry, will be effective in supporting the findings.

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Chef and sommelier's share in Michelin star success: The case of Denmark

Abstract

Enjoying a meal at a Michelin restaurant is quite a satisfying experience for consumers; working at one of these prestigious restaurants is similarly satisfying for a chef and sommelier. Chefs have long been the dominant factors in restaurants. In recent years, it has been observed that the sommeliers have become the partners of chefs in this important role. This study includes executive chefs, head chefs, sommeliers, and head sommeliers working at 11 different Michelin restaurants in Denmark with 1 and 2 stars. The findings confirm the recent contribution of sommeliers, which is mentioned in the related literature. In addition, the findings of this study indicate that the success of a chef in receiving a Michelin star and keeping it is mostly affected by the physical elements such as crew, materials, and presentation. Sommeliers, on the other hand, contribute to this success through abstract service elements such as the harmony of different elements on the table, food & wine harmony, menu tasting and increasing experience quality. It has also been determined that the impact of sommeliers on restaurant management will increase soon as they are the faces, in a sense 'models' of restaurants and they make unique contributions to customer satisfaction.

Keywords: Chef, Sommelier, Michelin Star, Denmark

Authors

Full Name	Author contribution roles	Contribution rate
Sami Sonat Özdemir:	Conceptualism, Methodology, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review & Editing	50%
Buğra Özdemir:	Conceptualism, Methodology, Formal Analysis, Writing - Original Draft, Supervision	50%

Author statement: Author(s) declare(s) that All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. **Declaration of Conflicting Interests:** The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article

Ethics Committee Satatement: Ethics committee report is available for this research and it has been documented to the journal.

Ethics committee: Balikesir University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee

Date of ethics committee decision: 44515

Ethics committee decision number: 2021/05