THE EFFECT OF THE TURKISH SERIES ON THE LATIN AMERICAN SOCIETIES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CULTURE INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

Today, especially with the globalization process, Turkish TV series are becoming widespread on the international market as a product of the culture industry, and gradually increasing their impact. During this period, in which the 2000s constituted an important breaking point, Turkish TV series reached a wide audience in Latin American countries as well as in the Middle East, the Balkans, Eurasia and Southeast Asia. The fact that Turkish TV series are followed with interest and have a large audience in Latin American countries, as in many other countries of the world, shows that Turkish TV series have important effects on the social structures and audiences of Latin American countries. This study aims to examine the main factors and dynamics that make Turkish TV series effective in Latin American societies as a product of the culture industry. Within the scope of the study, the findings obtained as a result of in-depth interviews with 20 people using the qualitative research method were analyzed through descriptive analysis. The research findings revealed that Turkish TV series have positive impacts on the social structure of Latin American societies towards Türkiye, as well as stimulating the learning of eating and drinking habits, clothing preferences, and more importantly, learning Turkish language and culture, which will affect social change.

Keywords: Turkish TV series, Latin America, Culture industry, Globalization.

INTRODUCTION

Cultural interaction, which is one of the unchanging realities of the age we live in, represents a cycle that covers a wide area from daily life to management style, from eating and drinking habits to technology use, and that includes communities living around the world. This interaction process, also known as globalization (State Planning Organization, 2000: 3), has found new channels for itself, especially with the widespread use of mass media.

The transfer of knowledge and culture, which started with newspapers, radio and television, in which communication developed one-way, became faster and more widespread through digital platforms, with the effect of developments in the field of communication such as social media, since the 2000s. TV series and movies watched in different countries of the world have diversified with this process and increased the interest of different communities in TV series that have a global impact besides their local productions. The TV series industry, which offers new content against global demand in the TV series industry, has started to realize conscious productions to fill the concept of the culture industry.

In the same period, Turkish TV series, which were in high demand globally, were exported to more than 150 countries, reaching an audience of around 600 million and an economic value of 800 million dollars. After the close geographical regions, such as the Middle East, which is the first export direction of the Turkish TV series industry, overseas geographies such as Latin American countries with different cultural backgrounds have been the places where Turkish TV series are most popular. In a process where globalization gained diversity, the issue of the social impact of television series, which first came to the fore with American TV series, brought with it the thesis that it would create a similar mechanism of influence with the spread of Turkish TV series.

Although there are many studies in the literature on Turkish TV series, which will be examined in the context of the concept of the culture industry, which is also the focus of this study, however, a limited number of studies have been focused on Latin American countries. Examining the effects of Turkish TV series on Latin America within the framework of the concept of the culture industry reveals the difference and originality of the study from other studies and is expected to add a different dimension to academic and social studies in this field.

The purpose of this study is to examine the main factors and elements that make Turkish TV series successful in Latin American societies. In the first part of the study, a literature review will be conducted on the globalization and culture industry approach, which constitutes the conceptual and theoretical framework of the research, the global success of Turkish TV series and the process of being effective in Latin America. In the research part of the study, the findings of in-depth interviews with 20 people, which were held face-to-face and online, will be analyzed to understand the main factors that make Turkish TV series effective in Latin American societies. In the conclusion part, the findings obtained in the analysis part will be evaluated and the place of Turkish TV series in international media and their impact on Latin America will be discussed.

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Adorno and Horkheimer, in the periods when the effects of glo-balization began to be seen and the mass media began to become widespread, the whole world was filtered by the "culture industry" (Horkheimer et al., 2010: 169). In this process, the culture industry produces not a real culture, but a mold culture without spontaneity (Jay, 1989: 312). The culture industry is concerned with the commodification of life and refers to "the processes of standardization of cultural products and rationalization of distribution techniques" (Kejanlioglu, 2005: 184). Moreover, according to Adorno (Adorno, 2003), the culture industry combines the old with the familiar in a new way.

The products of the culture industry are thus produced in a planned manner, and they are similar to each other in terms of their structures or they are intertwined (Adorno, 2012: 109). What is portrayed as progress in the culture industry and glorified as new consists in the transmutation of the always the same; changes in this direction mask an unchanging skeleton like the snow motive that has not changed since the first day dominated the culture. Therefore, the concept of in-dustry is used here to describe the standardization of cultural products and ratio-nalization of distribution techniques (Adorno, 2003). Everything is alike in this industry. Small differences in cultural products also serve to classify consumers, who have become a statistical unit (Umit, 2018: 321).

The effects of the globalization process play an influential role in the global dis-semination of media content produced as products of the culture industry. The concept of globalization, which was first used in the 1960s, has become wide-spread since the 1980s and has turned into a key concept frequently used in the social sciences literature today (Icli, 2001: 163). Giddens states that the concept of globalization is used extensively in discussions in the business world, poli-tics, and the media (Giddens, 2012: 83). Bauman, on the other hand, states that the concept of globalization is essentially a concept that refers to global effects rather than global initiatives (Bauman, 2010: 65). In other words, globalization;

> "…economic, political and cultural integration on a world scale, the use of ideas, views, practices and technologies at a global level, the universaliza-tion of capital circulation, the emergence of new forms of relationship and interaction that transcend the borders of the nation-state, the convergence of spaces, the shrinking of the world, unlimited competition, free move-ment means that the market grows on a world scale and goes beyond na-tional borders, in short, the world becomes a single market" (Kacmazoglu, 2002, QDT., Balay, 2004: 62-63).

Therefore, the concept of globalization defined the spread of some common values in the political, economic, cultural, and social fields across the world by crossing national and local borders (State Planning Organization, 2000: 3). More generally, the concept of globalization is used both as the process of the emergence of a single "global culture" with the similarity of world societies and the process of expressing and defining the differences of societies. These two qualities express the process of globalization itself in terms of social life. Therefore, the interaction of "globalization" and "localization" processes with each other emerges in social life. For this reason, globalization characterizes the style of "a simultaneous and joint movement, not the opposition of universality and locality" (Icli, 2001: 163).

Due to the increasing influence of mass media and digital media platforms in today's world, Turkish TV series have started to be followed in many parts of the world as a product of the culture industry, along with the globalization process. In this process, Turkish TV series both increased their popularity in the global context and had significant effects on the countries that followed. The fact that Turkish TV series are followed with interest and have a large audience in Latin American countries, as in many countries of the world, contributed to the spread and popularity of Turkish TV series around the world.

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The series has open-ended narrations, which predict a climax finale that will keep the audience in front of the screen the next week (Kabadayi, 2009: 136), and connect each episode to the previous and subsequent episodes. Features such as the open-ended narration and the fact that the narrative is based on intense emotions, highlighting the plot caused by the conflicts, and emphasizing the attempts made to solve some of the problems are also effective in the formation of the sense of reality in the audience (Turkoglu, 2010: 270). In addition, the main characters and side characters are kept active in each episode divided into many segments. Although these segments seem to highlight different characters in the series, they are all structured around the main event story (Kabadayi, 2009: 136).

The first television broadcasting in Türkiye was carried out by İ.T.Ü in 1952. However, the first Turkish television, which became widespread throughout the country, started broadcasting on January 31, 1968, under TRT (Akbulut, 2005: 237). Since the first television broadcasts started in Türkiye, television series have become interesting productions (Hancigaz et al., 2021: 726). The audience's acquaintance with domestic Turkish serials coincided with 1974 when television broadcasts developed both in terms of quality and quantity. In this broadcast year, TRT's broadcast days and hours increased and broadcasts were made throughout the country. In the same year, the first Turkish TV series called "Kaynanalar" was produced by TRT (Tanriover, 2011: 44). In the following time, Turkish television series works continued with productions such as, "Aşk-ı Memnu", "Perihan Abla", "Diyet", "Ferman", "Şıpsevdi", "Topuz", "Denizin Kanı", "Tatlı Çarşamba", "IV. Murat", "Üç İstanbul", "Çalıkuşu", "Küçük Ağa" (Cereci, 2014: 7). Thus, TV series studies, which started in the 1970s, showed themselves mainly in the form of novel adaptations at the beginning (Hancigaz et al., 2021: 726).

With the start of broadcasting of private television channels at the end of the 1980s, TV series studies increased and as a result of the development of production companies in time, TV series production turned into a private sector (Cereci, 2014: 7). Since these years, with the development of private television broadcasting, an increase has been observed in imported productions on the one hand, and a development has been recorded in domestic TV series productions on the other hand. In this process, the intense interest of the audience in TV series has also been effective in the shooting of many TV series in Türkiye (Bilis et al., 2018: 411). Thus, as a result of the privatization process that developed in the 1990s, diversity in TV series came to the fore. Thus, as a result of the

process of privatization that developed in the 1990s, diversity in TV series came to the fore. A diversification has emerged, ranging from novel adaptations and family-centered TV series to neighborhood TV series, from imported sitcoms to mafia and network TV series (Erguney, 2017: 53). In the 2000s, rapid developments were experienced in the serial production process and in terms of genre, Türkiye-specific, relatively fixed, format and content features were determined. In this direction, domestic serials, which have become almost the most popular and a real "sociological phenomenon" on commercial and public television channels broadcasting widely in Türkiye today, have become productions broadcast on prime time once a week. Local TV series are also produced every weekday, before the main news bulletin in the evening or in the daytime, but their number is not very high (Tanriover, 2011: 45-46).

The 2000s were also the years when Turkish TV series were opened to the international market, exported to many countries of the world, and watched with interest (Aslan, 2019: 32). Turkish TV series have reached wide audiences by focusing on situations and events that can be experienced by every person in the world, featuring characters that everyone can encounter in daily life, and adopting a universal approach besides local cultural features. The events that make up the series' stories, the problems in human relations, family problems, jealousy, loyalty, revenge, ambition, and love are the subjects of emotions and situations that can be experienced by almost every person; While reflecting the characteristics of Turkish culture, stories are formed with the behaviors, places and rituals found in every culture, the audience can find their characteristics in the characters of the TV series, and therefore they can attract the attention of large masses (Cereci, 2014: 7-8).

Thus, since the 2000s, Turkish TV series have been followed with great interest in Middle Eastern countries, Balkan countries, Caucasian countries, and the Turkic Republics. The years between 2008 and 2009 represent an important turning point in the export of Turkish TV series. Turkish TV series are now exported to many countries such as India, Pakistan, China, South and Southeast Asia, North Africa, and South America, as well as the Middle East. In the 2010s, the Turkish TV series industry started to export TV series and movies to the world (Kuyucu, 2019: 569-570). There are political, economic, social, and technological reasons behind the cross-border success of Turkish TV series and the expanding market with this success. TV series, one of the most important cultural productions of Türkiye in recent years, first spread to the Middle Eastern countries and then to South America and other countries of the world in the 2000s and turned into a global cultural export (Pinto, 2018). Having a wide audience from the Middle East to the Balkans, Latin America and Central Asia, Turkish TV series have become one of Türkiye's most effective soft power tools. Türkiye has become a country that ranks second in the world after the United States in the export of TV series and aims to generate 1 billion dollars in revenue from its TV series exports to 156 countries in 2023 (Ozdemir, 2021).

The positive reception of Turkish TV series, which has increased its influence in Latin American countries in recent years, in Middle Eastern societies for the first time has been tried to be explained by cultural affinity and similar sociocultural motivations (Ozalpman, 2017). Although there is a partial truth in these inferences, the positive reception of TV series in Latin American societies showed that the research should be examined in a different direction. Trying to explain

the success of Turkish TV series in Latin American countries with the "global-ization" and "culture industry" studies appears to be a more rational approach than explaining it with the "soft power" applied in countries with which Türkiye has close geographical and cultural relations.

The Turkish TV series industry, which opened up to the world after the 2000s, started to search for a market at a time when the political and economic transfor-mation in Türkiye was realized in the same years. The global economic crisis, which was also felt in Türkiye in 2001, and the subsequent elections, brought along a political change in which the coalition governments were replaced by a single party government. During the ruling period of the current government, which has been in power since 2002, bilateral relations with Middle Eastern countries such as the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, where TV series exports are made, have been carried out with fluctuations. The ongoing volatile economic relations with the Middle Eastern countries, which are a high-income market for the Turkish TV series industry, have led Turkish TV series exporters to seek new markets.

In the same years, Chile, which previously imported TV series from countries such as Brazil and Mexico, experienced a decrease in the general television audience since 2000, when the global crisis was experienced. The search for the Chilean television industry due to the reduction in the number of viewers has introduced Chile which is one of the important countries in South America with Turkish TV series in 2010 and later on. Turkish TV series, which entered the Latin American television market in 2013 with the TV series "1001 Nights Tales", has had a wide audience since then. Especially TV series that appeal to "prime time" audiences have come to dominate the foreign TV series industry in these countries (Barrios et al., 2021).

Despite the lack of geographical and cultural proximity in Latin American coun-tries, there are social reasons for the easy and long-term acceptance of Turkish TV series. Turkish TV series have a structure that presents different views to the audience due to the distant geography and cultural differences. According to Latin American viewers, TV series have an intriguing aspect, as they are based on real or probable life stories, rather than being fictional. Apart from this, serials have gained a faster and more continuous acceptance than expected for Latin American female audiences with their attractive aspects such as make-up, clothes, and houses (Pinto, 2018).

The media has an undeniable role in social changes and the individual socializa-tion processes. Media, which is one of the most important agents of socializa-tion, is a mechanism that affects the consumption, political and social behaviors of individuals and societies by using the newly developed technology aspect.

From this perspective, it is an expected result that Turkish TV series broadcast in Latin America will have an impact on the audience and the society in which they live. Since the years when Turkish TV series were broadcast, there have been processes in the target market that have had economic, political, and social consequences. TV series, as reflected in official reports, were influential in the choice of nearly 200 thousand Latin American tourists to Türkiye for their va-cation a year before the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected the whole world. For instance, the vast majority of tourists who came to Türkiye from Colombia

between 2016-2018 stated that they preferred Türkiye because they were influenced by Turkish TV series (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2018). According to the report "Latin America Market Report, Activities, Targets and Strategies (Brazil- Argentina- Colombia)" published by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in 2018, tourists from Latin America mainly visited the cities and places where TV series and movies were shot (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2018).

A similar economic impact occurred in the field of sectoral content. With the increase in the viewing rates of the TV series, other content broadcast on Turkish television also attracted the attention of the Latin American audience and led the industry to a search in this field. Reality shows and competition programs for families such as "Yaparsın Aşkım" broadcast on Turkish television were sold to countries such as Mexico and Bolivia with royalties (Pinto, 2018).

There have been processes in which TV series, one of the most important export items produced by the Turkish culture industry in recent years, were blocked or received a negative reaction in target countries due to political and cultural reasons. For example, in countries such as Iran and Pakistan, TV series have been shown as the reason for the increasing divorce rates and are partially banned. Likewise, it was brought to the agenda that TV series broadcast in some Middle Eastern countries were canceled because they were against Islamic values (Ozalpman, 2017). Apart from this, countries such as Iran and Saudi Arabia have periodically imposed restrictions on imported products, including Turkish TV series, according to the course of bilateral political relations with Türkiye. When the processes of Turkish serials on the Latin American market are evaluated in the context of the culture industry, a direct and targeted culture export motivation is not noticeable. Turkish TV series, which did not encounter any negative reactions in Latin American society, became the target of anti-Türkiye formations in the countries that were the target audience. The Armenian diaspora residing in South America has tried to attract the political field to cultural studies by organizing campaigns for the cancellation of Turkish TV series broadcast in the countries of the region (Gonzalez, 2015). However, these initiatives did not cause any change in the general attitude of the official authorities of the relevant countries and the audience.

Contrary to the reaction issue mentioned above, Turkish TV series have evolved in a direction that penetrates the socio-cultural areas where Latin American societies attach a high value. Turkish TV series have had a great impact on the audience since they were broadcast in Latin American countries. The most important of these is the issue of Turkish names given to newborns, which is also reflected in the official demographic statistics of the relevant countries. The demand for Turkish TV series in Latin American countries is evident in the names given to newborn children in these countries. The official population administration of Paraguay, a Latin American country (Registro Del Estado Civil), "Fatmagül'ün Suçu Ne", "One Thousand and One Nights", "The Magnificent Century", "Iffet", the names of the characters of the series such as Scheherazade, Kerim, Kemal, Devran and Mustafa are given to newborn children in the country often enough to enter the statistics (Oktay, 2020). Similarly, in countries such as Peru, Ecuador, Chile, and Argentina, the names "Onur" and "Scheherazade", the protagonists of the "1001 Nights Tales" series, have been approved in the population units as the new names of thousands of Latin American children (Añez, 2015).

METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the Study

Nowadays, especially with globalization, Turkish TV series have become widespread on the international market as a product of the culture industry, increasing their influence. Particularly in Latin American countries, Turkish TV series have gained a wide audience, and determining their individual and societal impact in these countries is crucial for this research. The purpose of this study is to examine the key factors and elements that make Turkish TV series influential in Latin American communities.

The research questions which we aim to find an answer to within the scope of our study, which also determine the theoretical framework of our research, are as follows:

1. What are the key factors / elements that contribute to the influence of Turkish TV series on Latin American communities?

2. What are the elements of cultural transfer through Turkish TV series?

3. What kind of societal changes have been observed in Latin American communities through cultural transfer via Turkish TV series?

4. How have the social reflections of Turkish TV series been in Latin American countries?

Research Methodology

In this study, in-depth interview techniques are used, which is a qualitative research method suitable for the research topic. Qualitative research is a suitable approach to exploring a problem or phenomenon in-depth. It is necessary to rely more on qualitative methods to observe and explain the mechanisms of causality in quantitative research accurately. If the phenomenon under study is complex, distant, and difficult to measure, it is important for the study's reliability that the chosen method be the qualitative research method, which provides more detailed information (Creswell, 2021: 48-49). Therefore, qualitative research is defined as obtaining the desired information by evaluating social phenomena through observation, interviews, or information materials without external intervention, in their natural appearances and habitats (Islamoglu, 2009: 180). In-depth interviews, on the other hand, involve asking detailed questions to the interviewee about a specific topic to understand the essence of the phenomenon. In such interviews, the researcher tries to make informed inferences by asking additional questions to obtain detailed information or a more comprehensive response (Aziz, 2008: 85). In this research, we use qualitative research methods and in-depth interview techniques to analyze in detail the key factors and elements that make Turkish TV series influential in Latin American communities.

Design of the Research

This research, aiming to deeply examine and understand the key factors and elements that make Turkish TV series influential on Latin American viewers, was conducted in accordance with the phenomenological design, which is one

of the qualitative research designs. Through this design, the study sought to conduct an in-depth investigation based on the perspectives of individuals who play a role in the emergence and impact of the phenomenon of watching Turkish TV series in Latin American communities.

Population and Sample of the Study

The population of this research consists of Latin American individuals who watch Turkish TV series. The sampling method used to determine the participants was maximum variation sampling, aiming to include participants from various countries in Latin America. As many participants as possible were selected from diverse countries in Latin America. The main criteria for selecting participants for the study was that they had watched Turkish TV series at least once. Therefore, it was confirmed that the participants had previously watched Turkish TV series. Through purposeful sampling, in-depth face-to-face and online interviews were conducted with 20 Latin American Turkish TV series viewers selected from the population.

Data Collection Process

In this research, data were collected from participants through in-depth face-to-face and online interviews using an interview guide consisting of unstructured open-ended questions. The interview guide was developed based on the conceptual framework provided in the literature.

To ensure the suitability of the interview guide for the qualitative research paradigm, it was presented to an expert for review. After receiving the expert's feedback, a pilot application was conducted with a Latin American Turkish TV series viewer who was not part of the study group and resided in Türkiye to assess the suitability of the questions for the scope of the study. The pilot application confirmed the suitability of the questions.

The data collection process of the research was carried out through face-to-face and online interviews from 20.06.2022, to 30.06.2022. Before the interviews, voluntary participation forms were obtained from the participants, and a post-research information form was provided for disclosure purposes after the interviews.

Data Analysis

In this study, the analysis of participants' socio-demographic data was handled manually. The data obtained from the research were analyzed using the descriptive analysis method to describe and explain participants' experiences and identify emerging themes, without using any software program.

Various strategies are recommended for the validity and reliability of qualitative research data analysis, in line with the nature of qualitative research. These strategies include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Yildirim et al., 2021). The research findings were examined within the framework of these four strategies. In terms of credibility, the study included the diverse opinions, perspectives, and experiences of the participants on the subject. Participants with different characteristics were also included in the research. Regarding transferability, the purposive sampling method was used to determine the participants relevant to the research topic, and the findings section directly

presents the participants' statements. To ensure dependability and prevent research bias, the researchers independently reviewed the recordings of the data obtained from the participants. For descriptive analysis, participants' statements were recorded by the researchers in both audio and written text formats, and for confirmability, all data documents of the study were stored.

FINDINGS

In our study, a purposive sampling method was used, and in-depth face-to-face and online interviews were conducted with a total of 20 participants, consisting of 4 males and 16 females, selected from our population. Of the participants, 9 indicated having a master's degree, 8 had a bachelor's degree, and 2 had an associate degree. Only one participant did not provide information about his/her educational background. Furthermore, 3 participants were not employed, while 17 participants were employed. The age range of the participants varied between 23 and 70. In terms of research ethics, the names of the participants were coded with different aliases such as "A1, A2, A3, etc." during the in-depth face-to-face and online interviews.

Based on the conducted in-depth face-to-face and online interviews, three interconnected themes emerged: 1) participants' practices for watching Turkish series, 2) participants' motivations for watching Turkish series, and 3) the impact of Turkish series on Latin American viewers.

Participants' Turkish Series Viewing Practices

In today's world, with globalization and advancements in communication technologies, Turkish TV series are watched in different countries as a product of the culture industry. However, behind each viewer's viewing practice, there are different elements at play. When we examine the viewing practices of Latin American individuals who watch Turkish TV series within the scope of this study, we can see that there are various elements underlying their viewing practices.

All the participants interviewed in the study expressed that they watch Turkish TV series. However, only two participants stated that they watch Turkish series every day. One participant mentioned, *"I used to watch soap operas every day, now I watch series whenever I have free time" (A9, Colombia),* indicating a shift from daily viewing to a more casual viewing pattern associated with free time. Two participants stated that they often and frequently watch Turkish TV series.

Among the interviewees, a participant with code name A1 (Colombia) stated that they watch Turkish TV series *"maybe 3-4 times a week"* on average, while participant A15 (Ecuador) mentioned that they watch "*one Turkish series every week".*

When it comes to the monthly frequency of watching Turkish TV series, one participant stated that they watch Turkish series 2 or 3 times a month, another participant mentioned watching one series per month, and one participant stated that they watch Turkish series once every 3 months.

A participant with code name A2 (Venezuela) stated, *"In the past 2 years, I watched a few Turkish series and movies,"* indicating their viewing frequency

every year. One participant mentioned watching Turkish series "*sometimes*," another participant stated "*rarely*," and two participants mentioned having watched Turkish series only once in their lives. Additionally, five participants did not provide any information about their Turkish TV series viewing practices. Overall, it can be observed that each participant has a different viewing pattern for Turkish TV series.

The TV series "Magnificent Century" which aired between 2011 and 2014 emerged as the most-watched series among the interviewed participants. However, when mentioning the series, participants used the name *"Sultan Süleyman and Sultan" instead of "Magnificent Century."* Participant A1 (Colombia) stated, "*Of course, for me, the series of Sultan Süleyman comes first,"* reflecting the different naming of the series. Furthermore, five participants mentioned watching the series "Magnificent Century".

After Magnificent Century, the two most watched series among the participants are "Medcezir" and "Mucize Doktor". Four participants have mentioned watching these two series. The other participants have mentioned watching different series such as "Seksenler", "Kösem Sultan", "Masumlar Apartmanı", "Her Şey Kızım İçin", "Kurt Seyit ve Şura", "Pera", and "Yeni Hayat". When looking at the series they watch, it can be observed that they watch both series that have ended their broadcast and current ongoing ones.

Half of the participants mentioned that other members of their families also watch Turkish TV series. The statement of participant A2-Venezuela, *"My family is currently watching a Turkish series,"* indicates that the whole family watches Turkish series together, while the statement of participant A3-Ecuador, "*My mother in my family watches Turkish series,"* specifically refers to the viewing practice of a family member. Four participants mentioned that their relatives also watch Turkish series, in addition to their families.

> "For example, my aunts, my maternal aunt, and my father watch Turkish series a lot" (A16-Dominican Republic).

> "My mother-in-law also watches the series Masumlar Apartmanı, which is broadcast on TRT" (A4-Mexico).

Four participants have mentioned watching Turkish series with their families, while only one participant has stated that they watch Turkish series with their partner. Additionally, one participant mentioned that they watch Turkish series in the original language (Turkish), while their family and people around them watch with subtitles or dubbed versions.

> "Yes, I have acquaintances who watch Turkish series both in Colombia and Spain. But they mostly watch with dubbing or subtitles" (A1-Colombia).

National Television Channel, Netflix, YouTube, and Facebook emerged as the media platforms through which participants watched and obtained information about Turkish series. Particularly participants from Colombia, Ecuador, and the Dominican Republic have mentioned that in their countries, a single channel within the national television broadcasts Turkish series exclusively.

> "We watch Turkish series on national television. A few years ago, Brazil-

ian or Colombian series were popular in Ecuador. Now, there are many Turkish series in Ecuador. Turkish series have become very popular in my country" (A3-Ecuador).

"There is one channel, I don't watch much television, so I don't know which channel, but they always have Turkish series. Always. They broadcast every day, every day" (A16-Dominican Republic).

"Soap opera series are on Colombian television because they are only broadcast there" (A6-Colombia).

The online streaming platform Netflix emerged as the most preferred media platform among the interviewed participants. Six participants mentioned that they preferred this platform due to its diverse content, while one participant stated that they preferred it because of both the variety of content and its accessibility to everyone.

"Netflix. Because it has everything I need so far" (A5-Paraguay and Brazil).

"Netflix. It is the most diverse platform in Latin America and the most accessible to everyone" (A2-Venezuela).

Five participants mentioned that they use both the national television channel and Netflix to watch Turkish series. However, two participants stated that they only watch Turkish series on the national television channel.

"I saw that there are Turkish series on national television and Netflix, and I watched them on these platforms" (A8-Colombia).

After Netflix and national television channels, the most preferred media platform by the participants is YouTube. The participants mention using YouTube due to its user-friendly interface, free access, availability of subtitled and dubbed content, and a rich variety of content, on-demand access to followed content, and user control over the content. Six participants stated that they use YouTube to watch Turkish series. However, three of these participants mention using the platform solely for watching Turkish series, while two participants mention using YouTube along with Netflix and national television channels. One participant states that they use YouTube and national television channels together, excluding Netflix.

"I watch on YouTube because it's free and I can pause it whenever I want" (A4, Mexico).

"In my country, we have national television, YouTube, and Netflix. I can find various series and movies with Spanish subtitles or full translations on YouTube and Netflix" (A9, Colombia).

Only one participant mentioned preferring the world's most-used social media platform, Facebook while following the Turkish series due to its ease of use and manageability.

"I prefer Facebook because I find it easier to manage this social network" (A15, Ecuador).

Participants' Motivations for Watching Turkish Series

People watch series to fulfill various needs, and the same applies to the participants in this study who watch Turkish series. Half of the participants expressed that they watch Turkish series for socio-cultural reasons. In this context, participants mentioned watching Turkish series to learn the language (Turkish), understand cultural and historical dynamics, gain knowledge about the structure and daily life of Turkish families, learn accepted behaviors in Türkiye's daily life, and observe social issues that can be encountered in almost any society.

> "I enjoy watching Turkish films and series that portray everyday problems in people's lives, just like in any production, where realities such as poverty, psychological issues that people may experience, or even single mothers are depicted" (A12, Ecuador).

> "I watched them before to improve my Turkish" (A17, Bolivia).

> "For family reasons. Within the family structure, members support each other, stay close, and show respect. I watch [Turkish series] because of strong family ties and respect" (A16, Dominican Republic).

> "Due to significant cultural differences according to our traditions and to generally learn about the daily life of a Turkish family" (A2, Venezuela).

> "To learn about Turkish culture and history" (A7, Colombia).

One participant who expressed watching Turkish series for sociocultural reasons specifically highlighted the religious differences, saying,

> "Religion is very different. For example, religious behaviors are very different. When I became Muslim, I understood certain things; there are different and hidden aspects. If you don't know Islam, you won't understand. But when I watch with my mother, I explain. She finds certain things different and asks, 'What's happening there?' And I say, 'Oh, they do it this way because of this situation.' Then she finds it reasonable" (A1-Colombia).

This statement emphasizes the difference in religious structure between Latin America and Türkiye. Another participant who mentioned sociocultural reasons for watching Turkish series said, *"The historical subjects of Turkish series are very different from what is usually seen in series" (A10-Colombia),* drawing attention to the disparity between historical events depicted in the series and actual situations.

Six participants identified the content and actors of the series as the main reasons for watching. They mentioned the respectful portrayal of love stories and romantic scenes, the presentation of interesting and beautiful narratives, and the scarcity of explicit scenes, the attractiveness of the actors and actresses, and the overall quality of the cast and production team as factors that contribute to their interest in the series.

> "They talk about interesting stories, the actors are very good, and the production is top-notch" (A4-Mexico).

> "They mention love and beautiful stories" (A3-Ecuador).

"They are more serious rather than, and they don't show explicit scenes" (A11-Ecuador).

"The development of relationships between characters in the series is slow, which makes the viewer addicted. Also, the beauty of Turkish women" (A18-Bolivia).

Additionally, two participants mentioned watching Turkish series for entertainment and pleasure. One participant said, "Because I like being able to see the places I've visited again" (A6-Colombia), while another mentioned, "to see Turkish cuisine, such views, and to see Istanbul" (A19-Dominican Republic). Therefore, we can see that Turkish cuisine and cities also influence the viewership of Turkish series.

The Impact of Turkish TV Shows on Latin American Audiences

Half of the participants mentioned being influenced by the socio-cultural values, beliefs, locations, clothing, and names depicted in Turkish series, and some even form para-social interactions with the characters. Therefore, it is stated that the series has many effects on the viewers.

Half of the participants expressed being influenced by the most prominently featured locations and cities in the Turkish series. Istanbul, in particular, stood out. Additionally, a desire to live in Türkiye was emphasized. Two participants mentioned being influenced by both the locations/cities and the Turkish language.

"I would like to live in Istanbul and the beautiful lands of Türkiye" (A2-Venezuela).

"I wish I could speak that language and live there" (A6-Colombia).

Three participants expressed being influenced by both the locations/cities and the beauty of the costumes and accessories used in the series. Only one participant specifically mentioned that the costumes and accessories used in the series were the main factors creating the impact. Therefore, after locations/cities, the most influential factor on the participants is the "costumes and accessories" used in the series.

"I want to know those beautiful places seen in the series. Their costumes are like art, and I'm a fan of them" (A14-Ecuador).

"I remember something. When we were watching the series, there were earrings, very interesting earrings, and I've been looking for that type of earrings for years but couldn't find them anywhere. A girl in Medcezir was wearing them. The earrings were very good, very beautiful. Generally, the costumes are more advanced; the fashion is more advanced in the series. They are very beautiful" (A16-Dominican Republic).

Four participants expressed that the Turkish series influenced cultural values, traditions, and culinary culture. However, two of these participants mentioned being influenced by the locations and cities in Türkiye as well as the cultural values.

"I love Turkish cuisine. Additionally, the tradition of taking off shoes before entering a home influenced me" (A10-Colombia).

"The culture of drinking tea in small cups is impressive" (A17-Bolivia).

"The places in Türkiye are beautiful, and their traditions such as dances, proposals, and marriages are remarkable" (A13-Ecuador).

Three participants mentioned being influenced by the main actors and female characters in the series, both in terms of their physical appearances and behaviors. One participant specifically emphasized the captivating nature of Istanbul's landscapes. Two participants mentioned being impressed by the names used in the Turkish series, while two others stated that the Turkish series did not have a significant impact on them.

"Despite the series depicting Istanbul as a paradise, many people have a desire to visit the city. Additionally, the characters have incredible physical beauty" (A9-Colombia).

"Yes, I love the female characters; they are a bit assertive but not excessive" (A5-Paraguay and Brazil).

"The meaningful Turkish names are remarkable and impressive" (A18-Bolivia).

In terms of cultural values, when examining the impressions of the participants, some of them mentioned that the Turkish series influenced their understanding of Turkish culture. Two participants expressed their desire to learn more about Türkiye and visit the country because they find Turkish culture interesting. One participant noted that Turkish culture is conservative and that historical events hold significance within the cultural framework. Another participant emphasized the importance of historical values within Turkish culture. One participant stated that learning about cultural values through series helps in better understanding Turkish society.

"For people in Ecuador, Turkish culture is very interesting, and after watching the Turkish series, they want to travel or get to know Türkiye" (A3-Ecuador).

"Based on the movies I've watched, my perception of Turkish culture is that it consists of conservative people, and the country's history is significant for its residents" (A6-Colombia).

Eight participants emphasized the significant impact of the Turkish series on their perspectives on Turkish culture. They found Turkish culture to be interesting and different, with unique traditional values. They expressed a desire to get to know Türkiye, highlighted the importance of historical elements within the cultural structure, considered the Turkish language intriguing, and noted that Turkish culture is emotional and respectful towards animals and nature. Only one participant expressed the view that women are undervalued in Turkish culture, describing it as a macho culture.

"Traditional cultural practices stand out, such as someone pouring water behind a person leaving or the blue bead, the evil eye bead" (A19-Dominican Republic).

"Turkish culture emphasizes the importance of the country's history for

its residents and the series showcases the old structures preserved in many cities and landscapes" (A20-Mexico).

"It is an emotional culture, and there is joy in their lives" (A5-Paraguay and Brazil).

"It is a very macho culture where women do not value themselves and engage in actions against their interests to be a man's first choice" (A15-Ecuador).

Some participants expressed the need to research Turkish culture, language, and religion after watching Turkish series. They mentioned that the content, stories, and scripts of the series motivated them to explore Turkish culture, language, and religion. Two participants specifically emphasized the importance of the series "Magnificent Century" and "Diriliş Ertuğrul" in this regard. Only one participant mentioned the need for research because they couldn't understand certain topics and word meanings in Turkish culture and language.

"Turkish dramas motivate us to research more about the culture and religion of Turkish citizens because every story told presents something unknown and different to us, showing different scenarios that capture our interest" (A12-Ecuador).

"Sultan motivates you to learn more about what that great empire was, the people, and their way of life at that time" (A9-Colombia).

"Because there are some topics I don't understand. I ask myself, why did it happen this way? Or, for example, in terms of language, I hear something, and I understand all the words, but I don't understand the meaning, so I have to ask. And sometimes I think, oh, maybe it means this, and then something completely different comes up" (A1-Colombia).

After sociocultural and historical elements, language, and religious structures, Turkish family structure and Turkish cuisine stand out as two aspects that capture participants' attention. Regarding Turkish family structure, participants mentioned that Turkish families have different characteristics compared to families in Latin American countries, emphasizing the importance of parent-child relationships, family unity, and emphasis on family. As for Turkish cuisine, participants noted that some dishes shown in the series are similar to dishes in their own countries, certain Turkish dishes are frequently depicted in every series, Turkish tea catches their attention, and watching the food in the series arouses their desire to eat it. Only one participant highlighted the connection between locations and Turkish cuisine, mentioning that different cities showcase different dishes.

"For example, börek is present in every series, and it attracts me. Sometimes I think people in Colombia don't know what börek is. But there are similar things. Menemen, for example. Menemen is called Periko in our country. Menemen and Periko are actually the same thing" (A7-Colombia).

"I admit that Turkish gastronomy is something I have missed since I left the country, and sometimes when I watch a series or movie, I feel like eating it" (A2-Venezuela).

"For example, wherever the series takes place, whether it's Istanbul, Izmir, or Bursa, there are significant differences. The clothing and the food are also different for this reason" (A16-Dominican Republic).

CONCLUSION

The concept of globalization, which has been used in the literature since the 1960s, essentially refers to the interaction of human communities through various means throughout history. Migrations, wars, trade relations, and travels have served as instrumental functions for the interaction of communities, while developments in the field of communication that have marked the last century have provided a different momentum to globalization.

The communication tools that have fueled globalization have not only brought ideas and commercial goods to a global arena but have also globalized cultures, which are the ancient accumulations of societies, even turning them into commercial products. This process, expressed by the concept of the culture industry, can also be defined as the conscious production and exportation of previously unique social accumulations by adapting to evolving needs.

With the proliferation of mass media and the discovery of a mechanism of influence that transcends borders through tools such as radio and television, Turkish TV series have found new markets in the last 20 years, not only dominating the export of drama films but also gaining popularity in countries such as Middle Eastern and Balkan countries, as well as in the Far East and Latin America. Turkish TV series sector, which produces cultural content in the synthesis of East and West, has emerged as a pioneer in this industry, gaining acceptance in both neighboring and overseas countries, influenced by the socio-political changes that Türkiye has undergone in the past century.

Communication tools with a rapid mechanism of influence and the TV series broadcast through these tools have been highly appreciated by Latin American society, turning into a potential that has influenced to the extent of giving Turkish names to children in countries such as Chile, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Colombia, and Peru since the 2000s.

The field research conducted within the scope of this study has revealed that a significant portion of participants with different television viewing practices themselves or in their close circles watch Turkish TV series. Participants stated that they watched these series with different motivations, such as learning about a different culture and observing the sociocultural environment produced by a society with a different language and religious structure. They also expressed that these series had subsequent effects, such as visiting the geographical region where the culture originated or learning the language that conveys that culture. However, apart from the effects on tourism and language learning, this influence has also resulted in changes in eating habits, family lifestyle, clothing style, and daily life, which can lead to societal changes.

Mass media and the transmission of different cultural productions through these media outlets present a different development that surpasses the notion of a uniform global cultural transmission. Especially in the last fifty years, the studies

conducted in this field should be seen as an effective mechanism in eliminating the perception of the spread of a uniform popular culture worldwide and addressing societal concerns on this matter. While the hegemony of American TV series and films, which has been discussed for years in the TV and film industry, was broken in one period with Brazilian series and in another period with Indian Bollywood films, it has diversified in recent years with Korean dramas and Turkish TV series.

In conclusion, Turkish TV series, which are recognized as an industry and followed with such an understanding, should be perceived as a cultural reflection of globalization and evaluated as a diverse coloration within global interactions rather than to change the society it influences. In today's world, where transportation and communication barriers are non-existent, and geographical and cultural boundaries can be easily overcome through mass media and transportation, similar interactions will inevitably continue to have an impact.

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