



Effect of Festival Satisfaction on Destination Loyalty through Destination Overall Image: The Case of Alaçatı Herb Festival

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Abstract

This study examines the relationships among festival success factors, festival satisfaction, destination image and destination loyalty. Based on the literature review, festival success factors were identified and a model was developed to measure the direct impact of these factors on destination loyalty and the impact of these factors through the overall image of the destination. Data were collected during the 11th Alaçatı Herb Festival held between March 24-27, 2022. The data obtained were analyzed with the structural equation modeling. According to the results of the study, the program, festival area, staff, souvenirs, and information dimensions of festival success factors affect festival satisfaction. The effects of convenience and food dimensions on festival satisfaction were statistically insignificant. The festival satisfaction and destination overall image variables have positive effects on destination loyalty, and the festival satisfaction variable has positive effects on the destination overall image. The destination overall images an integral partial mediating role in the relationship between festival satisfaction and destination loyalty.

Keywords: Festival Success Factors, Festival Satisfaction, Destination Image, Destination Loyalty

Introduction

The tourism sector is recognized worldwide as a driving force for national and global development (www.unwto.org). Therefore, considering the dynamism of tourism, destinations are looking for ways to be successful, and the image of the destinations is very important at this point. A destination with a positive image has a stronger competitive power compared to other destinations (Şahin & Baloğlu, 2011). The destination image affects the destination selection process and the general behavior of consumers (Bigne et al., 2001). Accordingly, destinations resort to some activities to improve their image and increase their destination loyalty. Festivals are used extensively to create uniqueness among competing destinations.

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Events are among the driving forces that encourage people to travel. In recent years, planned events have been used as an alternative to the tourism product to attract visitors to the region, make them stay longer and spend more (Osti et al., 2012). Following this trend, local governments organize festivals to increase destination attractiveness for both international and local visitors. Festivals are tools that provide opportunities to improve the destination image, revitalize the economy, culture and traditions; they bring economic, social and cultural benefits to the communities they are in and contribute to destination marketing (Tanford & Jung, 2017). They also offer tourists the opportunity to experience the local culture and lifestyle of the destination in a very limited time (Deng & Li, 2014). In destinations like Alaçatı with limited space and a short season, planned events have strategic implications for destination image building and destination loyalty.

Many elements such as culture, art and shopping are used as themes for festivals to attract tourists to destinations. Food is an important part of cultural tourism and is increasingly seen as an important area of interest, especially in rural areas (Hall & Mitchell, 2001). This can be explained by the fact that local foods or food products have the potential to increase sustainability in tourism, contribute to the authenticity of the destination, strengthen the local economy and provide an environmentally friendly infrastructure (Handsuh, 2000). Food helps tourists have authentic experiences (Sims, 2009). Tasting delicious food and experiencing food-related culture are among the travel motivations of modern tourists (Hornig & Tsai, 2012). From this perspective, food as an important part of the travel process can be used as an attraction (Boyne & Hall, 2004; Stone et al., 2018). Indeed, this is supported by the fact that tourists typically spend around 40% of their budget on food while traveling (Boyne et al., 2002). In parallel with the growing interest of tourists in food and food-related culture, a number of food festivals have emerged around the world. In these festivals, local cuisine is emphasized and the theme is food. The festival contributes both to the destination economy (Rand et al., 2003) and to the added value of existing tourism products (Quan & Wang, 2004). Furthermore, the festival is seen as an element that attracts tourists to the region and encourages them to spend money while promoting the destination (Cudny, 2014). Thus, it is important for destination marketers and experts to understand the relationship between the perceived service quality and visitor satisfaction of festival participants and their intention to participate in the event again, in terms of creating a destination image and building destination loyalty (Carse et al., 2018). For this reason, it is crucial to examine the effects of festival satisfaction of visitors on the destination image and destination loyalty. The current study examines the relationships between festival success factors, festival satisfaction, destination image and destination loyalty through structural equation modeling.

Literature Review

Having been a part of human life since ancient times, festivals are now regarded as one of the rapidly developing popular activities (Zhou, 2010). Festivals vary from culture, art, sports, business and food and beverage festivals. For people to escape from everyday life and experience new experiences, each festival should present many factors together in its own unique way. Bringing these factors together in the planning and organization processes of festivals is the key to festival success.

Festivals are essential both for the promotion and marketing of local products and for the destination's sustainability. Additionally, festivals can help the destination attract more tourists by impacting the destination image, differentiate and gain superiority over competing destinations, and enhance long-term destination loyalty. Therefore festivals have been the subject of many studies, both local and abroad, recently. In a recent review of 423 festival studies, Getz (2010) identified three main discourses in this body of work—namely, (1) the roles, meanings and impacts of festivals in society and culture; (2) festival tourism; and (3) festival management. Other important aspects considered in previous research on festivals include festival antecedents (e.g. participation motivations), planning and management, and outcomes (e.g. economic).

When the relevant literature is evaluated, it is seen that some studies focus on festival participation motivations (Crompton & McKay, 1997; Nicholson & Pearce, 2000; Lee et al., 2004; Wamwara & Bettina Cornwell 2009; Maeng et al., 2016; Nongsiej & Mothila 2019); some of them focus on factors of festival success (Khuong & Khanh Uyen 2018; Carse et al., 2018); main success factors that affect the loyalty of festival visitors (Dalgıç & Birdir, 2020); attributes of festival service quality perceived (Markovic et al, 2015); the impact of festivals on destination image formation (Hernández-Mogollón, 2018; Al-Dweik, 2020; Thongrom, 2019; Leal Londoño et al., 2022); the effects of festivals on visitor satisfaction and loyalty (Yoon et al., 2010; Anil, 2012, Çatır & Şimşek, 2019); and the relations between the experiential value of food festival, destination image and loyalty (Deng & Tang 2020). Furthermore, Alaçatı Herb Festival has become the subject of research by many local academicians in recent years (Özkan, et al., 2015; Ön Esen & Yılmaz, 2016; Saatcı & Yalçinkaya, 2018; Çoban & Süer, 2018, Yavuz, 2019; Kızılcıoğlu et al., 2019). However, to the best of our knowledge, none of the previous studies focused specifically on the relationship between festival success factors, festival satisfaction, destination image, and destination loyalty. Seeking to fill this gap in the literature, this paper studies this relationship using the case of Alaçatı Herb Festival. The research model used is shown in Figure 1.

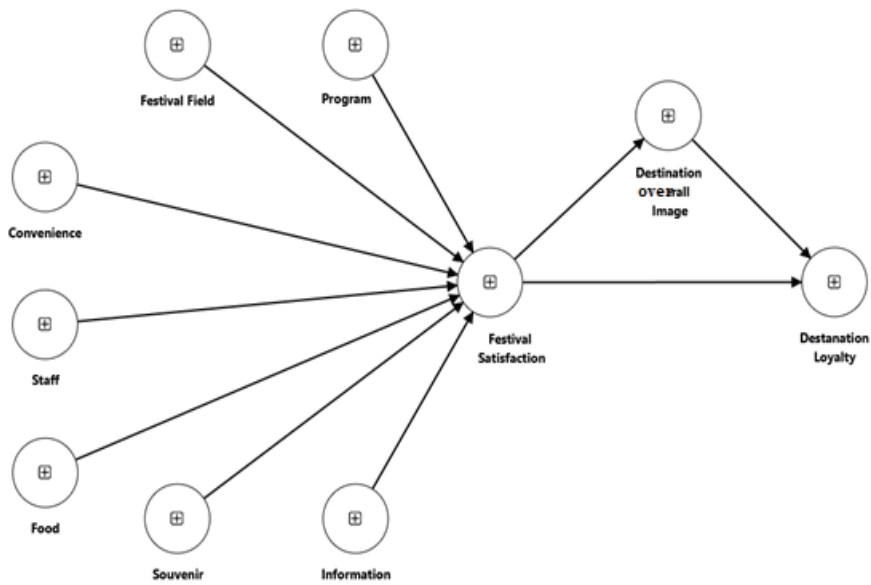


Figure 1. Research Model

Festival Success Factors: Festival success factors are those that can change the perceptions and behaviors of participants and provide them with unique experiences. When the related literature is examined, it is seen that similar criteria are mentioned in many studies as festival success factors. To realize a successful event, these factors need to be provided both before and during the event (Baker, 1986; Lee et al., 2008; Özdemir & Çulha, 2009; Yoon et al., 2010; Saayman et al., 2012; Anil, 2012; Mason & Paggiaro, 2012; Wan & Chan, 2013; Marković et al., 2015; Çatır & Şimşek, 2019; Dalgıç & Birdir, 2020). The festival success factors discussed in the research are as follows:

The program dimension represents the plan of the festival (beginning and end) and the organization of the activities that will take place during the festival.

The festival area dimension represents the width of the indoor and outdoor areas where the festival takes place, the cleanliness of these areas, the location of the festival, the décor and lighting of the festival area and the quality of the materials used there.

The convenience dimension measures the adequacy of the facilities in the festival area. The number of toilets, the cleanliness of the toilets, the size of the parking lot, the proximity to the festival area, and the number and adequacy of the rest areas were evaluated with this dimension.

The staff dimension refers to the attitudes of the staff working at the festival toward the

visitors and whether they have information about the festival.

The food dimension evaluates the variety of food at the festival, the traditional nature of the food, and the price and quality of the food.

The souvenir dimension evaluates the variety of souvenirs, the tradition of souvenirs, and the price and quality of souvenirs.

The information dimension represents information about the details of the festival, billboard advertisements and brochures, and directional signs in the festival area.

To assess the festival's success, it is essential to measure the visitors' satisfaction (Lee & Beeler, 2007). When festival success factors are assessed positively, the satisfaction of visitors positively affects festival satisfaction (Yoon et al., 2010; Mason & Paggiaro 2012; Anil, 2012, Markovic et al., 2015). The following hypotheses were developed in accordance with this scope:

H₁: The program dimension of festival success factors has a positive effect on festival satisfaction.

H₂: The festival area dimension of festival success factors has a positive effect on festival satisfaction.

H₃: The convenience dimension of festival success factors has a positive effect on festival satisfaction.

H₄: The staff dimension of festival success factors has a positive effect on festival satisfaction.

H₅: The food dimension of festival success factors has a positive effect on festival satisfaction.

H₆: The souvenir dimension of festival success factors has a positive effect on festival satisfaction.

H₇: The information dimension of festival success factors has a positive effect on festival satisfaction.

Festival Satisfaction

According to Tian-Cole et al. (2002), "*satisfaction is a summary of identified psychological results that visitors experience over time*", whereas Babin & Griffin (1998) defined it as a "*positive, emotional reaction arising from a favorable assessment of a shopping or consumption experience*". Satisfaction is dependent on both the quality of the service and

the information under the control of the provider. However, festival satisfaction is “*the overall festival value assessed by a combination of quality dimensions*” (Yoon et al., 2010). In the study, satisfaction with the festival is a summary of the experience of the visitors at the festival (McDowall, 2011; Wu & Ai, 2016). According to Folgado-Fernández et al. (2017), gastronomic experiences like food festivals in two specific regions of Spain and Portugal have a positive impact on destination image and loyalty. High satisfaction has a positive impact on visitors’ behavioral intentions (Severt et al., 2007; Gautam, 2022). Furthermore, event quality plays an important role in the development of the destination image (Kusumah & Wahyudin, 2023). From this viewpoint, the following hypotheses were developed:

H₈: Festival satisfaction has a positive effect on destination loyalty.

H₉: Festival satisfaction has a positive effect on the overall destination image.

Destination Image: The destination image has long been the focus of attention of many researchers in the field of tourism (Gartner, 1989; Crompton & Ankomah, 1993; Stepcenkova & Mills, 2010). Destination image is defined as “*the expression of an individual’s knowledge, impressions, prejudices, imagination and emotional thoughts about a particular place*” (Lawson & Baud Bovy, 1977). It is widely accepted that the destination image influences tourists’ subjective perceptions, outcome behaviors, and destination choice (Milman & Pizam, 1995; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). The destination image, which is integrated with tourists’ beliefs, values and destination impressions, plays a critical role in tourism marketing (Crompton, 1979). Destination image is recognized as a tourism experience that combines different natural routes, material resources, natural environment, cultural heritage, activities and other resources with traditional culture (Kolb, 2006). Local food and culture are believed to increase the value of a destination, and local cuisine can shape tourists’ destination image (Telfer & Wall, 1996; Hammitt et al., 2006). Many studies have proven that gastronomic activities are part of the tourism strategy by creating and enhancing the destination image (Kivela, 2006; Fox, 2007). Therefore, food festivals are believed to be beneficial for enhancing the destination image (Lee & Arcodia, 2011). Destinations with a positive image are more likely to be considered in tourists’ decision-making process. Therefore, a more positive image leads to higher tourist satisfaction. Moreover, the destination image is influenced and can change because of tourists’ destination experiences (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991). In other words, the destination image significantly influences tourists’ behavior by affecting future destination choices (Bigne et al., 2001; Chen & Tsai, 2007). Accordingly;

H₁₀: Destination overall image has a positive effect on destination loyalty.

Destination Loyalty:

Destination loyalty, seen as an extension of customer loyalty (Zhang et al., 2014), is a

key issue in destination marketing success (Oppermann, 2000). Newman and Werbel (1973) defined loyal customers as “*people who repurchase a brand, pay attention only to that brand and do not seek information about the brand*”. Hawkins et al., (1995) defined loyalty as “*consumers’ intentions or actual behavior to repeatedly purchase specific products or services*”. According to Lee & Cunningham (2001), customer loyalty is the tendency of consumers to become customers of existing suppliers again based on their previous experiences and expectations for the future. In other words, it is an indicator of consumers’ attitudes in terms of product categories, brands, stores and services (Uncles et al., 2003).

According to Zeithaml et al., (1996), positive behavioral intentions are related to the ability of a service provider. This relationship is realized by consumers 1) saying positive things about the company, 2) recommending it to other consumers, 3) being loyal to it (i.e. buying back), 4) spending more with the company, and 5) buying the same product/service at a higher price. On the other hand, tourist loyalty depends on tourist satisfaction and fulfillment of expectations (Chi & Qu, 2008). Facilities, security and infrastructure, cultural and shopping attractions, sights and ambience, diversity and accessibility affect tourist loyalty (Prayag, 2008). In addition to basic services; service quality, social value, entertainment, esthetics, perceived monetary cost, perceived risk, time and effort spent and perceived value (Gallarza & Saura, 2006); cognitive image of natural resources, cognitive image of service quality, cognitive image of entertainment and emotional image are also considered as antecedents of tourist loyalty (Hernandez et al., 2006).

Tourists’ loyalty to a particular destination is expressed by their intention to revisit the destination and their intention to recommend the destination to others (Oppermann, 2000). Satisfaction with the festival is strongly associated with loyalty (Tanford & Jung, 2017). Satisfaction with a festival has a direct impact on destination loyalty (Molina-Gómez et al., 2021). The festival and destination image have a positive impact on visitor satisfaction (Deng et al., 2015; Carse et al., 2018) and contribute to both behavioral intention and visit frequency (Kaplanidou & Gibson, 2012). Based on this literature, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₁₁: Destination overall image mediates the relationship between festival satisfaction and destination loyalty.

Research Methodology

Data Collection Method

The questionnaire technique was used as a data collection method in the study. The questionnaire was applied to the participants in the festival area, parking lot and tour busses. In the first part of the questionnaire, which consists of two parts, there are 4 questions to determine

the demographic characteristics of the participants and 2 questions questioning the status of visiting Alaçatı and the Herb Festival. In the second part, four different scales were used to measure the dependent variable of the research, festival success factors, and the independent variables festival satisfaction, destination image and destination loyalty. Festival success factors consist of 21 statements and 7 dimensions (program, festival area, convenience, staff, food, souvenirs, information) taking into account the scales used by Özdemir & Çulha (2009); Anıl (2012); Dalgıç & Birdir (2019). The second part consisted of 30 statements, including festival satisfaction (3 statements and 1 dimension previously proposed by Lee et al., 2008); destination overall image (4 statements and 1 dimension as previously proposed by Chi & Qu 2008), and destination loyalty (3 statements and 1 dimension previously proposed by Deng and Tang, 2020). The statements in the scale were scored on a 5-point Likert scale (from 1 = “strongly disagree” to 5 = “strongly agree”).

Sampling Process

The population of the study consists of domestic tourists who participated in the 11th Alaçatı Herb Festival organized in Alaçatı in 2022. Since the Çeşme Municipality festival officials could not provide a reliable estimate of the number of tourists attending the festival, we relied on the minimum sample size at 95% confidence interval, which amounted to 384 (Baştürk & Taştepe, 2013:150). Between March 24-27, 2022, 480 questionnaires were collected by the convenience sampling method. 30 questionnaires were not included in the analysis because they were incomplete and not filled in sincerely, and 450 questionnaires were evaluated.

Results

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

The SPSS Statistics statistical package program was used to evaluate the demographic profile of the sample. According to the results of the frequency analysis, the demographic characteristics of the participants are shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Findings on the Demographic Characteristics of Tourists

Demographic Characteristics		Number of Participants (n)	Percentage (%)	Demographic Characteristics	Number of Participants (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	325	72,2	18-24	75	16,7
	Male	125	27,8	25-34	71	15,8
Education Status	Middle School	20	4,4	35-44	104	23,1
	High School	165	36,7	45-54	148	32,9
	Undergraduate	195	43,3	55-64	40	8,9
	Postgraduate	70	15,6	65 and over	12	2,7
				Alaçatı Visit	311	69,1
Marital Status	Married	265	58,9	Herb Festival Visit	416	92,4
	Single	171	38,0	No	34	7,6
	Other	14	3,1			

As can be seen in Table 1, in terms of gender distribution, 325 (72.2%) were female, and 125 (27.8%) were male. With regard to the educational status, most of the participants had undergraduate education (43.3%), were married (58.9%), and aged 45-54 years old (32.9%). In addition, most of the respondents visited Alaçatı (69.1%) and Herb Festival (92.4%) for the first time.

3.1. Validity and Reliability Analyses of the Scales

The validity and reliability results of the constructs used in the study were tested with the measurement model. Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted for validity and reliability. Convergent and discriminant validity and internal consistency reliability of the constructs were investigated through factor analysis. For convergent validity, factor loadings and average variance explained (AVE=Average Variance Extracted) coefficients of the statements measuring the constructs were calculated. Composite reliability (CR=Composite Reliability) values were checked for internal consistency reliability. According to Hair et al., (2006; 2022), the factor loadings of the statements should reach ≥ 0.70 , the CR coefficients of the variables should reach ≥ 0.70 and the AVE value should reach ≥ 0.50 thresholds. The results of the measurement model are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Measurement Model Results

Structure/Dimension		Code Given to the Statement	Factor Load	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Explained (AVE)
Festival Success Factors	Program	fbf1	0,845	0,879	0,785
		fbf2	0,925		
		fbf3	0,825		
	Festival Area	fbf4	0,653	0,842	0,573
		fbf5	0,769		
		fbf6	0,769		
		fbf7	0,689		
	Convenience	fbf8	0,708	0,789	0,557
		fbf9	0,834		
		fbf10	0,732		
	Staff	fbf11	0,915	0,923	0,750
		fbf12	0,908		
		fbf13	0,896		
	Food	fbf14	0,910	0,894	0,808
		fbf15	0,888		
		fbf17	0,860		
	Souvenirs	fbf18	0,905	0,844	0,648
		fbf19	0,621		
	Information	fbf20	0,952	0,939	0,885
		fbf21	0,929		
	Festival Satisfaction		fm1	0,923	
		fm2	0,961	0,958	0,885
		fm3	0,937		
		ds1	0,917		
Destination Loyalty		ds2	0,959	0,960	0,888
		ds3	0,951		
Destination Overall Image		dgi1	0,906		
		dgi2	0,918	0,933	0,823
		dgi3	0,897		

According to Hair et al. (2022), the factor loadings should be ≥ 0.708 . The authors suggest that statements with factor loadings below 0.40 should be removed from the measurement model, and statements with factor loadings between 0.40 and 0.70 should be removed from the measurement model if their AVE or CR values are below the threshold value. Statement number three (fbf16) of the food dimension with a factor loading below 0.40 was removed from the measurement model. The factor loadings of the number two (fbf4), number one

(fbf7) and number three (fbf19) statements of the festival area dimension, convenience dimension and souvenir dimension were calculated as 0.653, 0.689 and 0.621, respectively. Although the factor loadings of these statements were below the threshold value, the AVE and CR coefficients of the festival area, convenience, and souvenir dimensions were within the desired limits, so the statements were not removed from the measurement model.

It is seen from the results in Table 2 that the CR coefficients were calculated between 0.789 and 0.960. Therefore, it was determined that the internal consistency reliability of the variables used in the study was ensured (Hair et al., 2022). The factor loadings of the statements measuring the variables were observed between 0.621 and 0.961, and the AVE coefficients were observed between 0.557 and 0.888. Considering these findings, it was understood that the convergent validity of the variables used in the study was ensured (Hair et al., 2022).

HTMT coefficients were calculated to investigate the discriminant validity of the variables. According to Henseler et al. (2015), the HTMT coefficients should theoretically be below 0.90 for close structures and below 0.85 for distant structures. The calculated HTMT coefficients are shown in Table 3. According to the calculated HTMT coefficients, discriminant validity was achieved.

Table 3
HTMT Coefficients

	Information	Destination Overall Image	Destination Loyalty	Festival Area	Festival Satisfaction	Souvenirs	Staff	Program	Convenience	Food
Information										
Destination Overall Image	0,506									
Destination Loyalty	0,434	0,704								
Festival Area	0,496	0,546	0,613							
Festival Satisfaction	0,554	0,676	0,540	0,426						
Souvenirs	0,490	0,378	0,430	0,373	0,511					
Staff	0,375	0,445	0,317	0,351	0,367	0,263				
Program	0,555	0,494	0,460	0,756	0,499	0,393	0,417			
Convenience	0,478	0,361	0,382	0,711	0,347	0,377	0,521	0,563		
Food	0,298	0,383	0,408	0,377	0,289	0,363	0,739	0,416	0,461	

Testing the Research Model and the Results

The structural equation model created to test the hypotheses of the study is shown in Figure 2.

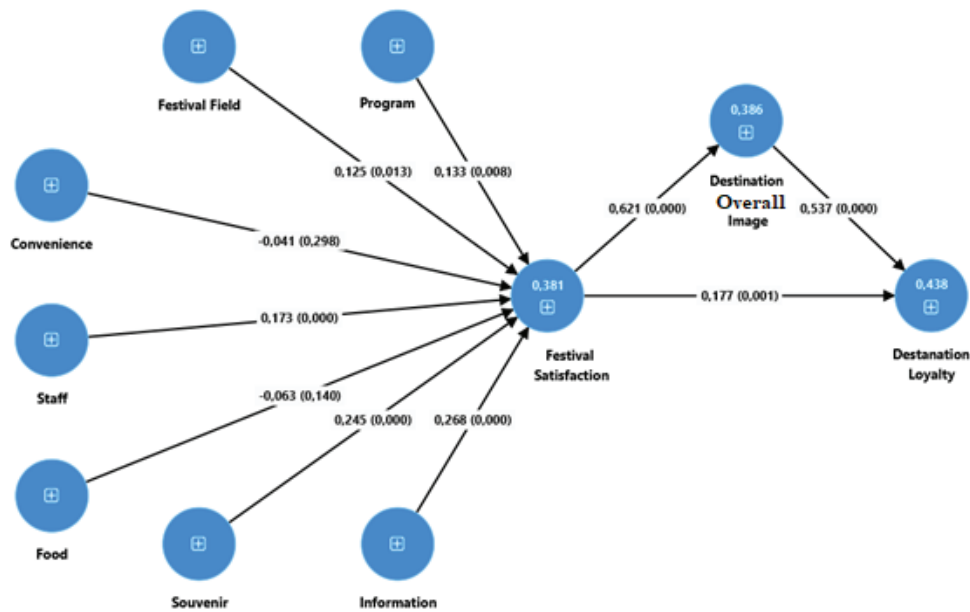


Figure 2. Structural Equation Model

Partial least squares path analysis (PLS-SEM) was used to analyze the research model. Data were analyzed using the SmartPLS 4 statistical program (Ringle et al., 2022; Yıldız, 2021). The PLS algorithm was run to calculate linearity, path coefficients, R² and effect size (f²). To assess the significance of the PLS path coefficients, t values were calculated by taking 10000 subsamples from the sample by resampling (bootstrapping). The VIF, R², and f² values for the research results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4
Research Model Coefficients

Path	VIF	R ²	f ²
Program	1,765		0,016
Festival Area	1,823		0,014
Convenience	1,515		0,002
Staff	1,817	0,381	0,027
Food	1,725		0,004
Souvenirs	1,278		0,076
Information	1,515		0,077
Festival Satisfaction	1,628		0,034
Destination Overall Image	1,628	0,438	0,316
Festival Satisfaction	1,000	0,386	0,628

Hair et al., (2022) argued that there is no linearity problem if the VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) coefficients between variables are less than 5. Since the VIF coefficients in Table 4 are

less than 5, it can be stated that there is no linearity problem between the research variables.

When the R^2 values in the table are analyzed, it is determined that festival satisfaction is explained by 38%, destination loyalty by 44% and destination overall image by 39%.

According to Hair et al. (2022), if the coefficient of predictive power (Q^2) is greater than zero, the exogenous variables in the research model have the power to predict the endogenous variables. The exogenous variables of the research have predictive power over the endogenous variables since the Q^2 coefficients in Table 4 are greater than zero.

An effect size coefficient (f^2) of 0.02 and above is considered low; 0.15 and above is considered medium; and 0.35 and above is considered high (Cohen, 1988). According to Sarstedt et al. (2017), it is not possible to talk about an effect when the coefficient is below 0.02. When the effect size coefficients (f^2) are analyzed,

- It has been observed that the staff, souvenir and information dimensions have small effect sizes on festival satisfaction,
- Festival satisfaction has small effect sizes on destination loyalty,
- Furthermore, festival satisfaction has high effect sizes on the destination's overall image.

Direct impact coefficients calculated by the resampling method are presented in Table 5 and the indirect impact coefficients are presented in Table 6.

Table 5
Research Model Direct Effect Coefficients

Path		Standardize β	Standard Deviation	t value	p value
Program	Festival Satisfaction	0,133	0,050	2,649	0,008
Festival Area		0,125	0,050	2,482	0,013
Convenience		-0,041	0,039	1,058	0,298
Staff		0,173	0,045	3,829	0,000
Food		-0,063	0,042	1,490	0,140
Souvenirs		0,245	0,046	5,346	0,000
Information	Destination Loyalty	0,268	0,043	6,274	0,000
Festival Satisfaction		0,177	0,051	3,465	0,001
Destination Overall Image		0,537	0,045	11,863	0,000
Festival Satisfaction	Destination Overall Image	0,621	0,037	16,634	0,000

When the results in Table 5 are analyzed,

- The positive effects of program ($\beta=0.133$; $p<0.01$), festival area ($\beta=0.125$; $p<0.05$), staff ($\beta=0.173$; $p<0.01$), souvenirs ($\beta=0.245$; $p<0.01$) and information ($\beta=0.268$; $p<0.01$) on festival satisfaction were found to be statistically significant.

- The positive effects of festival satisfaction ($\beta=0.177$; $p<0.01$) and destination overall image ($\beta=0.537$; $p<0.01$) on destination loyalty were statistically significant.
- The positive effects of festival satisfaction ($\beta=0.621$; $p<0.01$) on the overall image of the destination were found to be statistically significant.

The effects of convenience and food dimensions on festival satisfaction were found to be statistically insignificant ($p>0.05$). Within the framework of these results, hypotheses 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 were supported, while hypotheses 3 and 5 had to be rejected.

Table 6
Research Model Indirect Effect Coefficients

Path			Standardize β	Standard Deviation	t value	p value
Festival Satisfaction	Destination Overall Image	Destination Loyalty	0,334	0,042	7,929	0,000

When the values in Table 6 are analyzed, it is seen that the indirect effect of festival satisfaction ($\beta=0.334$; $p<0.01$) on destination loyalty through the overall destination image is significant.

According to Zhao et al., (2010), when independent variables have significant effects on mediating variables and mediating variables have significant effects (indirect effects) on dependent variables, the presence of a mediating effect is considered. Therefore, since the effects of festival satisfaction on the overall destination image and the destination image on destination loyalty are significant, we can talk about the mediating effect.

Since the mediating effects were identified, the type of mediating effect was examined in line with the Zhao et al., (2021) mediating effect decision tree. Since the indirect effect on the path of Festival Satisfaction → Destination Overall Image → Destination Loyalty is significant, the direct effect on the path of Festival Satisfaction → Destination Loyalty is significant, and the path coefficients are positive, it is determined that the destination overall image has an integral partial mediating role in the relationship between festival satisfaction and destination loyalty. Based on this finding, hypothesis 11 of the study is supported.

Conclusion and Discussion

A festival with social and cultural meaning is a powerful source of attraction for tourists and is of great importance in creating or strengthening a destination's image. Therefore, festival planning should maximize the benefits of a destination through appropriate image enhancement and economic development. Positive behavioral intentions toward a destination can provide important support for the development of new destinations, especially those with growth potential. According to Ritchie (1984), short-term festivals have a positive impact

on a destination's level of recognition, attractiveness and profitability. The study identified seven dimensions representing festival success factors and examined how these factors affect tourist satisfaction and, in turn, destination image and loyalty.

Alaçatı Herb Festival is a local festival that brings together various herbs of the Aegean with travel lovers since 2010. The festival, which was organized as a single day in the first year, was increased to 2 days in the following years and to 3 days in 2022 with very intense and diverse activities. According to the results of the research, among the festival success factors, the program, festival area, staff, souvenirs and information dimensions affect visitors' festival satisfaction. However, the food and convenience dimension did not affect festival satisfaction. Destination loyalty is affected by festival satisfaction and overall destination image. In addition, festival satisfaction has a positive effect on the destination image. In addition, the overall destination image plays an integrative partial mediating role in the relationship between festival satisfaction and destination loyalty.

According to the results of the research, the program dimension affects festival satisfaction; this result is similar to the results of Lee et al., 2006; Yoon et al. (2010). It can be concluded that the festival is better planned with the enrichment of the festival program content every year and 10 years of experience. The 11th Alaçatı Herb Festival has prepared a very rich program including painting exhibition, sculpture exhibition, olive oil tasting, herbal tea brewing techniques, talks on Aegean herbs and health, races and concerts.

The festival area dimension positively affects festival satisfaction. It supports the results of Lee et al., (2006), Özdemir and Çulha (2012), Mason and Paggiaro (2012), Anıl (2012), Çatır and Şimşek (2019). The festival area has been expanded because of the increasing interest from year to year, and in 2022, the area where herbs were exhibited was separated from the bazaar area to disperse the density.

The staff dimension positively affects festival satisfaction. This supports the result of Çatır and Şimşek (2019). However, in some studies such as Lee et al., (2006), it has been observed that the staff has no effect on festival satisfaction.

The souvenir dimension positively affects festival satisfaction. It is possible to say that tourists find souvenirs sufficient in terms of variety, quality and price. This result is the same as that of Yoon et al., (2010) and Çatır and Şimşek (2019).

The information dimension positively affects festival satisfaction. Lee et al., 2008, Çatır and Şimşek (2019) also reached a similar conclusion.

While five of the seven dimensions have a positive impact on festival satisfaction, the food and convenience dimension needs to be emphasized. The result that the food dimension does not affect festival satisfaction supports the result of Markovic et al. (2015) KuşKonmaz

festival research. It also differs from the results of Lee et al., (2008); Anıl (2012); Yoon et al., (2010) Polat et al., (2018). The festival, which takes a different herb as a theme every year, chose Labada in 2022. While programing the next festival, food diversity, availability of local products, and reviewing and controlling food prices are seen as necessary practices to increase festival satisfaction, destination image, and destination loyalty.

It can be said that there are some problems in the dimension of convenience (rest areas, toilets, parking area), that is, facilitating services. This result is similar to the results of Lee et al., (2006) and Polat et al., (2018). Since the time of the festival is spring, organizing indoor and outdoor recreation areas by taking into account the air temperature, increasing the number of toilets and closely controlling hygiene, and expanding the parking area can increase festival satisfaction. Based on these results, it can be concluded that festival planners and organizers should focus on details related to food and convenience in organizing a successful festival event. Efforts should be made to improve these dimensions. Each component of the festival success factors should be carefully planned and implemented for a successful festival.

Destination loyalty is affected by festival satisfaction and the destination image. This is similar to the results of Chi & Qu (2008), Çatır & Şimşek (2019), Deng & Tang (2020), Dalgiç & Birdir (2020). For Alaçatı Herb Festival tourists, festival satisfaction and destination image are considered to be important factors in encouraging tourists to visit Alaçatı again in the future and to encourage their recommendations.

Theoretical and Practical Contributions

Considering that Alaçatı Herb Festival has been organized continuously since 2010, it can be said that the number of studies conducted is quite low. In this direction, the research theoretically enriches the knowledge of festival success factors and reveals the relationship between festival satisfaction, destination image and loyalty as a model. The results of the research are therefore valuable for both academia and industry. In this festival, the main theme of which is herb, the fact that the food is not sufficiently varied, not traditional, and the prices and quality are not at the expected level is an important issue that needs to be emphasized. Further research is required for the success of this dimension.

In practical terms, the research results can be used as a strategic tool to identify areas where food festivals need to be improved to enhance the destination image and loyalty. This research has shown that festival satisfaction influences destination loyalty and that the destination overall image is an integral partial mediator in the relationship between festival satisfaction and destination loyalty. Festival organizers should closely examine festival experiences and take actions to ensure that festival experiences are positive in order to increase both festival satisfaction and destination loyalty and to improve the overall image of the destination.

Limitations and Future Research

As in every research, there are some limitations in this study. First, the convenience sampling method was preferred due to its convenience in terms of time and cost. To reach more generalizable results, data can be collected by the purposive sampling method. The second is that the research data was collected in a limited period between March 24-27, 2022. Another limitation is that the visitors read and evaluated the questionnaire in the noise and crowds of the festival area. Future research could customize the success factors according to the main theme of the festivals. The impact of the festival can be evaluated from different perspectives: festival visitors, participants, organizers and local people. Behaviors between first-time and repeat visitors can be compared, thus providing a more detailed framework.

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