



Perceived Performance of Gastronomy Destinations: The Case of Gaziantep, Adana, Hatay, Şanlıurfa, and Mardin¹

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ABSTRACT

The advent of gastronomy as a discipline has occurred in tandem with the emergence of gastronomic tourism as a concept. Türkiye boasts a multitude of destinations that hold significant importance and promise in this regard. Despite the existence of numerous academic studies in the field of gastronomic tourism, there remains a paucity of research addressing the issue of competitiveness among destinations. The present research was conducted with the objective of assessing the competitiveness and reputation of Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, Mardin, Hatay, and Adana—destinations that are widely regarded as being at the forefront of gastronomy in Türkiye—in the eyes of the public. This assessment was undertaken within the framework of this gap. In this research, a multifaceted approach was employed to assess the perceptions and perspectives of tourists visiting the research destinations concerning regional culinary traditions. This approach entailed the utilization of both quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments, thereby facilitating a comprehensive evaluation of the destinations' competitiveness in the culinary tourism sector. In the quantitative section of the research, data were collected using a structured interview form. In the qualitative component of the research, an average of 200 reviews were collected from Tripadvisor for each city. In the research, the data sets were compared, and the strengths and weaknesses of the destinations were identified. The primary rationale for employing the research as a tool by regional managers and business owners involved in the economic cycle is its capacity for comparative analysis of data. Accordingly, the destinations are hereby ranked according to the scores given by potential tourists who participated in the survey. The sequence of cities traversed is as follows: Gaziantep, Adana, Hatay, Şanlıurfa, and Mardin. However, according to the opinions expressed by tourists who have traveled to these destinations and experienced the restaurants in the region, the destinations are ranked as follows: The sequence of cities traversed is Hatay, Adana, Şanlıurfa, Gaziantep, and Mardin.

Keywords: Gastronomy Tourism, Destination Competitiveness, Destination Performance

Introduction

Gastro-Economy

The economy created by gastronomy encourages the development of other industrial sectors, as Hall and Mitchell (2000) mentioned in their research. Economic gastronomy can produce tourism models that can provide continuity under the tourism topic. In the region where the destination identity is completed, gastronomy can be an important subtitle in the determination of tourism policies and is seen

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as an important factor in attracting tourists. Therefore, gastronomy can be more forthright in the formation of regional policies, enabling medium or long-term strategies to be created in those regions.

Kivela and Crotts (2005) emphasize the sense of loyalty to gastronomy tourism. Gastronomy tourists have a sense of loyalty if they are satisfied with the food and beverages they experience in the areas they visit, and in this context, there can be economic returns. At the same time, this means that such tourists will visit the region again later, so there is continuity, and it allows the prestige of the destination to rise and be marketed better. Gastronomy tourism is gaining a positive momentum around the world and Türkiye and Turkish tourism are benefiting from this situation in a positive way.

Experience Economy and Gastronomy Tourism

Simple replication of products and services, non-heterogeneous, makes it difficult for businesses to achieve a wide range of goals, such as creating a brand image, providing customer loyalty, and increasing sales as part of marketing activities. It is also necessary to realize the spiritual satisfaction of consumers through differentiation. The experience element and the heterogeneous quality of products and services are homogeneous to customer loyalty, and sales increase.

Pine and Gilmore (1998) describe the concept of the experience economy and economic offerings to consumers as four rings. The first three elements of these rings include methane, goods and services, and experience on the last ring. Experiences are the highest differentiation rating. In a competitive environment, businesses are trying to differentiate their product and service ranges to gain a competitive advantage, making it easier for them to achieve their goals and build custom audiences as they step up in the competitive position. In addition, when reviewing the pricing change in the horizontal section, they are listed as methane, goods, services, and experiences, with the most exposed elements of market pricing. The premium is the reward that the business has achieved as a result of differentiating its products and services. The more a business differentiates its products and services, the more benefit it has in competition and pricing, and the more it allows consumers to experience something they cannot forget.

Oh, Fiona and Jeoung (2007) stated that their work requires a feature that businesses can produce high-end goods and services, as well as more value added. The concept of experience can affect people purchasing goods or services in the field of gastronomy both psychologically and physically. The thing is that a tourist waiting for his meal in a restaurant is subjected to an enjoyable presentation that he cannot forget, which makes the tourist happy psychologically while satisfying in terms of food and drink. Based on this example, the psychological, and physical impact of any recipient within the concept of experience, and the increased satisfaction level is an observable event.

Pine and Gilmore (1998) classified adoption and adhesion about environmental elements when actively and passively leaving the experience concept dimensions based on the participant's situation.

If individuals have any impact on this activity, this is covered by active participation. In cases where people do not influence the event, they are covered by passive participation. The combination of individuals with that experience is their environmental connection.

Watching a movie in a cinema environment with a high level of the sound system, picture quality, and so on, while watching the same movie at home does not provide the same experience. In a horse racing event, the viewers who follow the races from the stands embrace the activity, but the people who are more involved in the organization are held to it by the smell they feel, and the sounds they hear (Pine and Gilmore, 1998). According to the density of these four concepts, four categories are created: Entertainment, educational, esthetic, and visionary.

Actions such as attending a song contest as an audience, and watching TV, are experiences in the entertainment category. Activities that the person participates passively, and they adopt more. The students who take basketball are actively involved and are more absorbed, so this activity is covered by

the educational category. A person playing video games is active, but is also immersed in the game, and is held. Therefore, the computer player's experience is within the dreamer category. A tourist who has just arrived in Fethiye is thought to be able to visit the Kelebekler Valley and watch the view there, while the tourist is thought to be passively immersed in the landscape and held. In this context, the experience of the tourist is covered in the esthetic category (Pine and Gilmore, 1998).

The change in demand conditions for tourists has led to changes in the goods and services offered by businesses in the tourism industry. As with almost every industry, businesses in the tourism sector are reducing demand for these goods if they offer homogeneous goods and services with their market competitors. In terms of the tourism industry, where the concept of the experience economy is a key position, businesses must provide their goods and services in addition to their customers. This will enable significant industry benefits, while tourist satisfaction levels, industry profitability, and country prestige can be improved (Pine and Gilmore, 1998).

The main purpose of tourists visiting a destination is to recognize that region, learn about its culture, gain new experiences, to witness moments that they cannot forget. As Richards (2001) described in his work, services are dead, but experiences live a long time. So even if the tourists return to their residency, having memories that will be remembered for life strengthens the tourist activities.

One of the motivations of tourists is to experience local food and drinks on-site. Culinary culture is an attraction for tourism. When visitors travel to a region, their main motivation is to meet the culinary culture of the locals, whether they experience the culinary culture. That's why the gastronomy experience is an essential part of a journey. If the tourist's gastronomy experience is unforgettable, there is an increase in satisfaction levels and the number of tourists. The destination performance and image are directly related to these factors (Richards, 2001).

The experience delivered to tourists under gastronomy should have special and emotional effects on people. This example is 'Catharsis Restaurant', which operates in the United States and gives its guests an unforgettable experience. This restaurant allows customers to do their eating and drink with their eyes closed. Guests close their eyes with eye patches after ordering their employees who are interested in them and do not remove these tapes except in need of a toilet. Other than that, live music services are also offered to guests, and satisfaction levels are increased. This way guests can enjoy an unforgettable and immersive experience. Today, various food and beverage venues are trying to create concepts in theatrical or caricature, which affects customers' preferences (Richards, 2001).

A Performer for Destinations

Kozak, Baloglu, and Bahar (2009) have a concept in their work that has an impact on tourists visiting the region through the sustainable advantages of destinations and increased their share in the market, such as giving them better moments, and memories, raising the living standards of the people in the region, furthermore, this concept allows destinations to gain attractiveness over potential tourists.

Marchiori and Arc (2010) in his research, emphasized that a positive change in the perceptions of destination on tourists would contribute to the development of the regional economy and the people of the region. There are multiple indicators to determine the performance of destinations based on this research. One of the first to come is the performance that the consumer perceives. With the right management of the perception of performance, the performance of the destination will be improved, improving the development and development of the regional economy. Therefore, the performance that tourists perceive in this research has been investigated.

Methodology

Purpose, Importance, and Method of Research

One of the objectives of the research is to determine the perception of performance on audiences based on five of the leading destinations that have been identified by gastronomy tourism. The aim of the

research is to identify the role critical success factors play in the development of the perception of gastronomy cities, which will allow cities like Gaziantep and Hatay to be compared to other districts, which are included in the 'UNESCO Creative Cities Network program. The ability to evaluate performance perceptions of the Destinations in the context of gastronomy tourism is one of the objectives of this research, to uncover the strengths and weaknesses of the detected performances of the five cities in the research.

Quantitative and qualitative methods were used in the research. Quantitative data were collected with structured question form, and data were analyzed by quantitative methods. The destination characteristics that must be created for the evaluation and comparison of the relevant destinations were created by researchers, determined by Baloğlu, Kozak, and Bahar (2009) and Kozak and Universe (2019) as a result of literature screening. First, it was determined which cities would be included as gastronomy destinations in the research. For this purpose, a panel was created from the students of the Tourism Management department. "What are the first 5 cities you can think of when they call the gastronomy destination in Türkiye?" he's been asked a question. According to the answers, the destinations of Gaziantep, Adana, Hatay, Şanlıurfa, and Mardin have been determined. As a result of the literature scan, the structured questionnaire has been prepared and sent to 600 people via Google Survey. 206 people filled out the form. Data from participants was collected in February-March 2022. The data has been analyzed with SPSS 22.

The sample was used in the case and for the purpose. Participants were asked to rate their destinations, restaurants, accommodation businesses, value, and value, satisfaction based on the price paid, structural elements, and entertainment. The participants' opinions and opinions on the destinations were intended to be determined by the severity ratings they attributed to the relevant items, clarifying their perceptions on behalf of the destinations, and the questionnaire structured for the pandemic environment was submitted to the participants by sending an online questionnaire.

Restrictions and measures that have been implemented in the Covid-19 epidemic that has emerged worldwide throughout the work process have also restricted research. Data collection from restaurants for performance was not performed face-to-face due to travel restrictions and curfews. Issues such as time, budget, and energy costs are also a limitation of the research.

Validity and Reliability of Quantitative Data

The tests for validity have calculated the KMO value as 0.813 and the level of meaning, as 000. The Cronbach Alpha Coefficient is referenced for reliability and the scale's overall reliability rating is calculated at 0.862. The calculations match the reference values in the literature (Yaşlıoğlu, 2017). According to this, the scales used in research are reliable and valid.

Research Hypothesis

The hypotheses are as follows:

H₁: the level of importance attributed to the entertainment services of the destinations varies significantly according to the gender of the participants.

H₂: the importance of destinations to restaurant services varies significantly according to the gender of the participants.

H₃: the level of importance attributed to the accommodation services of the destinations varies significantly according to the gender of the participants.

H₄: the level of importance attributed to the structural elements of the destinations varies significantly according to the gender of the participants.

H₅: the level of importance attributed to the entertainment service of the destinations varies significantly according to the age group of the participants.

H₆: the importance of destinations to restaurant service varies significantly according to the age group of participants.

H₇: the severity of the destinations assigned to the accommodation service varies significantly according to the age group.

H₈: the level of importance attributed to the structural elements of the destinations varies significantly according to the age group.

H₉: the level of importance attributed to the entertainment service of the destinations varies significantly depending on where the participants live.

H₁₀: the importance of destinations to restaurant service varies significantly depending on where participants live.

H₁₁: the level of importance attributed to the structural elements of the destinations varies significantly depending on where the participants live.

H₁₂: the level of importance attributed to the accommodation service of the destinations varies significantly depending on where the participants live.

Findings

Quantitative Data Analysis

55% of participants are women, and 45% are men. Percentages for age groups; those between the ages of 15-24 are 36.4%, those between 25-34 and 45.6%, and those between the ages of 35-44 and 55-64 are between 15.5 and 45-54 1.5%, and those between the ages of 1 and. Education status percentages: 1% primary school, 6.8% high school, 6.8% associate, 68.9% undergraduate, 12.1% graduate, and 4.4% doctorate level.

Thirty-eight people, who make up 18.4% of their residents and living in the same places, have lived in Istanbul, and 2.9% of the six people who make up in Ankara, 20.9% in İzmir, and 57.8% in other cities. It is included in the structured questionnaire as participants are seen as a key element in the perception of cities they experience, and the structure of ideas, and ideas. While determining Destinations, previous studies in the literature have taken advantage of and advanced destinations in terms of the population, and economy.

Participants assessed the cities they were planning to travel to in terms of restaurants, natural environment, hospitality businesses, city transportation, and infrastructure. In the structured questionnaire, participants are asked for the severity ratings they assign to the items. As gastronomy destinations are the subject of research, restaurants, eating and drinking facilities, and opinions of this framework must be evaluated separately. Gastronomy-related substances are of great importance. In addition, it is aimed at determining how important people are to such measures in the process of making a trip. Since the five Likert Scale is used in the structured question form, the average is between one and five, and as it approaches five, its severity is increasing. Since no need to explain each article, only the weight conditions of gastronomy-related substances have been examined.

The answer average for the item "enough restaurants in the destination" are 4.10 and 42.7% of the participants think this article is important. The answer average for the item "reliability of food and beverage in the destination" is 4.81 and 83.5% of the participants selected the most important option. 84% of participants believe that the fact that restaurants have Covid-19 and hygiene documentation is an absolutely important factor, and the average of this article is 4.78. In the destinations, the average response of the substance, which queries whether the money spent in food and beverage places has been reciprocated is 4.84, and 86.4% of the participants think that this article is important.

In the article, which questions how important the occupancy of food and beverage places is for visitors, the response is estimated as an average of 3.97, while participants showed more regular distribution. It

is possible to comment that the severity is relatively low compared to other substances. 55.3% of participants think food and beverage facilities are important and the answer average of this article is 4.39.

In the matter where the service speed in restaurants is asked how important, the average response is 4.08 and many of the participants have selected important and important options. In the question of food and beverage diversity being questioned, the answer was calculated as an average of 4.26 and 49% of participants emphasized that this element is important. In the question of food and beverage price cases, 63.6% of participants have selected the important option, and the average response for this article is 4.50. When asked about the quality conditions of restaurants in planned destinations, 64.1% of participants were calculated to be 4.53 when marking the absolutely important issue.

In this context, potential gastronomy tourists have put a lot of emphasis on food and beverage-related substances in the intended destinations to be visited. The area of gastronomy can be seen as an attraction and can have positive effects. In almost every question, a large part of the participants expresses their opinion on the important or absolutely important options. It is possible to comment that restaurants have a certain weight within the perceived performance.

Table 1. Destination Sort Table

Assessment items	Gaziantep			Şanlıurfa			Mardin			Hatay			Adana		
	Std. Dev.	Av.	Row	Std. Dev.	Av.	Row	Std. Dev.	Av.	Row	Std. Dev.	Av.	Row	Std. Dev.	Av.	Row
Shopping opportunities	,934	3,73	2	,930	3,26	4	1,01	3,06	5	,951	3,52	3	,882	3,85	1
Night entertainment	1,02	2,72	3	,934	2,45	5	1,01	2,47	4	,964	2,83	2	,981	3,20	1
Activities other than gastronomy	1,09	3,48	2	1,05	3,25	4	1,08	3,18	5	1,05	3,43	3	1,05	3,50	1
Animal-friendly destination (animal hotels etc.)	,991	2,61	3	,971	2,51	5	,966	2,52	4	,971	2,67	2	1,02	2,68	1
Handicapped-friendly destination (Audio traffic lights, etc.)	,917	2,82	1	,886	2,65	4	,913	2,62	5	,949	2,79	3	,908	2,80	2
Urban image	1,06	3,75	1	1,05	3,28	5	1,19	3,34	3	1,08	3,36	2	1,15	3,32	4
The number of restaurants is sufficient	,852	4,27	1	,918	4,03	4	1,06	3,83	5	,947	4,12	3	,911	4,21	2
Restaurant reliability	,938	3,82	1	,929	3,55	4	,991	3,51	5	,930	3,65	2	,947	3,63	3
Restaurant hygiene and certification	,935	3,16	1	,894	3,01	4	,894	3,00	5	,874	3,04	3	,943	3,05	2
Value received for the money	,941	3,96	1	,980	3,75	4	,989	3,73	5	,929	3,83	2	,948	3,81	3
Restaurant occupancy status	,811	3,73	1	,763	3,49	4	,799	3,35	5	,823	3,56	3	,855	3,67	2
Status of being informed about the destination	,976	3,52	1	,982	3,24	5	,993	3,27	4	,901	3,34	3	,936	3,50	2
Eating and drinking facilities	,912	4,18	1	,940	3,93	4	1,01	3,76	5	,913	4,00	3	,896	4,08	2
Quality status of services in the Destinations	,922	3,89	1	,890	3,62	4	1,01	3,57	5	,856	3,75	2	,846	3,73	3
The nature of the destination	1,00	3,65	3	1,03	3,57	4	1,07	3,81	1	,981	3,67	2	1,02	3,55	5

Restaurant service speed	,835	3,73	1	,804	3,62	4	,805	3,56	5	,770	3,67	2	,864	3,65	3
Restaurant variety	,922	4,14	1	,935	3,91	4	,963	3,81	5	,875	4,02	3	,900	4,07	2
Eating and drinking price status	,909	3,24	1	,798	3,11	4	,873	3,17	3	,840	3,21	2	,916	3,24	1
Destination security status	1,01	3,17	1	1,01	2,82	3	,972	2,74	4	,992	2,84	2	1,15	2,48	5
Destination transport facilities	,903	3,45	2	,858	3,25	4	,883	3,12	5	,880	3,39	3	,924	3,54	1
Price status of accommodation businesses	,792	3,29	1	,753	3,17	5	,768	3,23	2	,693	3,18	4	,773	3,21	3
The quality of restaurants is	,856	3,81	1	,801	3,52	5	,886	3,55	4	,833	3,63	2	,915	3,60	3
Accommodations are full	,872	3,33	1	,820	3,17	4	,797	3,10	5	,796	3,22	3	,825	3,26	2
Diversity of hospitality businesses	,914	3,39	1	,848	3,24	4	,846	3,23	5	,827	3,27	3	,848	3,36	2
Quality of hospitality businesses	,823	3,45	1	,796	3,26	5	,854	3,28	4	,802	3,31	3	,858	3,32	2

Table 1 contains the answers to the section that makes up the second part of the question form configured in the Destinations Sort Table, which queries the participants' opinions and opinions about the destinations. In this table, cysts and potential gastronomy tourists prepared for the comparison of gastronomy destinations have ideas about these destinations. This table has been created and colored so that it can be understood more clearly how the Destinations have made an impact on people.

In this context, the list of destinations is Gaziantep > Adana > Hatay > Şanlıurfa > Mardin. To be more specific, according to the participants' answers, Gaziantep is first in the perceived performances of the destinations covered in the research, followed by Adana, Hatay, Şanlıurfa, and Mardin.

When only the items in which the gastronomy elements were evaluated were included in the review, i.e. the scores of dark substances were calculated, Gaziantep 50, Adana 37, Şanlıurfa 19, Hatay 35, and Mardin 13 managed to score. According to this situation, the detected performance order of restaurants in destinations is Gaziantep > Adana > Hatay > Şanlıurfa > Mardin. The interpretation of these results is 'the perceived performance of restaurants in Gaziantep is higher than the others, according to the answers they provide'. In this context, Adana, Hatay, Şanlıurfa, and Mardin follow Gaziantep.

On the other hand, 'Independent Samples T-Test' and 'ANOVA' testing were applied to the data obtained to test the hypotheses created for research. For these analyzes to be implemented, normality analysis has been performed before. Lohana, Rashid, Nasuredin, and Kumar (2019) emphasize that the basics and skew values should be between -2 and +2 to George and Mallery (2017). In this research, the order of measures of skewness and kurtosis values and the entertainment area are between -,564 and ,431, the accommodation service is -,622 and -,281, and the restaurant service area is -,692 and -,337. Only structural features have a sequence of skew and offset values of -1.270 to 2.014. In this case, the offset value is greater than 2 but very close. For this reason, the analysis has continued to prevent the data from being manipulated or deleted. The hypotheses and analyzes created are given below.

The following text is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the subject matter.

Table 2. Hypothesis Test Results

	Hypothesis Statement	Variable	Test	Statistic	p-value	Result
H ₁	The importance of entertainment services varies significantly by gender.	Entertainment Services vs Gender	t-test	-.738	> .05	Rejected
H ₂	The importance of restaurant services varies significantly by gender.	Restaurant Services vs Gender	t-test	.697	> .05	Rejected
H ₃	The importance of accommodation services varies significantly by gender.	Accommodation Services vs Gender	t-test	1.086	> .05	Rejected
H ₄	The importance of structural elements varies significantly by gender.	Structural Elements vs Gender	t-test	1.701	> .05	Rejected
H ₅	The importance of entertainment services varies significantly by age group.	Entertainment Services vs Age	ANOVA	1.929	> .05	Rejected
H ₆	The importance of restaurant services varies significantly by age group.	Restaurant Services vs Age	ANOVA	.270	> .05	Rejected
H ₇	The importance of accommodation services varies significantly by age group.	Accommodation Services vs Age	ANOVA	1.279	> .05	Rejected
H ₈	The importance of structural elements varies significantly by age group.	Structural Elements vs Age	ANOVA	1.007	> .05	Rejected
H ₉	The importance of entertainment services varies significantly by residence.	Entertainment Services vs Residence	ANOVA	.790	> .05	Rejected
H ₁₀	The importance of restaurant services varies significantly by residence.	Restaurant Services vs Residence	ANOVA	.383	> .05	Rejected
H ₁₁	The importance of structural elements varies significantly by residence.	Structural Elements vs Residence	ANOVA	.745	> .05	Rejected
H ₁₂	The importance of accommodation services varies significantly by residence.	Accommodation Services vs Residence	ANOVA	2.372	> .05	Rejected

The ensuing discourse will delve into the outcomes of hypothesis testing concerning the significance ascribed to an array of destination services (namely, entertainment, dining, accommodation, and structural elements) in relation to participants' gender, age group, and geographical location. To this end, independent sample t-tests and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were conducted for each hypothesis. The rejection of all hypotheses (H1–H12) was attributed to non-significant p-values ($p > .05$). While slight differences in mean scores were observed between groups, these differences were not statistically significant.

This finding suggests that demographic variables such as gender, age, and geographical location do not exert a substantial influence on participants' perceptions of the importance of these services. Subsequent studies may entail the incorporation of psychographic, behavioral, or socio-cultural variables to achieve a more profound comprehension.

Qualitative Data Analysis

In the qualitative part of the research, reviews on TripAdvisor, a site where people can voluntarily express their opinions about destinations and restaurants. The site is preferred as the comments made by the volunteers are completely independent and they are thought to be more useful for the work. The average of 200 reviews of each city based on the provinces of Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, Mardin, Hatay, and Adana within the scope of the research was recorded in a total of 1000 reviews for five cities and prepared for use by removing the necessary spelling and three comments.

In addition, the ability of users to rate food, service, value, and atmosphere categories on that site makes it easy to identify and extract three comments. As it is known, comments based on user comments are subjective on user-based sites. It can help eliminate negative situations such as exaggerating any adverse situation on the site to others, making the rating unnecessarily low.

Content analysis has been applied to the data organized and reported in this context. In his Young and Young (2017) research, he emphasizes that 'summarizing and specifying the basic meanings that the written information contains' is related to content analysis. A systematic categorization is carried out when reviewing content by this system. It is difficult to comment on content analysis as to whether "it belongs to one of the quantitative or qualitative research techniques". There is no definite consensus on this issue in the literature (Kocak and Arun, 2006). Koçak and Arun (2006) indicate that if a generalization is planned in the work to be conducted, the sample of each unit in the universe must be equal. In this research, such points have been noted and sample selection has been sampled equally on behalf of all destinations.

In the Merriam (2013) research, the scope of the validity and reliability of qualitative data mentions six methods to ensure internal validity of qualitative data, and it is stated that the validity will be ensured because of the use of several of these methods (Evren, 2016).

One of these methods is to ensure sufficient participation in the data collection process. In this research, two hundred and a thousand comments were received from each destination. When the location where the comments start to become monotonous, sufficient participation is achieved.

Another method is a negative case analysis, which refers to the research of different data representing the opposite of the findings. In the research, not only are there positive views, but also negative opinions and ideas of the opposite nature.

Another method is that the researcher is conducting an objective investigation. This method requires researchers, objects related to their research, destinations, etc. he must be neutral and unbiased about him. In this research, no prejudice regarding the destinations involved in the investigation has been fed and assessments, data collection process, and analysis have been completed objectively.

These methods, which are important factors, have been applied to ensure validity in qualitative research. These methods may result in the validity of the qualitative data used in the research.

To ensure the external validity of qualitative research, Simsek and Yıldırım (2013) stated that there should be an example of the capacity that is possible to generalize, that explanations should be made to the level that could allow the resulting ideas to be used in different studies, and that sampling selection and data collection processes should be explained in detail.

In the context of these stages, comments used in the research can be interpreted that the gastronomy points in the destinations in the focus of the research adequately describe and form a data set that is suitable for generalization. In addition, when the scope of the descriptions is examined, the evaluation of restaurants in many ways, not in a single way, and consequently the detailed interpretation of the findings may allow them to be used in different studies. The way data is obtained, the sampling selection, and the data collection process have not been discussed again because it has already been

tried to be explained in detail. In this context, the interpretation of the external validity of the data can be made.

In terms of the reliability of qualitative research, Merriam (2013) stated that “the results and data collected should be consistent” in his research (the Compact. Universe, 2016). The fact that the researcher is objective is one of the elements that ensure the reliability of data. In addition, each piece of data has been recorded, edited, and reported to make it more reliable. Ideas and opinions from each restaurant are arranged separately. This minimizes the possibility of disruption and confusion that may arise.

The qualitative data collection phase is based on restaurants from the “Turkish and Middle East” kitchens the destinations selected on TripAdvisor, and the type of kitchen is more local and is generated by user reviews and data obtained. This qualitative data were then reported in an Excel file to be the top ten local restaurants in each city, the type of kitchen, the food score, the service score, the value rating, and the atmospheric score from tourists, and corrected if the verbal data were simplified and misspelled by the required grammar rules. In this framework, twenty reviews have been taken in each restaurant and two hundred reviews for one city have been created, edited, and reported in a data set of thousand reviews for all cities.

In this section, where reviews of restaurants of gastronomy destinations are reviewed, the data has been categorized and reported into tables. In total, 200 reviews have been reviewed and classified as positive, negative, advisory, and both positive and negative comments. The current number of comments is the sum of positive reviews, negative reviews, and both positive and negative comments. In this context, 119 positive comments, 39 negative comments, and 42 positive and negative comments were made when 200 data were reviewed. In total, 48 comments indicate that the destination is advisable in terms of food and drink. In this context, the performance rating for Gaziantep was calculated as 0.595 according to the positive comment/total comment rate.

In total, 133 ideas have been expressed about restaurants in Adana. 27 of them are negative, 56 of them are advisable and 40 are both positive and negative. In this context, the performance rating of the Adana destination is calculated as 0.665.

When the data for Hatay was reviewed, it was deduced that 163 positive, 16 negative, 60 recommendations, and 21 positive and negative ideas were expressed. When the number of positive reviews of restaurants is analyzed alone, it is noticeable that there is no low number. In this context, the performance measurement of the Hatay destination is calculated as 0.815.

When reviewing the data on restaurants in the Mardin destination, a total of 98 positive, 54 negatives, 42 recommendations, and 48 positive and negative comments are found. Only when the positive number of comments is analyzed, there are very low numbers. In this context, the performance measurement of the Mardin destination is calculated as 0.490.

When reviews of food and beverage venues in the Şanlıurfa destination are reviewed, there are cumulative 124 positives, 29 negatives, 53 highly recommended, and 47 positive and negative ideas and opinions. In this context, the performance measurement of the Şanlıurfa destination is calculated as 0.620.

Table 3. Performance Table of Destinations

	Number of positive Comments	Number of negative Comments	Number of recommen dations	Both positive and negative Comments	Number of Comments	Destination Performance Rating
<i>Gaziantep</i>	119	39	48	42	200	,595
<i>Adana</i>	133	27	56	40	200	,665
<i>Şanlıurfa</i>	124	29	53	47	200	,620
<i>Hatay</i>	163	16	60	21	200	,815
<i>Mardin</i>	98	54	42	48	200	,490
<i>Cumulative Data</i>	637	165	259	198	1000	,637

The performance status of the Destinations is shown in Table 3. In cumulative terms, six hundred and thirty-seven of 1,000 data were declared positive, while hundred and sixty-five were negative, two hundred and ninety-nine were advisable, and hundred and ninety-eight expressed ideas and opinions with both positive and negative content. The value of 637 at the bottom of the destination performance rating column represents the common performance value of the five destinations. When assessed the performance ratings used for the order of the Destinations, Hatay is first with a value of 815, Adana second with a value of 665, Sanliurfa third with a value of 620, Gaziantep fourth, and Mardin last with a value of 490. This includes Hatay > Adana > Şanlıurfa > Gaziantep > Mardin ranking.

Conclusion and Discussion

When examining hypotheses and analysis conducted, it is observed that there is no significant difference in the variability of accommodation service, restaurant service, entertainment service, and structural elements according to the findings obtained from the analysis of the T-test, where differences are tested according to the gender of the participants (accommodation service = $0.279 > 0.05$; restaurant service = $0.486 > 0.05$; entertainment service = $0.461 > 0.05$; structural features = $0.091 > 0.05$). These results show that there is no significant difference between the participants' gender and the level of importance attributed to substances that affect destination preferences.

When the differences between the age groups and the entertainment service, restaurant service, structural elements, and accommodation service were examined, it was concluded that there was no significant difference (Entertainment service = $.107 > .05$; restaurant service = $.897 > .05$; structural features = $.405 > .05$; accommodation service = $.279 > .05$). This means that there is no significant difference between the age groups of the participants and the importance levels attributed to these substances.

Finally, the difference between the destinations where the participants reside and the importance levels attributed to entertainment service, restaurant service, hospitality service, and structural elements has been examined. Among them, there was no significant difference between the destinations where the participants reside, and the severity levels attributed.

The present research examined whether the perceived importance of destination-related services differed based on demographic variables such as gender, age group, and place of residence. Independent samples t-tests and ANOVA analyses revealed that all hypotheses were rejected, and no statistically significant differences were found ($p > .05$).

The subsequent academic evaluation delineates the potential rationales for the rejection of these hypotheses:

The present research examined the homogeneity of the sample. Despite the apparent demographic diversity among the participants, their attitudes regarding the perceived importance of services may have exhibited a degree of homogeneity. This finding suggests that destination preferences are more

influenced by shared lifestyles and experience-oriented expectations than by fixed demographic characteristics such as gender or age.

The exclusion of psychographic and cultural variables constitutes a critical aspect of the research. The research's exclusive focus on demographic variables has resulted in an oversight of internal factors, including values, lifestyles, and travel motivations. However, it is well-established that these psychographic variables often play a more prominent role in shaping service preferences.

It has been determined that a failure to consider interaction effects constitutes a significant contributing factor to the issue under discussion. The analyses treated demographic variables independently. The potential interaction effects (e.g., between gender and residence) were not considered in the analysis. To illustrate, the preferences of young urban women may differ considerably from those of elderly rural men, and such discrepancies would not be discernible without testing interactions.

A thorough examination of measurement sensitivity and sample structure is warranted. The measurement tools employed may have lacked sufficient discriminatory power, or the sample may have exhibited excessive homogeneity, thereby constraining the detection of substantial differences. Additionally, the statistical power of the tests may have been constrained by the sample size or distribution.

The subsequent essay will delve into the evolution of consumer behavior. Conventional demographic factors, such as age and gender, may exert diminishing influence in the context of contemporary consumer behavior. In contemporary society, both men and women.

The quantitative method is planned to be used within the scope of the research. But in addition to this, qualitative data has been obtained and used. The qualitative data has been used to add richness to the operation and is not considered to be the main method of the research. The findings obtained from qualitative data should also be interpreted in this context. Qualitative data ranges from quantitative and qualitative results in an area where only restaurants are evaluated.

As a result of the findings, the gastronomy city in which Gaziantep is located must maintain its image and improve on the items seen as negatives. Although the history of Gaziantep has made it a locomotive among these five cities, it is a dynamic situation, and materials can be developed and changed in the process. It is also possible that Gaziantep has already entered the 'Creative Cities Network Program' in the gastronomy area before other destinations can have an impact on this. With the focus and differentiation strategies implemented, it is possible to comment that local markets and promotions they have established across the country are also effective in the participants' choice and perception. Other destination managers are also thought to adopt national and international strategies and may have positive effects on the application of the people and businesses of the region.

Şanlıurfa's overdevelopment, being able to become more assertive by at least paying attention to the items in the fourth place, ensuring that Mardin can become more competitive with other cities due to the number of items in the final place, Although Hatay is mainly in the second and third place, he can improve these qualities, to provide attractiveness for tourists and thus to become a center for attraction, and to increase the number of items that Adana ranks first, The development of the last items is critical for urban and regional tourism, and the fact that it is more competitive with Gaziantep.

The destination ranking according to the scores of potential tourists in the participating position was organized in Gaziantep > Adana > Hatay > Şanlıurfa > Mardin. However, according to the ideas of tourists who travel to destinations and experience restaurants in the region, the list of destinations is Hatay > Adana > Şanlıurfa > Gaziantep > Mardin. There may be many reasons for this situation. While impressions are in the foreground on one side, there are real experiences on the other. For this reason, some destinations can manage the perceptions of potential tourists more successfully, while others may not be so successful. In addition, the concept of 'micro nationalism' can be emphasized as comments

are received from a public website. If it is necessary to repeat, the research was planned as quantitative research, and the qualitative part was added in terms of richness (Pretes, 2003).

Participants were also asked to perform a rating on the destinations feature and data were obtained. The rating system is also planned for a more accurate analysis of these assessments. As a result, Gaziantep was second in the first place in Adana.

Differentiation is a key position in ensuring competitive advantage. Gastronomy tourism destinations within the scope of the research are not geographically located in very remote regions. It is thought that the proximity of these destinations will increase the importance of the differentiation strategy. In this regard, it is important to differentiate the gastronomy experience. Gastronomy can be an important tool within the quality of experience for the consumer, and the most effective use of this tool can have a positive impact on the attractiveness of the destination (Çorman & Yılmaz 2024; Kodaş, 2018).

Perception management is seen as an important issue for destination managers to be aware of and consider. The advancement of technology and the relative importance of gastronomy in the process have an impact on this point. Perception management can become a more important issue, especially considering the usage volume of applications and applications that enable users to express their opinions about restaurants. In addition to this, the results of qualitative data analysis added to the research also prove that there are differences between the situation in the consumers' minds and consumers experiencing the experience.

The points of interest for potential gastronomy tourists have been found tangibly through the data obtained in the research. It will be normal for the destination managers to have a positive impact on the improvement, and development effort within areas where they are weak due to their assessment of the business and facilities in their region. Activities such as accommodation, restaurants, and entertainment are remediable, developable activities.

During the research, the researcher conducting the fieldwork was in Izmir and was affected by the Izmir earthquake. Due to the ongoing pandemic environment and the earthquake in Izmir, which imposed limitations on the scope of the research, it was not feasible to conduct data collection in person. The structured questionnaire, which had been approved by the ethics committee, was administered online. The data constituting the qualitative component were also collected online. These data can be examined and replicated in relevant regions, and the term "micro-nationalism" mentioned in the interpretations for the qualitative section may serve as a research area suggestion for future studies. It is recommended that another suggestion be presented, with the potential for implementation in national or international destinations.

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