

**InTraders**  
**International Trade Academic Journal**  
(InTraders Journal)

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## **InTraders Journal**

InTraders International Trade Academic Journal is peer reviewed academic journal, open access and accepts "PRINCIPLES OF TRANSPARENCY", follows the practice guidelines prepared by the Publication Ethics Committee (COPE).

### **About**

InTraders, which started its publication period in 2018, offers open access. The journal is a publication type of the InTraders Academic Platform, which started its processes with trademark registration in 2017. Platform: It publishes in Congress, journal and book chapter types.

The journal's main subject is international trade. For 2024 and beyond, it accepts economy-based studies outside international trade and original studies on tourism issues.

Authors must upload plagiarism reports and copyright transfer forms to the system along with their work. The work uploaded to the system must be prepared by the journal writing rules. The uploads made outside the spelling rules will be returned at the pre-check stage. Obtaining necessary permissions from ethics committees or commissions for studies that require ethics committee permission (works that require a survey or scale application, contain interviews and observations, documents, pictures, questionnaires, etc., developed by others and require permission to use), specifying these in the study content or must be submitted in addition. Without these permissions, the publication is returned to the author at the preliminary examination stage.

InTraders runs all its processes through Dergipark.

Broadcast range: July-December

Manuscript language: English (Should not include abstracts in languages other than English. ).

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InTraders accepts the Open Access Principles outlined in the Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI), and accordingly, the journal provides instant open access to its content, adopting the principle that making scientific publications accessible to researchers will increase the global sharing of knowledge. InTraders has accepted the Budapest Open Access Initiative, which allows readers to read, download, copy, distribute, print, and use the articles in the journal for any legal purpose.

\*-English studies are accepted for 2024 and later. Studies in English should not include abstracts in languages other than English.

### **Aim**

InTraders International Trade Academic Journal will be able to publish scientific studies of researchers; aims to create an international platform that can contribute to their academic development and increase the number of qualified academic studies.

### **Scope**

InTraders International Trade Academic Journal is peer-reviewed by international referees and an international journal that publishes original scientific research in English, primarily in international trade.

The journal's main subject is international trade. For 2024 and beyond, it accepts economy-based studies outside international trade and original studies on tourism issues. The journal is available free and open access to all researchers. The language, scientific, legal, and ethical responsibilities of the articles published in the journal belong to the authors. The articles published in the journal can only be used when showing the source.

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## **Review Process**

1-Editor assignment is made for the field of the article uploaded to the system.

2-Editor: checks the files—checks whether the article is within the scope of InTraders Journal. If there are missing or incomplete files, send the article to the author and request the completion of the deficiencies. After the deficiencies are completed, the editor reads the article. Decide whether the article is suitable for evaluation. If the article is unsuitable for evaluation, the reason is detailed, and the editor rejects the article. If the article is suitable for evaluation, a secretariat is assigned to check the spelling and bibliography of the article.

2-Secretariat: receives the spelling-language report of the article with the paid Grammarly Program and uploads it to the additional files section of the system. The spelling-language report is expected to be 95% and above. A bibliography check is performed. If corrections are necessary in the article, the secretariat indicates the notes on the article. Uploads the correction request file to the additional files section in the system. Completes the process by directing the article to the editor.

3-Editor: According to the secretariat's report, if the study's spelling and grammar need to be corrected, the article is sent to the author. The author makes the necessary revisions and uploads the file to the system.

4-Editor: Sends the article back to the spelling and grammar secretariat.

5-The spelling and grammar secretariat checks whether the requested revision has been made and obtains a spelling and grammar report again with the Grammarly Program. If the report is 95% and above, it is accepted. If the deficiencies are completed, the secretariat completes the process. The study takes on the role of editor. If the necessary corrections are not completed, the editor is informed, and a recommendation is made to reject the study.

6-The editor runs a "two-blind peer referee" process for articles with completed deficiencies. The article is sent to two referees related to the field. The article with incomplete deficiencies is rejected by the editor with a reason as a result of the secretariat's recommendation decision or sent back to the author for correction.

7-Referees: They choose one of four options: rejection, acceptance, major revision, or minor revision. They fill out the evaluation form, and the reasoning for the decision is stated in detail in the report.

For the study to be published, it must be accepted by both referees.

7.1 The referees' reports are examined. The referees must detail their reports. The editor sends the article to new referees when he/she decides that the decisions of both or one of the referees are insufficient, even if both give a favourable decision. Referees who do a superficial review cannot be articleed with in the following periods and are removed from the journal board.

7.2. If one of the referees accepts and the other rejects, the editor may reject the study or send it to a third referee. The decision is the editor's choice.

7.3 If the referees make major/minor revisions to the article, they send them to the author, who makes the necessary corrections and uploads them to the system.

8. A "doi" assignment is made for the article whose processes are completed positively. After the doi is obtained, it is sent to the "final reader editor." The Final Reader Editor reads the study and may request the necessary corrections. If a correction is necessary, upload the report to the system. This completes the process.

9. If there is a correction request in accordance with the final reader editor report, the editor sends the study to the author. The author completes the necessary corrections. If the editor deems it necessary, the study is sent back to the final reader for control purposes.

10. The final reader checks again and completes the process if the corrections are complete. Sends the article to the editor.

11. The editor sends the completed study to the "layout editor," who prepares the article for publication.

12. The article, which has completed all processes positively, will be included in the earliest issue to be published.

\*The editor reserves the right to reject all processes. The editor rejects the article for a reason. Reasons for rejection by the editor may be the author uploading incomplete files, not responding

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to the necessary revision requests or not doing so within the given time, recommendations and justifications of the referees and the secretariat.

The articles submitted for publication in InTraders must have never been published before, not been accepted for publication, and not submitted for publication.

**\*\*The Editor has the right to reject the work/deem it unsuitable for publication at each stage.**

### **Publishing Periods**

It is published twice a year. It is published in July and December. If it is deemed necessary, specific numbers / supplements may be issued for specific topics and for expanded notifications qualified by InTraders subject to conventions. Articles may always be accepted by InTraders.

### **Writing Rules**

#### **Preliminary Information**

-English studies are accepted for 2024 and later. Studies in English should not include abstracts in languages other than English.

After the author/s have prepared the forms below, they should start uploading files.

-InTraders Journal Article Writing Format

-APA 7 Reference Style Sample File

-Author Information File (Refer to item 4). At the end of the page, it should be stated whether there is a conflict of interest, whether there is an institution from which financial support is received, and the contribution rates of the authors.

-Copyright Agreement Form

-Ethics Committee Permission (Ethics Committee approval is mandatory for studies sent from Turkey (researchers located within the borders of the Republic of Turkey). Ethics committee approval is the author's responsibility due to the country's own management and systems.). In studies that do not require ethics committee permission, the author must upload the signed document stating "I declare that the study does not require ethics committee permission" by stating the study title and author information on a form while uploading the article to the system.

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1. Only English articles are published in InTraders Journal for 2024 and later. Articles submitted to the journal must have yet to be published/presented or sent for publication/presentation elsewhere. Only studies presented orally at scientific events organized by the InTraders Academic Platform and whose full text has yet to be published in writing can be submitted for publication.

2. The APA 7 system should be used for article citations and source indication. The journal's rules will be followed for other article-writing rules.

3. Articles must be written on A4-sized paper with 1.5 spacing, in Times New Roman font, 12-point font, and not to exceed 25 pages. Submissions made from outside the DergiPark platform are strictly not accepted. Your article must be edited using the Article Writing Template. You can download the Article Writing Template here. (Author information should be excluded from the Article File).

4. Author Information File: The article should not contain any information about the author(s). (The file from the author is used to initiate the 2-blind referee process of the article. Therefore, the information about the author(s) should be specified on a separate Word page and uploaded to the system. The following information should be included on the separate Word page: (i) title of the article; (ii) author(s) name and academic title; (iii) ORCID ID numbers; (iv) address of the institution to which the author(s) is affiliated; (v) keywords and (vi) JEL codes of the study, (vii) e-mail address, (viii) telephone The number should be stated as +. The abstract should be at least 150 and at most 250 words.

5. Tables, figures and graphs should be given titles and numbers. Table titles should be placed above the tables, and titles of figures and graphs should be placed below the relevant figure or graph. References should be written below the tables, figures and graphs. Commas must separate decimal fractions in numbers. The sequence number to be given to the equations should be placed in parentheses at the far right of the page. If the derivation of equations is not clearly shown in the manuscript, the derivation process with all its steps should be given on a separate page for the referees' evaluation. Times New Roman type and 11-point font should be used in

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table and figure titles and in-table text. If the table does not fit, 8-9-10 point size may be preferred.

6 Footnotes regarding the references made in the articles should be included at the bottom of the page.

7. At the end of the text, a list of sources used in the study is given under the heading REFERENCES. This bibliography lists the references used in the study and is prepared alphabetically according to the author's surname.

Example of creating a bibliography (justified on both sides, 1.5 spacing, Times New Roman, 12-point font)

"Baral, G. (2023). Kiracı Konumundaki Şirketlerin Finansal Kiralama İşleyişlerindeki Muhasebeleştirme Hataları veya Hileleri. In Traders International Trade Academic Journal, 6 (1), 26-43. DOI:10.55065/intraders.1288268"

8. References to sources should be made in the text, not in footnotes, including page numbers, as shown in the examples below.

9. The page layout of the articles to be added to the system must be made by the author and by the following values:

Paper Size: A4 Vertical (Landscape pages should not be included in the article)

Top Margin: 2.5 cm

Bottom Margin: 2.5 cm

Left Margin: 1.0 cm

Right Margin: 1.0 cm

Font: Times New Roman

Font Size: 12 and bold in the title, 12 in the text, 11 in abstracts and 8 in footnotes.

Paragraph Spacing: 6 pt before- 6 pt after, line spacing 1.5 in the text; In abstracts, first 6 pt - then 6 nk, line spacing - Single (The aim is for the abstracts to be easily read by the reader.)

10. There should be no paragraph beginnings (indentations) in the article text, and paragraph breaks should be made clear by leaving spaces (spacing before:6nk after:6nk, line spacing: 1.5 lines).

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11. Section Headings: The article can use main, intermediate, and subheadings to ensure an orderly transfer of information; headings will not be numbered. Headings should be levelled according to case sensitivity as specified in the Article Writing Template.

12. Tables and Figures: Tables must have numbers and titles and be located where they should be in the text. Figures must be prepared for colour printing. Table numbers and titles should be written centred on the table, and figure numbers and names should be set just below the figure (See Article Writing Template).

13 Images: They should be included in the text in high-resolution, print-quality scans. When naming pictures, the rules in figures and tables must be followed.

14. Advice(Not compulsory): At least 3 sources each from WOS/Scopus and TR Index, at least 3 sources from journals in Dergipark that cannot be included in the TR Directory, sources from congress books and books must be used, and the Doi of the sources used must be stated in the bibliography section. Wos/Scopus sources should be included in the bibliography in red text, TR Index sources should be listed in orange, and sources not in the TR Index but in Dergipark should be included in the bibliography in blue text.

15. Articles that do not comply with InTraders Journal Publication Principles in any respect will not be evaluated.

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## **Ethical Principles and Publication Policy**

### **1. General Ethical Principles**

1. Obtaining the necessary permissions from the ethics committees or commissions for studies that require permission from the Ethics Committee (for studies that require the application of a questionnaire or scale, including interviews and observations; documents, pictures, questionnaires, etc., developed by others and require permission to use), and these should be stated in the article content. or as an addendum. Without these permissions, the publication is returned to the author at the preliminary examination stage. Ethics Committee approval is mandatory for studies sent from Turkey (researchers located within the borders of the Republic of Turkey). Ethics committee approval is the author's responsibility due to the country's own management and systems.

2. It is essential that the raw data regarding the research in the peer reviews be submitted when requested by the referees. It is obligatory to provide the data after the article's publication when necessary.

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3. The authors accept that the contact information (mail, institution, ORCID) specified in their article will be included to be published/published in InTraders. InTraders agrees not to publish the authors' information anywhere other than the journal issues and not to share it with third parties for commercial and advertising purposes.

#### **A. Ethical Principles for Authors**

1. Authors guarantee that their work is original, and when they include ideas, languages, pictures, graphics and tables of other researchers in their work, they must indicate this as a quotation. Quoting without specifying the source is plagiarism.

2. Each author named in the study is equally responsible for the content of the study. It is unacceptable to not include the name of the researcher who contributed to the study or his name unjustly, even though he did not contribute.

3. Authors should stick to their research findings. It is out of the question to change the findings, make up findings and results, and conduct research based on them. Situations such as tampering with data and materials, deleting, removing, or skipping the interpretation of difficult data are distrustful.

4. Simultaneous submission of the study to journals is not possible. Authors cannot send their previously published works to the journal.

As of 2020, the TR Index-Journal Evaluation criteria have been updated. The articles related to the ethics committee permission, which should be in scientific research, have been detailed. The "documents and information requested for studies requiring ethics committee approval" is not expected to be applied to studies submitted in previous years, the evaluation process of which has been completed but has not yet been published, and for which research data before 2020 has been used, although the evaluation process is still ongoing. The process will start in 2020, and research data will be mandatory for articles starting in 2020. The articles for which the Ethics Committee Permission Document is required are explained below. EXPLANATION AND INFORMATION on the Ethical Rules Made by TR Index: The articles related to the Code of Ethics, which were included in the previous years' criteria, were detailed with explanations in 2020, and the issue of "includes information about the permission in the article" was added to the criteria, assuming that the permissions were obtained for the studies

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requiring ethics committee permission in the research field.

QUESTION: Is ethics committee approval required for all articles?

No. The criteria state that it applies to “articles that require the permission of the Ethics Committee.”

Studies that require the approval of the Ethics Committee are as follows:

- All kinds of research conducted with qualitative or quantitative approaches require data collection from the participants using surveys, interviews, focus group work, observation, experiments, and interview techniques.
- The use of humans and animals (including material/data) for experimental or other scientific purposes,
- Clinical studies on humans,
- Research on animals,
- Retrospective studies by the law on the protection of personal data,

Also;

- Indicating that an “informed consent form” was received in case reports,
- Obtaining and specifying permission from the owners for the use of scales, questionnaires, photographs belonging to others,
- Indication of compliance with copyright regulations for the intellectual and artistic works used

QUESTION: Should a retrospective Ethics Committee Permission be obtained for publications produced from studies and a thesis completed in previous years?

Retrospective ethics committee approval is not required for articles published before 2020, produced from master's/doctoral studies (must be specified in the article), submitted an application for publication to the journal in the previous year, and accepted but not published.

QUESTION: Are there any restrictions on publications made outside universities with these rules of the TR Directory?

No. Non-university researchers can also apply to the Ethics Committees in their regions.

Also;

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In articles to be published in journals, it should be stated in the article whether ethical committee permission and/or legal/special permission is required. If it is necessary to obtain these permissions, it should clearly state from which institution, on what date, and with which decision or number the permission was obtained.

If the study requires the use of human and animal subjects, an international declaration, guide, etc., should be declared appropriate.

### **B. Ethical Principles for Referees**

1. Referees should know that the evaluation process is confidential and should not be shared with third parties.
2. The referees must submit an objective, impartial, scientific, understandable and constructive evaluation report about the study within the specified time.
3. Referee reports will also include an assessment of the scientific nature of the article (the subject covered, the method used, or the appropriate use of the relevant literature). This evaluation must be made about the content, whether positive or negative.
4. It is not recommended or considered unethical for the reviewer to request citations for their work. If the referee's studies are related to the study he is examining, he can specify one or two studies, but the studies mentioned are advisory, and it is up to the author whether to use the specified studies or not.
5. When it is understood that the work is plagiarized or has been previously published elsewhere, the referees should notify the editor.

### **2. Publication Policy**

1. InTraders International Trade Journal (InTraders) is an international, peer-reviewed and scientific journal. It is published using the publication principles listed below.
2. InTraders aims to contribute to developing science at the national and international levels by creating a platform for publishing scientific studies.
3. InTraders publishes original scientific research in international trade, economics, business, supply chain management, law, and international relations, presenting congress papers, book reviews, and letters to the editor.

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4. InTraders publishes scientific studies in English and Turkish, with the default language being English.
5. InTraders are published electronically twice a year, in the Summer (July) and Autumn (December) terms. It also publishes a special issue if deemed necessary.
6. InTraders does not accept articles for any issue, but articles can be submitted to the journal anytime.
7. InTraders publishes using the TÜBİTAK ULAKBİM DergiPark system. All transactions related to the article are carried out through the DergiPark system.
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16. InTraders undertakes not to publish in violation of publication ethics, and all articles submitted to the journal are subject to plagiarism/similarity control by the editor.

17. Whether the article submitted to InTraders is covered by the journal; the editor checks whether it is uploaded to the system correctly and completely and is prepared properly.

18. InTraders uses a double-blind referee evaluation system. The "positive" opinion of at least two referees is sought for the article's acceptance for publication. If one of the referees gives a "positive" opinion and the other a "negative" opinion, the article is sent to a third referee. The editor completes the referee evaluation process by sending two "positive" referee opinions to the Editorial Board.

19. The Editorial Board decides to publish all articles with two "positive" referee opinions.

20. For articles accepted for publication, the editor sends a "Certificate of Acceptance for Publication" signed by the author upon the author's request.

21. Uses information such as names, titles and e-mail addresses shared on the journal website only for the stated purposes of this journal; It is not used for any other purpose or made available to other people.

22. InTraders accepts the Open Access Principles outlined in the Budapest Open Access Initiative. The journal has accepted the [Budapest Open Access Initiative](#).

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## Analysis of the Relationship Between External Debt and Economic Growth in Central Asian Countries<sup>1</sup>

Aziza Syzdykova<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

In the literature, studies on the relationship between external debt and economic growth are generally shaped around general theoretical and empirical frameworks. This study aims to shed light on the special conditions of the relationship in this region by addressing the external debt structure and economic growth performance of Central Asian countries. Although Central Asian countries entered the independence process with zero debt in 1991, they have received significant foreign debt and aid. The study aims to empirically analyze the relationship between external debt and economic growth in Central Asian countries based on available statistical data. In the application part of the study, the relationship between the variables was examined with the Westerlund (2007) cointegration test using data from 1995-2022 in Central Asian countries. The panel FMOLS method was used to estimate long-term coefficients between variables. According to the results, the long-term regression coefficient between external debt and economic growth in Central Asian countries is -0.1493. This means that when the external debt stock increases by 1% in these countries, economic growth decreases by approximately 0.15%. When evaluated on a country basis, the relationship between external debt and economic growth was negative in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, while it was positive in Uzbekistan. The results found for Turkmenistan are statistically insignificant. The findings are expected to guide economic policymakers, academics and international stakeholders.

**Keywords:** *Central Asian countries, developing countries, external debt, economic growth, panel cointegration*

**JEL Codes:** *C33, E62, G15, O40*

### INTRODUCTION

Among the basic goals of societies, ensuring social and political development and increasing the national income level are of great importance. These goals bring with them the problem of financing the elements that will ensure progress in the relevant areas. In order to achieve growth and development, the use of foreign resources comes into play, and especially underdeveloped and developing countries have to borrow for industrialization initiatives that require high budgets. Foreign borrowing, which means that individuals and organizations resident in the country obtain credit from individuals and organizations resident in other countries, can also be used for purposes such as eliminating foreign trade and budget deficits, financing defense expenditures, rolling over debts and covering extraordinary expenses. However, foreign resource transfers are preferred not only by countries that have not completed their development process but also by developed

<sup>1</sup> There is not a conflict of interest.

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countries due to their effects on protecting and providing economic balance.

If external debt is used to finance productive investments, its positive effect on national output is reversed because it causes an unrequited flow of funds during the periods when repayments are made. In addition, debts that cannot be paid on time can lead to a debt crisis by imposing a financial burden on the economy, and the problems that arise as a result can make economic balances more vulnerable to external shocks. Therefore, the debt burden problem and the need to limit debt constitute one of the important issues today. On the other hand, there is no common view in the literature on the direction of the relationship between external debt and economic growth. Some studies have found a statistically significant negative relationship between external debt and economic growth, while others have found a statistically insignificant negative relationship. In some studies, a statistically insignificant positive relationship has been obtained. There is no empirical study in the literature investigating the relationship between external debt and economic growth for Central Asian countries.

Central Asian countries include Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. After these countries gained independence, they implemented many structural reforms and privatization programs as they transitioned to market economies (Syzdykova, 2018). The countries in question resorted to external debt to overcome the economic difficulties they experienced in the first years of independence. Although the Central Asian countries started the process of independence in 1991 without debt, they have received a significant amount of foreign loans and aid to this day. Central Asian countries, especially the Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan, are among the countries with high external debt. In this context, studying the relationship between external debt and economic growth in these countries is essential. This study aims to examine the relationship between external debt and economic growth in Central Asian countries in transition. For this purpose, empirical studies on the topic were introduced after the introductory part of the article, and their results were discussed. The total foreign debts and structures of the Central Asian countries were evaluated. The data set and research method were then explained. The last part includes the analysis results, and the research is finished with the final part.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The relationship between foreign debt and economic growth began to be mentioned with Keynes and later continued with Harrod-Domar. In the growth model created by Harrod-Domar, it is claimed that there is a close relationship between the investment savings rate and growth in an economy. When external resources are used in investment financing, investments will increase and as a result, high growth rates will be achieved. According to this model, when external debts are transferred to investments, it will cause an increase in domestic resources depending on the increase in national income. Increasing domestic savings will reduce the

need for external debts and financing will be provided for external debt service payments (Zhu et al.2018).

In the neoclassical model, the relationship between external debt and economic growth is positive. This approach is incomplete due to its unrealistic assumption of full capital mobility. The generally accepted proposition is that the external debt burden negatively affects economic growth. In the long run, external debts have two different effects resulting from the taxes required to finance their payments. The first effect is that taxes directly reduce taxpayers' consumption. The other effect is that, with the decrease in disposable income, taxes reduce individuals' savings and thus reduce the capital stock (Patillo et al.2002).

The " growth cum debt" puts forward the argument that investments that cannot be realized due to the domestic savings deficit will be covered by foreign borrowing (Nissanke & Ferrarini, 2004). The aim here is to analyze the debt service capacity according to the benefits and costs of external resources in the process of economic growth. In order to maintain debt capacity, additional external debts must contribute sufficiently to economic growth over time. This is because the behavior of international financial resources providers may change at different stages of the debt cycle (Karadam, 2018).

The main theoretical explanation between external debt stock and economic growth is the "debt overhang" theory (Hwang et al.2010). According to the theory, if the debt stock exceeds the country's ability to repay in the future, the expected debt service is an increasing function of the country's output level (Krugman, 1988). Therefore, investments in the country's economy will be taxed by foreign creditors, and the incentives of domestic and foreign investors to invest will decrease. Krugman established a debt overhang model regarding the dilemma of debt repayments from the perspective of creditors. According to Krugman, if the discounted value of a country's future resource transfers is less than the current value of its debts, that country has a debt problem. Faced with this problem, creditors are trying to find strategies aimed at maximizing the current value of debts. In countries where debt excess begins to become chronic, domestic and foreign entrepreneurs tend to make lower investments both in the current period and in the future. Investors expect taxes on returns to cover debt service. Any deflationary or inflationary policy implementation by the government deters investors (Patillo et al.2002). Excessive indebtedness negatively affects investments and causes lower economic growth (Ikonen, 2017).

The empirical literature highlights several types of relationships between external debt and economic growth. Some empirical studies seek answers to the question of the amount of debt. Developing countries are especially trying to complete their economic development through foreign borrowing, which is one of the most common types of financing. How and to what extent external debt affects economic growth is a much-discussed issue in the literature. The theoretical literature on this topic developed mainly due to the debt crisis in Latin America in the 1980s (Presbitero, 2005). According to the general theory, foreign debt reduces economic growth. Although



many empirical studies support this theory, some have found a non-significant relationship. Eberhardt and Presbitero (2015) investigated the linear and nonlinear relationship between public external debt and economic growth with data from 1961-2012. A total of 118 countries were included in the analysis, including 22 low-income, 27 lower-middle-income, 33 upper-middle-income and 36 high-income countries. After performing the panel cointegration analysis, it was estimated with a long-run coefficient estimator. As a result, there is a negative relationship between public external debt and long-term growth, and the degree of this relationship varies from country to country. Siddique et al. (2015) analyzed the impact of external debt burden on economic growth for more than 40 highly indebted countries, including the Kyrgyz Republic, one of the Central Asian countries, with data from 1970 to 2007. The results of the empirical analysis show that in the short term and in the long term, reducing the debt stock significantly increases the growth performance of indebted countries.

Kamacı (2016) studied the effect of foreign borrowing on economic growth and inflation in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkey and Turkmenistan with data from 1995-2014. Panel cointegration and panel causality analysis revealed a long-run relationship between external borrowing and economic growth and inflation. However, according to the results obtained from the causal analysis, although there is a unidirectional relationship between external debt and economic growth, the causal relationship between external debt and inflation has yet to be determined. Kharusi and Ada (2018) found that external debt has a negative and significant effect on economic growth in Oman. It recommends more efficient use of external debt to influence positive growth.

Zhang et al. (2020) investigated the causal relationship between external debt and economic growth in developing countries, finding bidirectional causality between the two variables. Zuhroh and Pristiva (2022) found that external debt has a significant positive effect on economic growth in South Asian countries. Azretbergenova et al. (2022) examined the relationship between external debt and economic growth in the BRIC countries. The study found a long-term negative relationship between external debt and economic growth with a regression coefficient -0.1108.

Gurung (2023) stated that external debt has a negative impact on economic growth in Nepal. Shah et al. (2023) found a negative and significant relationship between external debt and economic growth in developing countries. Ale et al. (2023) found a significant negative relationship between foreign debt and economic growth in South Asian countries, both in the long run and in the short run. The authors recommend encouraging domestic savings and investment to reduce dependence on foreign debt. Heimberger (2023) applies meta-regression methods to 816 estimates from 47 primary studies. The unweighted average of the presented results shows that a 10% increase in the public debt-to-GDP ratio is associated with a 0.14% decrease in the annual

growth rate with a 95% probability. Abate (2023) examines the nature of the relationship between public debt and economic growth in Ethiopia. For this purpose, time series data from 1982-2018 were used. Nonlinear ARDL and multiple marginal nonlinear ARDL models were used to determine the relationship asymmetry between Ethiopia's external debt and economic growth. An instrumental variable regression model with a quadratic specification was used to test the marginal effect of debt. The results show evidence to support the existence of an asymmetric relationship between the indicated variables. Accordingly, it was found that a significant positive debt shock is favourable to economic growth, while a minor and negative debt shock is unfavourable. The results further show that debt has a marginal effect when the external debt-to-GDP ratio is below 66.75%, which benefits Ethiopia's economic growth. Debts above this threshold will impair the country's economic growth. The study recommends that the Ethiopian government create an enabling environment to help secure more loans from potential creditors while keeping annual debt well below 66.75% of GDP.

A study by Yamin et al. (2023) carefully examines the theoretical and empirical literature on the impact of external debt on economic growth in developed and developing economies. The authors aim to determine whether there is mutual agreement on the impact of external debt on economic growth. As a result, it determines a number of conflicting information about the relative impact of foreign debt on economic growth. Although most of the reviewed literature supports the negative effect of external debt on economic growth, several other studies have found long-term positive effects of external debt on economic growth through the fiscal multiplier effect. The article finds that several other studies support the hypothesis that no relationship exists between external debt and economic growth. Overall, these theoretical models and empirical studies show inconclusive results based on various criteria, such as the level of development of the sampled countries, the methodology used, data coverage, and the researchers' choice of control variables.

## METHODOLOGY

This study aims to examine the relationship between external debt and economic growth in Central Asian countries. An empirical model was created within the framework of panel data analysis using the external debt stock and growth indicators of 5 countries under analysis (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) for the period 1995-2022. The developed empirical model is as follows:

$$\ln growth_{it} = \alpha_{it} + \beta_{it} \ln edebt_{it} + e_{it} \quad (1)$$

$i = 1, \dots, 5$  in equation 1 indicates countries and time period = 1995, 1996 ... 2022.  $\ln$  represents the natural logarithm of the variables, and  $\varepsilon$  is the stochastic error term. In the study, the dependent variable expressed as «*growth*» is the GDP of each country, while the variable «*edebt*» is the external debt stock of each country. Data on variables were obtained from the official website of the World Bank in US dollars.

This study uses Westerlund's (2007) panel cointegration test to examine the long-run relationship between external debt and economic growth in Central Asian countries. The panel FMOLS method was used to estimate long-run coefficients. Westerlund (2007) proposed a 4-panel cointegration test based on an error correction model to test the presence of cointegration. The basis of the tests is to check for cointegration by deciding whether each unit has its correction. Thus, when the main hypothesis of "no error correction" is rejected, the hypothesis of "no cointegration" is also rejected. The following error correction pattern applies:

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta Y_{it} = & \delta'_i d_t + \alpha_i (Y_{i,t-1} - \beta'_i X_{i,t-1}) \\ & + \sum_{j=1}^{p_i} \varphi_{ij} \Delta Y_{i,t-j} + \sum_{j=-q_i}^{p_i} \gamma_{ij} \Delta X_{i,t-j} + \varepsilon_{it} \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

Moreover, rearranged as follows:

$$\Delta Y_{it} = \delta'_i d_t + \alpha_i Y_{i,t-1} + \lambda'_i X_{i,t-1} + \sum_{j=1}^{p_i} \varphi_{ij} \Delta Y_{i,t-j} + \sum_{j=-q_i}^{p_i} \gamma_{ij} \Delta X_{i,t-j} + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (3)$$

$d_t$  in equations 2 and 3 is a vector of deterministic components (constant and trend);  $\lambda_i$  is long-term,  $\gamma_i$  and  $\varphi_i$  are short-term parameters. Similar to the Pedroni (2001a) test, the autoregressive parameter can be estimated in two ways: specific to each unit or specific to the entire panel. In the first type of statistic, called the "panel variance coefficient statistic," the autoregressive parameter is assumed to be constant for all units. In the second type of statistic, the "group mean-variance coefficient statistic," the autoregressive parameter varies from unit to unit.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data on foreign debts of Central Asian countries after independence are given in Tables 1 and 2. Data on external debt in the form of total external debt stock and their ratio to GDP and total exports of the respective countries were obtained from World Bank data. Central Asian countries, which had zero debt in 1991, could borrow significantly in the first four years after independence, as shown in Table 1. In the current period, the total debt stock increased systematically in all of these countries except Turkmenistan. According to the results of 2022, the total external debt fund of Kazakhstan is 161.7 billion dollars. After Kazakhstan, the country with the most significant external debt is Uzbekistan, and its external debt fund is about 49.1 billion dollars. As can be seen from Table 1, Uzbekistan's external debt has proliferated since 2020. It can be seen that the country with the least foreign debt in Central Asia is Turkmenistan, which has a foreign debt of 4.5 billion US dollars.

**Table 1:** Total Stock of External Debt in Central Asian Countries (billion US dollars)

Countries/Years	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2021	2022
Kazakhstan	3,75	12,89	43,86	119,15	153,47	161,46	160,81	161,72
Kyrgyz Republic	0,61	1,94	2,26	4,12	7,72	8,68	9,06	9,53
Tajikistan	0,63	1,14	1,12	3,56	5,14	6,90	6,97	6,74
Turkmenistan	0,40	2,63	1,15	1,68	7,00	5,64	4,85	4,51
Uzbekistan	1,80	4,95	4,63	7,98	13,39	33,71	40,84	49,10
Source: Compiled by the author with World Bank data.								

Table 2 shows the ratio of total external debt of Central Asian countries to GDP and total exports of countries. According to the IMF and the World Bank, if the total foreign debt to GDP ratio exceeds 50 per cent, this country is considered highly indebted. The corresponding country is considered a medium-debt country if the total debt-to-GDP ratio is between 30% and 50%. Accordingly, all countries except Turkmenistan, namely Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, are in the category of countries with high debt. Turkmenistan's total external debt to GDP ratio was 16.20% in 1995, which will be 7.98% in 2022. With this indicator, Turkmenistan is among the countries with the lowest debt. In general, the ratio of external debt to GDP in Central Asian countries has the highest indicator in the Kyrgyz Republic, which is 82.51%. Tajikistan and Uzbekistan's total external debt/GDP ratio is 64.28 and 61.08%, respectively.

**Table 2:** Ratio of Total Foreign Debt to GDP and Exports (%)

	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2021	2022
<b>Kazakhstan</b>								
External debt/GDP	18,41	70,47	76,78	80,48	83,23	94,37	81,59	71,72
External debt/Export	62,76	126,05	138,01	178,36	320,90	327,67	224,21	172,81
<b>Kyrgyz Republic</b>								
External debt/GDP	36,69	141,48	91,72	85,90	115,60	104,91	97,97	82,51
External debt/Export	136,02	338,21	238,48	187,04	318,35	356,25	275,26	262,53
<b>Tajikistan</b>								
External debt/GDP	51,14	132,55	48,30	63,12	62,19	84,87	77,99	64,28
External debt/Export	-	-	227,00	422,89	623,76	489,91	322,50	384,78
<b>Turkmenistan*</b>								
External debt/GDP	16,20	90,44	14,23	7,45	19,56	12,30	9,70	7,98
<b>Uzbekistan</b>								
External debt/GDP	13,49	35,96	32,37	16,04	15,53	55,98	58,68	61,08
External debt/Export	-	-	82,99	66,16	113,00	231,91	248,38	203,78
*Note: Export data for Turkmenistan could not be accessed.								

Source: Compiled by the author with World Bank data.

The empirical analysis in the article begins with a test of cross-sectional dependence. The cross-sectional dependence test is important for the series that make up the panel. The presence of cross-sectional dependence is important for determining the unit root and other types of analysis used in later stages of the analysis. Cross-sectional dependence can be defined as the instantaneous correlation between series. The results related to cross-sectional dependence are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Cross-sectional dependence test results

Variables	LM (Breusch, Pagan 1980)		CD <sub>LM</sub> (Pesaran 2004 )	
	Test statistics	Probability value	Test statistics	Probability value
<i>lngrowth</i>	-0.893	0.008	-3.729	0.002
<i>lnedebt</i>	46.765	0.016	53.875	0.006

According to the results, the null hypothesis of cross-sectional independence for the *growth* and *growth* variables in the model is rejected. Accordingly, there is a dependence between growth and the cross-sectional units of the external debt series. It is unrealistic to assume that the cross-sectional units that make up the panel will never interact with each other under any shock conditions. Because of the cross-sectional dependence of the series used in the study, a second-generation unit root test was used to account for this condition. Pesaran's CADF test was used for this type of analysis. In his study, Pesaran (2007) proposed a method of surrogate variables instead of self-inference and estimation of factorial predicates for situations where horizontal dependence is identified. This method is called "Covariate Augmented Dickey-Fuller (CADF)" because the ADF regression is augmented with lagged cross-sectional means.

**Table 4:** Pesaran panel unit root test results

Variables	Level		1 <sup>st</sup> difference	
	$\bar{t}$	%5	$\bar{t}$	%5
<i>lngrowth</i>				
Intercept	-1.936	-2.330	-5.082**	-2.330
Intercept&Trend	-2.528	-2.830	-5.564**	-2.830
<i>lnedebt</i>				
Intercept	-2.193	-2.330	-5.247**	-2.330
Intercept&Trend	-2.604	-2.830	-4.545**	-2.830
<i>Note:</i> ** denotes 5% significance level.				

As a result of the unit root test, it can be seen in Table 4 that the level values are not constant, although there is a trend from the deterministic components. This means that the shock effects in the series do not disappear over time. When taking the first difference, the variables become stationary according to all statistical test values; they have an I (1) process. Since one-order stationarity is established, cointegration analysis can be started. After examining the stationarity of the series that make up the panel, the cointegration test used is decided on the basis of the obtained information. When making the assumptions of panel cointegration tests, the degree of stationarity of the variables changes the type of test used. The series considered in the study includes cross-sectional dependence.

For this reason, the study used Westerlund's (2007) panel cointegration test (Table 5). In his study, Westerlund (2007) proposed four-panel cointegration tests to test the presence of cointegration in panel data. The basis of the tests is to check for cointegration by deciding whether each unit has its error correction.

**Table 5:** Westerlund (2007) panel cointegration test results

Test	Test statistics	z value	p-value	Constant p-value
$G_t$	-3.257	-3.212	0.001*	0.001*
$G_a$	-36.931	-10.304	0.025**	0.000*
$P_t$	-8.104	-2.127	0.020**	0.194
$P_a$	-16.675	-3.780	0.010*	0.040**

*Note:* \* and \*\* indicate 1% and 5% significance levels, respectively.

According to the results of the cointegration test, it is decided that there is a cointegration relationship between the series. In other words, tests performed with baseline values do not contain spurious regression. According to the results of the cointegration test, looking at the strong probability values of the test statistics that take into account horizontal dependence in Central Asian countries, it is concluded that there is a long-term relationship between external debt and economic growth at the 5% significance level in the long run. The long-term cointegration vector of the model defined by the numerical expressions of the cross-sectional dependence and the cointegration relation was estimated by the FMOLS (Full et al.) estimator developed by Pedroni (2001). The FMOLS method stands out as an unbiased and consistent method by correcting biases caused by problems such as OLS (ordinary least squares), autocorrelation, and heteroscedasticity in standard fixed effect estimators. Allowing for significant heterogeneity among individual cross-sections, the FMOLS method also considers possible correlations between the constant term, the error term, and the variance of the independent variables. The results of estimation by the Panel FMOLS method are as follows (Table 6):

**Table 6:** FMOLS test results

Countries	Coefficient	t-Statistics	Standard deviation
Kazakhstan	-0.1058*	-30.04088	0.19709
Kyrgyz Republic	-0.1650*	-9.03094	0.04403
Tajikistan	-0.1137**	-12.04346	0.08437
Turkmenistan	0.0370	-4.27144	0.10113
Uzbekistan	0.0532*	-27.74082	0.04508
Panel	-0.1493*	-1.75505	0.04907

*Note:* \* and \*\* indicate 1% and 5% significance levels, respectively.

According to the results, the estimated long-term regression coefficient between external debt and economic growth is -0.1493. According to empirical findings, there is an inverse relationship between economic growth and external debt, and the results are consistent with the theory. If the external debt stock increases by 1%, economic growth will decrease by about 0.15%. By country, the relationship between external debt and economic growth is positive for Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan and negative for Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan. Although a positive relationship was found between the variables in Turkmenistan, it is statistically insignificant. In Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan, the external debt fund increases by 1%, while economic growth decreases by 0.10%, -0.16%, and -0.11% in these countries, respectively. And in Uzbekistan, a 1% increase in foreign debt increases economic growth by 0.05%.

## CONCLUSION

In the literature, according to the relationship between external debt and economic growth, external debt has a positive effect on growth up to a certain level. If it exceeds this level, the relationship between economic growth and external debt becomes negative due to excessive debt. The increase in foreign debts in Central Asian countries has become an essential economic problem, as in many other developing countries. The study examined the relationship between external debt and economic growth in Central Asian countries using the panel cointegration method. For this purpose, annual data from 1995-2022 were used. As a result of the applied Westerlund (2007) panel cointegration test, a long-run relationship between external debt and economic growth variables in Central Asian countries was determined. The long-run cointegration vector was then estimated with a panel FMOLS estimator. According to the results, the long-term regression coefficient between foreign debt and economic growth in Central Asian countries is -0.1493. This means that if the external debt stock increases by 1% in Central Asian countries, economic growth will decrease by about 0.15%. When considering countries individually, the relationship between external debt and economic growth was negative in Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan and positive in Uzbekistan. The results found for Turkmenistan are meaningless. In order to solve the problem of foreign debt in Central Asian countries, it is necessary to manage foreign debt effectively. The basis of these countries' external debt problems lies in insufficient domestic savings. Therefore, the policy of increasing domestic savings should be implemented to reduce the need for foreign debt. Other challenges in countries include reducing the shadow economy and tax evasion, effectively fighting corruption, and increasing funds allocated to productive investments by reducing public spending.

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## Reading The Literature on Female Labor Force Participation Rates with Content Analysis<sup>1</sup>

Berna Balcı İzgi<sup>2</sup> Belma Suna<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

This study aims to examine the literature on female labor force participation rates (FLFP) through content analysis. Data samples include international scientific research articles from the Scopus database (2000-2023). Data were collected by transferring the articles to the MAXQDA 2020 software and coding the themes with the software. Expert review was used to ensure the reliability of the research. The study allowed us to see the changing dimensions of the subject in the reviewed articles. The focal points of the literature reviewed are; the research method used in the publications, the theoretical framework, the increase in FLFP (female labor force participation) and its reasons, the reasons for the decrease, the direction and magnitude of the variables affecting FLFP, and how it changes over time starting from the date of publication. In the reviewed literature, the main reasons for the increase in FLFP and the main reasons for the decrease in FLFP come to the fore.

The reasons for the increase in FLFP are; education, increasing childcare opportunities, age factor, adaptation to home technologies, women being married and wages being effective, respectively. Accordingly, the "wage factor" is not that important in the increase in FLFP.

The reasons for the decrease in FLFP are fertility, alcohol consumption and transportation problems. These obstacles are generally gender-related, psychological and economic. An important finding of the study is that these three factors - gender-related, psychological and economic - should be supported in increasing FLFP. This result, which is especially important for policy makers, reveals the factors that should be taken into consideration in increasing FLFP. When the samples of the articles in the reviewed literature are examined, it is seen that there are detailed analyses covering countries such as European and Central Asian countries, OECD countries, Tokyo, Korea, Australia, USA, Chile and Turkey. In this respect, the content analysis conducted has allowed us to see which aspects of the FLFP issue are prominent in different countries around the world.

Increasing female labor force participation (FLFP) is an important potential to stimulate economies and promote growth. However, due to the weak global growth outlook and some other reasons, many countries cannot fully utilize this potential. In countries where flfp is low, the potential to increase FLFP is high. In this respect, it is hoped that this article will contribute to the literature in terms of enabling us to see the aspects of the reasons of the weak FLFP and how to increase it.

**Keywords:** *Female Labor Force Participation (FLFP), Gender Economics, Content Analysis*

**JEL Codes:** *J16, B21*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Studies on female labour force participation (FLFP) rates began in the 1960s, recognizing the importance of women's participation in social life. The increasing interest in this subject has continued in every period. The most important reason for this is the contribution of the female workforce to economic growth and development. In addition, reducing women's poverty is the basis for reducing poverty. In order to provide a more equitable balance in society in general, it is essential to understand and support the female workforce in every aspect of gender equality. From innovation and entrepreneurship to wage policies, home and private life balance and many other topics constitute the field of research.

There are many macroeconomic, sociological, cultural, ethnic and psychological constraints behind female employment. It is essential to examine these constraints in terms of why the issue is so crucial. In this way, the structural correction of the mentioned constraints and the implementation of developmental policies can be provided. Although there have been many developments in this regard to date, there are still some inequalities and difficulties. Providing a more self-confident female workforce is a development that will contribute to society in many ways.

## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The issue of women's participation in the workforce has progressed with the neoclassical economic theory and methods taken from labour economics. According to the labour-leisure preference theory, the labor force participation rate is considered together with the expected market wage and the value women give to the time they spend on housework. According to the neoclassical theory, labour supply depends on the choice between work and leisure and is an increasing function of the real wage. Labour demand is a function of the real wage. Studies in the field of women's participation in the workforce, which is also of interest to fields such as sociology, feminism and social policies in addition to economics, can be examined in three groups;

The labour-leisure preference model is a model in which the first group of studies are included. Studies in this group are (Mincer, 1962; Becker 1985). Both studies analyzed the process of women choosing between housework and the market. In his famous article, Mincer (1962) estimated a labour supply function for the USA. Mincer's work contributed in two ways. First, it stated that the choice was not just a two-way but a three-way choice. He stated that there was a triple choice between leisure and paid work but between leisure, paid work and unpaid housework or family work. The result of this triple choice would be a family decision. This family decision depends on the husband's income, the wife's earnings, market goods, household goods and their relative desires for leisure. One example is the substitutability of market goods with household goods (such as

whether a woman can buy a washing machine or pay a commercial laundromat to undertake this part of the housework). Secondly, Mincer used Milton Friedman's theory of consumption and stated that consumption expenditure changes according to current income (absolute income hypothesis). Usually, a family where the head of the family earns \$10,000 yearly, for example, tends to spend \$8,000 per year on consumption. Suppose the head of the household's regular income temporarily drops to \$5,000. In that case, the family will continue to spend \$8,000 because they have adjusted their spending and living habits to the long-term income. The Becker Model (1985) examined women's time on housework and participation in labour. He stated that due to childcare and housework responsibilities, the hourly earnings of married women are lower than those of married men in the same market. In another study, according to the 1971 Canadian census data, it was determined that women who are more educated and live in cities have fewer children than other women and provide more labour to the market. Non-labour income and the husband's wages do not significantly affect fertility, but the husband's wages reduce women's labour supply (Carliner et al., 1980).

The second group of studies is various labour force participation models. These studies, in which factors such as education, income level, and child care come to the forefront, are widespread. The prominent labour force participation models are the neoclassical, labour force supply, and human capital models. In the neoclassical model, the individual's utility maximization and labour market conditions are the main arguments for women's labour force participation. This model explains women's labour force participation by factors such as education level, income expectations, and childcare costs. Humphries & Sarasúa (2012) conceptualizes the trend in women's labour force participation in Europe using a U-shaped model. It is stated that supply-side factors such as marital status, number and age of children are the main determinants of modern women's decision to enter the labour force. The labour force supply model focuses on women's desire to work and the labour market equivalent of this desire. In this model, wages, non-labour income, and childcare costs come to the forefront. The human capital model focuses on women's level of education, skill acquisition, and the economic return of these skills. According to this model, education and skills are crucial for FLFP.

The third group of studies (Blau Kahn, 2017; Kunze, 2018) examines the issue of gender wage inequality. The models of neoclassical economics based on the individual emphasize being rational, autonomous, self-interested, and maximizing profit or benefit under external constraints. Feminist economics, on the other hand, argues that features such as abundance and altruism, as well as the concepts of scarcity and competition, are ignored. For this reason, women's labour needs to be discussed correctly and adequately as an argument. The data collection and analysis standards of neoclassical economics have some difficulties in analyzing the feminist economics side. One of the essential reasons for this is the difficulty of investigating and measuring issues such as power relations at home and the subtle processes that create the glass ceiling in the business

world. Therefore, in feminist theory, as in economic literature, the causes of gender wage gaps and policies aimed at reducing these gaps have been examined.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This section covers the articles that constitute the subject of this study and the broader literature. Studies that address similar variables are grouped in the same paragraph. Accordingly, the popular u-curve is one of the notable titles in the development and growth literature. There are many studies supporting the literature on the U-curve that the labour force participation rates of married women first decrease and then increase during the development and growth process (Goldin, 1994; Tansel, 2002; Tsani et al., 2013; et al., 2021; Besamusca et al., 2015). The U-curve emerges both in the economic development process and in the past of current developed economies. However, the income effect weakens at some point, and the substitution effect strengthens. According to the study by Tunalı, Kırdar and Dayıođlu (2021), the Female Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) in Turkey has reached the turning point of the U-shaped pattern found elsewhere and has been rising since 2008. In reaching this turning point, the effect of the "culture" factor has weakened.

Women's labour force participation is affected by many variables, starting from the level of education, services received for housework, non-wage benefits worked, relative prices of goods and services, household members and age (Taymaz, 2010, p. 10). Another similar study examines women's labour force participation by year according to education, marital status and age groups (Korkmaz and Korkut, 2012). Accordingly, if women's employment is increased, the labour force participation rate will also increase. Çatalbaş (2020) examined the data of 12 regions at the IBSS-1 level for the period 2008-2013 with panel data analysis to analyze the factors affecting women's labour force participation rate in Turkey. As a result, it was found that the fertility rate, divorce rate, unregistered employment, economic crises and education are the most critical factors affecting the female labour force.

It has been observed that there is extensive literature on the decrease and increase of FLFP. According to Tansel (2002), there are three main reasons for the low FLFP: younger societies have more extended education periods. Increases in schooling rates delay entry into the labour force. Second, the labour force shift from the agricultural sector to the non-agricultural sector is a reason. Participation rates in the agricultural sector are higher than in the non-agricultural sector. The third reason for the decline is the early retirement plan. Over the last decade, Lassassi and Tansel's (2020) study examines female labour force participation (FLFP) behaviour in five MENA countries, namely Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, and Tunisia. As in other MENA countries, low FLFP rates in these countries are well documented. The analysis includes a breakdown by rural/urban regional disparity, marital status, and level of education. Possible government policies to increase FLFP rates are discussed accordingly.

According to Dođrul (2002), being single increases the probability of women participating in the labour force, while being married decreases it. In the study conducted with data obtained from the TÜİK 2003 Household Budget Survey, it was stated that women become more willing to participate in the labour force as their level of education increases. Women's roles as mothers at home do not negatively affect their participation in the labour force. The reason for this can be shown as increasing family expenses with the number of children, which can increase the need for money.

According to Evans and Kelly (2008), increasing female education and decreasing fertility significantly increase women's labour force participation and working hours. According to the study's findings, education significantly increases women's labour force participation, while the variable of being married does not have a very significant effect. While women having young children decreases participation, family-related effects do not change much over time, and it has been found that women over the age of 55 tend to work less on average. According to the posterior estimation made with cross-sectional data for 2019 in the study of Beceren and İzgi (2021), it has been found that the human capital index increases the FLFP of young women between the ages of 15-24 with a coefficient of 2.47. It has also been found that gender discrimination has a negative significant effect on young women's labour force participation rates.

Women in rural areas, where the expectation of participating in the labour market is high, are also likely to migrate, which causes a decrease in women's labour force participation rate. Dayıođlu and Kırdar (2010) examined the demographic and economic factors of women's labour force participation with the help of the Household Labor Force Survey of the Turkish Statistical Institute in 2000. The authors determined that the geographical change in the share of the rural population may be partially effective in the decrease in women's labour force participation. The authors drew attention to the unemployment variable. According to the study of İlkkaracan (2012), the supply-side constraints arising from the widespread informal sector employment and the lack of paid work-family reconciliation measures are also a factor that reduces the female labour force participation rate. The increase in the burying rate in society also reduces female labour force participation (McManus & Johnson:2020). The increase in crime can explain and exacerbate the existing gender inequalities in labour force participation. Mishra et al. (2021) investigate the possible asymmetric impact of crime on labour force participation rates of women and men in India. The paper finds that, on average, a 1% increase in total crime reduces women's participation by 0.015%, while it increases men's participation in activities away from home by 0.012%. Therefore, crime may be one of the factors contributing to the worsening of the gender gap in labour force participation rates observed during the period this study was conducted. The increasing gender gap in labour force participation rates may further worsen gender inequality in India at this critical point in economic development. Another possible explanation for the decline in participation rates in rural areas is the



decline in agricultural wages due to deteriorating agricultural conditions. When examining the trade between agriculture and manufacturing, it is found that the deterioration in agricultural terms of trade after 2000 partially explains the decline in participation rates in rural areas after 2000. In addition, low-skilled women's labour force participation rate ranged between 10.9 and 11.8% during 2000-2006. These are considerably low rates compared to low-skilled men, who ranged between 67.1 and 68.8% during the same period. Comparing the wages of the two groups to explain this significant difference between the participation rates of low-skilled men and women, Dayıoğlu and Kırdar (2010) found that although there was an improvement in women's wages compared to men's, women's wages were still very low, with more than 75% of women earning less than the minimum wage. These low market wages, resulting from the large household sector in Turkey, high reservation wages and very long working hours, probably explain why so few of them participate in the labour force.

Yenilmez and Işıklı (2010) compared Turkey's female labor force participation rate with that of other countries in the world. They stated that religion, as well as social values, have an important effect on women.

By analyzing the local government, Kawabata and Abe (2018) found intra-metropolitan disparities in FLFP, regular employment, and part-time employment rates. Investigating the intra-metropolitan spatial patterns of FLFP and their relationship to commuting times in Tokyo, the study finds that they vary significantly by marital status and the presence of children. For married mothers, the spatial clusters of low participation and regular employment rates were very large in inner suburbs, many overlapping with spatial clusters where men have longer commutes. The spatial regression results show that for married mothers, longer commute times were significantly associated with lower participation and regular employment rates, while for unmarried and childless married women, these relationships are mostly insignificant.

To understand the effects of reproductive activities on women's paid work, it is necessary to consider whether the tasks assigned to the woman in question are supported by other family members (Dedeoğlu, 2000: 151).

According to Ulutaş (2009), over time, as social solutions and organized resistance strategies have given way to poverty aid and local strategies, women have tried to meet the vital needs of the family by taking the largest share possible to access all of the poverty aid. This situation results in women's impoverishment and has also become a method of coping with poverty for poor women.

Increasing and supporting FLFP leads to a higher level of welfare. İzgi (2022) investigates the effects of foreign trade, unemployment and political stability on FLFP rates with panel data using FE, RE, and Driscoll-Kraay standard and CCE standard errors. The sample consists of nine Black Sea Cooperation (BSEC) member countries for the period (1999-2021). The findings of the three models applied: 1) FGLS (heteroskedastic), 2) FGLS (homoskedastic) AR(1) and no autocorrelation and 3) Prais Winsten results are consistent with each

other. The findings show that exports have a positive effect. According to Taşseven et al. (2016), the panel logit model examined female labour force participation in OECD countries (1990-2013). According to the model, the unemployment rate, gross domestic product per capita, and fertility rate positively and significantly affect the FLFP.

Lasassi and Tansel's (2020) study examines female labour force participation (FLFP) behaviour in five MENA countries, Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, and Tunisia, over the last decade. Low FLFP rates in these countries, as in other MENA countries, are well documented. Using the age-period-cohort (APC) methodology, the study separates the PFP into age, period, and cohort effects. It discusses the implications of the results for possible government policies to increase FLFP rates.

Women's participation in the workforce is affected by the stages of the life course. It is possible that extended paid parental leave and part-time work rights may encourage women who would otherwise have a stronger commitment to part-time jobs or lower-level positions. On the employer side, such policies may lead employers to statistically discriminate against women for jobs leading to higher-level positions if employers need to know which women will take advantage of these options and which will not. Therefore, the possibility of women being considered for higher-level positions decreases (Blau & Kahn, 2013:255).

According to Özer and Biçerli (2003), who investigated the factors affecting the FLFP in Turkey (1988-2001), restricted least squares regression with fixed effects and random effects models with unit-specific fixed terms were used using panel data for all of Turkey, rural and urban areas. While no significant results were obtained from the many macro variables tested in the models, significant results were obtained from the variables of the rate of homemakers in the female active population, the rate of unpaid family workers in the employed female labour force and the rate of total retirees in the population aged 12+. This situation was expressed as an indicator that women were not integrated into the labour markets for the period in question, and emphasis was placed on examining its sociological aspect. Güçlü (2017) analyzed spatial panel regression models for the period 2008-2013 with (macro) data from 26 regions at the NUTS-2 Ö level in order to examine the factors determining the regional labour force participation of women in Turkey. Accordingly, it was concluded that the factors determining women's regional labour force participation are education, marital status, the ratio of dependent children to parents, migration and unemployment. In addition to these results, it was determined that there is a spatial dependency between the regions and indirect effects (spillover effects) of the factors determining regional labour force participation. Therefore, the effects of the factors determining women's labour force participation in a region on the participation rates of that region and neighbouring regions were determined separately.

According to Göksel (2013), three indices that can affect FLFP were determined: religion, social norms and

conservatism. The results are consistent with previous literature that shows that urbanization and education levels play an important role in FLFP. Another important innovation of this article is determining the effect of social norms and religion on rural and urban areas. While these factors negatively affect women's employment in urban areas, no significant effect is observed in rural areas. Özkaplan (2009) stated that gendered roles, expectations, and emotional labour create, feed and restructure the female/male work stratification and the wage gap. He stated that care work is seen as an exception for men in both home and work life, while it is seen as mandatory for women.

Karaoğlan and Ökten (2012) analyze the labour supply responses of married women to husbands losing their jobs (additional worker effect) and worsening unemployment conditions (discouraged worker effect). Using annual cross-sectional data from Turkey for the period 2000-2010, married women whose husbands are unemployed or underemployed are found to be more likely to participate in the labour force and work more hours. Women whose husbands lose their jobs are found to be more likely to increase their labour force participation. It is noted that worsening general unemployment conditions discourage women's labour supply response, and husbands tend to reduce their labour force participation when unemployment rates in their regions increase.

In recent studies, it is seen that there is a perspective that examines different topics on female labour force participation. So, there are changing lifestyles, psychology, and neurological disorders. For example, female employment in the USA has made a significant positive contribution to the adoption of technology at home. Bose et al. (2022), using factories and male mortality rates in World War II as a proxy for female labour force demand, found that the increase in female labour force participation between 1940 and 1950 increased average device ownership by 25 per cent. This result validates both panel and cross-section estimates and two different technologies. In another study, whether women's all-cause mortality risk changes according to different levels of alcohol consumption. The assumption is that working women are more likely to drink for various reasons (access, stress, male work culture) and that drinking increases their all-cause mortality risk (Wilsnack et al., 2009). Masum and Sparks (2022) show that alcohol consumption has a significant effect on all-cause mortality risk for adult women in the United States. Lifelong abstainers and former drinkers are at higher risk of all-cause mortality compared to other drinking groups, but they are generally concentrated in women in the oldest age categories and disproportionately among Hispanics and non-Hispanic blacks, which partially explains the cumulative mortality risk. Erten and Metzger (2019) find that undervalued exchange rates encourage female labour force participation, and the effects are more potent for developing countries. The study finds that a 10% undervaluation is associated with a 3.4 percentage point annual increase in FLFP, corresponding to a 7.1% increase relative to the mean outcome.

## DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Research articles are one of the most important materials academics and students use in scientific literature. Women's participation in the workforce has been one of the research topics examined since the early 1960s. Although prevalent in every period, this topic, where the main themes change depending on the conjuncture and many different factors, also affects many economic, sociological and psychological factors. In this study, scientific articles published in 2000 and later examining FLFP were examined using the content analysis method.

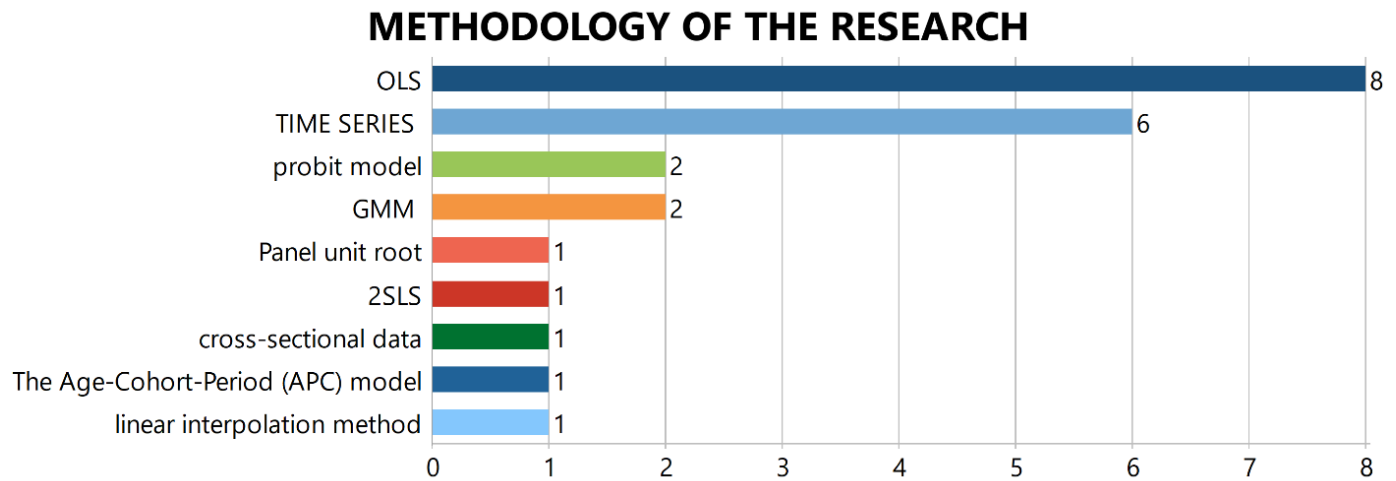
Qualitative content analysis includes a set of techniques for systematic analysis of texts and media. This method helps interpret hidden meanings in texts and images (Drisco & Maschi, 2016). Qualitative content analysis goes beyond word counting and quantitative content analysis and reveals the meanings hidden in words. The research questions (RQs) of this study are as follows:

From what perspectives were the articles examined regarding female labour force participation?

- How does the content of the articles explain the issue of female labor force participation?
- Do the articles address the causes and consequences of female labour force participation, and if so, how?
- What types of research methods were used in the articles?

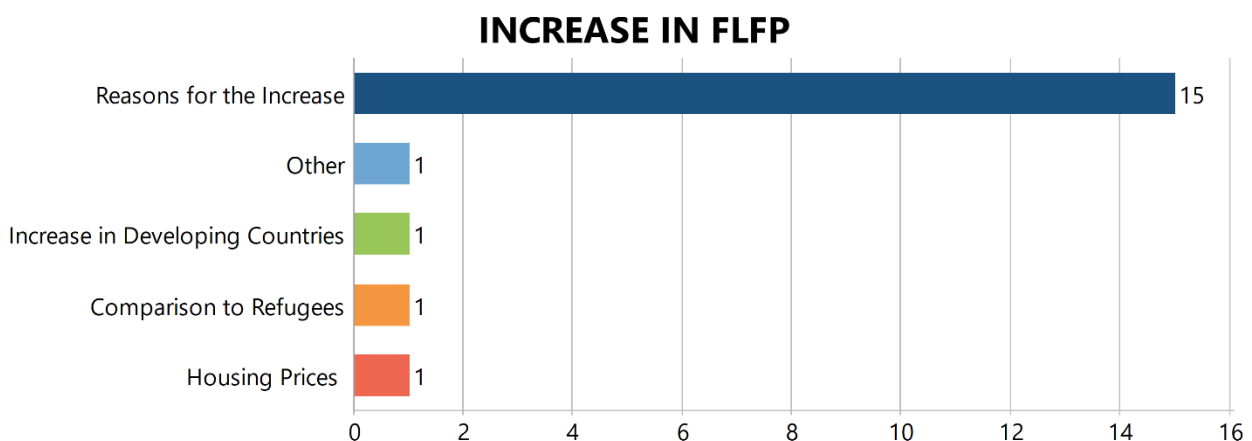
In order to make a comprehensive analysis of the literature, 18 articles from 2000 to the present were examined. The articles on the subject were examined in terms of the publication date, research method, reasons for the increase in the female labour force participation rate, reasons for the decrease and theories on the subject. The relevant literature material was taken into the Maxqda program and grouped in sub-code groups. It was determined that 3 of the 18 articles analyzed within the scope of this research were published in 2014. In addition, 2 publications were made in 2008, 2021 and 2022. It was seen that the other articles were one each in 2000, 2002, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2018, 2019 and 2020.

Secondly the reviewed literature was grouped according to the methodology they used. The figure 1 shows the related subcodes.



**Figure 1: Statistics of Subcodes Related to the Research Method**

The scope of the articles were grouped in figure 2. According to the figure 2, 6 of the 18 articles analyzed used time series analysis, and 8 were carried out with the least squares (OLS) method. It was observed that 2 articles used the GMM (generalized method of moments), and 2 used the probit method. The other articles were one each of cross-section data analysis, Oaxaca-random two-stage method, age-group-period model (APC), linear interpolation method (LIM), recursive models, 2-stage least squares, overlapping generations, and secondary data analysis. 15 of the 18 articles examined the reasons for the increase in female labour force participation, while the other three articles focused on the increase in developing countries, comparison with refugees, housing prices, and other issues.



**Figure 2: Increase in Female Labor Force Participation Rates by Subject**

In the 18 articles examined, the reasons for the increase in female labour force participation were the education issue in 9 of them, the increase in child care opportunities in 7 of them, the age factor in 7 of them, the adaptation to home technologies in 5 of them, the married status of the woman in 4 of them, and the wage

factor in 4 of them. Based on this information, it was seen that new variables, such as the advantages provided by education and developments in the digital economy, emerged (Figure 3).

## Hierarchical Code-Subcode Model

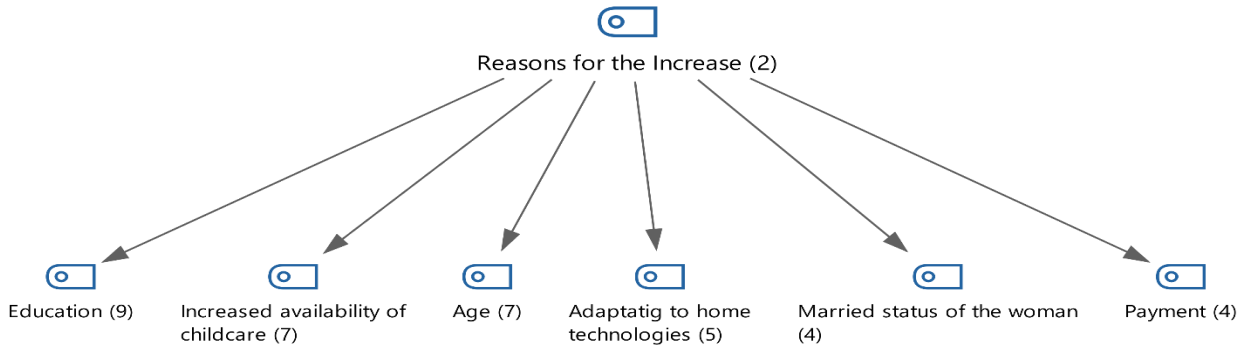


Figure 3: Reasons for the Increase in Female Labor Force Participation

### Reasons for Low Participation;

Although there is a large literature investigating the reasons for the decline in female labor force participation rates, only three of the 18 articles examined the issue of low participation. In these articles, the reasons of fertility, transportation restrictions, and alcohol consumption were seen as prominent restrictive barriers. Mentioned reasons appeared in one article each.



Figure 4: Word Cloud

The word cloud shows the word frequencies in the examined articles. Accordingly, the distribution of the words used in Figure 4 is written from largest to smallest. The most used words are women, participation, and labor,

followed by development, family, economics, employment, education, and married.

## **CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION**

Qualitative content analysis is a powerful tool for examining the literature in detail. This analysis examines the literature on female labour force participation rates. This approach reveals the information hidden in the texts and analyses in detail. With this research method, it has been possible to see different aspects of female labour force participation in different countries. Researchers and policymakers interested in this subject can use the results of this content analysis. According to the findings of this study, which examined the articles that were mainly from the field of economics, it was seen that the articles mostly used regression analysis and that the effects of the transition to the digital economy started to enter the literature when examined according to their subjects in the last 20 years.

Regarding gender roles, one of the most frequently mentioned topics in the literature is women's labour force participation rates. This study aimed to examine the literature on women's labour force participation rates between 2000-2023 using the Scopus database. According to the findings, when the publication dates are examined, it is seen that the number of publications made in 2008, 2014, and recent years is higher. While 15 of the 18 articles examined examine the reasons for the increase in women's labour force participation, one examines the increase in women's labour force participation rates in developing countries, one examines the situation of refugees, one investigates the effect of housing prices on participation, and one investigates other topics. In addition, for the reasons for the increase in FLFP, the factors such as education, increased childcare opportunities, age factor, adaptation to home technologies, women being married, and wages are the most effective, respectively. The following conclusion can be drawn from this: the "wage factor" is not as prominent in the increase in women's labour force participation as thought. When the reasons for the decrease in women's labour force participation are examined, it is seen that there are fertility, alcohol consumption, and transportation problems. These obstacles are seen to be gender-related, psychological and economic. Therefore, it can be easily stated as a significant finding of this study that gender-related, psychological and economic factors need to be improved to increase women's participation in the workforce.

This study, once again revealing that women's participation in the workforce has many different aspects, also reveals the need for good management of change over time. To ensure that individuals can express their social realities, it is necessary to overcome the difficulties of working in harmony with differences. On the one hand, it is important to prevent women's poverty and, on the other hand, to develop changes in social and economic life by considering the family.

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## A Trilogy of Food, Photography and Social Media: Gastroporn<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

Eating is a biologically fundamental human activity. However, the real importance of eating stems not from its biological necessity but from its symbolic character. Food and eating also have psychological, social, and political significance. Food is a means by which love and desire are expressed and communicated. In addition, food serves purposes beyond filling the stomach, such as self-construction, identity formation, social status, gaining prestige, showing others who you are, and differentiating from others. In this context, the concept of gastroporn is considered a form of food that has moved away from its true meaning and undergone a shift in meaning and is expressed as aesthetic images of unattainable pleasure that replace real food. The presentation and visualization of the food, the preparation of the food, and the kitchen materials used often become more important than the food itself. Changing the existing image of the food and serving it with presentations that can emphasize the feelings and emotions of the consumer is the main reason underlying gastroporn. Although the pairing of food with pornography in the classical sense may sound repulsive and irreconcilable at first, the fact that the artistic aspect rather than the food itself comes to the fore in the dishes made with artistic mastery by the chefs in the kitchen, the "irresistible" erotic connotations of some ingredients and the professional photography of all these reveal the similarities between food and pornography. The sexual connotations of foods such as a burst yolk, a runny chocolate bar, and the elongation of hot cheese, bananas, ice cream, etc., reinforce the connection between food and pornography. The main thing emphasized in this article is that the concept of gastroporn is a new form of transforming food and that social media and food photography contribute positively to this new form.

**Keywords:** *Food, Gastronomy, Gastroporn, Photography, Food photography, Social media*

**JEL Codes:** *M1, M10, M3, M30*

### INTRODUCTION

Food is one of our most basic needs and has been mentioned in various written sources since prehistoric times (Cömert & Sökmen, 2017, p. 7). Recognition, authenticity, and diversity are the most well-known concepts in food and gastronomy. Recognition means that other cultures know and practice eating and presentation

<sup>1</sup> There is not a conflict of interest.

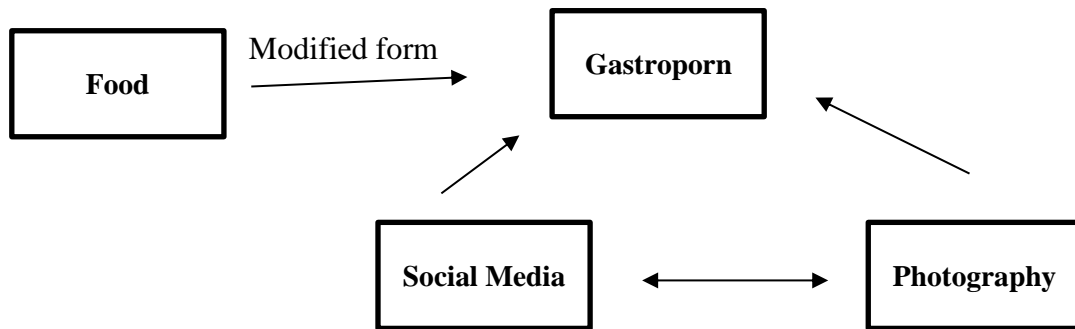
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techniques, and authenticity means that cooking and presentation techniques belong to that country. Diversity means the multiplicity of food types (Hatipoğlu, 2014, p. 1). Food and beverages belonging to a destination can be a part of touristic products and an attraction on their own. The field of gastronomy, where food and beverages are the main factors, has become increasingly widespread in many countries (Eren, 2016, p. 1). Gastronomy helps to attract tourists to the region by creating tourism movements in the destination or businesses, thus enabling the relevant destination to stand out in the competitive environment. In this sense, traditional dishes, culinary characteristics, and local foods are among the primary drivers of tourism (Ottenbacher et al., 2016). With the spread of the concept of gastronomy, interest in this field is increasing, and an increasing number of academic studies are being conducted.

Considering that consumption plays a role in the identity formation activities of individuals in the consumer society, consumers create and express their identities through consumption related to their bodies such as weight loss, exercise, fashionable dressing and decoration, and eating. Eating is one of the fundamental biological activities of humans. However, the real importance of eating stems not from its biological necessity but from its symbolic characteristics. Food and eating also have psychological, social and political significance. By eating, individuals take nourishment for their bodies, which are their most private sphere, on the one hand, and construct their psychological selves. Food is a means of expressing and communicating love and desire (Dedeoğlu & Savaşçı, 2013, p. 80). Eating, which is a compulsory consumption activity for survival, is evolving towards a pretentious consumption outside of this necessity. Sharing what is eaten on social media is an indication of this.

Food will be defined in this study, and its cultural, economic, and social meanings will be discussed. Then, the concept of gastronomy will be defined, the relationship between gastronomy and other disciplines will be explained, and the concept of gastroporn will be introduced. Finally, the concept of social media will be explained, and the contribution of social media and photography to the concept of gastroporn will be emphasized. This article is prepared as a literature review, and its main claim is that "social media networks and photography feed the concept of gastroporn." Another claim is that food fulfills a psychological, social, and communal need rather than a physiological need and that the concept of gastroporn is a new form of food that has moved away from its primary purpose. There is a reciprocal relationship between social media and photography. While social media emphasizes taking photographs, uploading and displaying them on social networks has become necessary. As a result of this reciprocal relationship between them, the concept of gastroporn has gradually shifted in meaning, and food has gone beyond "filling the stomach" to serve purposes such as self-construction, identity formation, showing off, and achieving status. Within the framework of these claims, the following conceptual model has been created, and the elements in this conceptual model are explained.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual Model

The model above shows that gastroporn is a changing form of food and that social media and photography have contributed to the development of gastroporn. It is emphasized that there is a reciprocal relationship between social media and photography. While it is only possible to exist in social media with photographs, it is seen as a necessity to upload the photographs taken to social networks in order to exhibit them.

### **THE CONCEPT OF FOOD AND ITS SUB-MEANINGS**

Food, one of the basic human needs, has become a symbolic indicator. From a point in our religion where it may be shameful for people to say what they eat, where a dish with an intense smell should be given to the neighbors when it is cooked at home, and where there is an understanding called the right of the eye, we have come to a point where what we eat is advertised. In addition, the fact that many television brands present their food presentations to the public in a very ostentatious way or that they are prominently displayed on billboards in places with heavy vehicles and human traffic proves that food has other sub-meanings. The fact that food has become a status indicator is the main reason for these posts.

According to Çaycı (2019), cultural values such as lifestyle, upbringing, and habits influence people's food choices. Food consumption is the most essential activity for an individual to survive. The relationship between consumption and culture constitutes human history's most fundamental complementary aspect. Today, it is seen that exaggerated food presentations are shared intensively on social media. The content shared here shapes users' identity and social identity in the virtual environment, as well as the unique advertising activities of brand owners (Çaycı, 2019). Self-presentation on social media is more oriented towards presenting what one consumes and what one wants to consume. The food consumed by individuals has come to determine personal identity or status,

economic quality, and cultural value (Demir & Öztürk, 2023). Therefore, people tend to show what they eat, who they eat with, and where they eat by sharing what they have eaten recently.

In summary, presenting food to consumers with this visual feast creates the idea of "I exist if I can consume" in individuals. By recognizing these dishes on social media and in their daily lives, individuals prove they are in the socio-economic and cultural environment that can afford them. By pointing to the position they want to have, they give the messages "I can consume these meals" and "I can buy these meals" (Demirel & Karanfiloğlu, 2020, p. 243).

## **GASTRONOMY CONCEPT**

The concept of gastronomy is related to various fields such as sociology, economics, chemistry, and modern technologies and is not limited to food and beverage (Gülen, 2017, p. 33). In this context, gastronomy, which refers to all the rules related to eating and drinking, is also blended with culture and history (Küçükkömürler et al., 2018, p. 79). In addition, gastronomy is a valuable tool for local people in terms of strengthening local identity, increasing interaction between different cultures and contributing to the economy (Yılmaz, 2017, p. 172). Gastronomy is a wide field of study phenomenon due to its many features. Therefore, it is also included in the visual communication and presentation working activities.

Gastronomy is a combination of the Greek words gaster (stomach) and nomas (law) (Altinel, 2009, p. 2). Gastronomy is defined as the art of cooking in which food and beverages are prepared in a particular order within the framework of hygiene rules and presented in a way that appeals to the eye and palate (Dilsiz, 2010, p. 3). Gastronomy is also defined as a healthy, pleasant and delicious kitchen order (Hatipoğlu, 2014, p. 10). While gastronomy is defined as a branch of science that utilizes science and social sciences in some sources, it is defined as the art of eating and drinking in some sources (Sormaz et al., 2015, p. 69). When we look at the relationship between gastronomy and other sciences; it is seen that it is based on psychology in terms of reasons for eating, preferences and factors affecting them, and on sociology and economics in terms of the place of food and drink in social communication and reasons for eating out. However, gastronomic tourism is based on agriculture, culture, and tourism. Agricultural products and cultural elements serve history and the historical past, while tourism provides infrastructure and services (Akgöl, 2012). Gastronomy is based on food and beverage culture and includes travel to farms and wine production sites to taste the food and beverages provided. While gastronomy introduces tourists to the culture and history of a region, it also provides the opportunity to live in that region, creating travel motivation to experience a new food and beverage experience and shaping travel behaviors (Özdemir & Altiner, 2019, p.3). In addition, gastronomy strengthens public diplomacy and dialog between countries as a soft power. This situation, which is explained by the concept of gastro diplomacy, shows that food plays a role even in the field of international relations. This concept promotes countries, creates a positive image

and brings different cultures together, making diplomatic messages more understandable (Sökmen Alaca, 2018).

## **GASTROPORN CONCEPT**

The term Gastroporn is widely used to refer to several interrelated aspects of visual culinary culture. The staged sensuality of celebrity chefs and the dazzling images of ingredients and dishes that parallel pornography on television and in magazines are highly attractive to consumers (Mentinis, 2017). In short, gastroporn can be defined as aesthetic images of unattainable pleasure that replace real food. Photographing food with a visual feast is related to the feelings of the trend of that food. For example, the extending cheddar of a pizza, the fried appearance of the meat in a delicious hamburger, and the fluidity of the chocolate sauce on a waffle provide a favorable environment for photography and reveal the dazzling, mouthwatering images of the food. The presentation and visualization of the food often become more important than the food itself. Based on the fact that food is consumed with the eyes rather than physically (Aprilia & Irwansyah, 2017), it can be said that food that appeals to the eye deserves to be looked at and watched more, is shared more frequently on social media (Chauhan et al., 2022), and satisfies people emotionally, psychologically and spiritually.

In food presentations, photographers must reflect the most aesthetically desirable image (Tınmaz & Yılmaz, 2019, p. 428). Exaggerated food presentations are sometimes made for advertising and promotional purposes and sometimes for ideological and cultural purposes. Although these presentations have become quite popular with social media, professional shooting studios are more prioritized for sector-specific productions. At this point, aesthetic rules are essential during the food presentation, and the presentations are realized to convince the consumer.

New culinary movements such as "Refined Cuisine," "Nouvelle Cuisine," and "Haute Cuisine" emerged in France after the second half of the last century regarding the consumption of food and beverages. The effects of the change brought about by these new culinary movements paved the way for the birth of the concept of gastroporn. Under the influence of these movements, the presentation of meals has been simplified regarding consumption and nutrition, both in food and in the ingredients used. Therefore, simple and aesthetic plates have come to the fore. As a result of this change, food and beverage presentations that attract attention with their aesthetic features have led to the emergence of the concept of gastroporn, and in this case, the designs that include the presentation of food are considered as works of art in themselves (Özdemir & Ateş, 2021, p. 1070). In addition to the culinary trends mentioned above, various methods have been developed to make the preparation and serving of food more pleasing and eye-catching. New and different culinary trends have emerged. One of these trends is molecular gastronomy. Molecular gastronomy has emerged from separating food into its molecules using different methods. In other words, molecular gastronomy can be explained as dishes with the same calories appearing less in the portion. At the same time, food photography and food styling are among the prominent business lines in the field

of gastronomy that are used to obtain different presentations.

Bulut (2019), examined the artistic aspect of food in his study to examine aesthetics in gastronomy through the concepts of painting and photography and stated that human emotions are reflected through paintings. The author also defends the idea that modern art understanding is applied in the presentation stages of gastronomy, and thus, food is transformed into an art. Therefore, as a result, it is argued in the study that instead of plating the food as it is, it should be served with presentations that can emphasize the feelings and emotions of the consumer. Photographing food with different presentations can also be indirectly associated with the use of social media. Sharing food photos on social media with the #foodporn hashtag supports this idea (Yıldırım & Doğan, 2022).

Kocabay Şener (2014), in his evaluation of food photos shared on social media, claims that the individual transforms his/her existing eating habits into indicators through shared photos. Demirel and Karanfiloğlu (2020) investigated the consumption of food photos on social media in the context of identity construction. They stated the effect of food photos on the identity and image desired to be created. They concluded that food is also used as an object of status, vanity, and image.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

A human being is a social being. While they want to be informed about something, they also want to share what they know and have learned with other individuals. They want others to be aware of everything that makes them feel valuable, from where they stay, where they stay, what they eat and drink. It is possible to say that even publishing a photo taken at dinner is a result of the effort to show themselves in a higher social status (Eryılmaz, 2014). Social media can be considered as one of the most essential parts of our lives, allowing us to communicate with people we know and even with people we do not know at any time. It has entered our lives with Web 2.0, which enables individuals using the Internet to not only access readily available content, but also to create new communications and contribute to individuals becoming content producers (Gümüş, 2018). Social media attracts users' attention with its websites, content-sharing sites, and messaging areas. Accordingly, it is possible to define social media as a platform where individuals and institutions want to be noticed in order to eliminate loneliness and show their presence by creating differences (Aydoğan & Akyüz, 2010).

With social media, individuals can both show themselves and have the opportunity to keep track of where they are, what they are doing, and what they share. Social media constitutes a large part of the time most computer users spend online (Solmaz et al., 2013). In addition to computers, the use of smartcell phones has gradually increased, making it possible to access social media at any time. In addition to listening to music and communicating verbally and visually on social media, individuals now efficiently perform their daily activities, such as shopping, ordering food, or sharing images of their environment. Users sometimes take a photo of something that interests them and share it, while at other times, they write their thoughts at that moment and

continue to communicate with the people they are in contact with (Kocabay Şener, 2014, p. 74). In social media, societies have actually become unafraid of doing certain practices that do not precisely symbolize their own values, but which they normalize and accept internally. Especially the sharing of food photos on social media is a result of the process mentioned.

Çaycı & Aktaş (2018), state that social networks create popular food and beverage environments. Although the presentation of food photos on social platforms is beneficial in terms of promoting the beliefs, traditions, and food cultures of countries, it is possible to say that the presentations made on social networks are part of the consumption culture.

According to Çaycı (2019), the food show is a powerful method Today. The photos shared on social media are shared in the most appetizing and aesthetic way rather than being published randomly. Thanks to these visuals, feelings of pleasure arise in people. Instagram and Facebook, in particular, are the leading platforms where such photos are shared within subject tags (#hashtags). While these shared food images allow people to meet foods from various cultures, food, which has become an element of pleasure and entertainment, also changes people's consumption habits.

Eryılmaz & Şengül (2016) emphasize that there are many opinions about the fact that people and businesses share food images on social media. Some argue that eating is one of people's most essential activities, and sharing food images is the next best thing to eating together. Others attribute the reasons why food visuals are so compelling to the fact that they are consumed with the eye before handling the equipment associated with the meal. Some experts also see the sharing of images of a dish promoted by top restaurants or a dish that is not widely known as a status symbol.

Consumption is an action that depends on the satisfaction of physiological and psychological needs. While physiological needs are necessary for the healthy survival of the body, psychological needs are essential for the satisfaction of the soul. It is inevitable for a healthy individual to satisfy both of these needs adequately. However, the symbolic meanings that consumption has gained Today have caused the line between these two basic needs to blur. In this sense, food photographs have become an important indicator value. Food photos, which serve as a gateway to gather and share daily experiences, have gained a symbolic meaning that will satisfy the soul before the body (İbrahim, 2015, p. 46). Food, which is among the most shared photos on social media, has become a symbol and, in the opinion of some people Today, has turned into self-definition (Kocabay Şener, 2014, p. 73). Today's people, who gain "visibility" with what they consume and produce, also prefer food venues in this direction. Social media offers a wide market to users in this sense. Moreover, not only the food itself but also the place of the food, the way the food is served, and the presentation of the food carry a show value. The reactions to the photographs presented are an example of the pleasure and satisfaction that the soul needs.



The wide user base of social media has become a showcase not only for individual users but also for business owners. Today, the suitability of the places that people prefer especially for socializing to social media is an important issue. The desire of people to share the places they visit on social media and the efforts of brand owners to arouse interest in the target audience with visual presentations are progressing in a way to meet these expectations (Yıldırım & Doğan, 2022). For this purpose, businesses have started to keep the show and show value high while trying to develop different styles in order to differentiate their meals. When food photographs are taken in luxurious, branded and famous places, they can gain status and ostentation. Since an ordinary meal eaten in an ordinary restaurant does not create any value for being extraordinary, it is not considered worth sharing on social media. Food and presentation take place in almost every area of human consumption (Kocabay Şener, 2014, p. 77). Food influencers also affect people's food and restaurant preferences, and the photos they share on social media contribute positively to the marketing strategies of businesses (Tran, 2023). Both the brand owner and the consumer should consider factors such as the location of the food and presentation aesthetics when sharing food photos. The individual aims to gain identity and status by showing the luxurious places he can go and the luxurious foods he can eat to his environment, while the brand owner aims to gain a competitive advantage in his market area and gain more customers by making exaggerated and intriguing presentations as much as possible. Therefore, the high probability of receiving feedback on social media draws attention as the main reason for the basic sharing value of a meal.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY AND ARTISTIC MOVEMENTS**

Suppose we accept art as the expression of people's feelings and thoughts in various ways. In that case, these ways can be sound, word, note, or photography (Çizgen, 1998, p. 15). Although it is thought that photography cannot be a product with an artistic quality as in gastronomy, it can bring art and gastronomy together with the aesthetic concern it contains within itself. In the early periods of the development of photography, photography was known as a field that contained only technical elements. Following the technical searches in the field of photography, aesthetic searches began, and photography became an important communication tool that could convey many emotions, thoughts, and information to society through photography (İmançer, 2014, p. 110). The art of photography, which developed due to the interaction between technology and aesthetics, has undergone a technical transformation in gastronomy, accompanied by media tools such as computers, the internet, and mobile phones (Sağlamtimur, 2017, p. 89).

The easiest way to show what you can have is to document it on social media with photographs. The basis for sharing food on social media is not the food itself but the message it gives and its status and benefits (Demirel & Karanfiloğlu, 2020, p. 243). Thousands of people share photos of a meal they have eaten, prepared or seen on many different social accounts and even on social media sites specially opened for food sharing. While sharing, they also convey their opinions about local dishes, restaurants, or businesses that serve them to other people

around them. Individuals especially like to share dishes that reflect the local culture in the places they visit. In this way, they try to show that they are in a different region and that they have an experience that other people do not know and have not seen (Eryılmaz & Şengül, 2016, p. 34).

Today, many food and beverage brands have started creating new methods to maximize their presence and attract consumers. The most effective among these methods were food photographs that created the brand's image. Presenting the meals with a visual feast is important in the consumer's encounter with the brand. Businesses are aware that food photographs give effective messages about the brand to the society and are aware of how aesthetically pleasing food photographs must be created to create a unique appearance in the consumer's mind. This existing awareness has given the opportunity to the formation of a new profession in the food and beverage industry. Food presentations in the promotions of food and beverage establishments aim to attract the consumer's attention and whet his appetite. The basis for a business to achieve its goal is to reflect the image and story of the business or brand to the consumer (Sarıtaş, 2022). While companies and businesses in the food and beverage sector undertake the task of increasing the consumer's appetite with the food presentations they provide, they also ensure their loyalty and continuity in the future (Bekâr & Karakulak, 2016, p. 110). The presentation of a meal should be done in accordance with the consumer's decision-making process. Describing food only with words will never attract the attention of the consumer. Since the consumer wants to see the visual of the product he intends to eat, describing the food with an impressive visual and words will be more eye-catching. Technological tools such as augmented reality can be used in visual food presentations. Kabaq application uses augmented reality technology to present meals to the customer in high quality in three dimensions, and the customer can see the food in its actual size before ordering (Yıldırım & Yıldırım, 2020). If a food photo or its technological visual does not attract the consumer's attention and begin to serve its purpose quickly, the consumer will immediately turn to another option. This is an outcome that businesses and food companies do not want. Businesses promoting food should ensure that the message conveyed through the food photos they take is designed for the consumer's tastes (Finkelstein, 2004, p. 59).

As a new perspective on the artistic representation of contemporary food and beverage presentations created in the context of gastronomy and culinary arts, the concept of "Nature Cuite" has been encountered quite frequently lately. While Nature Cuite is defined by the expression "dead nature," it can also be conceptualized as "cooked nature." The concept is also known as designs that can be experienced real and simultaneously, including elements evaluated from an artistic point of view, food and beverages offered for consumption, such as presentation plates and cake designs (Özdemir & Ateş, 2021, p. 1058). Showing food and beverage presentations with a particular art movement or products that evaluate presentations using a specific food and beverage product within the framework of art movements supports the meaning of the concept of Nature Cuite in the examples. In the following headings, movements such as Cubism, Abstract Expressionism, Pop-art, and Surrealism will be

mentioned, and the ways in which these movements are used in gastronomy will be explained.

### **Cubism**

In Cubism's works, which were prepared with a rational and clear perspective, without any aesthetic illusions, the forms were fragmented into small cubes, and it became the viewer's duty to put the puzzle together as a whole. In Cubism, the artist, in a sense, responds to the preconditions of science regarding space and time (Alparslan, 2019).



**Picture 1.** Cubist Nature Cuite Example (Google, 2023a)

In Picture 1, we see the abstract forms created by dark chocolate, milk chocolate, white chocolate, and caramel. The intersections of the layers created by using the tonal values and textural effects of chocolates with different contents were composed with a front-back relationship. Chocolate pieces of different sizes supported the composition with their transparency effect and light, medium, and dark values.

### **Abstract Expressionism**

With abstract expressionism, artists sought ways to express themselves freely, moving away from oppression. The first examples of the abstract expressionism movement were primarily influenced by cubism and surrealism (Ahmetoğlu & Denli, 2013).



**Picture 2.** Example of Abstract Expressionist Nature Cuite (Google, 2023b)

Picture 2 shows an example of abstract expressionist Nature Cuite. Pork belly, rhubarb leaves, Japanese zucchini, spinach, mushrooms, egg yolk, black rice, and sauces are presented on a black plate with spiral-cut lines opening from the inside to the outside. The objects presented on the plate are arranged in an expressionist style with dots and lines.

### **Pop Art (Pop Art)**

Within the scope of pop art, these elements were organized from the artist's perspective, creating artistic objects that were sometimes humorous and sometimes thought-provoking (Toptaş, 2017).



**Picture 3.** Pop Art Nature Cuite Example (2023c)

Picture 3 shows a two-layered cake with a blue circle on a white background and a noodle bowl on top. Cake: It is designed with French fries in a paper bag with blue, yellow, and red food coloring, noodles, and steak embossed in the bowl. In practice, a perspective similar to that of pop art artists who incorporate the world of consumption into art with popular culture images is observed.

### **Surrealism**

The surrealism movement aims to bring together seemingly unrelated forms and objects and present these objects as a whole. In this movement, objects are depicted in unusual ways, and contrasting colors make the expression striking (Yalur, 2019).



**Picture 4.** Surrealist Nature Cuite Example (2023d)

Picture 4 shows a black and white checkered chessboard with a wooden frame. The design includes a chocolate cake and white and black chocolate figures arranged on it. Chess, removed from its context, is now presented as a meal with a surreal significance. Objects that exist as representations in cake design are designed with an understanding that includes surreal references to the structure of reality in daily life, which is full of paradoxes and open to different interpretations.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

While individuals continue their eating habits outside, they make choices by evaluating many visual and non-visual elements, such as the taste of the food, color harmony, the business's image, service quality, and the prices of the meals. The improved presentation techniques reflected on the plates and the enrichment of visuality in the services offered by businesses affect the service that individuals will prefer. In Today's service and marketing approach, customer satisfaction is the most critical business issue. The most vital aspect of the business is the appearance of the food and the physical appearance of the environment where the service is provided. For some, the food served is a signature, a name. However, achieving the same standard in every presentation may take time and effort. If it is necessary to include the most preferred dish on the menu, it would be wise to change its visuality and make it more exciting and eye-catching. Applying this approach in all presentations can significantly stay ahead of competitors. The time spent on cooking and serving food is long and laborious. It would be a colossal mistake to waste this tedious process on a sloppy presentation plate. It is possible to create a positive atmosphere before the tasting by paying attention to the presentation of the food, in other words, by presenting a well-designed plate. Thus, impressive plates can be created by carefully presenting new recipes and traditional cuisine. It is necessary in every field for design purposes.

Visuals produced in gastronomy are created according to specific aesthetic rules. The practical appearance of the product generally makes companies and people working in the field of food styling think about the arrangement and use of materials, as well as the basic structure of the photograph, and the effect of graphic design cannot be ignored. Because they are graphical processes that bring the product into the consumption phase after shooting it

and strengthen it with images such as color and placement. The aesthetic rules thought, and creativity used in graphic and visual communication to convey messages enable the product to be created and preferred.

The research provides important information about preparing and presenting food-based visuals. In addition, the main proposal of the research, which is the idea of presenting food visuals to the audience through graphic processing, was emphasized. The examples presented to support this idea show that food presentations do not consist of simple photographs. Because it was created to document or publish the photographed dishes. Therefore, processing the images taken, placing them in the necessary media, and creating a practical advertising face is essential. As a result, graphic design has a role in processing images in the production of all kinds of media in gastronomy. Therefore, it is essential for people working in gastronomy to know about graphics and visual communication to produce more vital images and food design and, thus, gain a problematic position against their competitors.

The consumer is influenced by the food photos on the menu before the taste of a plate. Encouraging business managers, Chen managers, and employees to receive training and interest in this field has a significant share in taking themselves to further levels than competing businesses. In this research, the interest of kitchen managers working in businesses operating in the food and beverage sector in food photography and presentation activities was examined. At the same time, it could provide a new interdisciplinary understanding of the literature with the scope of the subject covered.

In this article, the concept of gastroporn is expressed as the photography and presentation of food in an inaccessible, inaccessible way. It is defined as a transforming new form of food. It is also emphasized that social media and photography feed the concept of gastroporn and that the increasing number of food photos on social media develops the concept of gastroporn and causes a shift in meaning. For future research, it may be recommended to subject gastroporn-tagged social media accounts to content analysis, to conduct qualitative studies by interviewing the owners of accounts using the hashtag #gastroporn, and to analyze the comments made by people who follow accounts opened with the gastroporn tag through ethnography research.

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