

Determining the Knowledge of Local People in Adana on the Cuisine Culture

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of the study is to determine the knowledge of local people in Adana on their own culinary culture. The data of the study were collected using a survey developed according to the current literature. The survey was implemented in person in January 2020 with the local people residing in the Yüreğir district of the city of Adana, and a total of 412 people participated in the study. The data were analyzed using a statistics software used in social sciences and the responses for each question were interpreted using graphs and tables. The responses provided for the questions related to the knowledge of local Adana people on regional food in the order of frequency were Adana kebab, içli köfte, mumbar, analı-kızılı soup, yüzük soup and şırdan. The foods that locals include in the Adana cuisine include Adana kebab, stuffed eggplant (patlıcan dolması), sour meatballs (ekşili köfte), stuffed meatballs. All participants of the study indicated that they include regional food in their cooking.

Key Words: Gastronomy values, regional food culture, Adana.

JEL Code: Z32, Z39, Z30

Adana İli Yöre Halkının Mutfak Kültürünü Tanıma Durumunun Tespit Edilmesi

ÖZ: Çalışmanın amacı Adana yöre halkının kendilerine ait mutfak kültürlerini tanıyıp tanımadıklarını belirlemektir. Çalışmada veriler, mevcut yazından yararlanılarak geliştirilen anket formu aracılığı ile toplanmıştır. Çalışma için hazırlanan anket 2020 yılının ocak ayında Adana'nın Yüreğir ilçesinde ikamet eden yerli halk ile yüzyüze uygulanmış ve çalışmaya 412 kişi katılım göstermiştir. Elde edilen veriler sosyal bilimlerde kullanılan istatistik programında analiz edilerek değerlendirilmiş ve her bir soru için alınan cevaplar grafikler ve tablolar ile yorumlanmıştır. Buna göre araştırmaya katılan yerli halkın Adana ilinin yöresel yiyeceklerin bilinirliğine ilişkin sorulara istinaden sırasıyla en çok Adana kebab, içli köfte, mumbar dolması, ekşili köfte (analı-kızılı), yüzük çorbası ve şırdan dolması cevabı verilmiştir. Yerli halkın Adana yöresine ait mutfaklarında yer verdikleri yiyecekler ise, Adana kebab, patlıcan dolması, ekşili köfte, içli köfte vs. olarak belirlenmiştir. Araştırmaya katılan katılımcıların tamamı mutfaklarında yöresel yemeklere yer verdiklerini belirtmişlerdir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Gastronomi değerleri, yöresel yemek kültürü, Adana.

JEL Kodu: Z32, Z39, Z30

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1. Introduction

People have been actively engaged in tourism activities in recent years to taste regional food and see how these foods are prepared. Considering that the most important vehicle that allows for bringing local identity to the fore and to protect cultural diversity and authenticity is tourism in Turkey, which shows differences in variety and taste of food, tourism is an effective marketing tool for a region to be a center of attraction (Kesici, 2012). Among the marketing tools, food and beverage culture plays an important role in the interaction and fusion of different cultures with the developing technology, and ease of communication and transportation.

In Turkey, regional food culture offers various and rich options unique to regions. Turkey, which has important advantages in terms of food and beverage culture, has a rich cultural structure that is among the world's limited rich cuisines (Serçeoğlu, 2014). Turkish cuisine, which is among the few rich cuisines in the world, has both a deep-rooted history and a very rich cultural structure. As one of the richest cuisines in the world, the Turkish cuisine has an advantage for two important reasons. One reason is that it's located in the world's most important geography, and the other is that it has a nomadic culture that allows for interactions with many cultures in the world (Arman, 2011: 8). Therefore, the aim of this study is to determine the perspectives of the local people on Adana's regional cuisine, which has a rich diversity, and their knowledge of the Adana cuisine. In the study, first, the concept of local food is addressed and information about Turkish and Adana cuisine cultures is given. In the implementation of the study, the knowledge of local people of Adana on their culinary cultures is determined, and the findings obtained from the study were evaluated in this context and recommendations were offered for practitioners to keep the Adana culinary culture alive.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1. Local Food Concept

The concept of local food not only attracts the attention of destination managers and tourists, but also the attention of academics, politicians, food system advocates, and producers (Born & Purcell, 2006; McEntee, 2010). The concept of local food is defined from different perspectives in the relevant literature. While some define it as a prerequisite for growing in the region and being able to purchase from local producers, it is also defined as the distance between the place of production and the place of consumption being limited to a certain distance or reflecting the local culture of the region. For example, according to Wilkins (2008), local food are agricultural products grown in a country, region, and nearby region. While Onozaka, Nurse and McFadden (2010: 1-2) argue that the distance between the place of production and the place of consumption should be at least 80 km, Kang and Rajagopal (2014: 302) argued that this distance should be at most 320 km. Plummer, Telfer, Hashimoto, and Summer (2005: 453) approach local food from a cultural perspective and describe local food as products grown in the region that reflect the symbolic characteristics of the regional culture.

From a tourist perspective, experiencing the regional cuisine can be considered both a necessity and a pleasure. Tourists are interested and curious about the local culture and traditions during their travels and the local foods of the regions they visit. Curiosity, which is accepted as a critical motive in guiding the behaviors of individuals, affects the destination choices of tourists (Bessiere, 1998; Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Kivela & Crofts, 2006; Kim, Eves & Scares, 2009; Kim & Eves; 2012) and it plays an important role in the formation of interests and preferences towards food (Kim & Eves, 2012). According to Du Rand, Heath, and Alberts (2003: 97), the interest and curiosity of tourists towards local, regional, and national cuisines are important in destination marketing in terms of destination attractiveness and authenticity. In relation to this, tourists want to taste dishes prepared with traditional methods. Many tourists state that they are motivated to have an authentic experience in the regions they visit and to see the historical textures of the region as visiting such destinations gives the chance to learn about the traditions, handicrafts, and food culture of the local people as well as witnessing the daily lifestyle of the local people (Frochot, 2003; Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Kim, et al., 2009). Sims (2009: 321) argues that in terms of authenticity, local food creates a desire for visitors and states that local food can be conceptualized as authentic because it symbolizes the regional culture.

On the other hand, while tourism continues to develop, the food industry also affects many holiday options and behaviors of tourists. Food culture, which is one of the important components of culture, reflects the development of the community it belongs to in history and has a unique quality. Local food culture is an important touristic supply element that can provide competitive advantage to

destinations due to its unique nature. The dishes unique to that region create an added cultural value for the region (Šimić and Pap, 2016: 10). Visiting new destinations provides an opportunity to learn about the daily lifestyles of local people, local food culture, local clothes, traditions, handicrafts etc., and to communicate with local people, to understand the flora and fauna of the region, special ecosystems, natural life, and their conservation. Considering this feature of destination products consisting of various intangible and tangible services (Kim, et al., 2009: 424), local foods can increase the sustainable competitiveness of destinations (Crouch and Ritche, 1999: 149).

2.2. Turkish Cuisine and Adana Culinary Culture

Each nation has a culinary culture based on its cultural structure. Turkish culinary culture is also among the most colorful and rich cuisines. While it is possible to attribute the richness of Turkish culinary culture to the spices used in cooking, cooking styles and rich climatic conditions, together with its historical development Turkish cuisine is based on agricultural and animal products. Turkish cuisine, which varies according to the geography, has also been influenced by tradition, customs, and religion. Interaction with the West has brought Turkish cuisine into a rapid change, and it has been enriched by Anatolian and Islamic civilizations. Opening to the Western culture, rapid industrialization and urbanization, women's participation in work life, the increase in the level of education have led to a change in food habits and, accordingly, taste habits. In addition, economic conditions accelerated the change of Turkish cuisine (Artun, 2002; Sürücüoğlu & Özçelik, 2007: 13).

It can be said that the prominent type of food in Turkish cuisine is pastries. Among pastries bread is the main food in Turkish cuisine. In terms of meat dishes, there are kebabs and stews. On the other hand, the variety of vegetables is also abundant, and it is common to cook vegetables with onions, tomatoes, and tomato paste together with meat. Onion is used as the main ingredient of all dishes. Oil is of great importance in Turkish cuisine. Olive oil is mostly used in Western Anatolian cuisine. A wide variety of spices are generally used in Turkish cuisine. The most used spices are red pepper, black pepper, and mint (Sayılı, Şekeroğlu, Akça & Yaramancı, 2006: 5; Yıldız & Kılınc, 2010: 32).

Adana cuisine has also developed a food culture specific to its own taste, under the influence of the West, the Near East, the Arabian culture, Anatolian, and Turkish cuisine in the course of history (Karaca and Karacaoğlu, 2016: 570). Adana's culinary culture is a value that has been shaped by centuries of experience and transferred from generation to generation. Adana's historical and cultural heritage has an important role in shaping Adana's culinary culture. Nomadic, village, and town cultures were transferred to Adana due to internal migration, and cultures from various cities were transferred due to external migrations. This phenomenon has brought richness and diversity to Adana's culinary culture. Mountain, plateau, plain and sea culture are intertwined in Adana which provides richness to Adana cuisine (Ballı, 2013: 210).

Adana cuisine is a rich cuisine where various culinary cultures live together. The fact that Turkish women are conservative about cuisine and food has enabled a culture formed over thousands of years to reach the present day. Livestock was the main source of livelihood until recently. The economy that is dependent on agriculture, wheat, and grain is the second main factor in the formation of the Adana cuisine. The fact that Adana is located in the Mediterranean Region and is very rich in legumes, vegetables, and fruits has a positive effect on the cuisine (Artun, 2001: 33).

Adana region has a rich cuisine in which the food was influenced by various cultures in accordance with their own taste. Adana cuisine, which consists of mostly meat dishes and meat and vegetable dishes, has an important place for pastries (Artun, 1994: 34). Flavorings have an important place in Adana cuisine. Among those flavorings are parsley, ornamental pepper, red pepper, chili pepper, black pepper, cumin, thyme, pomegranate sour, sumac, garlic, mint, etc. While bulgur and flour are the most used ingredients in the region, ground beef kebab, shish kebab and turnip juice are the leading foods that are known of the region (Artun, 2002).

The Adana culinary culture can be summarized in various categories that are: Adana local dishes (cooked at homes and in restaurants selling home-cooked meals), kebab culture (meals made using barbecue and served with salads and appetizers), Adana street delicacies (ring dessert, şalgam (turnip juice), boiled chickpeas, aslama, etc.), Adana seafood (blue crab, clam, sea snail, shrimp, black caviar-sturgeon, mullet caviar) and Adana agricultural products (citrus products, olive-olive oil, pepper paste, pomegranate syrup, watermelon) (Zaimoğlu, 2018: 12). At the same time, the city has many products with geographical indication. Adana Kebab, Adana Stuffed Meatballs, Adana Analı Kızlı, Adana

Bicibici, Adana Aşlama, Adana Ring Dessert, Adana Watermelon, Adana Cotton, Adana Şalgam, Adana Kol Börek, Adana Şırdan, Kozan Orange and Tapan Knife have been registered. In addition, there are nearly 20 products whose application processes are still in progress. Adana Taş Kadayif, Adana Lokma Dessert, Adana Karakuş Dessert, Adana Tulumba Dessert, Adana Lemon (Mayer), Adana Pepper Paste are some of those products (Turkish Patent and Trademark Office, 2021).

The development of agriculture and industry, and innovations brought by transportation and technology in Adana cause the traditional cuisine culture to change rapidly. A part of the Adana cuisine has been forgotten in the face of the changing and effected culinary culture. Some of the dishes are made rarely now compared to the past and the number of people who know those dishes are gradually decreasing. Additionally, some of the dishes remain only in memories.

3. Methodology

3.1. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is twofold: to determine whether people, who are over the age of 18 and reside in the city of Adana, know the regional food of Adana, and to identify the status of inclusion of food and beverages unique to Adana in the kitchens of Adana's local people. In line with this purpose, a survey was developed consisting of questions on knowledge on the Adana cuisine food, and what can be done to protect the food that are almost forgotten, and to continue and sustain the Adana culinary culture.

3.2. Context of the Study

The study was limited to people who are over the age of 18 and reside in Yüreğir town of the city of Adana. The sample size was determined by using the town's central population data and the study was implemented with the local people residing in Yüreğir.

3.3. Sampling Process

In this study aiming to determine the level of local people's knowledge on cuisine culture, people over the age of 18 residing in the town of Yüreğir in Adana were chosen as sample. In order to determine the population aged 18 and over, the data of the Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK) were examined. In the examination, no category related to individuals over the age of 18 was found, but population statistics for 2019, which are thought to be the closest to this purpose and include five-year age ranges (such as 15-19 years, 20-24 years old), were obtained.

The sample size was calculated with the town's central population data (N: 412,092) and the local people in Yüreğir were asked to complete a questionnaire. The $[2500 \times N \times (1,96)^2] / [25(N-1) + (2500 \times 1,96^2)]$ formula was used to include a number of participants to represent the main population. The minimum sample size was calculated as 383. Considering the temporal and financial constraints of the study, it was assumed that a sample size of over 400 would be accessible.

3.4. Data Collection Method and Instrument

In the study, data were collected through a questionnaire developed in accordance with the current literature. A questionnaire was used as the data collection tool for reasons such as being economical, providing a large number of data collection opportunities, and being accessible to large masses (Ural & Kılıç, 2011: 56). The survey consists of 14 questions in total. The first four questions are related to determine the demographic characteristics of the participants, while other questions are related to the awareness on the local foods of Adana by the people of the region and whether local foods are included in the kitchens.

In the implementation process of the survey, the researcher used the drop and collect survey method, which is one of the face-to-face application methods, with the people residing in Adana's Yüreğir district, who volunteered to fill out the survey in January 2020. This method was preferred as it is time- and cost-effective for the researcher conducting the research (Walker, 1976: 284).

Based on the assumption that there may be incomplete or incorrectly responded surveys, 412 survey forms, which are above the target sample, were collected from local people over the age of 18 residing in Yüreğir district.

4. Findings

4.1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

The demographic characteristics distribution of the participants in this study conducted in the city of Adana, is shown in Table 1.

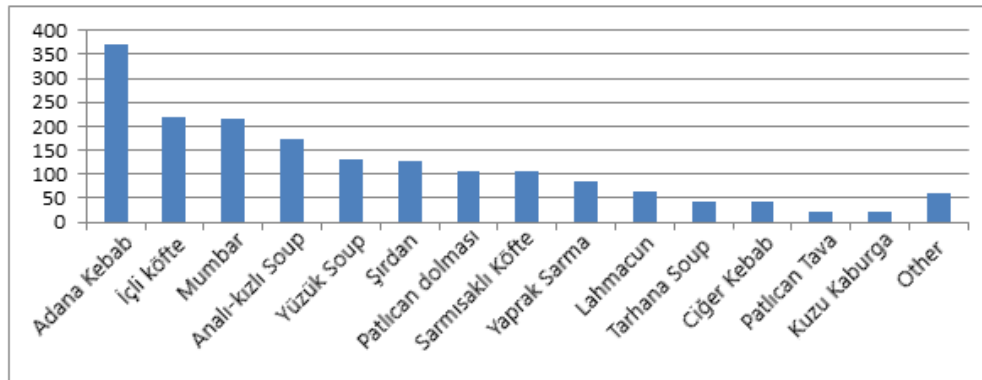
Table 1. Distribution of Participants' Demographic Characteristics

	F	%		F	%	
Gender			Education			
	Female	307	74.5	Elementary	178	43.2
	Male	105	25.5	Secondary	47	11.4
Age			High School	128	31.1	
	18-35	21	5.1	Undergraduate	40	9.7
	36-46	192	46.6	Graduate	19	4.6
	47-60	178	43.2	Occupation		
61 and older	21	5.1	Government Employee	86	20.9	
			Worker	27	6.6	
			Housewife	195	47.3	
			Self-Employed	44	10.7	
			Retired	39	9.5	
			Other	21	5.1	

75% (307) of the participants is female while 25% is male. In terms of age distribution, 46.6% of participants is in the age range of 36-46, and 43.2% in the 47-60 age range which constitute almost the whole sample of the study.

In this study focusing on the knowledge on Adana's regional food, the responses provided to the question of "what are the foods that come to your mind when you think of Adana?" are presented in Figure 1.

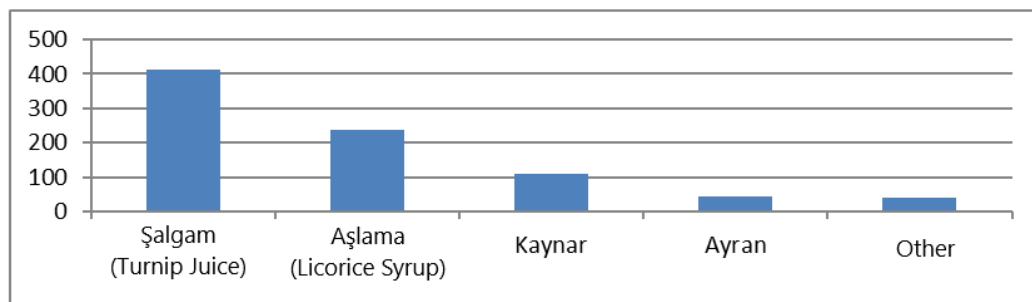
Figure 1. Adana Dishes That Come to Mind First



The first foods that come to mind of the participants when it comes to Adana are Adana kebab, içli köfte, mumbar, analı-kızılı soup, yüzük soup, şırdan, patlıcan dolması, sarmısaklı köfte (fellaah meatballs), yaprak sarma (stuffed grape leaves) and lahmacun.

In Figure 2, which was created in the light of the answers of the participants, the first beverages that come to mind from the Adana region are included.

Figure 2. Adana Beverages That Come to Mind First

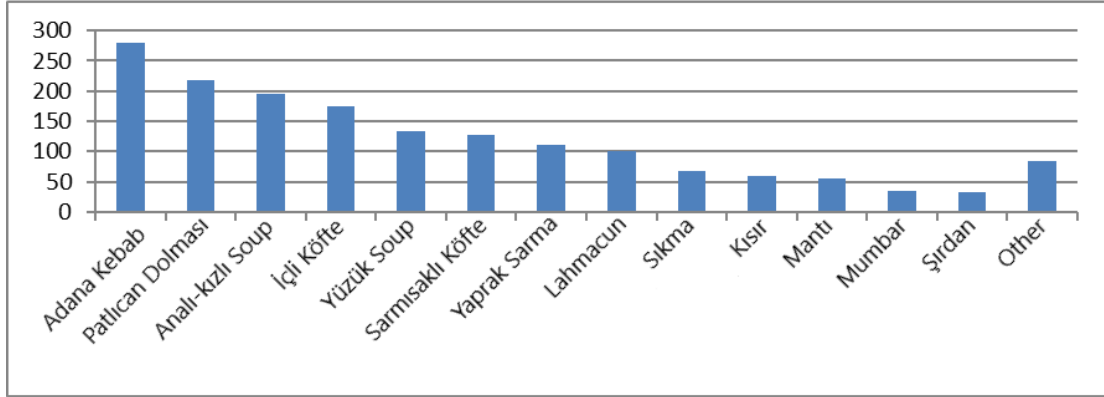


The first local beverage that came to mind of all the participants was turnip juice. Turnip juice is followed by a beverage made from licorice root, locally known as aşlama, and kaynar.

All of the participants gave a positive answer to the question “Do you include dishes specific to the Adana region in your cooking?”

Figure 3 is a graphical representation of the dishes of the Adana region that the participants include in their cooking.

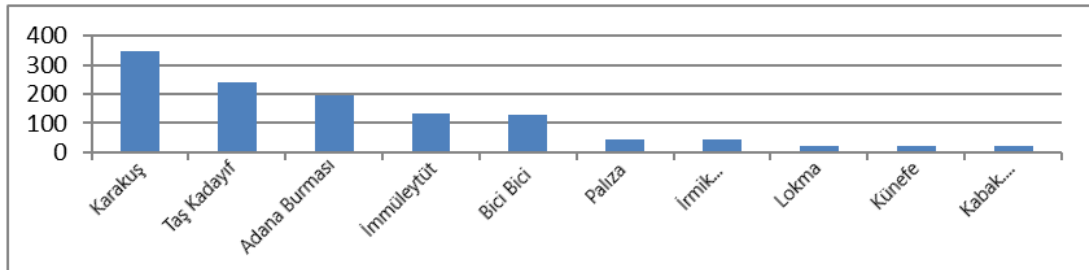
Figure 3. Dishes of the Adana Region Which Participants Include in Their Cooking



Adana kebab, patlıcan dolma, analı-kızılı soup, içli köfte, yüzük soup, sarmısaklı köfte (fellaah meatballs), yaprak sarma and lahmacun were the dishes that are most included in participants’ cooking, respectively.

Their answer to the question “What is the first dessert of the Adana region that come to mind?” is shown in Figure 4.

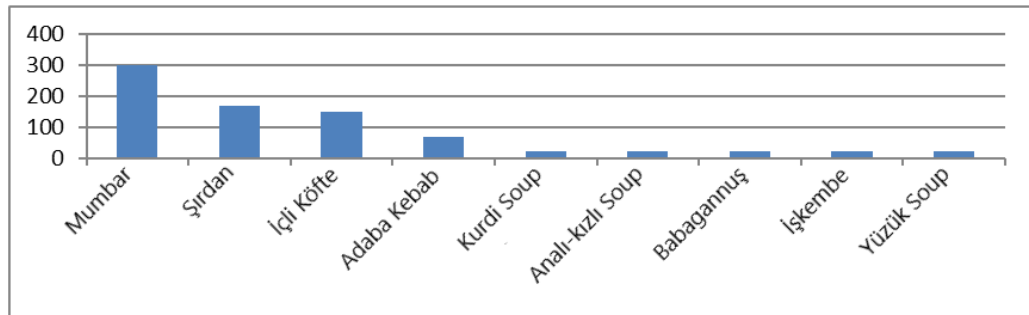
Figure 4. Desserts of the Adana Region that Come to Mind First



In the light of the findings, the first desserts that come to mind from the Adana region are Karakuş, Taş kadayıf, Adana burma, İmmüleytüt, Bici bici and Palıza dessert, respectively.

Another question to be answered in the research is “Which of the dishes of the Adana region are not included in your cooking?”

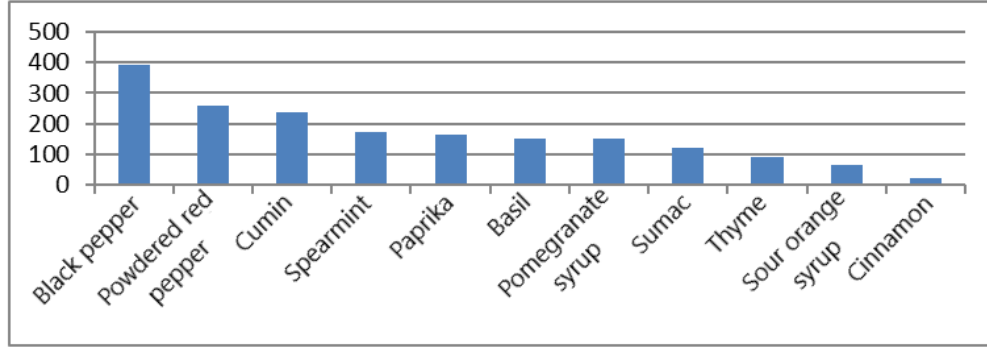
Figure 5. Dishes of the Adana Region That They Do Not Include in Their Cooking



The dishes belonging to the Adana region, which the participants include less in their cooking due to certain reasons, were mumbar, şırdan, içli köfte, Adana kebab, kurdi soup, and analı-kızılı soup, respectively (Figure 5).

The flavorings used in the dishes of the Adana region are shown in the graph in Figure 6 in line with the answers of the participants.

Figure 6. Flavorings/Spices Frequently Used by Participants in Their Cooking



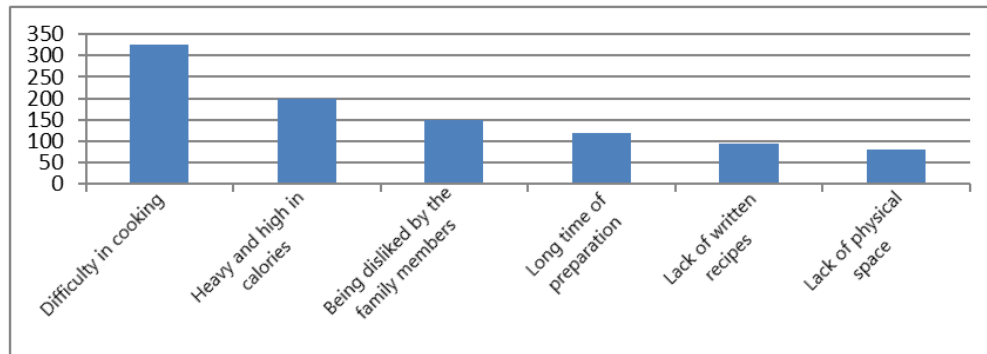
According to the participants, black pepper and powdered red pepper are used the most, followed by cumin, spearmint, paprika, basil, pomegranate syrup, sumac, thyme, sour orange syrup, and cinnamon, respectively.

All of the participants participating in the study stated that the Adana's culinary culture has not been lost, and it is still kept alive in their cooking.

Most of the participants (84.7%) stated that mostly the local dishes of the Adana region are prepared in Adana kitchens.

The reasons why the dishes of the Adana region are not always or frequently cooked were emphasized and questions were asked to the participants in this direction. The answers received from the participants are shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7. Reasons for Not Cooking the Local Dishes of Adana



The first and most important reason why the participants did not cook the dishes of Adana cuisine was "the difficulty in cooking the dishes". When the other reasons were listed in order of importance, the reasons such as "the dishes being rich and high in calories", "being disliked by the family members and especially the children", "lengthy preparation", "the lack of written recipes" and "the lack of physical space in the kitchen" were stated by the participants.

According to the demographic data obtained, it is seen that the distribution between the variables is not close to each other. Thus, no analysis was performed to reveal the differences in the food and beverages of Adana by the demographic variables.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Local dishes used in tourism destinations emerge as a complementary element of tourism (Du Rand, et al., 2003: 98) with its features of increasing the destination attractiveness and enriching the experiences of the visitors (Frochot, 2003; Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Jahromy & Tajik, 2011), and play an important role in making it different in terms of promotion of touristic destinations from similar ones (Horng and Tsai, 2010: 74-75) as the perceptions created by regions/countries with their own food cultures are richness that cannot be used by other regions (Okumuş, Okumuş, & Mckercher, 2007). The fact that the Turkish culinary culture differs by each region offers tourists a wide variety of dishes and plays an important role in tourists' desire to get to know the Turkish culinary culture. However, as a result of the change in food cultures in the globalizing world, some foods prepared in local cuisines face the danger of extinction by leaving their place to the dishes existing in other cultures. The regional dishes of Adana, which have an important place with its rich cuisine culture, have been shaped within the framework of its geographical location, historical development, and nutritional understanding in Turkish culinary culture. This study, conducted in line with this purpose, was carried out to determine whether the local people of Adana know their own cuisine cultures. In the findings obtained in the study, all participants (100%) stated that they include local dishes in their cooking. When it comes to Adana, the foods that come to minds of the participants were Adana kebab, içli köfte, mumbar, analı-kızılı soup, yüzük soup, şırdan, patlıcan dolması, sarmısaklı köfte (fellaah meatballs), yaprak sarma and lahmacun, respectively. However, among these foods that come to mind, dishes such as mumbar, şırdan, and içli köfte, respectively, were not included in their cooking due to reasons such as being difficult to cook, being rich and greasy, and being disliked by family members. According to the study, the dishes that the participants include in their cooking were mostly Adana kebab, patlıcan dolma, analı-kızılı soup, yüzük soup, sarmısaklı köfte (fellaah meatballs), yaprak sarma, and lahmacun.

When we look at the answers regarding the recognition of the desserts of Adana province, the karakuş dessert was in the first place, while the palıza was among the least known desserts. Turnip juice is the most well-known local beverage, followed by a beverage made from licorice root with the local name of aşlama, and then kaynar, respectively. According to the findings of the study, the flavorings that the participants frequently use in their cooking are black pepper, powdered red pepper, cumin, spearmint and paprika. Looking at the answers given to the questions about Adana cuisine culture, 84.7% of them stated that mostly local dishes are cooked in Adana kitchens, and 100% stated that Adana cuisine is not forgotten.

Some of the above-mentioned findings of this study are supported by previous studies conducted in the city. Yıldırım, Karaca, and Çakıcı (2016: 59) determined in their study conducted during the Orange Blossom Carnival (Portakal Çiçeği Karnavalı) that the local people consumed kebab the most during the carnival, and that turnip juice is the second most-consumed beverage after orange juice which is the symbol of the carnival. According to the results of the study by Yıldırım (2021), kebab and turnip juice are the two leading food and beverages of Adana according to the local people.

Recommendations can be made for practitioners and for those who will visit Adana for touristic purposes in the coming years. The results show that Adana's regional food culture diversity is quite high. Adana can be considered as an important attraction center that can be preferred as a touristic destination, with its diverse, deep-rooted, and rich cuisine throughout history. For this purpose, necessary studies should be carried out to raise awareness in food and beverage businesses operating in Adana and the presentation of local foods should be performed in the best way. The traditions of cuisine and culinary culture of Adana should be examined, and local dishes should be promoted effectively. Those operating in this field should be supported, and promotional activities in the written and visual media should be given priority. Further research should be carried out to expand the dishes that are locally sustained but facing extinction, the changing food tastes and habits of tourists should be constantly monitored, the tastes of foreign tourists should be researched, and menus suitable for these tastes should be created.

It is necessary to contribute to the marketing and branding of the region by increasing the recognition of the rich food culture of Adana. Medium and long-term strategic plans should be created in order to ensure the sustainability of the regional food culture and increase the gastronomic tourism revenues for the city to reveal alternative gastronomy routes of Adana and to market it together with the cities which are known for gastronomy such as Hatay and Gaziantep in an integrated manner. It is of primary importance to make Adana a center of attraction that can be preferred as a gastronomic tourism

destination by paying attention to the planning of the menus of tourism establishments and inclusion of local foods and beverages in menus. It is important to encourage the establishment of local food restaurants with good production practices in the city by providing funding to women entrepreneurs.

The main limitation of the study is that it was conducted with 412 participants. Although this number is accepted as a sufficient sample size representing the population, it is recommended to work with the quota sampling technique and a larger sample group to represent different parts of the society in future studies.

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