

A Study on Foreign Viewers' Perceptions of Turkish Series and the Marketing of Turkish Series

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Abstract

Television and digital series reflect the cultural, social, political, and economic dynamics of the societies in which they are produced. They provide international audiences with the opportunity to explore foreign cultures while contributing to national interests like promoting tourism, enhancing the country's image, influencing consumer behavior, and encouraging language learning. This study examines foreign audiences' perspectives on Turkish series, evaluating factors such as content quality, language learning, travel motivation, and purchasing behaviors. Findings show that the depiction of locations and cultural elements in Turkish series motivates viewers to visit Türkiye. High-quality casts, romantic themes, and engaging storylines contribute to the perception of Turkish series as high-quality productions. Social media interactions positively influence viewing behaviors by encouraging recommendations and episode discovery, with some viewers expressing a desire to purchase featured products.

Keywords: Turkish series, marketing, marketing of Turkish series, foreign viewers

Türk Dizilerinin Pazarlanması ve Yabancı İzleyicilerin Türk Dizilerine Yönelik Algıları Üzerine Bir Araştırma

Öz

Televizyon ve dijital platformlar, üretildikleri toplumların kültürel, sosyal, politik ve ekonomik dinamiklerini yansıtan diziler yayınlamaktadır. Bu diziler, uluslararası izleyicilere yabancı kültürleri keşfetme fırsatı sunarken, aynı zamanda turizmi teşvik etme, ülke imajını geliştirme, tüketici davranışlarını etkileme ve dil öğrenimini teşvik etme gibi ulusal çıkarılara da katkıda bulunmaktadır. Bu çalışma, yabancı izleyicilerin Türk dizilerine yönelik bakış açılarını incelemekte olup, içerik kalitesi, dil öğrenimi, seyahat motivasyonu ve satın alma davranışları gibi faktörleri değerlendirmektedir. Araştırma bulguları, Türk dizilerindeki mekanlar ve kültürel unsurların izleyicileri Türkiye'yi ziyaret etmeye teşvik ettiğini göstermektedir. Kaliteli oyuncu kadroları, romantik temalar ve ilgi çekici hikayeler, Türk dizilerinin kaliteli yapımlar olarak algılanmasına katkı sağlamaktadır. Sosyal medya etkileşimleri, izleme davranışlarını olumlu yönde etkileyerek tavsiyeler paylaşılmasına ve yeni bölümler keşfedilmesine olanak tanımaktadır. Ayrıca, bazı izleyicilerin dizilerde yer alan ürünleri satın alma isteği olduğu gözlemlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türk dizileri, pazarlama, Türk dizilerinin pazarlanması, yabancı izleyiciler

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Diziler genellikle bir ihtiyaç ya da zamanı geçirmek için bir eğlence aracı olarak görülmektedir. Ancak bunların ötesinde, diziler izleyicilerin hayatları üzerinde doğrudan etkiler yaratabilir, onların sosyal yaşamlarını etkileyebilir ve algılarını değiştirebilir. Dizilerdeki farklı mekanlar ve karakterlerle tanışan izleyiciler, farklı ülkeler ve kültürlerle etkileşim kurma fırsatı bulurlar. Bu durum, izleyicilerde dizinin üretildiği ülkeye, oyuncularına, ürünlerine yönelik bir merak uyandırır ve o ülkenin tanınmasına katkı sağlar. Böylece ülkeler, diziler aracılığıyla imaj inşa eder, izleyiciler dizinin çekildiği ülkeye gitmek ister ve diziler ülkenin turizmine katkıda bulunur. Tüm bunlar ülkeye ekonomik kazanç olarak geri dönmektedir (Ateşoğlu ve Andaç, 2015: 668-669; Aydemir, 2016: 179; Barkınay, 2019: 37; Kim vd., 2007: 1340). Dizinin içeriğinden sosyal medya yönetimine kadar birçok faktör dizi pazarlamasına önemli katkılar sağlamaktadır. Böylece dizilerin birden fazla ülkede izlenmesi için pazarlama faaliyetlerinin ve çalışmalarının yapıldığı görülmektedir. Geçmişte dizilerin pazarlaması geleneksel medya araçları kanallara yönelikken, günümüzde hem TV kanallarının hem de dijital platformların artan gücüyle, dijital kanallarla da anlaşmalar yapıldığı görülmektedir. Böylece Disney+, Netflix, YouTube, Amazon Prime gibi uluslararası dijital platformlarda Türk dizilerinin erişilebilirliği gün geçtikçe artmaya başlamıştır.

Bu çalışma, Türk dizilerini izleyen yabancı izleyiciler perspektifinden, turizm, imaj, satın alma davranışları, dizi içeriği gibi konular açısından ilişkilendirmeler yapılmaktadır. Diğer bir ifadeyle yabancı tüketicinin Türk dizilerine yönelik bakış açısı incelenmektedir. Ülkelerin dizi pazarlaması üzerine yapılan çalışmaların literatürde yetersiz olduğu görülmektedir. Genellikle diziler, yumuşak güç (soft power) kavramı çerçevesinde ele alınmıştır (Jaarneh, 2023; Yazar, 2020; Arslan, 2022; Aktaş, 2024). Ayrıca dizi turizm üzerine de çalışmalar bulunmaktadır (Güngör, 2019; Contu ve Pau, 2022; Askanova vd., 2021). Ancak bu çalışma, Türk dizilerini, sadece dizilerin turizme etkisi yönüyle değil, sosyal medyanın rolü, dizi içeriği, satın alma gibi pazarlama stratejilerini yönlendirici unsurlarla ele alınmakta ve bu durumu yabancı izleyicilerin Türk dizilerine yönelik görüşlerini inceleyerek ortaya koymaktadır. Çalışmanın, bu çerçevede hem literatüre hem de uygulamaya katkı sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir.

Araştırma sonuçlarına göre, yabancı tüketiciler Türk dizilerini en çok internet ve YouTube platformları üzerinden izlemektedir. İzleyicilerin, altyazı kullanarak Türkçe kelime öğrenmeye çalıştıkları görülmüştür. Türk dizilerinde yer alan mekanlar ve ülkenin tanıtımı, izleyicilerin Türkiye'ye seyahat etme motivasyonlarını artırmaktadır. Ayrıca, Türk dizilerinin kaliteli oyuncu kadrolarına sahip olması, romantik temaları ve ilginç hikaye yapıları, bu dizilerin kaliteli olarak algılanmasını sağlamaktadır. Türk dizilerinin sosyal medya aracılığıyla araştırılması, izlenmesi ve yeni bölümlerine ulaşılması, izleme davranışlarını olumlu yönde etkilemektedir. İzleyicilerin, online platformlarda Türk dizileri hakkında yorum yaparak çevrelerine tavsiye ettikleri de gözlemlenmiştir. Son olarak, Türk dizilerini izlerken bazı izleyicilerde dizilerde görülen ürünleri satın alma isteği olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Türk dizilerinin izlenmesi, sosyal medya etkileşimi, izleyicilerin seyahat motivasyonu ve ürün satın alma davranışlarını olumlu bir şekilde şekillendirmektedir. Bu çerçevede, Türk dizilerinin pazarlanmasında, dizi içerikleri, sosyal medya etkileşimleri, kalite algısı, oyuncular ve benzeri birçok faktör stratejik birer unsur olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Böylece, dizilerin farklı ülkelere pazarlanmasında, hedef kitlenin özellikleri, sosyal medya kullanım alışkanlıkları ve turizmi teşvik eden stratejilerin pazarlama faaliyetleri dikkate alınmalıdır.

1. Introduction

Series can often be seen as a necessity or a means of entertainment to pass the time. But apart from these, series can also have an immediate impact on the lives of viewers, affecting their social lives and changing their perceptions. Exposure to different places and characters in series enables viewers to interact with different countries and cultures, which in turn leads to the recognition of that country and culture, and even to an increased curiosity about that country and culture. Thus, countries export their cultures by building a nation image through series, viewers want to go to the country where the series are broadcasted, and the series contribute to the tourism of the country. All these returns to the country as economic gain (Ateřođlu and Andaç, 2015: 668-669; Aydemir, 2016: 179; Gökşun, 2018 as cited in Barkınay, 2019: 37; Kim, et al., 2007: 1340). The audience, which changes day by day, increases the viewership of the series by watching, wondering, researching and following the series from other countries in addition to the American-made series. This situation also contributes to the country where the series are made. It is seen that marketing activities and studies are carried out for the series to be watched in more than one country. This situation is evaluated in the series scripts, the visual and physical appearance of the plays, clothing, technical and image quality and many other issues. In the export and marketing process of series, decisions are made through in-depth discussions and interviews in terms of disagreement or agreement between countries, marketing power, content and quality of the series, suitability for the country, etc. While in the past the marketing of series was directed towards channels, today, with the increasing power of both TV channels and digital platforms, it is seen that agreements are also made with digital channels. Thus, the accessibility of Turkish TV series on international digital platforms such as Disney +, Netflix, YouTube, and Amazon Prime has started to increase day by day. It is seen that the studies in the literature about the series marketing of countries are insufficient. Generally, studies have been conducted in series with the concept of soft power (Jaarneh, 2023; Yazar, 2020; Arslan, 2022; Aktaş, 2024). In addition, there are also studies on tourism (Güngör and Uysal, 2019; Contu and Pau, 2022; Askanova et al., 2021). The study discusses the development, diversity and marketing importance of Turkish series. In addition, relational links are established in terms of tourism, image, purchasing behaviors, series content, etc. through the perspective of foreigners who watch Turkish series. All the same, this study deals with Turkish series, and marketing strategies, as well as examining the perceptions of foreign viewers about Turkish series. It is thought that the study will contribute to both literature and practice within this framework.

2. Development of Series in the World

First of all, the study provides information about the development of TV series in the world and then the historical development of Turkish TV series is discussed. A flow is drawn from general to specific. The first television series was broadcast in the United States. This series was a melodrama called *The Queen's Messenger*, aired in the late 1920s (Barnow, 1975: 61 as cited in Mutlu, 2008: 71). However, it is known that serials were initially introduced to the audience through radio. The origin of serials can be traced back to the radio serials broadcast in the early 1930s in the United States. In radio, whose main material is music, soap opera programs started to be broadcast over time and these programs had a great impact on listeners (Mutlu, 2008: 159; Kuyucu, 2013: 373-378). The impact of the series on the audience has been one of the reasons why they started to be broadcast on television as well (Mutlu, 2008: 72). In the US, TV series have become very popular since the 1950s and have become the most preferred television broadcast by viewers. This has led to the formation of many different types of series and it has become possible to categorize series into many different categories (Allen, 2019 as cited in

Doğanay and Aktaş, 2021: 854). Since the second half of the 1950s in the US, TV series in the types of western (cowboy), melodrama (soap opera), comic book adaptations, crime fiction and science fiction have also started to be filmed. However, the genre that was followed with the most interest by the audience was sitcoms (Doğanay and Aktaş, 2021: 855). Starting from the late 1950s in the United States, these different television series began to be found more attractive and watched more by viewers than other formats on television. This led to the marketing of these series broadcast on American television to many countries, in other words, the export of the series. The American TV series ‘Dallas’ started to be broadcast on European television and was well received by the audience. In addition to the series ‘Dallas’, many other series were exported from the US and shown on European channels. US-British co-produced historical series such as ‘Rome’ and ‘Tudor’ were also filmed and broadcast. Some European TV series have emerged as adaptations of American series (Bignell and Fickers, 2008: 281). In Latin American countries, the soap opera, called ‘telenovela’, has become the most popular type of soap opera. Telenovelas are the main television programs that have been filmed since the beginning of television broadcasting in Latin American countries. Telenovelas are melodramas in which characters find themselves in complex situations, based on class conflict and the promotion of social mobility. Over time, telenovelas have transcended the borders of Latin countries and have become the most important cultural export products of countries in this region (La Pastina, Rego and Straubhaar, 2003: 1-3; Dorce, 2014: 252-253).

The fact that television series are very popular with the public has made these series an export product. Thus, producers started to export the series to different countries (Özel, 2020: 120). According to a study conducted by EuroData TV in 2015, it was concluded that viewers attach great importance to TV series. In this research, it is seen that movies and TV series are the most watched productions all over the world with a rate of 43%, and this rate increases to 60% in Asia, Latin America and Africa (Şentürk, 2018: 24). Considering these rates, it is seen that TV series are in an important position for both viewers and television channels (Barkınay, 2019: 26). TV series have become one of the most striking productions of television, which is one of the visual communication tools, and the most preferred productions by viewers. In the 2000s, OTT (over-the-top) broadcasting, a type of internet television broadcasting, emerged and many series from different countries became easily accessible all over the world thanks to OTT platforms (Şentürk, 2018: 24). OTT was first produced to provide broadcasting services over television, and with the development of technology, it has started to be used on many devices such as computers, laptops, tablets and mobile phones. OTT platforms have offered a wide range of viewing options to the audience in terms of both device and content (Yüncüoğlu, 2019: 31). Today, OTT platforms such as Netflix, Disney+, HBO Max, Hulu, Amazon Prime are universal and offer the audience in almost every country the series of many different countries with various content. In this context, it is observed that the series industry is increasingly expanding on both digital platforms and television.

2.1. Development of Turkish Series

One of the most important indicators that television is effective in Türkiye is television series (Savaş, 2004: 4). Turkish television viewers first met with soap operas in the first half of the 1970s, a format they did not know in terms of content and form. Turkish viewers first started watching soap operas called Brazilian telenovelas and then American soap operas. In the years when there was only one channel broadcasting in Türkiye and TRT was the only channel, they were TV series that were bought from abroad such as ‘Fugitive’, ‘Virginia’, ‘Dallas’, ‘The Young and the Restless’, ‘Dynasty’, ‘Brave and Beautiful’. They constitute some of these soap operas broadcast on the TRT channel. These serials and many other serials broadcast at that

time were followed with interest by the Turkish audience (Kurt, 2011: 187; Öneren, 2013: 78). With the “Turkish Radio and Television Corporation Law” numbered 359, the TRT channel was established in 1964 as an autonomous public legal entity in order to perform radio and television broadcasts on behalf of the state, and the first broadcast was made in 1968. In 1974, the TV series “Kaynanalar”, which was accepted as the first domestic television series and had sitcom features, was broadcast. After this series, Turkish literature was used for the scenario of the series, and in 1975 Halit Refiğ filmed the series “Aşk-ı Memnu”, adapted from Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil’s novel Aşk-ı Memnu. It is known that the first TV series in the history of Turkish TV series consisted mostly of TV series adapted from Turkish literature. (Avcıoğlu, 2018: 34; Cereci, 2014: 2; Öneren, 2013: 78; Reis, 2013: 12; Doğanay and Aktaş, 2021: 858-859).

In the 1980s, the TRT-2 channel was launched as a result of the audience’s admiration for domestic TV series, as well as foreign soap operas. “Kuruntu Ailesi” in 1985 and “Perihan Abla” in 1986 started broadcasting in 1989. It was with the TV series “Perihan Abla” that Turkish TV series became the center of attention in society. As a result of the popularity of this series by the audience, the street where the series was filmed was named after the series and the real estate market gained vitality. Thus, it has been seen what a TV series can affect social life and how important it can become for a country (Mutlu, 2008: 215; Tanrıöver, 2015 as cited in Doğanay and Aktaş, 2021: 859). With the launch of Star 1, Türkiye’s first private channel, on August 4, 1990, television series began to be followed with greater interest by the public. This situation encouraged the producers to film a new series. This private channel, which went on the air, enabled Türkiye to enter a new era in terms of the TV series industry. The number of serials has increased, and in parallel, production companies have started to develop and the quality of the series has increased (Cengiz, 2020: 46-47; Cereci, 2014: 7; Doğanay and Aktaş, 2021: 860; Reis, 2013: 12).

The TV series industry in Türkiye showed significant growth in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Barkınay, 2019: 33) In the 2000s, the variety of topics in Turkish TV series started to increase. Adaptations of foreign serials have also started to be made, and these adapted serials have been loved by the audience. These adaptations also contributed significantly to the diversity of the subject. Another development in these years was the sale of Turkish TV series abroad. Since 2006, domestic TV series exports have started to accelerate. Turkish TV series have been exported to many different regions of the world, primarily the Middle East and the Balkans, and have left the audience under their influence. Developments in marketing communications have had a great impact on the fact that Turkish TV series are watched in different parts of the world (Doğanay and Aktaş, 2021: 859; Öztürk and Atik, 2016: 68-69). Turkish television has created the TV series industry, which it started to develop with the TV series it bought from abroad, with elements of its own culture. In addition, Turkish TV series were brought to a position where they started to be exported abroad.

2.3. Developments in the Marketing of Turkish Series

Serial export is defined as the granting of the right to display a series to a broadcaster abroad for a certain period in return for a fee (Doğanay and Aktaş, 2021: 861). Today, while the size of the television sector has reached billions of dollars, the most important productions in this field are Turkish TV series. Turkish series, which have grown rapidly to become a sector on their own in a short time and gained international recognition, are both the most-watched on national television channels and the most exported productions (Businessdiplomacy, 2021). For a TV series to be exported abroad, it must achieve high ratings in the country where it is produced. For example, in Türkiye, a TV series must first reach high viewership in Türkiye in

order to be sold abroad (Doğanay and Aktaş, 2021:871). Turkish TV series also demonstrate significant performance with their success in exports (Çapık and Dulupçu, 2023:158; Nuroğlu, 2013: 11).

The export of Turkish TV series abroad was realized for the first time in 1981 when the TV series “Aşk-ı Memnu” was marketed to France. After this series, fifty-two Turkish-made TV series were exported to nine different countries. Turkish TV series also achieved significant success in the domestic TV series industry during this period, and the adventure of going abroad in real terms was realized with the series “Deli Yürek”. With the marketing of the “Deli Yürek” series to Kazakhstan in 2001, Turkish TV series producers took an important step to gain a place in the international TV series market (Şentürk, 2018: 3; Arbatlı and Kurar 2015: 31; Öztürk and Atik, 2016: 74). With the step into the Central Asian TV series market with the series “Deli Yürek”, TV series started to be seen as a major export branch in the Turkish export industry (Ballı et. al., 2013: 187). With the marketing of the ‘Gümüş’ series to the Middle East and Bulgaria in 2007, serial exports to the Middle East and the Balkans began (Öztürk and Atik, 2016: 74; Buccianti, 2010: 25; Dinçer and Kutlay, 2012: 4).TV series exports to the Balkan countries continued with the TV series “Binbir Gece” broadcast in Croatia in 2010. This series was loved by the public and increased the Turkish TV series audience. After this series, serials such as Fatmagül’ün Suçu Ne, Hanımın Çiftliği, Muhteşem Yüzyıl (Magnificent Century), Ezel and Dudaktan Kalbe were broadcast in Balkan countries in 2012 (Panjeta, 2013: 143; Nuroğlu, 2013: 7). Turkish TV series have gained an important place in the European TV series market after their success in the Middle East and the Balkans. In 1981, the TV series “Aşk-ı Memnu” was marketed to France, and the TV series “Yabancı Damat” to Greece. In addition to these TV series, many Turkish TV series such as Binbir Gece, Dudaktan Kalbe, Gümüş, Acı Hayat, Aşk-ı Memnu, Ezel, Yer Gök Aşk, Lale Devri, Muhteşem Yüzyıl and Asi were screened at different times, and these series attracted millions of viewers on the screen. (Özdemir Güzel and Aktaş, 2016: 116; Cengiz, 2020: 53). In addition to Greece, Turkish TV series were followed by Spain, Sweden, Italy, Portugal and many other European countries. According to the news of Anadolu Agency, Spain had dominated Latin American TV series until this time, but it was stated that Turkish TV series had a great impact. Many Turkish TV series have been exported to many continents and countries, especially to the Middle East, Balkans and European country markets. (Öztürk and Atik, 2016: 75). The series, which has the biggest success story among the TV series exported to countries in all these different continents, is “Muhteşem Yüzyıl (Magnificent Century)”. It has reached more than 500 million viewers in almost 90 countries and has increased its export figures exponentially. At the same time, this series has taken its place among the TV series that bring the most revenue and are exported to most countries. Thanks to the Magnificent Century TV series, China and Japan were among the countries to which Türkiye exported TV series for the first time (Büyükköşdere, 2018; Özdemir, 2018; Şentürk, 2018: 4). Today, more than 120 Turkish series reach 156 countries and approximately 500 million viewers. In the early periods, Turkish TV series exports, which mainly progressed to the Middle East, expanded to Central Asia, the Balkans, Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Far East. Thus, Turkish TV series became the most demanded TV series in the international arena after US TV series, and Türkiye became the second country after the US in TV series exports (Directorate of Communications, 2019; Kantarcı et.al., 2015: 213; Öztürk and Atik, 2016: 69). Although Türkiye started television broadcasting and producing Turkish series relatively late, it has rapidly become a dominant player in the global TV series market. In a very short period, Türkiye has achieved a larger market share than any other country, except for the USA. This remarkable success is due to the widespread international popularity of Turkish dramas, which have gained significant viewership in regions like the Middle East, the Balkans, and Latin America. As a result, Türkiye has established itself as a major exporter of

TV series, surpassing many other countries in terms of global influence in the television industry. In addition to these, the government has provided certain support for the export of TV series. First of all, in 2008, the law on the VAT (Value Added Tax) refund of TV series production costs was enacted. After many developments regarding this issue, the support of TV series was defined in the “Regulation on Supporting the Cinema Industry” published on October 15, 2019. According to the regulation, producers of TV series projects that are exported abroad and contribute to the promotion of the country can now receive support (Deniz, 2010: 52; Dođanay and Aktař, 2021: 869).

Distributor companies have an important role in opening Turkish TV series to international markets and broadcasting them on different channels in different countries. Distributor companies, which distribute, market and sell the serials that have existing content, carry out the export activities of the serials (Öztürk and Atik, 2016: 76). Global Agency, which contributes to the cultural promotion of Türkiye and helps Turkish series to spread globally, was awarded an outstanding achievement award by the TOA Awards, one of the award ceremonies held in the USA in 2019 (GlobalAgency, 2019). On the other hand, serial productions cooperate with channels of different countries in export. Channels such as Kanal D, ATV, and FOX have their own sales units for serial productions (Şentürk et al., 2017: 185). While the United States ranks first in the world's largest TV series exports, Türkiye ranks second (MediaCat, 2018; Kalkınma Bakanlığı, 2018: 20; GlobalAgency, 2019; Branding Türkiye, 2019; Businessdiplomacy, 2020). Self-development of Turkish TV series increases export activities and their marketing to different countries beyond the Middle East countries. It also enabled the increase of distributors such as agencies (Şentürk et al., 2017: 203). The audience profile of the target country is important in the marketing of TV series. Because the products to be marketed must be suitable for the audience profile. It helps to collect information about the audience profile of the target country by looking at the demands of the countries, such as what kind of TV series content and TV series types (Şentürk et al., 2017: 191). It can be evaluated by looking at many structures of the targeted country in the marketing of Turkish TV series. Common points and ties can be found with the targeted country. In addition to television series, OTT platforms collaborate with producers in other countries for series/films. Such platforms also do business with Turkish producers. OTT platforms can easily reach audiences from all over the world (Dođanay and Aktař, 2021: 868). The habits of watching TV series have started to change in the world and Türkiye. In order to save time, the viewer now aims to watch the serials where they can access the content they want at any time and place and they do not watch commercials in between. OTT platforms, on the other hand, can meet such needs of this new generation audience. This situation also had a significant impact on the export of series. Because viewers have started to show interest in the series broadcast on OTT platforms rather than television series. Thanks to OTT platforms, Turkish series reach a wider geography and audience. In this context, OTT platforms also make a significant contribution to the export of series, mediating the reach of viewers not only from certain channels but also from international digital broadcasting platforms (Şentürk et al., 2017: 190-191). The transition of Turkish series to digital platforms began with Netflix's availability in Türkiye in 2016. In this context, while Turkish series were already reaching audiences in various countries through terrestrial broadcasting, the new generation of Turkish series, written and directed as part of Netflix Originals, significantly contributed to the growth of the Turkish series industry. One of the key differences between digital platforms and television broadcasting is the freedom provided by the on-demand nature of digital platforms. This freedom is reflected in the ability to experiment with a wide range of genres and storytelling techniques, which are often more flexible compared to the conventional, genre-specific productions common in television broadcasting (Kuřcu Özbudak, 2022).

According to Parrot Analytics, global demand for Turkish series increased by 184% between 2020 and 2023 (Parrot Analytics, 2024; Economist, 2024). The increasing success of Turkish TV series is driven by various factors. These include content, design, external evaluation (costumes, set design, locations), organizational structure, and marketing (Son, 2020). This significant rise reflects the growing international popularity of Turkish dramas, which have become a prominent export in the television industry. After the export of Turkish series increased so much, Turkish series showed significant progress in terms of filming quality, production quality and artistic value. They tried to reach high standards in many areas such as image quality, sound system, venue and costume design, dubbing, script, storytelling, outdoor filming and acting (Deloitte Turkey, 2014; Özgökbil-Bilis et. al., 2018: 412; Bolelli, 2021). Such factors help promote the country in an international context and strengthen its cultural influence. It can be evaluated by looking at many structures of the targeted country in the marketing strategies of Turkish TV series. Common points and ties can be found with the targeted country. In this case, the factors involved in the marketing of the Turkish series to different countries should be clearly addressed. Topics such as tourism (Akşen, 2016; Özcan, 2016; Matar, 2017; Navarette, 2020), image (Barkinay, 2019; Navarette, 2020, Özarslan, 2020), product purchasing (Bozlak, 2019, Kuriş, 2019; Akşen, 2019), learning Turkish language (Sejfula, 2019; Nastoski, 2021), social media (Deniz, 2019), culture (Balaban, 2015; Özgökbil Bilis et.al., 2018; Hancıgaz, 2021; Benrazek, 2022; Ökmen, 2023) are the main contributions of Turkish series to the country.

2.3.1. The Impact of the Turkish Series on Tourism

Tourism income increased by 53.4% in 2022 compared to the previous year and reached 46 billion 284 million 907 thousand dollars (tuik.gov.tr/:05.07.2023). Tourism becomes a key driver for socio-economic progress and therefore tourism is closely linked to development (Ertz et al., 2021: 655). There can be many reasons why a country is considered valuable in terms of tourism. These reasons could include a country's natural beauty, cultural heritage, historical landmarks, and unique experiences that attract visitors. Factors like safety, accessibility, hospitality, and infrastructure are also critical in shaping its tourism appeal. Additionally, television series and films produced in that country can serve as a powerful marketing tool by showcasing its locations, culture, and lifestyle. Films/series can serve as a powerful marketing tool by showcasing tourist destinations through media, appealing to international audiences and sparking their interest in visiting these locations. In this way, TV shows can become a strong promotional asset for tourism, encouraging viewers to explore the featured places and cultures. Nuroğlu (2013:9) states that, according to the study, Turkish series play a significant role as an effective promotional tool for introducing Türkiye to tourists coming from the Balkans and Arab countries. Film/Series tourism, called series/film-based tourism, provides tourist visits to that region as a result of showing a country/city/region on television, video or cinema screen. Film/series tourism is a growing phenomenon worldwide, causing both the growth of the entertainment industry and the increase in international travel (Hudson and Ritchie, 2006: 387). Naci Kuru, who served as the Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, mentioned that country promotion campaigns cannot be done even if millions of dollars are spent, it becomes possible to realize this situation with a few series (Dinçer and Kutlay, 2012: 31). In that case, the elements reflected by a series significantly affect the country's contribution to tourism.

Exported Turkish series increased the sense of curiosity in the audience and this situation had a positive effect on the tourism sector (Özcan, 2016: 202). Movie and serial effect tourism can be defined as the audience's curiosity about that destination and visiting it for touristic purposes as a result of showing a destination with a film or series. As a result of the broadcasting

of Turkish series in many different countries, viewers from many different countries began to come to Türkiye to visit the places they saw in the series. Thus, film/series tourism becomes important in Türkiye (Hudson and Ritchie, 2006: 387; Ökmen and Göksu, 2019: 270; Saltık et. al, 2010: 42; Çınar Şahin and Acar, 2021: 75). In this case, studies have been carried out on whether film/series tourism has a positive effect on visiting the regions shown in the series/films. Çetin (2010) concluded that the TV series “Kıvalı Kar” and “Yeşeren Rüyalara” are very effective in the promotion of Cumalıkızık district and that these TV series attract local and foreign tourists to the region. Nuroğlu (2013) concluded that 31% of the tourists who come to Türkiye visit Türkiye with the effect of the TV series they watch. Özdemir-Güzel and Aktaş (2016) concluded that Turkish TV series positively affect the size of tourism activities for Türkiye. Çiftçi et. al. (2017) concluded that the “Karagül” TV series filmed in Eski Halfeti had a positive impact on visiting the region. According to the findings of research conducted by Skyscanner, the travel search engine serving globally, it has been seen that there is an important connection between flight searches and foreign TV series in the show (Deloitte Türkiye, 2014: 31). When we look at the results of this and similar studies, one of the most important results of Turkish TV series exports is that a positive image of Türkiye such as historical values and natural beauties is drawn, and as a result, foreign tourists come to the country. In this context, every effort should be made to ensure sustainable growth in the field of tourism. One of the important elements of a touristic destination, brand image or destination image (in the context of tourism) should be given special attention to the examination and evaluation (Lopes, 2011: 306). Turkish TV series have positive effects on the image of the country (Barkınay, 2019: 81). In that case, series not only influence audiences through their storylines but also promote the countries, cities, or local destinations where they are filmed. They create cultural appeal and contribute to the country's brand image. This, in turn, has a significant impact on both tourism and cultural awareness, fostering international interest and engagement.

2.3.2. Culture Marketing of Turkish Series

Culture is the collective programming of the human mind that distinguishes one group of people from other groups. In this sense, culture is the system of values that the society has in common (Hofstede, 2002). Along with cultural marketing, studies are carried out to introduce the countries culturally, to make pricing policies, and to ensure their activities in distribution networks. In this way, it is seen that the social and economic welfare and development of the countries are realized. Cultural elements encompass fundamental aspects such as religion, language, tradition, music, and clothing. Additionally, cultural elements can be examined through mediums such as films/series, museums, and various other domains. (Karabıyık, 2013: 27). With globalization, it is seen that the changes in the modern world have diversified within the economic, social and cultural structures (Gosco Hernandez and Torres Coronas, 2009: 10). Culture constitutes the mosaic of values, morals, attitudes, beliefs, art and other shared symbols created by the communities it is in. Culture significantly affects where people will travel, what they will wear, and even where they will live (Mucuk, 2017: 76).

Culture marketing aims to ensure that a product or content is effectively presented within specific cultural contexts and consumed in a way that is suitable for those cultures. Culture marketing is perceived to be related to visual arts, performing arts or cross-cultural marketing. In addition, it can have far-reaching effects on the social, economic and political behavior of a community (Miller and Patiluga, 2001: 72). In other words, it is necessary to define a product that includes more than just cultural tourism, cultural heritage, books, magazines, movies, theater plays and festivals (Karabıyık, 2013: 39). The television series industry plays a significant role in international marketing. The culture, customs, traditions, and lifestyles

portrayed in these series provide valuable insights into the country of origin, enhancing its global recognition. Through this medium, countries can promote their unique cultural identity and increase international awareness, positioning themselves within a global context (Danacı ve Nacar, 2016). Television series are not merely entertainment tools but can also serve as powerful marketing instruments that promote a country's culture on an international scale. The cinema/series industry, like other sectors, is influenced by the changes and developments in cultural marketing conditions that arise as a result of global capitalism (Kılınçaraslan, 2015:33). The most important reason for the positive results of Turkish series exports is that Turkish series are loved by the audience in the countries where they are broadcast. There are several main reasons why Turkish series are loved by foreign audiences. The first main reason is known as cultural proximity. According to the theory of cultural proximity, viewers show more interest in television productions that include lives they see close to their own (Doğanay and Aktaş, 2021: 862). For example, a study investigating the reasons why Turkish TV series are admired in the MENA region (Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Amman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen). According to the results, the fact that the actor/actress(s) in the TV series are more similar to Arabs in appearance, the events take place in a modern Muslim society, the use of common words such as respect to the elder, the use of common words such as 'I hope, mashallah', family ties, the similarity of social relations, the similarities related to life such as drinking tea with a thin glass, praying the rosary. It has been seen that Turkish TV series are enjoyed in this region (Nuroğlu, 2013: 7; Doğanay and Aktaş, 2021: 862). The reflections of the Islamic culture in Turkish and Arab society in Turkish TV series also allow the TV series to be watched more acceptably by the Middle East audience (Ökmen and Göksu, 2019: 253-255). Turkish TV series have created an important audience in Balkan countries due to reasons such as cultural and linguistic similarity, having a common history and heritage, and similarity of family traditions (Kantarcı et al., 2015: 214). Considering all these, religious, historical, cultural and ethnic partnerships play an important role in the popularity of Turkish TV series in the Middle East and Arab geography, Central Asia and the Balkans (Özgökbil Bilis et al., 2018: 412). All these partnerships make it easier for the audience to connect with the subjects and characters in the series and enable the audience to follow the Turkish series with interest. Pothou (2020) examines how Turkish drama series are consumed in different cultures. In recent years, Turkish dramas produced with themes such as the history of the Ottoman Empire, militaristic series, and Türkiye's foreign policy have been observed to spread successfully among viewers in different countries, such as Greece. The research shows that cultural proximity contributes to the adoption of these series by viewers from different cultures. In this context, in the television industry, cultural marketing plays a crucial role not only in targeting local audiences but also in achieving success in the global market. By understanding the cultural context accurately and developing appropriate strategies, producers and distributors can establish a stronger connection with viewers and increase viewership ratings.

Culture is one of the fundamental building blocks of content production, as content must be shaped according to the cultural contexts, values, norms, and belief systems of the target audience. This relationship directly influences the audience's interest in, response to, and connection with the content, especially in genres such as television series, films, music, and other media types. In this context, one of the reasons why Turkish series are loved by foreign audiences is the closeness of the content. Most of the exported Turkish series consists of melodrama series. These melodramas are very similar in content to South American telenovelas in particular. For this reason, Latin people like to watch content they are used to from a different culture, and for this reason, Turkish series have created an important sphere of influence in Latin countries. In addition, the content of the Turkish series does not contain excessive

sexuality and violence, it reflects emotions such as love, affection, revenge, anger and despair well, it focuses on romance, and the series are watched with interest in the countries they are exported to (Doğanay and Aktaş, 2021: 863-867; Çınar Şahin and Acar, 2021: 21). In addition, the actor/actress in Turkish series portraying their roles in a natural way is another reason for watching Turkish series (Cengiz, 2020: 58; Ökmen and Göksu, 2019: 253). The fact that the lifestyle seen in Turkish series is accessible not only to celebrities or wealthy people but also to viewers from all walks of life, is another reason why Turkish series are loved and watched (Kraidy, 2014, as cited in Temina, 2019: 57). Designing content in alignment with the cultural context allows brands and content creators to build a strong connection with viewers, capture the interest of their target audience, and achieve success in a broader market.

2.3.3. The Impact of Turkish Series on Buying

Consumer behavior is influenced by a variety of internal and external factors that interact to create guiding effects on the purchasing process. These factors can alter consumers' purchasing attitudes, intentions, and behaviors, thereby influencing their involvement in the decision-making process. Internal factors are rooted in individual psychological states and motivations, while external factors encompass environmental influences, social norms, and economic conditions. This interaction dynamically shapes consumers' decision-making processes. In this context, series have a significant effect on purchasing behavior (Hudson and Ritchie, 2006: 256; Şahbaz and Kılıçlar, 2009: 47). Series can influence viewers' purchase intentions through product placement (Qu et. al., 2024). Additionally, the lifestyles and preferences of characters in the series can shape viewers' attitudes. Turkish series have increased the interest in Turkish goods such as clothing, furniture, accessories and cosmetics in the countries where they are shown (Kantarıcı et al., 2015: 215; Nuroğlu, 2013: 7). Thanks to Turkish TV series, viewers in foreign countries have information about the family structures of Turks, the places they live, the music they listen to, their clothing, and the food they eat (Göksun, 2018 cited in Barkınay, 2019: 35). In a study on the effect of Turkish television series in Latin America on the audience, it was found that the audience had little knowledge about Türkiye before watching Turkish TV series, but as they watched the TV series, they began to learn more about Turkish people, culture and lifestyle. Thus, it was seen that they started to have a positive view of Turkish people (Aslan, 2019: 47). Furthermore, TV series can promote tourism and increase viewers' desire to travel to locations featured in the shows or purchase products associated with those locations. The effect of Turkish series in foreign countries is also seen in tourism, especially in purchasing Turkish products seen in series. In addition, Turkish series have a positive impact on Turkish traditions, values and culture, Turkish lifestyle, Turkish people and consumption habits in the countries they are exported to (Deloitte Turkey, 2014: 31; Kuyucu, 2014: 11; Ökmen and Göksu, 2019: 270; Özgökbil Bilis et al., 2018: 413). All these positively affect Türkiye's image, increase its international visibility, open up Turkish culture to different geographies and contribute to the formation of sympathy for the country by foreigners.

3. Research Method

3.1. Aim and Contribution

Turkish series have gained a wide fan base not only among local audiences but also on international platforms, becoming a global phenomenon. Spanning a vast geography from Latin America to the Middle East, and from Europe to Asia, Turkish series have captured viewers' attention with their unique storytelling and rich cultural elements. This development has not only added economic value to the entertainment industry but has also made significant

contributions to Türkiye's culture, tourism marketing and consumer behavior. Turkish series spark cultural curiosity, increasing touristic interest in Türkiye, while also driving demand for Turkish products. This study aims to research the perceptions of foreigners towards Turkish series. The study also addresses the significant impacts of series on marketing within a strategic context. In the study, the analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics and crosstab to evaluate the questions. When the previous literature is examined, it is seen that the series are evaluated from a single perspective or nation. It is thought that the study will contribute to the literature on examining series with different elements and analyzing them by establishing relationships.

3.2. Sampling and Data Collection

Since social science researchers cannot reach the whole population in order to carry out their studies, the generalization of the research is made over the sample mass. Due to factors such as time, cost and effort, it is not possible for researchers to reach and observe the entire population. In this case, researchers evaluate their research by selecting a sample mass with similar characteristics and abilities that can represent the population and by making studies on this sample mass (Gürbüz and Şahin, 2016: 126). In our research, in which we wanted to measure the perceptions of foreign people towards Turkish series, the data were collected by convenience sampling method and by online. The sample was formed using data obtained from individuals who follow social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram) related to Turkish series and from the researcher's group of foreign friends by Google forms. 244 foreigners were asked to answer the survey questions. The data was collected between July and November 2023.

3.3. Measures

15 of the 23 question statements in the research; Balaban (2015), Gümüş et al. (2017), Malik and Mukhtar (2019), Temina (2019), Deniz (2019) have been adapted from their research. The other 8 questions of the research were created by the authors who conducted the research. In this way, questions were asked about Turkish series in order to support the literature and gain a different perspective. Table 1 includes the survey questions and their sources.

Table 1. Questionnaires

Items	Reference
What kind of Turkish series do you watch? I watch Turkish series because they have interesting stories. I buy products that I see in Turkish series. I feel the Turkish series is close to my culture. How often do you watch Turkish series? (Every week / Every month / Once a year)	Gümüş et al., 2017; Malik and Mukhtar, 2019
I watch Turkish serials because they have love and romantic themes. I think Turkish series have a good cast (actors/actresses). Turkish serials motivate me to travel to Türkiye. I try to learn words while watching Turkish series. I would like it to be dubbed/subtitled while watching Turkish series. (Dubbed / Subtitled / Doesn't matter)	Malik and Mukhtar, 2019; Balaban, 2015
I think the Turkish series are of good quality. I follow Turkish TV series actor/actress(s) on social media I comment on Turkish series from online platforms. I read information about Turkish series when I see it on social media. The Turkish series I see on social media affect my watching preference. On which platform do you watch Turkish series the most?	Temina, 2019 Deniz, 2019
I would be happy when a Turkish series is broadcast on a platform that I can reach. I would like to quickly find other episodes of a Turkish series I watched online. It makes me happy to see the landscapes of the country in Turkish series After I finish the Turkish series, I search to watch another Turkish series. I recommend watching Turkish serials to my friends. Turkish series contribute to the promotion of the country. There are products that I want to buy while watching Turkish series.	Created by authors

3.4. Findings

In this part of the study, the demographic features of the participants are examined. Information on gender, marital status, education, age and country of the people participating in the research was collected. These features are examined and evaluated within the scope of the research.

3.4.1. Demographic Features

The participants were asked questions about their gender, marital status, education, age and country, and 244 participants were asked to answer all questions in the questionnaire. In Table 2, all demographic characteristics of the respondents in the questionnaire are given in detail.

Table 2. Demographic Features

Variables	N	%	Variables	N	%
Gender			Region		
Female	195	79,9	America	68	27,9
Male	49	20,1	Europe	63	25,8
Marital Status			Africa	52	21,3
Single	132	54,1	Asia	42	17,2
Married	112	45,9	Middle East	13	5,3
Education			Other	6	2,5
High School	66	27,0	Total	244	100
Bachelor	111	45,5			
Master and PhD	67	27,5			
Age					
18 years and under	7	2,9			
19-40	108	44,3			
41 years and older	129	52,9			
Total	244	100			

In the demographic characteristics of the research, firstly, gender was analyzed. It is seen that the foreigners participating in the research are mostly female participants. Female participants constitute 79.9% of the study, while men constitute 20.1%. Another demographic feature is marital status. According to the results, single individuals were 54.1%; married people are at the rate of 45.9%. When the education statistics of the respondents are examined, it is seen that undergraduate (45.5%) and graduate (27.5%) participants are more than high school level. Age characteristics of the participants are 18 years and under 2.9%; between 19-40 44.3%; 41 years and over 52.9%. Countries have been categorized according to the continents they are located in. The statistics of the continents where foreign participants live are respectively America (27.9%), Europe (25.8%), Africa (21.3%), Asia (17.2%), Middle East (5.3) and other (2. ,5%).

3.4.2. Statement of Questionnaires and Mean

In this section, the means and standard deviations of the research questions have been calculated.

Table 3. Statement of Questionnaires and Mean

Items	Mean	Std. Dev.
It makes me happy to see the landscapes of the country in Turkish series.	4,32	0,85
I think Turkish series have a good cast (actors/actress).	4,31	0,80
I would like to quickly find other episodes of a Turkish series I watched online.	4,29	0,88
I would be happy when a Turkish series is broadcast on a platform that I can reach	4,27	0,89
Turkish series contribute to the promotion of the country.	4,22	0,85
I try to learn words while watching Turkish series.	4,17	1,02
I watch Turkish series because they have interesting stories.	4,15	0,86
After I finish the Turkish series, I search to watch another Turkish series.	4,15	1,00
Turkish serials motivate me to travel to Turkey	4,14	0,96
I think Turkish series are of good quality.	4,10	0,91
I recommend watching Turkish serials to my friends.	4,00	1,00
I read information about Turkish series when I see it on social media.	3,94	1,02
I watch Turkish serials because they have love and romantic themes.	3,91	1,04
I follow Turkish TV series actor/actress(s) on social media	3,63	1,25
The Turkish series I see on social media affect my watching preference.	3,46	1,06
There are products that I want to buy while watching Turkish series.	3,28	1,08
I comment on Turkish series from online platforms.	3,22	1,24
I buy products that I see in Turkish series.	2,99	1,12
I feel Turkish series close to my culture.	2,97	1,08

The averages of the questions were analyzed. +1.25 and below Strongly Disagree; Between 1.25 and 2.24 Disagree; 2.25 and 3.24 Neither Agree nor Disagree; Between 3.25 and 4.24 Agree and 4.25 and above I Strongly Agree is determined. Analysis results are given in Table 3. When the table is examined, the statement “Seeing the Landscapes of the Country in Turkish TV Series Makes Me Happy” has the highest average (4,32). The lowest average is the expression of foreign participants that I feel Turkish series close to my culture (2.97).

3.4.3. Descriptive Statistical Analysis

These processes involve compiling, collecting, and summarizing data related to the variables included in the research. The primary aim of this analysis is to graphically summarize the dataset of a variable (White and Wint, 2004: 1; Gürbüz ve Şahin, 2016: 220). In this study, data is analyzed and interpreted through cross-tabulations (cross-tabs) used within the scope of descriptive statistics. Crosstab analysis is a technique used to analyze the relationship between

two or more variables (Özbay, 2008: 467). With the increase in foreign people's behavior towards liking/watching Turkish series, besides Turkish viewers day by day, foreign people participating in the research were asked the question "What kind of Turkish series do you watch" in order to get an answer to the question of what kind of Turkish series they watch. More than one marking option is provided and the outputs for the analysis results are given in Table 4.

Table 4. Kind of Turkish Series & Watching Frequency

What kind of Turkish series do you watch?			How often do you watch Turkish series?		
	N	%		N	%
Romantic	176	24,3	Every Week	185	75,8
Drama	161	22,2	Every Month	43	17,6
Comedy	104	14,4	Once a Year	16	6,6
Action	85	11,7			
Historical	81	11,2			
Crime	79	10,9			
Adventure	32	4,4			
Sci-fi	6	0,8			

According to the results of the research, it is seen that the most watched Turkish series type is romantic (176 out of 244), followed by drama (161 out of 244). It has been determined that the least watched is Sci-fi. When the frequency of watching Turkish series of foreign viewers is examined, it is concluded that the majority of them watch "every week".

Table 5. On which platform do you watch Turkish series the most?

Platform	n	%
Internet	119	48,8
YouTube	73	29,9
Netflix	28	11,5
TV	24	9,8
Total	244	100

It was concluded that the foreigners participating in the research preferred watching Turkish series and the most used platform was the internet. Secondly, it is seen that YouTube is the most-watched platform for Turkish series by the participants.

Table 6. Cross-tabulation Results for " I would like it to be dubbed/subtitled while watching Turkish series * I try to learn words while watching Turkish series"

		I try to learn words while watching Turkish series.					Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strong Agree	
I would like it to be dubbed/subtitled while watching Turkish series.	Dubbed	4	7	6	9	6	32
	Subtitled	2	3	8	72	91	176
	Doesn't matter	2	5	4	7	18	36
Total		8	15	18	88	115	244

*Chi-square p value≤0,05

According to the analysis results of the research conducted on foreign people watching Turkish series, it is concluded that the majority of them try to learn Turkish vocabulary while watching Turkish series. In addition, it is seen that most of those who try to learn Turkish vocabulary watch series with subtitles. In this case, it is thought that subtitles are preferred to learn how the words are said and how the language is spoken. When past studies are examined,

cases where watching movies with subtitles will be used as a tool to learn a language have been discussed (Kanellopoulou et. al., 2019; Truong and Tran, 2014; Tognozzi, 2010; Avon, 2006).

Table 7. Cross-tabulation Results for "Turkish serials motivate me to travel to Türkiye* The other questions"

		Turkish serials motivate me to travel to Türkiye					Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strong Agree	
It makes me happy to see the landscapes of the country in Turkish series.	Strongly Disagree	3	0	0	0	0	3
	Disagree	1	3	3	2	0	9
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	1	2	7	6	1	17
	Agree	0	5	14	51	21	91
	Strong Agree	0	2	7	31	84	124
Turkish series contribute to the promotion of the country.	Strongly Disagree	3	0	0	1	0	4
	Disagree	1	2	2	1	0	6
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	0	2	10	9	4	25
	Agree	0	6	14	56	29	105
	Strong Agree	1	2	5	23	73	104
Total		5	12	31	90	106	244

* Chi-square p value≤0,05

The data in Table 7 underscores the impactful role of Turkish serials in promoting tourism to Türkiye by leveraging the visual appeal of the country's landscapes and fostering positive perceptions of its cultural promotion. Specifically, 34.4% (84 participants) of those who strongly agree with the statement "It makes me happy to see the landscapes of the country in Turkish series" also strongly agree that "Turkish serials motivate me to travel to Türkiye." Similarly, 29.9% (73 participants) of participants who strongly agree that "Turkish serials contribute to the promotion of the country" also strongly agree with the statement about their travel motivation. These findings suggest that the visual satisfaction derived from Turkish series, particularly through their portrayal of natural and cultural features, plays a significant role in inspiring international audiences to consider Türkiye as a travel destination. When the literature is reviewed, similar results are observed (Nuroğlu, 2013; Özcan, 2016; Hudson and Ritchie, 2006; Ökmen and Göksu, 2019; Hua, 2021).

Table 8. Cross-tabulation Results for "I think the Turkish series are of good quality* The other questions"

		I think the Turkish series are of good quality					Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strong Agree	
I think Turkish series have a good cast (actors/actresses)	Strongly Disagree	3	0	0	0	0	3
	Disagree	1	3	0	1	0	5
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	0	2	14	1	2	19
	Agree	2	1	13	70	16	102
	Strong Agree	0	1	6	35	73	115
I watch Turkish serials because they have love and romantic themes.	Strongly Disagree	4	2	4	2	0	12
	Disagree	1	1	3	5	1	11
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	1	4	9	15	10	39
	Agree	0	0	11	65	30	106
	Strong Agree	0	0	6	20	50	76
I watch Turkish series because they have interesting stories.	Strongly Disagree	4	0	0	0	0	4
	Disagree	1	2	4	1	0	8
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	0	3	12	9	2	26
	Agree	1	1	15	69	28	114
	Strong Agree	0	1	2	28	61	92
Total		6	7	33	107	91	244

* Chi-square p value≤0,05

According to Table 8, among the participants who strongly agree with the statement “*I think Turkish series have a good cast (actors/actresses)*” 29,9% (73 participants) also agree with the statement “*I think the Turkish series are of good quality.*” Among those who agree with the statement “*I watch Turkish serials because they have love and romantic themes.*” 26,6% (65 participants) also agree with “*I think the Turkish series are of good quality.*” Similarly, among those who agree with the statement “*I watch Turkish series because they have interesting stories.*” 28,3 % (69 participants) also agree with “*I think the Turkish series are of good quality.*” The results show that elements such as the cast, thematic features, and interesting storylines of Turkish series have a significant impact on viewers' perception of the quality of the series. In other words, the content features (actor/actresses, script, storyline, themes of the series positively reinforce viewers' overall perception of their quality. When the literature is reviewed, similar results are observed (Nuroğlu, 2013; Doğanay and Aktaş, 2021; Deloitte Turkey, 2014; Özgökbel-Bilis et. al., 2018; Bolelli, 2021).

Table 9. Cross-tabulation Results for “The Turkish series I see on social media affect my watching preference * The other questions”

		The Turkish series I see on social media affect my watching preference					Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strong Agree	
I read information about Turkish series when I see it on social media	Strongly Disagree	6	0	6	0	0	12
	Disagree	1	5	1	7	0	14
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	1	3	11	5	1	21
	Agree	5	20	27	65	8	125
	Strong Agree	0	6	12	29	25	72
After I finish the Turkish series, I search to watch another Turkish series.	Strongly Disagree	2	1	2	0	0	5
	Disagree	4	6	4	3	0	17
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	1	6	10	8	1	26
	Agree	4	13	13	47	6	83
	Strong Agree	2	8	28	48	27	113
I would be happy when a Turkish series is broadcast on a platform that I can reach.	Strongly Disagree	3	1	1	0	0	5
	Disagree	1	2	2	2	0	7
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	3	2	13	3	0	21
	Agree	1	20	20	50	2	93
	Strong Agree	5	9	21	51	32	118
I would like to quickly find other episodes of a Turkish series I watched online	Strongly Disagree	2	2	1	0	0	5
	Disagree	3	1	1	2	0	7
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	3	5	8	2	0	18
	Agree	1	15	22	52	6	96
	Strong Agree	4	11	25	50	28	118
Total		13	34	57	106	34	244

* Chi-square p value≤0,05

The statement “*I read information about Turkish series when I see it on social media*” was agreed upon by 65 out of 244 participants (26.6%). This indicates that reading information about Turkish series on social media has a significant impact on viewers' watching preferences. In other words, obtaining information about series on social media influences viewers' choices and guides their decision-making process on which series to watch. The statement “*After I finish the Turkish series, I search to watch another Turkish series*” was agreed upon by 48 participants (19.7%). This shows that people who finish a series are inclined to look for other Turkish series and also the impact of Turkish series on social media increases viewers' motivation to search for a new Turkish series after finishing one. The statement “*I would be happy when a Turkish series is broadcast on a platform that I can reach*” was agreed upon by 50 participants (20.5%). This highlights the importance of accessible platforms for viewers. Social media influences

platform preferences and, consequently, watching habits. Similarly, 52 participants (21.3%) agreed with "*I would like to quickly find other episodes of a Turkish series I watched online,*" showing that viewers want to watch Turkish series uninterrupted and easily find new episodes. Social media facilitates this by helping viewers stay updated on new episodes.

Table 10. Cross-tabulation Results for " I recommend watching Turkish serials to my friends*
I comment on Turkish series from online platforms"

		I recommend watching Turkish series to my friends					Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strong Agree	
I comment on Turkish series from online platforms	Strongly Disagree	3	5	9	8	3	28
	Disagree	1	5	8	26	7	47
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	2	2	5	22	17	48
	Agree	1	4	10	37	33	85
	Strong Agree	0	0	0	9	27	36
Total		7	16	32	102	87	244

* Chi-square p value \leq 0,05

The cross-tabulation results for the statements "*I recommend watching Turkish serials to my friends*" and "*I comment on Turkish series from online platforms*" show the relationship between two behaviors: recommending Turkish series to friends and commenting on them online. Out of the participants, 37 people (15,2%) agreed with both statements. This suggests that these viewers not only enjoy watching Turkish series but are also actively engaging with them on social media or other online platforms by commenting. It implies a more involved level of interaction with Turkish series, where they feel compelled to share their opinions and experiences with others.

Table 11. Cross-tabulation Results for "There are products that I want to buy while watching Turkish series * I buy products that I see in Turkish series"

		I buy products that I see in Turkish series.					Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strong Agree	
There are products that I want to buy while watching Turkish series.	Strongly Disagree	16	1	0	0	0	17
	Disagree	3	29	6	1	0	39
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	4	13	49	7	0	73
	Agree	5	6	29	45	3	88
	Strong Agree	0	0	1	8	18	27
Total		28	49	85	61	21	244

* Chi-square p value \leq 0,05

The cross-tabulation results for the statements "*There are products that I want to buy while watching Turkish series*" and "*I buy products that I see in Turkish series*" reveal the relationship between the desire to purchase products seen in Turkish series and the actual behavior of buying those products. 49 participants (Neither Agree Nor Disagree) did not express a clear agreement or disagreement with the statements. This suggests that these participants may not feel strongly either way about the influence of Turkish series on their desire or behavior to purchase products. However, 45 participants (Agree) stated that they do buy products that they see in Turkish series, indicating a direct link between watching the series and making purchases. These viewers are influenced by the products shown in the series and are willing to make purchases based on what they see. This data shows that while a portion of the audience is neutral about the influence of Turkish series on their purchasing behavior, a significant number

of viewers are actually motivated to buy products they see in the series. This highlights the potential of Turkish series as a form of product placement or advertisement that influences consumer behavior. When the literature is reviewed, similar results are observed (Qu et al., 2024; Liang et al., 2014; Başgöze and Kazancı, 2014).

Table 12. The frequencies for the question " I follow Turkish TV series actor/actresses on social media"

	N	%
Strongly Disagree	25	10,2
Disagree	22	9,0
Neither Agree Nor	34	13,9
Agree	98	40,2
Strong Agree	65	26,6
Total	244	100,0

Among the 244 participants, 40.2% (98 people) agreed with the statement 'I follow Turkish TV series actors on social media,' which indicates that viewers not only connect with the content of the series but also form a bond with the actor/actresses. By following their social media accounts, viewers strengthen their interaction with the series.

Table 13. The frequencies for the question "I feel the Turkish series is close to my culture"

	N	%
Strongly Disagree	19	7,8
Disagree	67	27,5
Neither Agree Nor	83	34,0
Agree	52	21,3
Strong Agree	23	9,4
Total	244	100,0

Among the 244 participants, 27.5% (67 participants) indicated that they do not agree with the statement 'I feel the Turkish series is close to my culture.'. There may be several reasons why some viewers do not find the structure of Turkish series close to their own culture: These can include factors such as religion, social norms, and other cultural differences.

4. Conclusion

At the core of a successful business lies the ability to understand consumers' perspectives and develop strategies based on this understanding (Erdoğan and Akın, 2023:60). In markets where competition is rapidly increasing every day, one of the key factors for businesses to succeed is the development of effective and strong marketing strategies (Toksarı and İnal, 2012:105). Watching series/films by foreign people and marketing them to different countries by productions or agencies is seen as a normal situation in today's world. However, it is thought that the series/films marketed and met with foreign audiences made a great contribution to the country of the series. At the beginning of this, advantages such as tourism and travel can be counted. Then, factors such as recognizing the culture and learning a language can be listed. In this study, research on the evaluation of 244 participants from many countries of the world who participated in the survey on Turkish series in terms of culture, tourism, purchasing, content and the perspective of foreigners on Turkish series is discussed. In addition to this, what kind of opportunities and factors are required in the export and marketing of Turkish series are revealed. It is possible to state that marketing strategies have played an important role in the export of Turkish series from the past to the present.

International marketing studies are carried out with marketing tactics and strategies. With globalization, people's habits and behaviors have become relatively similar. As people move in a global structure, they act in similar behaviors, attitudes, purchases, lifestyles, clothing perceptions, etc. show similar characteristics in many respects. Productions such as series, while bringing the structures and features of a country to an audience in another country, may lead viewers to find certain elements relatable or approach them sympathetically. This can create an interaction in terms of the country's image, tourism, getting to know the actors of the series, and exploring other parts of the series. The reasons behind the burden of the Turkish series today should be handled internationally and the strategies made should be examined by other exporting countries. The rise of Turkish series, which ranks second after the American in terms of exports (Kantarıcı et al., 2015: 213; Öztürk and Atik, 2016: 69), is not a coincidence. When the findings of the research are examined, it is seen that the thoughts and attitudes towards the Turkish series are extremely positive. This shows that Turkish series have positive relations with image, promotion, tourism and language learning. However, in this research, the statement "I feel Turkish series are close to my culture" was found to be negative by some individuals. The underlying reason for this may be that people from different nations do not feel culturally close to Turkish culture due to differences in their religious and social structures.

In this study, it has been determined that the desire of the audience to find other episodes when watching Turkish series and the feeling of being happy when they find it. In this situation, it is concluded that Turkish series are preferred more in terms of content, watching and being liked today, watched more and the audience is looking for other parts of the series or other Turkish series to watch. The fact that there are elements about the country in the Turkish series is attractive to the audience. This shows that it is related to watching Turkish series. In addition, participants evaluate Turkish series as quality productions. It is possible to state that Turkish series are progressing day by day in many aspects such as content, cast (actors/actresses), image quality, scenario, and shooting techniques. It is seen that this situation is reflected in the perceptions of the foreign audience. In addition, it is concluded that the more the participants watch Turkish series, the more their motivation to travel to Türkiye increases, and they advise their close circles to watch them. It is concluded that the foreigner viewers participating in the research feel close to the culture of the Turkish series, leading them to travel to the country and buy the products they see in the Turkish series. It is possible to state that the foreign participants participating in the research feel that they are close to the characteristics of Turkish culture, which is an indicator of globalization. People globally change and resemble each other in their cultural characteristics. This situation is also reflected in the lifestyle and purchasing habits. The result of this relationship can be shown as evidence for this situation. Thanks to the rapid advancement of digital technologies and the rise of social media platforms in recent years, the global entertainment industry has undergone a significant transformation. This transformation has had a great impact on the production, distribution, and consumption of various media types, including television dramas (Zhan, 2023:149). In today's era, where social media has become one of the most significant tools shaping individuals' consumption behaviors, various factors such as watching Turkish series, gaining more information about and following actors, staying informed about new Turkish series, gathering information about Turkish series and their actors, gaining a deeper understanding of the country, and learning a language can be associated with social media. When the general findings of this study are considered, it has been revealed that the watching of Turkish series has increased, the actors are liked and followed, they are the driving force in language learning, positively affect the image and tourism of the country, Turkish series productions are of high quality, and provide a tendency towards purchasing actions.

In sum, according to the research findings, foreign audiences predominantly watch Turkish series through online platforms and YouTube. Viewers often use subtitles as a means to learn Turkish vocabulary. The depiction of locations and cultural elements in Turkish series significantly enhances viewers' motivation to travel to Türkiye. Moreover, the presence of skilled actors, romantic themes, and compelling storylines contribute to the perception of Turkish series as quality productions. Social media plays a crucial role in the viewing experience; audiences use it to explore, access new episodes, and engage with the series, positively influencing their viewing behaviors. It has also been observed that viewers frequently share reviews and recommendations about Turkish series on online platforms. Additionally, some viewers have expressed a desire to purchase products featured in these series. The consumption of Turkish series, along with the associated social media interactions, positively shapes cultural interest, travel motivations, and product purchase behaviors among viewers. Within this context, various factors—such as the content of the series, social media engagement, perceived quality, and cast—emerge as strategic elements in the marketing of Turkish series. Consequently, the successful international marketing of these series requires consideration of target audience characteristics, social media usage habits, and tourism-promotion strategies in marketing activities.

The interaction of factors such as content quality, actors, locations, script, social media, and tourism plays a significant role in the marketing of Turkish series. Each of these factors can enhance the success of marketing strategies. Every component of marketing plans can be used to expand the viewer base in global markets, strengthen the promotion of the series, and spread the cultural impact of Turkish dramas. Tourism opportunities related to the locations where the series are filmed can encourage travel agencies to promote packages, while interactive campaigns on social media platforms can increase interest in the series. Additionally, while watching Turkish series, viewers may pay attention to the products featured in the shows and may be inclined to purchase them. This highlights the effectiveness of product placement strategies. The products seen in the series can increase viewers' interest in the brands and motivate them to make purchases. Product placement strengthens viewers' engagement with the series, while also helping brands reach their target audience. Therefore, the products featured in the series play an important role in marketing strategies. To make suggestions in terms of theoretical studies, a study can be made by comparing digital platforms with traditional channels in the marketing of series/films, and the strategic elements in the marketing of series of two specific countries can be discussed comparatively.

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