

Gastronomy Students' Awareness, Perception and Purchasing Behavior Towards Geographically Marked Products¹

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Gastronomi ve mutfak sanatları bölümü öğrencilerinin coğrafi işaretli ürün farkındalığı ve algısının belirlenmesi

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Öz

Coğrafi işaretler, ürünlerin üretildikleri yere bağlı olarak sahip oldukları belirli nitelikleri temsil etmek için kullanılan bir tür marka hakkıdır. Bu uygulama, üreticilerin haklarını güvence altına alır, pazarlama fırsatları sunar ve yerel ekonomiye katkıda bulunur. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Gastronomi ve Mutfak Sanatları Bölümü öğrencilerinin coğrafi işaretli ürünlere yönelik algılarını, farkındalıklarını ve satın alma alışkanlıklarını incelemektir. Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak anket yöntemi kullanılmış ve 399 katılımcıdan yanıt alınmıştır. Toplanan veriler normal dağılım testi, güvenilirlik analizi, faktör analizi ve regresyon analizi gibi çeşitli analizlere tabi tutulmuştur. Çalışma sonucunda katılımcıların coğrafi işaretli ürünlere yönelik algılarının coğrafi işaretli ürünlere yönelik farkındalıkları ve bu ürünleri satın alma davranışları üzerinde olumlu ve anlamlı bir etkisi olduğu belirlenmiştir.

Abstract

Geographical indications are a type of intellectual property right that signify the unique qualities of products based on their geographic origin. They protect producers' rights, enhance marketing opportunities, and contribute to local economies. This study aimed to examine the perceptions, awareness, and purchasing behaviors of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts students regarding geographically indicated products. A survey was conducted with 399 participants. The collected data were analyzed through normality testing, reliability analysis, factor analysis, and regression analysis. Results showed that students' perceptions of geographically indicated products had a positive and significant impact on both their awareness and purchasing behaviors.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Gastronomi, coğrafi işaret, satın alma davranışı

Keywords: Gastronomy, geographical indication, purchasing behavior

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1. Introduction

From the 1990s onwards, the concept of agricultural food geography has gained popularity in Europe, and various strategic steps have been taken to protect local products and improve quality (Murdoch et al., 2000; Marsden et al., 2002; Goodman, 2004). Today, consumers tend to consume "local" and "natural" foods. Consumers associate the criteria of "local" and "natural" with quality. Quality is associated with four criteria: certification, determination of product characteristics, geographical or historical association, and consumer appeal (Ilbery and Kneafsey, 2000).

Following the Second World War, the trade and competition environment changed, leading to the development of marketing strategies that emphasize the origin of products. The first international agreement to use the phrase "geographical indication" was the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights Agreement (TRIPS), which formed a council inside the World Trade Organization to address geographical indicators (Gökovalı, 2007; Tuncay, 2009). This practice emerged as a reaction to globalization and aimed to contribute to the greater promotion of local products in the market and rural development (Van Ittersum, 2002).

The geographical indication application helps protect and sustain local products while also providing crucial support for the development and sustainability of culinary tourism (Cebeci and Şen, 2020; Savaşkan and Kingir, 2020). Preserving local elements, establishing production standards, integrating gastronomic products with other tourism offerings, and introducing new products to the existing gastronomic values are of significant importance (Güden and Nebioğlu, 2024).

Studies in Turkey related to geographical indication have primarily focused on consumers' perception of geographical indication and have been observed to be conducted on consumers (Toklu et al., 2016; Çakaloğlu and Çağatay, 2017; Taş and Taş, 2020; Yıldız and Akdemir, 2020). The goals of this research are to ascertain whether or not students in the Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Department are familiar with geographical indicator items and investigate whether or not these students' attitudes and knowledge of these products influence their purchase behavior. It is believed that identifying the awareness and perceptions of students in the Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Department towards products geographical indication is crucial for the future of geographical indications applications, as these students are being trained to take on important roles in the food sector. Therefore, it is essential to understand students' awareness and perceptions towards products with geographical indications in order to promote widespread adoption and ensure the sustainability of the application.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Concept of Geographical Indication

The phrase "geographical indication" refers to a kind of intellectual property right that allows a product to be identified as having originated in a certain place or as reflecting the quality, image, or other attributes associated with that region (Turkish Patent and Trademark Office, 2018a). The Turkish Patent and Trademark Office is an organization that has been registering geographical indications, managing the registration process, and providing protection since 1995 (Turkish Patent and Trademark Office, 2018b). The TRIPS agreement is the first international agreement that includes rules on the protection and regulation of geographical indications in international trade (TRIPS, 1995). The application of geographical indications is examined in two different categories: indication of source and indication of origin (Code of Intellectual Property [SMK], 2017). The concept of traditional products refers to products that are not covered by indication of source and indication of origin and are defined by names that have been used for at least 30 years (Code of Intellectual Property [SMK], 2017).

There are four essential qualities that a product must have in order to be recognized with a geographical indication:

- Having a name recognized by consumers,
- Contributing to the uniqueness of the region where it originates,
- The production of raw materials and processing of the product are being conducted in a specific geographical area,
- Having a clearly defined special production process (Demirer, 2010).

The practice of attributing regional identity to products, also known as geographical indication, has a long history. Some sources suggest that in ancient Egypt, geographical indication was used to demonstrate the quality of products and promote them. Similarly, in medieval Europe, particularly in England, weavers enhanced the appeal of their products by indicating and labeling their geographical origins. Additionally, during the spice trade, unofficial traditional markings began to emerge among colonies based on the geographical origins of products (Kop et al., 2006). In Europe, a new concept known as "agri-food geography" was introduced in the late 1990s (Murdoch et al., 2000; Marsden et al., 2002; Goodman, 2004).

Geographical indication products have been the subject of many studies in literature. Jafarova (2022) investigated consumers' attitudes towards geographically indicated food products. In the study, it was concluded that the majority of the participants were partially knowledgeable about geographically indications. Rossetti (2019) examined the legal development of geographical indications and the behavior of consumers in the market. In the study, 100 Italians and 100 Dutch consumers in total 200 consumers were reached and it was concluded that Italians have more knowledge and awareness of geographical indications than Dutch consumers. Stated that this is because Italians are more closely tied to their food and beverage culture than the Dutch. Likoudis et al. (2016) analyze customers' intentions to purchase food products with protected designation of origin and protected geographical indication in Greece, whereas Teuber (2011) explores the expectations of consumers and producers about geographical indications in a German context.

2.2. Products with Geographical Indication in Turkey

Turkey is a country with a rich cultural heritage, natural geography, and craft tradition. With its unique topography and rich cultural history, it is the birthplace of various products, from agricultural products to handicrafts, traditional foods to handmade carpets (Kan et al., 2010; Yıkımsı and Ünal, 2016). Local foods can serve as significant instruments in providing a unique value proposition for a destination. The competitive strength of a region is contingent upon the effective utilization of local resources and the establishment of robust collaborations among stakeholders (Suna and Alvarez, 2019). Producers of the product, consumer associations, trade/industry chambers, and other relevant institutions and public organizations have the right to apply for geographical indication. Up to now, municipalities have made the most applications for registered products with 598 applications. Following municipalities, Chambers of Commerce/Industry with 478 registered products and Commodity Exchanges with 143 registered products have made applications. The institution with the least applications for registered products is the Military School with 3 geographical indications (Turkish Patent and Trademark Office, 2024a).

As of October 2024, the number of products registered with geographical indication is 1646, while the number of ongoing applications is 592. 75.70% of the 1646 products with geographical indication, which is 1243, are denoted by origin; 23.90%, which is 393, are denoted by appellation; and 0.4%,

which is 7, are denoted by traditional name (Turkish Patent and Trademark Office, 2024b; Turkish Patent and Trademark Office, 2024b).

Table 1. Distribution of registered product numbers and product numbers in applications by provinces. (Turkish Patent and Trademark Office, 2024d)

Province	Product registration count	Product count in the implementation stage	Province	Product registration count	Product count in the implementation stage	Province	Product registration count	Product count in the implementation stage
Gaziantep	106	14	Konya	76	36	Diyarbakır	57	19
Erzurum	55	19	Afyonkarahisar	50	9	Malatya	50	8
Şanlıurfa	48	4	İzmir	44	7	Ankara	41	6
Balıkesir	37	11	Hatay	35	88	Muğla	34	14
Bursa	34	10	Kastamonu	34	2	Kayseri	31	10
Manisa	31	9	Kahramanmaraş	30	4	Aydın	29	11
Çankırı	29	3	Bolu	26	6	Amasya	24	7
Mardin	24	4	Mersin	24	3	Adana	22	7
Tokat	21	11	Kütahya	21	4	Sivas	21	4
Çorum	20	38	Isparta	20	1	Ordu	19	5
Sakarya	19	5	Antalya	18	13	Van	18	11
Samsun	17	6	Rize	17	5	Denizli	15	8
Çanakkale	15	5	Düzce	15	5	Karaman	14	9
Burdur	14	4	Kocaeli	14	2	Eskişehir	14	0
Giresun	13	2	Gümüşhane	13	0	Edirne	12	5
Trabzon	12	4	Bayburt	12	3	Bartın	12	3
Hakkâri	12	2	Aksaray	12	1	Elazığ	12	1
Sinop	12	1	Tekirdağ	11	8	Erzincan	10	19
Kars	10	1	Kilis	10	1	Kırşehir	9	3
Nevşehir	9	3	Uşak	9	3	Adıyaman	9	0
Şırnak	8	7	Siirt	8	5	Zonguldak	8	3
Yozgat	8	2	Karabük	8	1	Artvin	7	10
Bilecik	7	8	Kırklareli	7	3	Osmaniye	7	3
Niğde	7	2	Ardahan	7	1	Batman	6	14
Iğdır	6	1	İstanbul	5	5	Ağrı	5	1
Bingöl	5	1	Bitlis	4	6	Muş	4	1
Yalova	4	0						

Gaziantep has the highest number of registered products, with 106. Konya follows Gaziantep with 76 products, and Diyarbakır follows with 57 products. Hatay has the highest number of products in the application stage, with 88. Çorum follows Hatay with 38 products, and Konya follows with 36 products. Currently, Yalova does not have any applications.

3. Method

3.1. Research Model

The purpose of this study is to investigate the level of knowledge and attitudes held by students in the Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Department regarding geographical indicator goods, as well as their impact on their purchase decisions.

3.2. Research Universe and Sample

The population of the study includes students enrolled in the Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Departments in Turkey. Convenience sampling method was used in the study. The sample for the research consisted of 399 individuals who volunteered to participate. A sample size of 384 was found to be necessary with a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence level (Büyüköztürk, 2010; Ural and Kılıç, 2005). Therefore, the study deemed 399 participants sufficient.

3.3. Data Collection and Analysis

This study used the survey technique, a quantitative research method, to gather data. The study's survey questions were crafted using Küçükyılmaz's research as the basis for them (2019). Participants were asked 5 questions to determine their demographic characteristics, as well as 3 questions to assess their knowledge of products with geographical indication. Seven questions assessed the participants' awareness of products with geographical indication. Additionally, 11 questions were employed to gauge participants' perception of products with geographical indication, while 9 questions were used to evaluate their purchasing behavior. A 5-point Likert scale was implemented in the third and fourth sections of the survey (1. Strongly Disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Neutral, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly Agree). Participants were provided with information before the survey was conducted. Ethical approval to collect the data for this study was obtained from the Necmettin Erbakan University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research Ethics Committee, with decision/number 11/2021/582 dated 10/12/2021.

Descriptive statistics were used to investigate the demographic and other features of the participants, and a statistical program was used for data analysis. Factor analyses were carried out for the research scales, and relationships between the scales were determined through regression analyses.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Findings Regarding Participants' Demographic Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of the participants in this study, who were targeted to determine the awareness and perception of products with geographical indication and their impact on purchasing behavior, as well as their consumption of products with geographical indication, seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Demographic characteristics of participants and consumption of products with geographical indications

Gender	n	%	Monthly income	n	%
Female	166	41,6	3000 and less	67	16,8
Male	233	58,4	3001-5000	127	31,8
Age	n	%	5001-10000	125	31,3
18	22	5,5	10001 and more	80	20,1
19-21	251	62,9	Knowledge of products with geographical indication	n	%
22-24	101	25,3	Knows	352	88,2
25 and over	25	6,3	Does not Know	47	11,8
The class where education is received	n	%	Consumption of products with geographical indications	n	%
1st Grade	201	50,4	Consumes	331	83,0
2st Grade	63	15,8	Does not Consume	68	17,0
3st Grade	70	17,5	Frequency of consuming products with geographical indications	n	%
4st Grade	65	16,3	Once a few times	180	45,1

The situation of receiving culinary education	n	%			
			A few times in 3 months	87	21,8
Yes	84	21,1	Several times in 6 months	46	11,5
No	315	78,9	A few times a year	86	21,6
TOTAL	399	100	TOTAL	399	100

Data was collected from 399 students of the Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Department. 41.6% of the participants were female, while 58.4% were male. The majority (62.9%) of the participants were in the 19-21 age range, and 50.4% were first-year students. 15.8% were second-year students, 17.5% were third-year students, and 16.3% were fourth-year students. When examining the distribution of monthly income, 31.8% of the participants had a family income between 3001-5000 TL, 31.3% had a family income between 5001-10000 TL, 20.1% had a family income of 10001 TL and above, and 16.8% had a family income of 3000 TL and below. When the research asked participants if they had received culinary education at the secondary education level, it revealed that 78.9% had not, while 21.1% had.

The study found that 88.2% of the participants are familiar with products with geographical indication, and 83% consume them. When looking at the frequency of consuming products with geographical indication, 45.1% of participants said they consume them several times a month, and 21.6% consume them several times a year. Additionally, 21.8% consume them every 3 months, and 11.5% consume them every 6 months.

4.2. Results of Reliability and Normality Tests

The reliability values of the scales that were used in the study are provided in Table 3.

Table 3. The reliability value of the scales being used

Scale	Cronbach Alfa Value
Awareness of Products with Geographical Indication (7 Items)	,899
Perception of Products with Geographical Indication (11 Items)	,936
Purchasing Behavior of Products with Geographical Indication (9 Items)	,959

Reliability analyses were conducted on three scales related to geographical indication. These included the geographical indication awareness scale with 7 items, the geographical indication perception scale with 11 items, and the geographical indication purchasing behavior scale with 9 items. The reliability of each scale was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficients. A Cronbach's Alpha coefficient between 0.80 and 1.00 indicates a high level of reliability for the scale (Cronbach, 1951). The reliability test revealed a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.899 for the awareness scale (7 items). The perception scale (11 items) had a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.936, and the purchasing behavior scale (9 items) had a coefficient of 0.959. These results suggest that all three scales are highly reliable.

In order to establish if the data were suitable for normal distribution, the research ran a normality test on the scales. A skewness or kurtosis value of ± 1.0 is considered acceptable for many psychometric

applications, while a value of ± 2.0 is often acknowledged (George and Mallery, 2010). The results showed that the data had a normal distribution; hence parametric analysis could be used.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of the scales that were utilized

Scales and dimensions	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Awareness of Products with Geographical Indication	399	3,6495	,92999	-1,021	,828
Perception of Products with Geographical Indication	399	3,7804	,92106	-1,429	1,730
Purchasing Behavior of Products with Geographical Indication	399	3,7187	1,00756	-,961	,444

4.3. Results of Factor Analysis on Research Scales

Factor analysis is a statistical method aimed at defining and understanding a set of variables that are related to each other in a few factors. This method aims to discover hidden, unobservable relationships between variables by examining the covariance structures of the variables. Factor analysis is a powerful tool in data science, especially for creating psychometric tests (Daniel, 1989). Statistical methods such as Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Sphericity Test can be used to evaluate the suitability of the data for factor analysis. These tests are crucial for finding out whether the dataset is fit for factor analysis (Çokluk, Şekercioğlu, and Büyüköztürk, 2012; Büyüköztürk, 2010). With a possible range of 0 to 1, the KMO test determines whether the data covariances are enough. Factor analysis may be performed on data sets with KMO values in the range of 0.5 to 1. Factor analysis cannot be conducted on data with a KMO value less than 0.5 because there is insufficient covariance structure (Çokluk, Şekercioğlu, and Büyüköztürk, 2012).

The data related to the scale of awareness of products with geographical indication for factor analysis is provided in Table 5.

Table 5. Factor analysis on awareness scale related to geographical indication product

Factors/Expressions	Factor Values	Eigenvalue	Explained Variance(%)	Alpha	Std. Deviation	Mean
	1					
Awareness of Products with Geographical Indication (7 Items)						3,649
10.7. It is important to me that the food I eat is produced by supporting the local economy.	,835	4,374	62,493	0,899	1,218	3,812
10.2. I would like to be informed about the unique quality of a traditional product with a geographical indication label.	,830				1,117	3,982
10.6. It is important for me that the food I eat clearly belongs to a specific country or region.	,813				1,253	3,571
10.4. I believe that the geographical indication label indicates the unique characteristic of the product.	,820				1,131	3,774

10.1. I am aware that certain products are protected by geographical indication registration.	,796			1,197	3,842
10.5. It is important for me to purchase a product with a geographical indication label.	,772			1,201	3,315
10.3. The geographical indication label indicates that a product is of higher quality.	,654			1,125	3,248
Principal component analysis with varimax rotation. Total variance explained: % 62,49 Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Sample Measure: % 87,0 Bartlett Test: X^2 : 1623,067; s.d.: 21; $p \leq ,000$					

The scale with a single dimension consists of a total of 7 statements. The KMO value of the scale is determined to be 0.870. According to the results of Bartlett's Sphericity Test, the test result at a significance level of $p \leq .000$ is determined to be 1623.067. A KMO value above 0.90 indicates that the data is "excellent" for conducting factor analysis (Çokluk, Şekercioğlu, and Büyüköztürk, 2012). It is determined that the scale explains a variance ratio of 62.49% and its eigenvalue is calculated as 4.372.

In Table 6 of the Geographical Indication Product Perception Scale, a KMO value of 0.931 is shown. According to the results of Bartlett's Sphericity Test, the test result of the Geographical Indication Product Perception Scale at a significance level of $p \leq .000$ is determined to be 4232.605. The statements in the scale are evaluated within 2 sub-dimensions as "Economic and Cultural Impact" and "Quality and Reliability Perception". It is found that these two dimensions explain 75.9% of the total variance.

Table 6. Factor analysis on the perception level scale of products with geographical indication

Factors/Expressions	Factor Values		Eigenvalue	Explained Variance(%)	Alpha	Std. Deviation	Mean
	1	2					
Economy and Cultural Impact (7 Items)			5,157	46,883	0,948		4,013
9.3 Products with geographical indication contribute to the promotion of the region they belong to.	,910					1,241	4,223
9.5 Products with geographical indication are an integral part of the culture of the region to which they belong.	,898					1,199	4,195
9.2 Products with geographical indication contribute to local producers.	,889					1,213	4,107
9.7 Geographical indication helps to protect cultural heritage.	,888					1,181	4,125
9.1 Products with geographical indications support the local economy.	,855					1,205	4,070
9.6 Geographical indication contributes to preserving traditional production methods.	,796					1,214	3,959
9.4. Having a geographical indication increases the price of the product.	,559					1,236	3,408
Perception of Quality and Reliability (4 Items)			3,195	29,045	0,870		3,373
9.9 Products with geographical indications are healthier and more reliable than other products.						1,144	3,350

		,876					
9.8. Products that are geographically indicated are of higher quality in comparison to other products.		,850				1,116	3,315
9.10 Products with geographical indications are tastier than other products.		,814				1,124	3,468
9.11. Products that are geographically indicated are produced to a higher standard of quality compared to other products.		,684				1,095	3,358
<i>Principal component analysis with varimax rotation.</i> <i>Total variance explained: % 75,9 Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Sample Measure: % 93,1</i> <i>Bartlett Test: χ^2: 4232,605; s.d.: 55; $p \leq ,000$</i>							

The dimension of "Economy and Cultural Impact" includes 7 items and explains a total variance ratio of 46.883% with an eigenvalue of 5.157. The dimension of "Perception of Quality and Reliability" consists of 4 statements and explains a total variance of 29.045% with an eigenvalue of 3.195. When evaluating the averages of the dimensions in the perception of products with the geographical indication scale, the average of the "Economy and Cultural Impact" dimension is 4.013, while the average of the "Perception of Quality and Reliability" dimension is 3.373. Based on these findings, it is evident that the "Economy and Cultural Impact" dimension holds greater importance compared to the other two dimensions.

Table 7 presents the data regarding the factor analysis of the purchasing behavior scale for products with geographical indication. The scale, which has a single dimension, consists of a total of 9 statements. The KMO value of the scale is 0.949, and the Bartlett's test of sphericity yielded a result of 3590.334 with a significance level of $p \leq .000$. The scale explains 75.59% of the variance, with an eigenvalue of 6.804.

Table 7. Factor analysis on purchasing behavior scale related to products with geographical indication

Factors/Expressions	Factor Values	Eigenvalue	Explained Variance(%)	Alpha	Std. Deviation	Mean
	1					
Purchasing Behavior of Products with Geographical Indication (9 Items)						3,718
10.12. Products with geographical indication have an influence on my purchasing behavior as they support local producers by providing income.	,894	6,804	75,598	0,959	1,138	3,799
10.14. I am more likely to buy products that are geographically labeled because they are produced in an environmentally friendly way.	,894				1,171	3,751
10.13. The use of traditional production methods in the production of products with geographical indications affects my purchasing behavior.	,889				1,161	3,646
10.9. Products with geographical indications are effective on my purchasing behavior because they are reliable.	,883				1,142	3,704
10.8. Products with geographical indication positively influence my purchasing behavior due to their natural qualities.	,871				1,162	3,709

10.16. Products with geographical indication have an impact on my purchasing behavior because they help to support the local economy.	,865				1,170	3,834
10.11. Products with geographical indication have an impact on my purchasing behavior because they are produced without pesticides and chemical preservatives.	,861				1,161	3,716
10.10. Products that have geographical indications have an impact on my purchasing behavior because of their high nutritional value.	,833				1,151	3,571
10.15. The accessibility of products with geographical indications affects my purchasing behavior.	,831				1,173	3,734
Principal component analysis with varimax rotation						
Total variance explained: % 75,59 Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Sample Measure: %94,9						
Bartlett Test: X^2 : 3590,334; s.d.: 36; $p \leq ,000$						

4.4. Regression Analysis

As a statistical tool, regression analysis quantifies the influence of independent variables on dependent variables in order to draw conclusions (Akbulut, 2010). Table 8 presents the results of the regression analysis on the influence of geographical indication awareness on purchasing behavior. The adjusted R^2 value was found to be 0.749, explaining 74% of the model variance. Based on the results obtained, statistically significant effects of geographical product awareness on the purchase behavior of products with geographical indication were observed ($p < 0.05$). The independence of the error terms is a fundamental presumption of regression analysis. The presence of autocorrelation is indicated if there is a correlation between error terms, as determined by the Durbin-Watson (D-W) test statistic (Ünver and Gamgam, 1996). The D-W test statistic was calculated as 1.904, suggesting that there is no autocorrelation in the model as the value falls within the range of 1.5-2.5 (Küçüksille, 2010).

To assess for multicollinearity, it is necessary to analyze Tolerance and VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) values (Gazibey et al., 2012). Multicollinearity is evaluated by computing the VIF value separately for each independent variable in the model (Güriş and Çağlayan, 2005). In order to avoid multicollinearity issues, the VIF value should be below 10 (Alpar, 2011), the tolerance value should be above 0.200, and the CI (Condition Index) value should not exceed 30 (Büyüköztürk, 2008). According to the analyses conducted, it was concluded that there were no multicollinearity concerns (Tolerance: 1.000, VIF: 1.000, CI: 1.000-7.984). It was observed that a one-unit increase in geographical product awareness level resulted in a 0.866 increase in purchasing behavior.

Tablo 8. Regression analysis of the impact of geographical indication awareness on purchasing behavior

Independent Variables	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	R^2	Adjusted R^2	F Test	t - test	Significance Value (p-value)
	B	Std.Error	Beta					

Fixed	,296	,103		,749	,749	1186,182	2,890	,004
CI Product Awareness	,938	,027	,866				34,441	,000
<u>Multiple Connection Statistics:</u> Durbin-Watson (DW) Test: 1,904 (1,5 – 2,5) VIF: 1,000 Smallest – Largest CI: 1,000– 7,984 Tolerance: 1,000 Dependent Variable: Purchasing Behavior								

Table 9 presents the results of the regression analysis, demonstrating the influence of the sub-dimensions of geographical indication perception on purchasing behavior. The adjusted R^2 value was determined to be 0.593, explaining 59% of the variance in the model. According to the results obtained, statistically significant effects of the sub-dimensions of geographical indication perception on the purchasing behavior of products with geographical indication were observed individually ($p < 0.05$). The D-W test statistic in the analysis was calculated as 1.843. Additionally, it was also determined that there was no issue of multicollinearity according to the findings obtained (Tolerance: 0.653, VIF: 1.531, CI: 1.000–10.263).

Tablo 9. Analyzing the impact of sub-dimensions of geographical indication perception on purchasing behavior using regression analysis

Independent Variables	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	R^2	Adjusted R^2	F Test	t - test	Significance Value (p-value)
	B	Std. Hata	Beta					
Fixed	,520	,137		,596	,593	291,493	3,803	,000
Economic and Cultural Impact	,516	,038	,543				13,717	,000
Perception of Quality and Reliability	,335	,042	,315				7,977	,000
<u>Multiple Connection Statistics:</u> Durbin-Watson (DW) Test: 1,843 (1,5 – 2,5) VIF: 1,531 Smallest – Largest CI: 1,000– 10,263 Tolerance: ,653 Dependent Variable: Purchasing Behavior								

Researchers have determined that, for products with geographical indications, a one unit increase in the economic and cultural impact dimension results in a 0.543 increase in purchasing behavior. Similarly, a one unit increase in the perception of quality and reliability dimension leads to a 0.315 increase in purchasing behavior.

5. Results and Recommendations

The application of geographical indications focuses on important goals such as protecting original products, maintaining quality and standards, and offering various advantages, including increasing the contribution of products to the country's economy and supporting the rural economy. Thus, there is a need for experts and trained individuals to enhance and improve the recognition of geographical indication application. It is crucial to determine the awareness and perceptions of products with geographical indication among students in the Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts, as they play a significant role in this applications. This study has examined the perceptions, awareness, and purchasing behaviors of these students towards products with geographical indications, as they will encounter this application frequently during their education and professional careers.

The analysis revealed that a large majority of participants (88.2%) were aware of geographical indication product application. A study conducted by Meral and Şahin (2012) found that 76.3% of consumers in Kahramanmaraş province were not knowledgeable about these products, indicating that students in the Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts are more familiar with the subject. Additionally, the analysis determined that a large majority of participants frequently consume products with geographical indication.

Factor analyses showed that the Geographical Indication Product Perception scale was divided into two sub-dimensions: economic and cultural impact and quality and reliability perception. Additionally, the Geographical Indication Product Awareness and Geographical Indication Product Purchase Behavior scales were found to be unidimensional. Regression analyses indicated a significant and positive relationship between the sub-dimensions of the Geographical Indication Product Perception scale, the Geographical Indication Product Awareness scale, and the Geographical Indication Product Purchase Behavior scale.

According to Toklu et al. (2016), economic support, cultural and traditional factors, as well as quality and reliability, impact consumers' perceptions of products with geographical indication. The research also showed that geographically protected products give consumers a perception of quality and reliability. On the other hand, Küçükylmaz (2019) discovered a positive relationship between geographical indication product awareness and perception and geographical indication product purchase behavior. Furthermore, regression analyses demonstrated that as Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Department students' perception of geographically indicated products increases, so does their purchasing behavior. Similarly, an increase in awareness of geographically indicated products led to an increase in purchase behavior. Küçükylmaz's (2019) study concluded that as consumers' perception and awareness of geographically indicated products rise, their purchase behavior also increases.

It is believed that educated and expert individuals play a crucial role in contributing to the country's economy and local development by developing the geographical indication application and increasing its recognition. In this regard, students and graduates of the Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Department are part of this significant group. According to the study findings, some suggestions for the development and dissemination of geographical indication applications are:

- The inclusion of courses related to geographical indications in the Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Departments of universities to ensure that students are more competent in this area.
- Especially including dishes with geographical indications in Turkish Cuisine Application courses in the Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Departments of universities and using original recipes to raise awareness among students.
- Collaborating with local producers of the products with geographical indication and providing

students internship opportunities in these areas to ensure direct contact with the production process of these products.

- Organizing taste tours and festivals in regions where products with geographical indication are produced by local governments and tourism organizations for gastronomy and culinary arts students to experience these products and meet the producers.

Organizing congresses, seminars, and conferences by universities where all stakeholders related to geographical indication practices can meet.

Research and Publication Ethics Statement

This study was prepared in accordance with the rules of scientific research and publication ethics with the permission of Necmettin Erbakan University Ethics Committee dated 10/12/2021 and numbered 11/2021/582.

Authors' Contributions to the Article

The entire study was created together with two authors.

Author 1's contribution to the article is 60%, Author 2's contribution to the article is 40%.

Declaration of Interest

There is no conflict of interest with any person or institution in the study.

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EXTENDED SUMMARY

Introduction

The application for geographical indication safeguards and promotes local goods, while offering essential assistance for the advancement and sustainability of culinary tourism (Cebeci and Şen, 2020; Savaşkan and Kingir, 2020). Maintaining local components, setting manufacturing standards, merging culinary items with other tourist services, and launching new options to enhance current gastronomic qualities are very important (Güden and Nebioğlu, 2024). Research in Turkey concerning geographical indication has been focused on customers' perceptions and has been largely performed with consumers (Toklu et al., 2016; Çakaloğlu and Çağatay, 2017; Taş and Taş, 2020; Yıldız and Akdemir, 2020).

The goals of this research are to ascertain whether or not students in the Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Department are familiar with geographical indicator items and investigate whether or not these students' attitudes and knowledge of these products influence their purchase behavior. Identifying the awareness and perceptions of students in the Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Department regarding geographical indications is deemed essential for the future implementation of such indications, as these students are being prepared for significant roles in the food industry. Consequently, it is vital to comprehend students' understanding and views about items with geographical indicators to facilitate broad acceptance and guarantee the sustainability of their use.

Literature Review

The term "geographical indication" is a kind of intellectual property right that enables a product to be recognized as originating from a certain location or as embodying the quality, image, or other characteristics linked to that area (Turkish Patent and Trademark Office, 2018a). The TRIPS agreement is the first international agreement that includes rules on the protection and regulation of geographical indications in international trade (TRIPS, 1995). The application of geographical indications is examined in two different categories: indication of source and indication of origin (Code of Intellectual Property [SMK], 2017). The concept of traditional products refers to products that are not covered by indication of source and indication of origin and are defined by names that have been used for at least 30 years (Code of Intellectual Property [SMK], 2017). The Turkish Patent and Trademark Office is an organization that has been registering geographical indications, managing the registration process, and providing protection since 1995 (Turkish Patent and Trademark Office, 2018b).

Turkey has a profound cultural legacy, diverse natural topography, and a longstanding tradition of craftsmanship. Due to its distinctive geography and extensive cultural heritage, it serves as the origin of several items, including agricultural goods, handicrafts, traditional cuisine, and artisanal carpets (Kan et al., 2010; Yıkılmış and Ünal, 2016). Local cuisine may function as pivotal tools in offering a distinctive value proposition for a location. The competitive power of an area depends on the efficient use of local resources and the formation of strong partnerships among stakeholders (Suna and Alvarez, 2019). Producers of the product, consumer associations, trade/industry chambers, and other relevant institutions and public organizations have the right to apply for geographical indication. Up to now, municipalities have made the most applications for registered products with 598 applications. Following municipalities, Chambers of Commerce/Industry with 478 registered products and Commodity Exchanges with 143 registered products have made applications. The institution with the least applications for registered products is the Military School with 3 geographical indications (Turkish Patent and Trademark Office, 2024a).

Method

This research aims to examine the knowledge and attitudes of students in the Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Department concerning geographical indicator items and their influence on purchasing choices. The study population comprises students enrolled in the Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Departments in Turkey. The sample for the research consisted of 399 individuals who volunteered to

participate. This study used the survey technique, a quantitative research method, to gather data. Participants were asked 5 questions to determine their demographic characteristics, as well as 3 questions to assess their knowledge of products with geographical indication. Seven questions assessed the participants' awareness of products with geographical indication. Additionally, 11 questions were employed to gauge participants' perception of products with geographical indication, while 9 questions were used to evaluate their purchasing behavior. A 5-point Likert scale was implemented in the third and fourth sections of the survey.

Findings

Most participants (62.9%) were between the 19-21 age bracket, and 50.4% were first-year students. 41.6% of the participants were female, while 58.4% were male. The study found that 88.2% of the participants are familiar with products with geographical indication, and 83% consume them. Regarding the frequency of consumption of items with geographical indication, 45.1% of participants reported eating them several times monthly, while 21.6% indicated consumption several times annually. Furthermore, 21.8% participate in their consumption every three months, while 11.5% do so every six months.

Reliability assessments were performed on three scales pertaining to geographical indication. The assessment included a geographical indication awareness scale with 7 items, a geographical indication perception scale containing 11 items, and a geographical indication purchase behavior scale with 9 items. The reliability of each scale was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficients. A Cronbach's Alpha coefficient between 0.80 and 1.00 indicates a high level of reliability for the scale (Cronbach, 1951). The reliability test revealed a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.899 for the awareness scale (7 items). The perception scale (11 items) had a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.936, and the purchasing behavior scale (9 items) had a coefficient of 0.959. These results suggest that all three scales are highly reliable.

The scale of awareness of products with geographical indication for factor analysis with a single dimension consists of a total of 7 statements. The KMO value of the scale is determined to be 0.870. According to the results of Bartlett's Sphericity Test, the test result at a significance level of $p \leq .000$ is determined to be 1623.067. A KMO value above 0.90 indicates that the data is "excellent" for conducting factor analysis (Çokluk, Şekercioğlu, and Büyüköztürk, 2012). It is determined that the scale explains a variance ratio of 62.49% and its eigenvalue is calculated as 4.372. Geographical Indication Product Perception Scale has a KMO score of 0.931 is shown. According to the results of Bartlett's Sphericity Test, the test result of the Geographical Indication Product Perception Scale at a significance level of $p \leq .000$ is determined to be 4232.605. With this data, the suitability of factor analysis in the scale was tested, and it was found that the data were sufficient for analysis. In the evaluation, values above 1 for eigenvalue statistics and above 0.50 for factor loadings were taken into consideration. The statements in the scale are evaluated within 2 sub-dimensions as "Economic and Cultural Impact" and "Quality and Reliability Perception". It is found that these two dimensions explain 75.9% of the total variance. The purchasing behavior scale for products with geographical indication which has a single dimension, consists of a total of 9 statements. The KMO value of the scale is 0.949, and the Bartlett's test of sphericity yielded a result of 3590.334 with a significance level of $p \leq .000$. The scale explains 75.59% of the variance, with an eigenvalue of 6.804.

Table 8 presents the results of the regression analysis on the influence of geographical indication awareness on purchasing behavior. The adjusted R^2 value was determined to be 0.749, accounting for 74% of the model's variance. Statistically significant impacts of geographical product awareness on the purchasing behavior of items with geographical indication were identified ($p < 0.05$). The D-W test statistic was computed at 1.904, indicating the absence of autocorrelation in the model, since the value is within the range of 1.5-2.5 (Küçüksille, 2010). According to the analyses conducted, it was concluded that there were no multicollinearity concerns (Tolerance: 1.000, VIF: 1.000, CI: 1.000-7.984). It was

observed that a one-unit increase in geographical product awareness level resulted in a 0.866 increase in purchasing behavior. Table 9 displays the results of the regression analysis, demonstrating the influence of the sub-dimensions of geographical indication perception on purchasing behavior. The adjusted R² value was determined to be 0.593, explaining 59% of the variance in the model. According to the results obtained, statistically significant effects of the sub-dimensions of geographical indication perception on the purchasing behavior of products with geographical indication were observed individually ($p < 0.05$).

Results and Recommendations

Factor analyses showed that the Geographical Indication Product Perception scale was divided into two sub-dimensions: economic and cultural impact and quality and reliability perception. Additionally, the Geographical Indication Product Awareness and Geographical Indication Product Purchase Behavior scales were found to be unidimensional. Regression analyses indicated a significant and positive relationship between the sub-dimensions of the Geographical Indication Product Perception scale, the Geographical Indication Product Awareness scale, and the Geographical Indication Product Purchase Behavior scale.

The research results provide many recommendations for the advancement and distribution of geographical indicator applications. Courses on geographical indicators can be added to the Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Departments of faculties in order to increase students' competence in this field. Especially in the Turkish Cuisine Application courses in the Gastronomy and Culinary Arts departments of faculties, dishes with regional characteristics can be included and original recipes can be used to increase the knowledge of students.