

## **Brand and branding applications of fisheries sector in Turkey**

Serpil YILMAZ<sup>1\*</sup> , Olgaç GÜVEN<sup>1</sup> 

<sup>1</sup>Akdeniz University, Faculty of Fisheries, 07058 Antalya/Turkey

\*Corresponding author email: [serpilyilmaz@akdeniz.edu.tr](mailto:serpilyilmaz@akdeniz.edu.tr)

### **Abstract**

Turkey is a remarkable country with its variety of aquatic resources, coastal fishing potential and high water quality in comparison with industrialized countries. As a country with the possibility to culture subtropical species also, had a total aquaculture production of 276.5 thousand tonnes while the total fisheries production was 630.8 thousand tonnes in 2017. However, according to the records of Turkish Patent Institute, number of brands and branding initiative are quite low. Indeed, according to the records approximately 300 of the enterprises related to the fisheries sector were branded. High number of independent small-scale enterprises, lack of brand expectation by the consumers and the lack of standardization in the products offered to domestic consumption were the main reasons of the current trend. However, better income for the producers, more reliable products for the consumers and reduction of product and quality losses is possible with branding and branding concept. Branding potential of the fisheries sector was evaluated within the present study and the advantages of brand and branding was discussed.

**Key words:** Brand, Branding, Fisheries Sector, Aquaculture Sector, Turkey

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Although the fisheries production has decreased proportionally since the 1980s, aquaculture has a steady and steady growth in the world. Total fisheries production is 171 million tons as of 2016 in the world, the share of aquaculture is 47% in total and 53% after the non-food usage excluded. According to FAO data, it is expected that world total aquaculture production will reach 201 million tons in 2030. It is estimated that most of the increase will be provided by aquaculture and the total production of aquaculture will reach to 109 million tons with an increase of 37% in 2030 and 90% of production will be directed towards human consumption (FAO, 2018). It is foreseen that the income level, urbanization and improved marketing functions will have an impact on this increase. As of 2030, approximately 38% of the total fisheries production will be realized as human consumption or trade of different products for non-food purposes. Aquaculture sector in Turkey has especially a very fast growth rate (11%), holds 2<sup>th</sup> position within in the European Union Countries and 22<sup>th</sup> in the world. The European aquaculture product market share of Turkey is 25% (Anonymous, 2015). Despite the successful fisheries products production sector Turkey don't have an impact on the markets. In this sense,

branding and branding have a very important function. As brands play an important role in determining the preferences of both enterprises and consumers.

### **BRAND AND BRANDING**

Marketing is a set of activities of enterprises that aim to achieve product and service satisfaction by anticipating customer needs and to achieve their goals by directing the needs flow from the producer to the customer (Perreault et al., 2012). As can be understood from the definition, marketing starts with the determination of potential customer needs and not the production process. Therefore, this activity requires a good marketing strategy. Because marketing strategy determines both target markets and related marketing mix.

*Marketing mix*; It is the variables that the enterprise can bring together to satisfy the target group and it has been reduced to 4 (four) foundations by the marketers.

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These are; *Product, Distribution, Promotion* and *Price*. From the strategic decision areas organized by the marketing mix, the *Product* area aims to develop the right product for the Target Market. Since it includes the physical properties and service facilities of the product, branding and branding come into play in this field. Brands not only affects the consumption preferences and shopping tendencies of the individuals who make up the society, but also determines the product development and sales strategies (Fügen and Ayyıldız, 2016).

Brand is the combination of names, phrases, colours, shapes and designs which; i) enables the easy separation of products and services from the same or different, various qualities and sectors, ii) identifies products that are distinguished from the similar products with designs of the product or the services and the companies owns the brand, iii) introduce and announces the product to a wide audience through the press and media, iv) protects the products in accordance with the laws of the countries or international law to which they belong, in case of imitation or unfair practices (Kotler, 2000).

To identify the agricultural and food products by brands or trademarks is easier with a successful branding. Branding is also the best way for pricing as it is easy to maintain the quality of the product. Moreover, since the market value of the product can be kept high when demand is

strong, branding reduces cost, increases profit, makes the product reliable and accessible (Perreault et al., 2012). Recognition of the brands helps the planning of selecting the markets where the product will be offered and what promotions are needed. This requires good brand management. Brand management is one of the most important factors in the development and success of a brand for businesses. Brand identity precedes brand image in an effective brand management. Brand identity is the most basic structure that describes the brand and ensures the formation of image (Elitok, 2003). On the other hand brand image is the synthesis of perceived components of brand identity in the consumer mind. An effective brand image can differentiate a product from its competitors, reduce research costs, minimize perceived risk, and appear as high quality in consumer perception (Hosany et al., 2006). The first international meeting for the brand concept was held in France in 1957. Following the meeting in the same year, in order to register the brands, goods and services were classified with Nice Convention and “*Nice classification*” system was established. This system was revised in Stockholm in 1967 and in Geneva in 1977. According to the contract, goods and services are classified into 45 classes, goods were classified in 1 to 34 and services were classified in 35 to 45. Agricultural products and services were classified in 6 different classes (29, 30, 31, 32, 33, and 43) (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Nice Classification System (WIPO, 2012)

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Classification</b>
Agricultural products and services	29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 43
Management, communication, public and financial services	35,36
Chemicals	1, 2, 4
Textile-Clothing and Accessories	14, 18, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 34
Construction, Infrastructure	6, 17, 19, 37, 40
Pharmaceuticals, health, cosmetics	3, 5, 10, 44
Household equipment	8, 11, 20, 21
Entertainment, education	13, 15, 16, 28, 41
Scientific research, information and communication technology	9, 38, 42, 45
Transportation and logistics	7, 12, 39

The use of the Nice classification for registration of brands is not only limited with the national Parties to the Nice agreement, was also valid for international brand registrations performed by the African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI), African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO), Benelux Office for Intellectual Property (BOIP) and European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO). Nice classification is also applied in some countries which are not party to nice agreement (WIPO, 2012). The competent authorities in registering trademarks and patents in Turkey is the “Turkish Patent Institute”. Turkey has signed the Madrid Protocol and involved to the international

registration of the trademarks act, in 1999. Before international application of trademark registration, products needed have a trademark registration or at least an application for registration in Turkey (Anonymous, 2017).

### **BRANDING STATUS AND POTENTIAL IN TURKEY'S FISHERIES SECTOR**

Due to the ecological advantages, Turkey has the potential to implement the standard for aquaculture. However, only a certain amount of its aquaculture potential is on use and a significant part remains idle. Most of the available enterprises are small scale facilities (66,1%) (Table 2). According to the 2017 data, while the available fishery

capacity is 487.859, 276.502 tons, 43.4% of this capacity was idle. Despite these facts, Turkey holds an important position in the world aquaculture production. However, as the value-added branded products that are successful in marketing

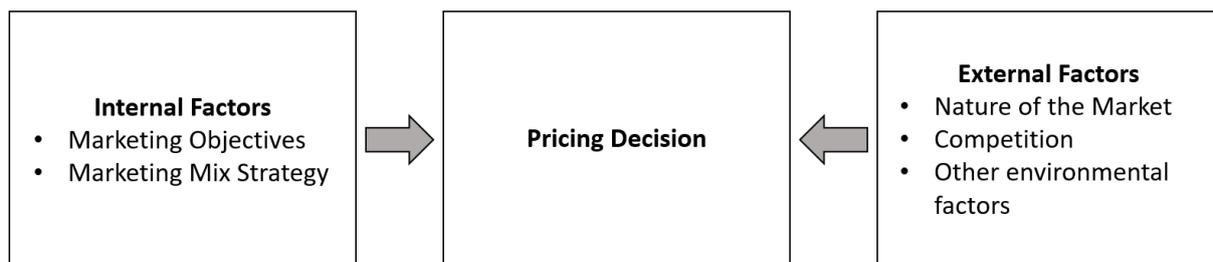
communications determine the markets, have a limited impact on world fisheries markets and the small size of enterprises in developing countries increases foreign trade costs even further (Gümüş and Yılmaz, 2015).

**Table 2.** Aquaculture facilities according to their production capacity by the year 2017 in Turkey (BSGM, 2018)

Group	Capacity Group (ton)	Number of Facilities	Rate %	Total Capacity of the Facilities (ton / year)	Rate %
<b>Marine</b>	0-50	173	40,5	3,939	1,5
	51-100	17	4,1	1,415	0,6
	101-250	18	4,2	3,324	1,3
	251-500	68	15,9	23,368	9,2
	501-1000	71	16,6	61,524	24,2
	1001 +	80	18,7	160,870	63,2
<b>TOPLAM</b>		427	100,0	254,440	100,0
<b>Freshwater</b>	0-50	1352	71,8	21,497	9,2
	51-100	108	5,7	9,460	4,1
	101-250	175	9,3	35,164	15,1
	251-500	118	6,3	51,689	22,1
	501-1000	125	6,7	108,209	46,3
	1001 +	3	0,2	7,400	3,2
<b>TOPLAM</b>		1,881	100,0	233,419	100,0
<b>Marine and Freshwater</b>	0-50	1,525	66,1	25,436	5,2
	51-100	125	5,4	10,875	2,2
	101-250	193	8,3	38,488	7,9
	251-500	186	8,1	75,057	15,4
	501-1000	196	8,5	169,733	34,8
	1001 +	83	3,6	168,270	34,5
<b>TOTAL</b>		2,308	100,0	487,859	100,0

Many products have been accepted by the consumers due to their brand value. Thus it is a known fact that labelling, packaging, brand and advertisement applications increase the value of the products. A strong brand value provides premium price while decreasing the price flexibility. Agricultural and food products with a strong brand value become competitive in terms of both quality and price (Çakaloğlu and Çağatay, 2016). Nevertheless, brand preference and purchase behaviour of consumers for agricultural and food products meets the basic consumption needs display a complex structure (Ayaz and Apak, 2015). The agriculture and food product preference of the consumers is directly related to food safety (Haghiri, 2016). When we focus on the brand value of agricultural and food products, as the promotion strategy, which is one of the elements of the marketing mix, seems to have gained great importance in terms of agricultural and food products, therefore these products should be considered as unbranded. These strategies are

generally marketing elements of products oriented to Niche Markets. Niche markets create awareness by meeting the special needs and needs of consumers (Kazançoğlu et al., 2011). It is important to place these products in the appropriate markets in accordance to the brand preference of the consumers and their purchasing behaviours. This can only be sustained by the brand's market stability and effective marketing strategies (Akpınar and Yurdakul, 2008). On the other hand, the capacity of value creation of the brand can only be measured with determining the pricing policy returns. Consumers of a branded product are insensitive to price movements as their needs are fully met (Ak, 2009). For these consumers, price is the second priority, as product quality perception is a priority. However, since domestic and external factors affect the market balance in agriculture and food products, costs are also affected. Figure 1 shows the internal and external factors that affect the brand's pricing decisions.



**Figure 1.** Factors Affecting Pricing Decisions (BBMMS, 2019)

Nevertheless, it was found in the studies that consumers give more importance to the brand than price (Şengül and Özçiçek, 2000; Eru, 2007; Dokuzlu et al., 2013; Fügen and Ayyıldız, 2016). As the brand is recognition, reliability, quality and prestige in the perception of consumers the consumer (Saner et al., 2014). In the branding of food products three different types of options is available, these are; brand according to quality, brand according to origin and real brand (Yurdakul and Koç, 1997). Within this scope, branding can be done according to the origin along with available options. Origin branding is a branding option that protects the quality while determining the place of production. In origin based branding criteria such as endemic species, water quality, nutrition and taste of the products are considered. Van inci kefali, Beyşehir inci balığı, Eğirdir sazan balığı, Karadeniz hamsisi, Karadeniz kalkanı, Ege denizi sardalyesi, Akdeniz kum gridası are some examples of origin based branding. Although there is no trademark for these products, there is an ongoing debate that branding can be done for these products. This kind of branding should not be confused with the registration of geographical signs as he trademark and geographical sign registration are different elements used in marketing. Geographical indications cannot be registered as trademarks, but strengthen branding. Gelibolu sardalyası and Gelibolu tuzlu sardalya are the two fisheries products with a geographical indication in Turkey. A geographical indicator is a name or sign that indicates a product that is identified with a region, area, region or country in which it has its origin in terms of its distinctive quality, reputation or other characteristics. Geographical indicator registration does not grant individual ownership rights, but it allows manufacturers a common right to use the products subject to the geographical indicator (Anonymous, 2016).

Products with brand value must bear some characteristics:

Properties of products with brand value (Çakaloğlu and Çağatay, 2016);

- Competitiveness with rival companies
- Innovation practices,
- Accurate pricing strategy,

- Effective human resources management and company evaluation,
- Effective crisis management against rival brands,
- Proper advertising activities and consistency in sales

Price parameters, quality standardization and food safety concepts are very important in order to endure in the agricultural and food products in world markets. If these features are developed and differentiated by technology-based research activities, it may be possible to develop strong strategies for branding these products (İpar, 2011). However, one of the most important factors in achieving the deserved value of agricultural and food products, therefore aquaculture products, in global markets is product perception and country awareness.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although Turkey holds an important share in the world aquaculture production, it has a limited impact on the global markets. The value-added branded products that are successful in marketing communications determine the markets. Aquaculture products that can affect the markets are the products with systematic packaging applications, logistics and marketing communication network. However, Turkey's aquaculture trade costs are quite high. Similar with the other types of products, with a successful branding in agriculture and food products it is easier to label the products with a brand or trademark. As with the branding it is easy to maintain the quality of the product, branding is the best way to value pricing. Because the market value of the product can be kept high when demand is strong, branding decreases the cost, increases the profits, and makes the product reliable and accessible. In this sense, branding and branding in aquaculture products are of particular importance. In Turkey the competent authority for the trademark and patent registrations is the Turkish Patent Institute. Turkey has signed the Madrid Protocol and involved to the international registration of the trademarks act, in 1999. However, according to the Turkish Patent Institute, branding and branding in aquaculture products is

very low. Indeed, according to the Turkish Patent Institute records; although approximately 300 existing brand related to Turkey's aquaculture industry, does not have an internationally registered aquatic product brand. The main causes for this is the high number of independent small-scale enterprises, lack of a brand expectation for freshly consumed products, and a lack of standardization in products offered for domestic and foreign consumption. However, with brand and branding a better income for the producers, production more reliable products for consume and to reduction of product and quality losses of the enterprises is possible. Promotion of the products that are beneficial for human health produced by the fishery sector in national and international markets will facilitate an opportunity for product branding will also increase the value of the brands.

### CONFLICT AND INTEREST

Authors declare no conflict and interest.

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