

## Evaluation of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Students' Perceptions of Workshops: A Case of Afyon Kocatepe University

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### Abstract

The purpose of the research is; to determine whether attitudes and expectations of undergraduate-level gastronomy and culinary arts students for culinary workshop activities differ according to the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants. In this direction, the research has seven different hypotheses. The population of the research consists of the participant students of the “Seafood & Fish”, “Ottoman Cuisine” and “Pizza & Pasta” workshops which were organized by the Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Department in the Faculty of Tourism, Afyon Kocatepe University. In this quantitatively designed research, survey technique was used as a data collection tool which was carried out in January 2018. A questionnaire was applied to all 64 students. Descriptive statistics, frequency, reliability, t-test and one-way ANOVA analyses were performed by means of a statistical package program. In this respect, it has been found that the perceptions, attitudes and expectations of students about workshop activities do not show any difference in terms of gender, age, class level, type of education program, type of high school graduated, experience of culinary experience, or workshop type variables.

**Keywords:** Tourism Education, Gastronomy and Culinary Arts, Workshop.

**JEL Code:** L66, I23, H52

### 1. Introduction

The first educational activities in the field of gastronomy started with a master-apprentice relationship. By the transformation of eating good food into becoming a prestige factor between high status wealthy people and country governors, great importance has been given to the culinary profession and talented people in the preparation of food began to be employed by the noble and rich people. Culinary education began with the training of employee by the masters, continued with the opening of gastronomy schools for the training of well-equipped and educated specialists, after that it has gained different dimensions with the connection of gastronomy with art and science (Beşirli, 2012; Öney, 2016; Şengün, 2017).

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There are three basic components for qualified gastronomy education; teaching staff, application material and workshop equipment (Görkem and Sevim, 2016: 980). Culinary and gastronomy training require a process that is heavily practiced. Therefore, courses should be held in ateliers and schools which are built in accordance with the profession, kitchens must have adequate application material and lessons should be delivered by experienced instructors, which have great significance for gastronomy education and the professional competence of the students (Gillespie and Cuisin, 2001; Hegarty, 2011:55; Şengün, 2017). Using both of modern/traditional methods and tools, examination of the structural characteristics of food cultures and foods of countries, enrichment of gastronomy education by giving place to the dimensions of different disciplines, development of the ability of students to work under stress and in a limited time frame, providing a well-equipped and qualified workforce by carrying out both of theory and practices with an interdisciplinary approach, are all necessary supplement to educate qualified personnel in the dynamic and constantly changing environment in gastronomy training (Gillespie and Cuisin, 2001; Hegarty, 2011: 55).

Workshop activities play an important role in the application of theoretical knowledge into practice acquired in the direction of university-level culinary education given in departments such as culinary arts, food and beverage management, gastronomy or gastronomy and culinary arts in Turkey. In recent years, beside the curriculum programs there has been an increase in the number of workshop activities organized by the Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Departments (GCAD), therefore determining the students' attitudes towards workshops indicates great importance for successful education.

## 2. Methodology

The purpose of the research is; to determine whether attitudes and expectations of undergraduate-level GCAD students for culinary workshop activities differ according to the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants. In this direction, the research has seven hypotheses. The students participated in the “Seafood & Fish”, “Ottoman Cuisine” and “Pizza & Pasta” workshops which were organized by the GCAD of Faculty of Tourism, Afyon Kocatepe University forms the population of the research. In this quantitatively designed research, survey technique was used as a data collection tool which was carried out in January 2018. The scale used in the study of Boyraz (2018) was taken as the basis for the research and by adding new questionnaire and dimensions final version of the questionnaire was prepared. The questionnaire contains five-point Likert-type 35 expressions in two parts. The first part's questions are about demographic characteristics and second part's questions are related to evaluation of workshop attitudes. In the direction of research, seven different basic hypotheses have been determined for the questionnaire. These are;

- H<sub>1</sub>:** The perception of students on workshop events shows a significant difference according to gender.
- H<sub>2</sub>:** The perception of students on the workshop events shows a significant difference according to ages.
- H<sub>3</sub>:** The perception of students on workshop events shows a significant difference according to class in which they are actively trained.
- H<sub>4</sub>:** The perception of students on the workshop events shows a significant difference according to type of learning program.
- H<sub>5</sub>:** The perception of students on the workshop events shows a significant difference according to graduated high school type.

**H<sub>6</sub>:** The perception of students on the workshop events shows a significant difference according to having culinary experience.

**H<sub>7</sub>:** The perception of students on the workshop events shows a significant difference according to the workshop event type.

A questionnaire was applied to all 64 students who participated in workshop events. Descriptive statistics, frequency, reliability, t-test and one-way ANOVA analyses were performed by means of a statistical package program for the analysis of obtained data.

### 3. Findings

The descriptive statistics of participant students are given in Table-1. In the scope of the research, gender, age, undergraduate level, type of education and graduated high school types are considered as demographic variables. According to 64 participant students replies, it was determined that; 79.7% female and 20.3% male students participated in the study. Beside, 80% of the students are between the ages of 18-21 and the rest of them are between the ages of 22-25. In the GCAD department, where no fourth grade students are present yet, it can be said that the participants are predominantly in the 18-21 age range and this group is also in the foreground. Nevertheless approximately 30% of the students were in the first class (freshman), 12.5% in the second class (sophomore) and 57% in the third class (junior). 51.6% of them were enrolled in the normal (day-time) education while the remaining 48.4% were educated in the evening education curriculum. Lastly 45.3% of the students graduated from “Anatolian High Schools” with the greatest proportion in terms of the graduated high school types.

**Table 1:** Descriptive Characteristics of Participants

| Descriptive Info               | n  | %    |
|--------------------------------|----|------|
| <b>Gender</b>                  |    |      |
| Female                         | 51 | 79,7 |
| Male                           | 13 | 20,3 |
| <b>Age Group</b>               |    |      |
| 18-21                          | 51 | 79,7 |
| 22-26                          | 13 | 20,3 |
| <b>Grade</b>                   |    |      |
| 1st                            | 19 | 29,7 |
| 2nd                            | 8  | 12,5 |
| 3rd                            | 37 | 57,8 |
| <b>Type of Learning</b>        |    |      |
| Normal Education               | 33 | 51,6 |
| Secondary Education            | 31 | 48,4 |
| <b>Graduate High School</b>    |    |      |
| Normal High School             | 15 | 23,4 |
| Imam Hatip High School         | 3  | 4,7  |
| Tourism Vocational High School | 3  | 4,7  |
| Anatolian High School          | 29 | 45,3 |

|  |    |      |
|--|----|------|
| Culinary High School                     | 1  | 1,6  |
| Other High School (Technic, Trade, etc.) | 13 | 20,3 |

Table-2 shows the number of applied workshops on the average annual practice of the students and the explanatory factors related to them. There is not a big difference between the groups in terms of the number of events that are going on. In addition, 31.3% of the students participating in workshops three times a year can be considered to have great importance in terms of GCAD students. A number of important findings about the determinants of student workshop activities have been revealed within the scope of the research. Firstly, it is detected that internet is the most important and effective follow-up channel to follow innovations in gastronomy by students, which is becoming popular in the direction of technological developments of our age. Secondly, determined three most significant objectives of students' preference for workshops are; respectively, willing to learn new things, desire to acquire hand skills and meet the chiefs. Thirdly, overlapping student's interests with subject of workshop and accompanying guest chiefs are clarified as the most important motivators of the student's workshop decision.

**Table 2:** Frequency and Determiners for Participation in Workshops

| Workshop Info   | n  | %    |
|---|----|------|
| <b>Number of Participation in Workshops During the Year</b> |    |      |
| 1 time  | 19 | 29,7 |
| 2 times   | 25 | 39,1 |
| 3 times and above   | 20 | 31,3 |
| <b>How to Tracking Developments in Gastronomy</b>           |    |      |
| Tv - Radio  | 23 | 35,9 |
| Newspaper – Journal   | 18 | 28,1 |
| Social Environment  | 22 | 34,4 |
| Internet  | 60 | 93,8 |
| Faculty   | 22 | 34,4 |
| Random  | 7  | 10,9 |
| Other   | 3  | 4,7  |
| <b>Purpose for Participation in Workshops</b>               |    |      |
| Learning New Things   | 60 | 93,8 |
| Having a Certificate  | 14 | 21,9 |
| Make New Friends  | 5  | 7,8  |
| Competition Preparation                                     | 5  | 7,8  |
| Improve Hand Skill  | 39 | 60,9 |
| Meet the Chiefs   | 30 | 46,9 |
| Habit   | 2  | 3,1  |
| Other   | 1  | 1,6  |
| <b>Determinants of Workshop Participation Decision</b>      |    |      |
| Interest  | 45 | 70,3 |

|                       |    |      |
|-----------------------|----|------|
| Chefs                 | 27 | 42,2 |
| Price                 | 21 | 32,8 |
| Friend Recommendation | 6  | 9,4  |
| Hobby                 | 18 | 28,1 |
| Time/Date             | 15 | 23,4 |
| Random                | 1  | 1,6  |
| Other                 | 1  | 1,6  |

The students decelerated that they were dissatisfied with the workshops due to the limited participant quota, time and presentation possibilities. On the other hand, it is detected that; approximately one in three students participated at least three applied workshops per year; 28% of students participated in workshops organized by other faculties in addition to extra workshops organized apart from the curriculum by GCAD; overall satisfaction level of workshops was high with 87,5% and good with 4,151 of scale average; students are conscious and willing to attend workshop activities; and the workshop attitudes of them were generally positive and at a good level.

Independent t-test and one-way ANOVA were conducted to compare students' attitudes towards workshops according to the demographic characteristics and to determine whether they showed a meaningful difference in terms of these independent variables. According to the results of the t-test in Table-3; in terms of the gender variable, although the male students had a higher average than female,  $p=0.47$  at 95% reliability level, so that the attitudes of the students to the workshops did not change according to the gender and therefore the  $H_1$  hypothesis was rejected. In terms of student's ages, although the averages between the groups differed similar to the gender, there was no significant difference between the age and attitudes of the participants and the  $H_2$  hypothesis was rejected because  $p = 0.267$  in the 95% confidence interval. Lastly, as other variables of the attitudes of students towards workshops; it has been found that there is no significant difference according to the bachelor program being trained and culinary experience that they have whether or not before. Therefore,  $H_4$  ( $p=0.082$ ) and  $H_6$  ( $p=0.504$ ) hypotheses were not accepted either.

**Table 3:** "T-Test" Analysis Outputs: Student's Attitudes towards Workshops with Demographics

| Characteristic            | Variable                  | n  | Aver.  | S. Dev. | t      | df     | p    |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|----|--------|---------|--------|--------|------|
| <b>Gender</b>             | Female                    | 51 | 4,1305 | ,47929  | -,715  | 62     | ,477 |
|                           | Male                      | 13 | 4,2330 | ,37686  | -,825  | 22,997 | ,418 |
| <b>Age</b>                | 18 – 21                   | 51 | 4,1838 | ,44923  | 1,120  | 62     | ,267 |
|                           | 22 – 25                   | 13 | 4,0242 | ,49540  | 1,056  | 17,374 | ,305 |
| <b>Type of Learning</b>   | 1 <sup>st</sup> Education | 33 | 4,0545 | ,46172  | -1,768 | 62     | ,082 |
|                           | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Education | 31 | 4,2544 | ,44117  | -1,771 | 61,980 | ,082 |
| <b>Kitchen Experience</b> | Yes                       | 43 | 4,1243 | ,47413  | -,672  | 62     | ,504 |
|                           | No                        | 21 | 4,2068 | ,43367  | -,693  | 43,161 | ,492 |

When the attitudes of the participants to the workshops were examined in terms of the classroom levels which are educated, according to the one-way ANOVA analysis results in

Table-4, at 95% reliability level ( $p=0,239$ ), so no meaningful difference was observed between the groups, therefore  $H_3$  hypothesis was not accepted. As another demographic variable; in terms of the graduated high school type, there was no differentiation in student's workshop attitudes among the groups at the 95% confidence level. Hence, the hypothesis  $H_5$  was rejected because significance level was  $p=0,614$ . Likewise, when the attitudes of the students were analyzed in terms of the type of workshop that they had participated in,  $H_7$  hypothesis was not accepted as 95% confidence interval, there was no difference occurred between the groups and significance level was  $p=0.555$ .

**Table 4:** “One Way ANOVA” Output: Student’s Attitudes towards Workshops with Demographics

| Feature              | Distribution   | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F     | p    |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|------|
| Grade                | Between Groups | ,609           | 2  | ,305        | 1,464 | ,239 |
|                      | Within Groups  | 12,690         | 61 | ,208        |       |      |
| Graduate High School | Between Groups | ,773           | 5  | ,155        | ,716  | ,614 |
|                      | Within Groups  | 12,526         | 58 | ,246        |       |      |
| Workshop Event Type  | Between Groups | ,450           | 3  | ,150        | ,701  | ,555 |
|                      | Within Groups  | 12,849         | 60 | ,214        |       |      |

#### 4. Conclusion

Within the research, approximately one in three students to attend at least three applied workshop events per year; 28% of students attend extra workshop events outside the faculty's training program as well as workshops events which are organized by other faculties; the overall level of satisfaction with workshops was high with 87.5% and good with a mean of 4,151; students are conscious and willing to workshop activities; and their attitudes towards this direction are generally positive and at a good level despite results indicated that students participating in the survey are dissatisfied with the availability of quotas, time and presentation opportunities.

As a result of the research, a number of outputs were made about the determinants for the workshop activities of the students. The first of these; the internet is the most important and effective follow-up channel that is becoming popular in the direction of technological developments of our age as expected by students to follow innovations in gastronomy. The second important result is that the three most important objectives of students' preference for workshops are; desire to learn new things, acquire hand skills and meet with the chiefs. In addition, the most significant determinant of the workshop decision is; overlapping students' interest and workshop content and the accompanying chiefs (quality, experience, awareness, etc.).

In the scope of the research, it has been found that the perceptions, attitudes and expectations of students about workshop activities do not show any difference in terms of gender, age, class level, type of education program, type of high school graduated, experience of culinary experience, or workshop type variables. In other words, none of the research hypotheses have been accepted. These results indicate that workshop activities positively contribute to both of application and practical skills, as well as their training and social dimensions, regardless of their socio-demographic variables. Due to the multi-faceted contribution of the workshop activities to the students, the necessity for the GCAD to be



reevaluated together with the official curriculum programs and workshops is another important result of the research.

The scope of the research is limited to the GMS department of Afyon Kocatepe University. The study was conducted only on students who were actively enrolled in this department due to time and financial constraints. In addition, the students who represent the research population consist of only three different workshop evets participants; hence study was evaluated within the scope of only one education period. Therefore, in respect of all other parts of GCAD degree programs except for students or part of the research results it is not possible to generalize the whole of Turkey.

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