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## THE EFFECT OF GASTRONOMIC PRODUCTS ON THE SELECTION OF RECREATION CENTER: THE CASE OF KARAMAN ZEYVE BAZAAR<sup>1</sup>

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### ABSTRACT

Tourism, known as a flueless industry, is among the most important sources of income for countries. To attract more consumers, new types of tourism are offered to tourists. Gastronomic tourism has been one of the most striking types of tourism in recent years. Tourists who prefer local gastronomic products prefer to experience new tastes by visiting recreation centers. In tourism activities, tourists spend their leisure time with enjoyable and quality activities. Among the leisure activities, gastronomy elements have an important share within the scope of recreational activities. Tourists learn about the culture, history and traditions of the region through gastronomic products. Organized gastronomic festivals, cooking competitions, tasting days of local foods attract tourists to recreation centers therefore gastronomic products have an important share in the promotion of recreation centers. This study aims to determine the effect of gastronomic products on the recreation center preference of domestic tourists. The research was carried out in Zeyve Pazar, a recreation center in Ermenek district of Karaman province, and the data were obtained via interviews with local tourists visiting Zeyve Bazaar. In the study in which the qualitative research method was used, purposeful sampling was preferred and a semi-structured interview form was created by making use of the scientific studies determined as a result of the literature review. The data obtained as a result of the interviews with the volunteer participants and interpreted by making content analysis and descriptive analysis. At the end of the study, the elements of gastronomy grouped as restaurant meals, local foods and gastronomic tools were determined in Karaman Zeyve Bazaar. It has been concluded that the gastronomic products in the Zeyve Bazaar affect the choice of recreation center of domestic tourists after the elements of nature such as water resources and trees.

**Keywords:** Karaman, Ermenek, Zeyve Bazaar, recreation, gastronomy

<sup>1</sup> This study was presented as a summary and oral presentation at the Sivas Cumhuriyet University Food Studies Application and Research Center International Food Research Congress on 15.10.2022.

## INTRODUCTION

While the time period arbitrarily preferred by individuals is defined as leisure time (Metin, Kesici & Kodaş, 2013), meaningful and entertaining leisure activities that individuals voluntarily participate in are described as recreation (Cordes, 2013). Individuals spend their spare time by doing planned activities such as touristic activities, excursions, entertainment either individually or in a social group (Can, 2015). Activities that people participate in voluntarily in their spare time are defined as recreational activities, making a region suitable for people to rest and have fun known as a recreation center (sozluk.gov.tr, 2022; Özdemir, Güçer & Karaküçük, 2016). Food and beverages are among the reasons why recreation centers are preferred. The branch of science that includes the development of food and beverages within the cultural values of societies by applying them in the historical process and adapting them to today's conditions and enriched with artistic elements is defined as gastronomy (Deveci, Türkmen & Avcıkurt, 2013). In gastronomic tourism, local gastronomic products are seen as an attraction factor for people who perform Gastro-tourism activities (Toklu, 2020). Zeyve Bazaar, where gastronomic products are located, is 26 km away from the town of Ermenek in Karaman province and has a history of approximately 600 years. Besides its natural beauties such as water mills, cold waters and water lines, Zeyve Bazaar has become a gastronomic recreation center visited by local and foreign tourists for its local handicrafts, bakery, picnic areas, market and vegetables and fruits grown (ermenek.gov.tr/zeyve-pazari, 2022).

*When the relevant literature is examined following researches have been carried out within the framework of those subject "Leisure Time Habits of the People: The Example of Alanya" (Kurar & Baltacı, 2014), "People's Recreation Experience Preference: The Example of Alanya Dim Stream Valley" (Kurar, 2019), "A study to determine the recreational experience preferences, expectations and satisfaction levels of the local people: The Case of Alanya Dim Stream Valley" (Kurar, 2020), "Gastronomic Tourism as a Destination Attractive Element: The Case of Kastamonu" (Aydoğdu & Duman, 2017) and "Destination Attractiveness" and Gastronomy Tourism as its Element: The Example of Buldan" (Yıldırım, 2021). As a result of the review in the related literature, it was seen that the effect of gastronomic products on the choice of recreation center has similar characteristics in terms of topics such as gastronomy tourism, destination selection in tourism, gastronomy-themed recreational activities, recreation, and tourism. *The Effect of the Realized Gastronomic Products on the Choice of Recreation Center:* Some studies that is similar to the Case of Karaman Zeyve Bazaar are as follows: Bezirgan & Koç (2014) applied a questionnaire to 221 people in their study titled "The Effect of Local Cuisine on the Formation of Belonging to the Destination: The Case of Cunda Island", at the end of the study, they stated that local foods have positive effects on the formation of belonging to the visited place. The Travel Industry Association states that 70% of people who perform touristic activities for gastronomic tourism, from food, recipes, wine, etc. In touristic areas buy products and take them to their places of residence and to share with their families and friends (Sarıışık & Özbay, 2015). A "Gastronomic Tourism as a Destination Attractive Element: The study conducted by Aydoğdu & Duman (2017) titled The Case of Kastamonu" which was applied to a group of 20 people visiting Kastamonu food and beverage businesses, concluded that local dishes are seen as a destination attractiveness factor. Güzel & Öncel (2018), in their study titled "A Research on Hatay Culinary Culture", Güzel & Öncel (2018), concluded that*

gastronomic products create an attractive element on the places to be visited, as a result of the survey they conducted with 15 people from 8 different cities, where local foods are served in Hatay province. In another study, Sağ & Yaldız (2020) stated that Ermenek can be a national and regional rural tourism destination, in their study titled "Assessment of Rural Tourism Potential in Ermenek District and Defining Strategies". In the survey conducted (Kurar, 2020) with 268 people in his study titled "A study to determine the recreational experience preferences, expectations and satisfaction levels of the local people: The example of Alanya Dim Stream Valley"; the pollution of the toilets, fountains and sinks in the area, lack of leisure time, and financial impossibilities were determined as the limiting factors for the participation of the local people in recreational activities; the local people expect the local governments to plan the recreational areas in a way that everyone can benefit from, to create new recreation areas and to plan activities rich in art; he also stated that the factors that encourage the participation of local people in recreational activities are the experiences of having a good time, mental relaxation and strengthening family ties. Yıldırım (2021), in his master's thesis titled "Gastronomic Tourism as a Destination Attractive Element: The Example of Buldan", stated that the individuals interviewed know most of the 34 local dishes of Buldan, that local dishes create a potential for gastronomic tourism, but that local dishes are not in the first place in terms of destination attractiveness. Josphine (2021), in his study named "A Critical Review of Gastronomic Tourism Development in Kenya", told that studies on gastronomic tourism are insufficient, a stakeholder approach is necessary for studies on this subject, documentation of authentic gastronomic aspects locally, planning of gastronomic tours and packages and the tourism strategy in Kenya should be determined and a tourism incentive program should be prepared. Sio, Fraser & Fredline (2021), in their study named "A Contemporary systematic literature review of gastronomy tourism and destination image", examined six studies reached as a result of the literature review and according to the findings, they expressed that they examined the majority of the studies and subjects from the perspective of the tourist in terms of the developing trends in the study area, the use of theory. Karakan (2021), in his study, titled "Gastronomy-Themed Recreation Activities", examined gastronomy and recreation activities, which are two different branches of tourism; stated that it would be appropriate to evaluate gastronomic activities as gastronomic recreation activities and gave examples of gastronomic recreational activities carried out in Turkey and around the world. According to the findings obtained in these studies, the results were interpreted and it was concluded that gastronomic products are among the important factors in the selection of recreation centers, recreational activities and tourism centers in general terms.

The findings obtained at the end of the research will be shared with the local governments of Karaman and Ermenek, non-governmental organizations, and tradesmen's chambers, and recommendations will be made on eliminating the deficiencies in Zeyve Bazaar and promoting the area for the public to prefer the area for recreational activities. In this way, it will make a tangible contribution to the leisure time activities of the people. Furthermore, it was clearly stated to the participants and local governments of the region that projects should be prepared in order to preserve the historical structure and nature of the area and to transfer natural and traditional products to future generations.

## **METHOD**

In the qualitative research method, the research subject is interpreted and inferred in the social environment, and the events and conditions that are effective on the facts are taken into account. The subjective qualitative research method examines subjective data such as people's feelings, perceptions, and experiences in human and group behaviors and tries to understand and explain the research subject in natural conditions (Gürbüz & Şahin, 2018). In the study, in which qualitative research method was used, the data obtained as a result of the literature researches and the data obtained as a result of the interviews with the participants who visited the area using a semi-structured interview form were used. According to the data obtained as a result of the literature review, a semi-structured interview form was created and this form was used in the interviews. The interviews lasted an average of 30 minutes and the interviews were recorded on a voice recorder with the consent of the participants. "People's Leisure Habits: The Case of Alanya", Kurar (2020), "A study to determine the recreational experience preferences, expectations and satisfaction levels of local people: The Example of Alanya Dim Stream Valley" and Aydoğdu & Duman (2017), "Destination Attractiveness Element Gastronomy Tourism: The Case of Kastamonu" were framed with reference to those studies. The interview form consists of two parts, including the demographic information of the participants and the questions prepared for the purpose of the research. The individuals participating in the research were informed about the voluntary participation form and the research topic, and weekends when the market was crowded were selected for the research. In the research, the data obtained as a result of the literature research were interpreted by using the content analysis, and the data obtained using the face-to-face interview form was interpreted by using the descriptive analysis method. Descriptive analysis is a method that is summarized and interpreted according to the determined themes. In this method, the researcher can convey the answers of the interviewees using the direct quotation methods. The findings obtained in the descriptive analysis method are presented in a summarized and interpreted (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008; Baltacı, 2019). The study carried out in this context aims to investigate the effect of gastronomic products in Zeyve Bazaar on the choice of the recreation center. To achieve this aim; a qualitative research design was preferred, and an interview form consisting of two parts in the face-to-face interview technique was used to reach this research data. In the research, the data obtained as a result of the literature review and content analysis, all the information acquired as a result of the research were interpreted by using the descriptive analysis technique. According to the purpose of the research, ethical approval was obtained with the decision of Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee dated 18.04.2022, meeting 03 and numbered 48 in order to conduct the interviews.

### ***Significant of the Study***

It is important to minimize the problems between practitioners and users regarding the use of leisure time and to develop programs that will enable more people to benefit from the activities (Manfredo, Driver & Tarrant, 1996). In this context, thematic programs carried out in recreation centers where leisure time is used affect the choice of the recreation center. The research aims to determine whether the tourists visiting the gastronomic products area in Zeyve Bazaar in the Ermenek district of Karaman province, which is an open-air recreation

center, affect the recreation center preferences in terms of the effect of gastronomic products on the choice of the recreation center. The recreational activities carried out in the recreation centers economically develop the region where the recreation center is located within the framework of the tourism economy. Zeyve Bazaar, which is one of the important recreation centers with various shopping activities for the local people and tourists from the surrounding cities, provides significant tourism income for the local people. It has been observed that recreational activities are important for health, healthy individuals spend less on health than other individuals, and participation in such activities makes healthy individuals more productive in terms of morale and physicality. (Özdağ, Yeniceri, Fişekçioğlu, Akçakoyun & Kürkçü, 2009; Kurar, 2015). In this direction, the importance of using natural and healthy gastronomic products in Zeyve Bazaar as an attraction element of the area was tried to be emphasized.

**Study Group**

This study was carried out with tourists visiting Ermenek Zeyve Pazarı between 11.04.2022 and 31.05.2022. The research population consists of tourists visiting Zeyve Pazarı. As a result of the interviews with the people who visited the area during the research, 22 people who participated in the research were voluntarily chosen as a sample group of the research. Visitors participating in the research were listed as P1, P2, P3 within the scope of the sample and were coded between P1 and P22. The demographic information of the sample group participating in the research is given in table 1.

**Table 1.** Demographic Information of Participants

Participant	Gender	Age	Marital status	Education Status	Occupation	Place of Residence	Monthly Income
P (1)	Female	40	Married	Bachelor degree	Officer	Karaman	13.000
P (2)	Male	42	Married	Postgraduate	Officer	Karaman	17.000
P (3)	Male	48	Married	Doctorate	Officer	Karaman	18.000
P (4)	Male	34	Married	Postgraduate	Officer	Karaman	15.000
P (5)	Male	41	Married	Doctorate	Officer	Karaman	17.000
P (6)	Female	41	Married	Bachelor degree	Teacher	Karaman	10.000
P (7)	Male	38	Married	Bachelor degree	Business Manager	Ermenek	10.000
P (8)	Male	50	Single	High School	Tourism Person	Antalya	40.000
P (9)	Male	30	Married	High School	Optician	Konya	10.000
P (10)	Male	67	Married	Bachelor degree	Police	Ermenek	7.000
P (11)	Male	54	Married	High School	Jeweler	Karaman	10.000
P (12)	Male	62	Married	Primary School	Framer	Ermenek	8.000
P (13)	Male	39	Married	Associate degree	Food Technician	Ermenek	9.000
P (14)	Male	62	Married	Middle School	Tradesman	Ermenek	7.000
P (15)	Female	28	Single	Doctorate	Officer	Karaman	15.000
P (16)	Male	37	Married	Postgraduate	Officer	Karaman	15.000
P (17)	Male	35	Single	Postgraduate	Officer	Karaman	15.000
P (18)	Male	36	Married	Postgraduate	Officer	Karaman	16.000
P (19)	Female	25	Single	Bachelor degree	Dentist	Karaman	14.300
P (20)	Female	29	Single	Doctorate	Officer	Karaman	14.000
P (21)	Female	30	Single	Postgraduate	Officer	Karaman	14.500
P (22)	Male	37	Married	Doctorate	Officer	Karaman	18.000

When table 1 is examined, the majority of the 22 participants are male (16), age range (25-67), married (16), the majority of them are officers at bachelor degree and postgraduate education level, their income level varies between (7000-40000 TL), the place of residence is Karaman and appears to be around.

**Limitations of the Study**

This study was limited to the responses given by the tourists who visited Zeyve Bazaar, which is one of the important recreation areas in the Ermenek district of Karaman province, to the questions in the questionnaire. Although sufficient sample size was reached for this research; time and cost are the most important constraints of the study. A semi-structured interview form was used for the study in which the qualitative research method was preferred. For similar studies to be done in the future, data can be collected by using the questionnaire forms in the quantitative research method. Since the research is a qualitative study, validity and reliability criteria were not considered.

**FINDINGS**

In accordance with the purpose of the research, the data obtained from the interviews were created through the descriptive analysis used in qualitative research, and themes and sub-themes were created. At the end of the research, five themes were determined. Accordingly, the themes of the study consist of the attitudes of the visitors towards recreational activity, the attitudes of the visitors towards the Zeyve Bazaar as a recreation center, the gastronomic products in the Zeyve Bazaar, the attitudes of the visitors towards the gastronomic products they buy and consume in the Zeyve Bazaar, and the attitudes towards the recreational area service opportunities are taken into consideration. Then, sub-themes and codes were created within the framework of these themes. The themes and sub-themes created are given in the table 2.

**Table 2.** Themes and Sub-Themes

Themes	Sub-Themes
Attitudes of Visitors Towards Recreation Activity	Attitudes towards touristic trips Attitudes towards recreational areas Attitudes towards the time of recreational activity Attitudes towards the season of participation in recreational activities Attitudes towards the length of stay in recreation areas Attitudes towards participation in recreational activities Attitudes towards restrictions on participation in recreational activities
Attitudes of Visitors Towards Zeyve Bazaar as a Recreation Center	Reasons to visit the Zeyve Bazaar Satisfaction with the Zeyve Bazaar Attitudes towards the promotion of the Zeyve Bazaar Attitudes towards the tourism potential of the Zeyve Bazaar
Gastronomic Products in Zeyve Bazaar	Restaurant food Local foods gastronomic gadgets
Attitudes of visitors towards gastronomic products they buy and consume in Zeyve Bazaar	Information status of visitors about gastronomic products before visiting the area Food purchased and consumed during the visit Gastronomic products that may be a reason to visit Zeyve Bazaar again Attitudes towards whether the gastronomic products in Zeyve Bazaar can be seen as a recreational area attraction
Attitudes towards recreational area service opportunities	Attitudes and expectations towards businesses Attitudes and expectations towards local governments

When table 2 is examined, five themes within the scope of the research; attitudes of visitors towards recreational activities, attitudes of visitors towards Zeyve Bazaar as a recreation center, gastronomic products in Zeyve Bazaar, attitudes of visitors towards gastronomic products they buy and consume in Zeyve Bazaar, and attitudes towards recreation area service opportunities were considered. When the relevant literature is examined, it was determined that there were studies that overlap with the results of the research. Yıldırım (2021), in his study titled "Gastronomic Tourism as a Destination Attractive Element: The Example of Buldan", stated that local dishes create gastronomic tourism potential, but local dishes are not in the first place in terms of destination attractiveness. Özersin (2019), in his study titled "The Destination Image of Gastronomy Tourism and Its Effect on Destination Selection: The Example of Çeşme", stated that local food and beverages are important in promoting the region and increasing the number of tourists, and that 70% of gastro tourist take local foods to their hometowns to share these foods with their families and friends, and emphasized that gastronomy tourism has positive effects on the promotion and economic development of the country in particular.

The themes, sub-themes and codes created for the analysis of the data obtained within the scope of the research are placed in table 3. The themes were supported by the direct statements of the participants who were interviewed face-to-face. In theme 1 in which the attitudes of the visitors towards the recreational activities are investigated, the attitudes towards the touristic trips, attitudes towards the time of the recreational activities, towards the season of participation in the recreational activities, towards the length of stay in the recreation areas, towards the participation in the recreational activities and towards the participation restrictions in the recreational activities and in this direction seven sub-themes were determined. The expressions given to the sub-themes and the frequency of repetition of these expressions are shown in the codes. In Table 3, the attitudes of the visitors towards the recreation activity are given.

**Table 3.** The Attitudes of the Visitors Towards The Recreation Activity are Given

Sub-Themes	Codes	Repetition Frequency of Codes
Attitudes towards touristic trips	Yes	18
	Partly	4
Attitudes towards recreational areas Open space	Outdoor	19
	Sports Facility	5
	Other	2
Attitudes towards the time of recreational activity	Morning	6
	Noon	15
	Evening	7
Attitudes towards the season of participation in recreational activities	Summer	14
	Spring months	6
	Winter	2
Attitudes towards the length of stay in recreation areas	1-2 Hours	10
	3-4 Hours	12
Attitudes towards participation in recreational activities	With Family	18
	With Friends	4
Attitudes towards restrictions on participation in recreational activities	Lack of leisure time	13
	Financial impossibility	5
	Management of fields	5
	Insufficient infrastructure	4
	Hygiene Conditions	19
	No restrictions	4

When table 3 is examined, it was determined that the majority of the participants like making touristic trips, they usually perform outdoor recreational activities, prefer lunch and evening hours in summer for recreational activities, they spend around 1-4 hours in recreation areas, they participate in activities with their families, and was seen that the lack of leisure time and the hygiene conditions of the areas restrict their participation in recreational activities. The direct statements of some of the participants are as follows.

*P1, " I like partly to make touristic trips, I do recreational activities with my wife and children in open areas in the morning and evening hours in summer for 1-3 hours."*

*P4, "I like to make touristic trips, I participate in activities with my wife and friends, I do recreational activities in open spaces and historical places in the afternoon between July and August for 1-2 hours."*

In theme 2, in which the attitudes of visitors towards the Zeyve Bazaar as a recreation center were investigated, four sub-themes were determined: the reasons for visiting the Zeyve Bazaar, the satisfaction with the Zeyve Bazaar, the attitudes towards the promotion of the Zeyve Bazaar and the attitude towards tourism potential of the Zeyve Bazaar. The expressions given to the sub-themes and the frequency of repetition of these expressions are shown in the codes. In Table 4, the attitudes of the visitors towards Zeyve Pazarı as a recreation center are given.

**Table 4.** Theme 2: Attitudes of Visitors towards Zeyve Bazaar as a Recreation Center

Sub-Themes	Codes	Repetition Frequency of Codes
Reasons to visit Zeyve Bazaar	Close to where we live	6
	nature and culture	18
	gastronomic products	14
	To find peace	8
Satisfaction level with Zeyve Bazaar	Pleased	18
	Not Satisfied	1
	Indecisive	3
Attitudes towards the promotion of Zeyve Bazaar	Sufficient	4
	Insufficient	16
	Partly	2
Attitudes towards the tourism potential of Zeyve Bazaar	Yes	19
	Should be improved	3

When table 4 is examined, it is seen that they make nature and culture-oriented visits and then prefer to experience gastronomic products as a recreational activity. According to the data obtained from the participants who visited Zeyve Bazaar, it can be deduced that local gastronomic products come after the elements such as nature, history, and water as recreational attractions. 16 participants stated that Zeyve Bazaar was not promoted, and 19 participants stated that the tourism potential of Zeyve Bazaar was high. The direct statements of some of the participants are as follows:

*P4 said, "We heard that it has an unspoiled nature, we saw local products during our visit and bought some of them after consuming them there. We did not know about local products before our visit, and as a person living in Karaman, I think that such an area with tourism potential has not been promoted."*

P9 said, "We came for the waterfall and its nature. We did not know about the local products and food sold here. We camp here with two families. We did bazaar and grocery shopping before coming here. If we knew that these products were sold here, we would have done the shopping here. We are happy with Zeyve Bazaar , but I think there are issues that need improvement. We bought natural products such as corn, eggplant and tomatoes here. We will take what we buy from the market home, the natural local products sold here are better."

The poem written by Durmuş Ali Özbek, one of the local poets, wrote many articles about the cultural elements of the region in order to transfer the Ermenek culture to future generations, about Zeyve Bazaar is given in table 5.

**Table 5.** Zeyve Bazaar

<i>Chill land on a summer day, Don't ask, this is Zeyve. Don't search, there is no other feeling, Don't ask, this is Zeyve.</i>	<i>Mills grind flour, The coolness grows the plane tree, Your blind mind chills Don't ask, this is Zeyve.</i>
<i>Kebab has big fame Those who eat are full, It has no precedent, Don't ask, this is Zeyve.</i>	<i>Özbekoğlu sees and writes, When you come, don't evil eye The market established every week Don't ask, this is Zeyve.</i>
<i>Its history is six hundred years old, The waters roar and whistle, There is no scarcity in the bazaar, Don't ask, this is Zeyve.</i>	

Source: Özbek, 2022

In theme 3, where the gastronomic products in Zeyve Bazaar are researched, three sub-themes were determined as restaurant meals, local foods, and gastronomic tools. The expressions given to the sub-themes and the frequency of repetition of these expressions are shown in the codes. In table 6, the gastronomic products in Zeyve Bazaar are given.

**Table 6.** Theme 3: Gastronomic Products in the Zeyve Bazaar

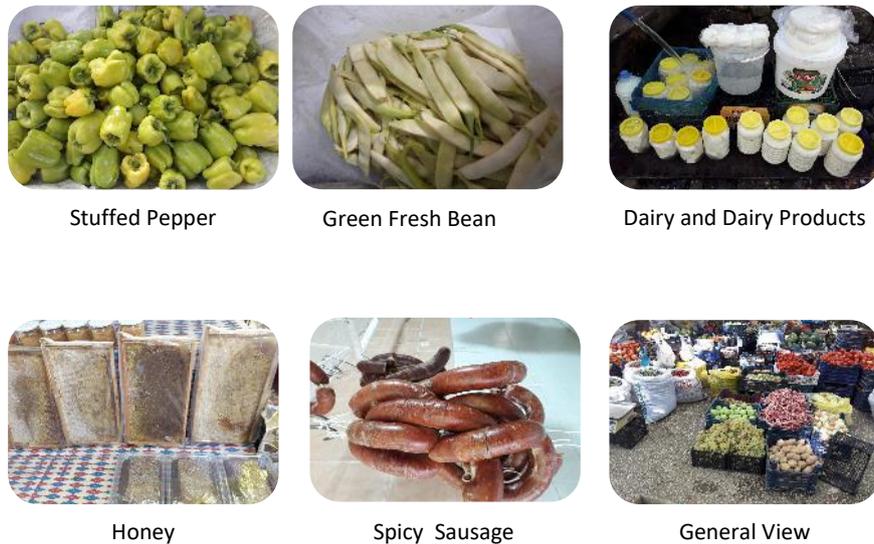
Sub-Themes	Codes			
Restaurant Foods	Sac Roasting Lamb Skewer Liver Skewer Chop Tantuni Chicken chop Kesh Salad	Zeyve Kebab Trotter Soup Lentil soup Chicken Shish Sheet Pan Oven Roasted Salad Varieties Goat cheese	Rice Trout Butcher meatball Adana Kebab Meat Pita Bread Gozleme Töymeken Filo Pastry	Kashar Cheese Pita Tulum Cheese Pita Çökelekli Pita Spicy Sausage Pita Mixed Pita
Local Foods	Aubergine White Beans Sweetcorn Tomatoes Cucumber Pepper Kelek/Melon Pumpkin Green pepper Haricot bean Garlic Cowpea	Sumac Lavender Thyme Centauray Almond Walnut Honey Grape molasses Dried fruit pulp Dried Chickpeas Capia Pepper Wheat	Apple Pear Fig Strawberry Plum Paradise Fruit Grape Peach Walnut Bandirma Grain Watermelon Silverberry	Tulum Cheese Pickled Cheese Fresh Milk Precipitate Kes Cheese Cheese Yoghurt Sausage Potatoes Onion Melon Chief Tarhana
Gastronomic tools	Wooden spoon Rolling pin Pastry Board Pitcher Spatula Casserole	Sac Bread Oven Mortar Large Mortar Skewer	Grill Wire Grill Knife Cleaver Grinding	Sieve Tongs Samovar Strewing Basin

Question asked to the participants "What are the foods you buy or consume at the Zeyve Bazaar?" As a result of the analysis of the answers to the question and the data obtained from the interviews with and the tradesmen in the fields; the sub-themes of restaurant meals, local foods and gastronomic tools were determined under the main theme of gastronomic products in Zeyve Bazaar. Some of the dishes included in the codes in the sub-theme of restaurant meals are given in figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Restaurant Meals

Some foods included in the codes in the sub-theme of local foods are given in figure 2.



**Figure 2.** Local Foods

Some of the products included in the codes in the sub-theme of gastronomic tools are given in figure 3.



Rolling pin



Cleaver and Knives



Sieves



Skewers



Pastry Board



Sac

**Figure 3.** Gastronomic Tools

Meals can be consumed at the restaurant in Zeyve Bazaar, as well as by purchasing local natural products and gastronomic vehicles sold to prepare self-catering meals in picnic and camping areas.

Some of the participants asked, "What are the foods you buy or consume at the Zeyve Bazaar?" Their straight responses to the question are as follows:

*P8, "Meat, yoghurt, cheese, fruit and vegetables, sometimes meat and walnuts and almonds."*

*P12 said, "When I come here, I eat Zeyve Kebab. I usually buy natural products like sumac, thyme and lavender, and also do market shopping because it is natural and cheap."*

In theme 4, in which the attitudes of the visitors towards the gastronomic products they buy and consume in Zeyve Bazaar are investigated, the information status of the visitors about the gastronomic products before the visit to the area, the gastronomic products that may be the reason for a repeat visit to the Zeyve Bazaar, the gastronomic products in the Zeyve Bazaar as a recreational area attractiveness element. Three sub-themes were determined as attitudes towards whether or not they could be seen. The answers given to the sub-themes and the frequency of repetition of these expressions are shown in the codes. Table 7 shows the attitudes of the visitors towards the gastronomic products they buy and consume in Zeyve Bazaar.

**Table 7.** Theme 4: Attitudes of Visitors towards Gastronomic Products Purchased and Consumed in Zeyve Bazaar

Sub-Themes	Codes	Repetition Frequency of Codes
Information status of visitors about gastronomic products before visiting the area	Yes i knew	12
	No, I did not know	10
Food purchased and consumed during the visit	Restaurant food	13
	Local foods	18
	Gastronomic tools	3
Gastronomic products that may be a reason to visit Zeyve Bazaar again	Restaurant food	14
	Local foods	17
Attitudes towards whether the gastronomic products in Zeyve Bazaar can be seen as a recreational area attraction	Yes	13
	Diversity should be	5
	Increased	4
	No	

According to table 7, it was concluded that 12 participants had prior knowledge of the gastronomic products in Zeyve Bazaar, while 10 participants did not. 13 of the participants stated that they experienced restaurant food, 18 of them bought and consumed local foods, and 3 of them bought gastronomic tools. The direct statements of some of the participants on the subject are as follows:

*P13 said, "Yes, I had information. I prefer products such as sumac, peach, fig, plum and grape when I come here. Restaurants do not interest me much. Natural products such as lavender products and sumac play an important role in my revisit here. Gastronomic products Zeyve Bazaar" It increases my interest in it."*

*P16 said, "Yes, I had knowledge of it. It is a place where I can buy vegetables and fruits, and eat meat and fish if I prefer. Products such as figs and grapes are influential factors in my revisit here. Gastronomic products can increase the attractiveness of Zeyve Bazaar, but the first element is the natural environment."*

*P19 said, "I did not know. I bought and consumed products such as grapes, figs, and peaches in the field. All natural fruits and vegetables grown by the local farmers of the region are the reason for me to visit this place again. It can be seen as a central attraction if more endemic products are included by increasing the product variety."*

In the theme, where the attitudes of the participants towards the recreational area service opportunities were investigated, two sub-themes were determined, namely attitudes towards businesses and local governments. The expressions given to the sub-themes and the frequency of repetition of these expressions are shown in the codes. In table 8, attitudes towards recreational area service opportunities are given.

**Table 8.** Theme 5: Attitudes Towards Recreation Area Service Facilities

Sub-Themes	Codes	Repetition Frequency of Codes
Attitudes and expectations towards businesses	Hygiene conditions	22
	Qualified manpower	14
	Communication	16
	Reasonable price policy	22
	Increasing the variety	13
	Using natural products	17

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Attitudes and expectations towards local governments	Seating areas should be made	22
	Child park	17
	Sports facility	6
	Boat tour on the dam	3
	Number of sinks	22
	Hygiene conditions	22
	There should be a guide	3
	Direction signs	11
	Marketplaces of the tradesmen	15
	Bus service from Ermenek	4
	walking areas	21
	Pest control	19
	Car park	13
	Lighting	16
	food inspection	18
	Local people should be given the opportunity.	9
		4
	Campsites should be created	3
	Fishing places must be	4
	Security personal	

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When table 8 was examined, at first participants did not find satisfactory and sufficient recreational opportunities in Zeyve Bazaar. Participants indicated that businesses and local governments should be more careful especially in terms of hygiene conditions and security. In a further statement, they stated that the embroideries should employ well-qualified manpower, implement reasonable price policies, include traditional dishes made from local natural products in their menus, and increase diversity more. After that the participants point out some critical issues such as expanding food inspections in the area from local governments, placing the natural products they grow at home in the recreation center, making the marketplace in the area more useful, increasing the sitting areas, fighting against pests, and increasing the number of sinks. The direct statements of some of the participants on the subject are as follows:

*P22 said, "The naturalness of the market should be preserved, the people of the region should be maintained as tradesmen, and the products should be made from the region. Most importantly, the environment is extremely polluted. This comment may sound strange, but really extreme pollution is actively continuing. If you look down the flowing water at the crowded time, there are bottles and other waste, dead fish, broken glass, I don't think it's sustainable like this. If measures are not taken against this, entrances can be paid and staff can be employed for cleaning. Especially those who do business there and local people should embrace the region. Campaigns can be made to raise awareness of people."*

*P18 said, "At certain times of the year, bringing the atmosphere of a fair with events will increase its attraction much more. Such events need to be planned."*

*P17 said, "Bus services that we can provide instant transportation between Ermenek - Zeyve, for both ways, making the entrance and interior more modern without damaging the structures and trees, making walking tracks of various lengths, reducing the slope, allowing individuals of all ages to use these areas, in Karaman city*

*center should be implemented. I am 35 years old and as a Karaman resident, I do not remember seeing a single promotional advertisement by local governments about Zeyve or its pictures on billboards in the Karaman city center. In Zeyve, it is necessary to control the enterprises in terms of hygiene, to increase the number of places to meet the basic needs, to prepare seats or gazebos for resting by creating balconies on the walking tracks and to create areas for taking pictures.*

## **CONCLUSION and DISCUSSION**

Today, gastronomy tourism has been added to tourism activities commonly known as sun, beach, sea, sports, and culture. Gastronomic products included in the culinary culture offered to the service of visitors in recreation centers preferred in daily or overnight tourism activities are among the important criteria that affect people's tourism and recreation location preference. Concepts such as "gastronomic tourism, nutritional tourism, culinary tourism, gourmet tourism, and food tourism" are used to describe the food and beverages used within the scope of tourism activities (Cömert & Özkaya, 2014). Recreation, which is defined as a leisure time activity that relaxes and benefits people psychologically, and is also evaluated on a voluntary basis (Kozak & Özkeroğlu, 2020), has taken its place in tourism types as recreational tourism activities. Planning, implementation and marketing of recreational activities creates a recreational product that adds value to tourism (Kargiglioğlu & Sormaz, 2021). For people who carry out tourist activities, food is an important element that provides recognition of the local culture as well as a physiological need. Gastronomic products are an important tool for promoting and marketing the history, culture, traditions and customs of the destination center where the recreation area is located. Gastronomic products contribute to the creation and branding of a sustainable recreation center that attracts visitors to the recreation center, brings producers and consumers together, and offers unique experiences to visitors (Kyriakaki, Zagkotsi & Trihas 2016; Ergan, Kızılırmak & Ergan, 2020). The concept of "Gastro tourist" has emerged as a result of experiencing gastronomic tourism and gastronomic products. Gastro tourists have the opportunity to learn and experience gastronomic products in the recreation areas they visit (Ergan, Kızılırmak & Ergan, 2020). Food festivals, tasting days, cooking events, gastro tours and gastronomy museums are among the gastronomic events held in recreation centers (Karakan, 2021). Although the recreation center preference of the visitors differs according to many factors, the recreational activities offered by the recreation centers to the visitors are taken part as an important criteria for the visitors' choice of the recreation center in terms of the history, geographical conditions, culture, and gastronomic products (Şengel, İbiş, Zengin & Batman, 2014). Many factors such as preparation, purchasing, service, consumption and preservation methods affect the visitors' decision whether to choose gastronomic products or not. (Şen & Aktaş, 2021). Taste, health, convenience, price, accessibility, and variety are effective in the selection of gastronomic products. In Ermenek Zeyve Bazaar, there are gastronomic products such as sheet pan, trout, dip, breakfast, pastry with töymeken, goat cheese, keş salad, yellow keş, raw keş, tarhana and pastry (ermenek.gov.tr, 2022).

This study was carried out by applying a semi-structured interview form to the tourists who visited Zeyve Bazaar in Ermenek district of Karaman province between 11.04.2022 and 31.05.2022. In the research, it has been

revealed how effective gastronomic products are in the visits of tourists coming to Zeyve Pazarı, a recreation center with nature and culture themes. It was determined that gastronomic products (restaurant dishes, local foods, and gastronomic tools) in Zeyve Bazaar come after natural elements such as water resources and trees and other natural factors among the reasons for the visit. Participants like making touristic trips, they usually perform outdoor recreational activities, and prefer lunch and evening hours for recreational activities by spending virtually 1-4 hours in recreation areas and it was also concluded that they participate leisure time activities with their families and their participation in recreational activities were limited by the lack of leisure time and the hygiene conditions of the areas. Considering that the majority of the participants are officers and have bachelor's degrees and doctoral graduates, and their economic income is on average (15,000 TL), it has been seen that educated people and people with good incomes visited Zeyve Bazaar. In this context, it can be predicted that educated and well-off people give importance to recreational activities more focusing on nature, history, and gastronomy. From the clear explanations of the participants, it was concluded that they were willing to revisit the Zeyve Bazaar and make suggestions to their acquaintances and that the region has tourism potential. It has been determined that food can be consumed in the restaurant in Zeyve Bazaar, as well as in picnic and camping areas, meals can be prepared by purchasing local natural products and gastronomic tools sold in order to prepare food in the style of self-catering. Participants did not find the recreational opportunities in Zeyve Bazaar adequate, businesses and local governments should be more careful, especially in terms of hygiene conditions and safety, they should employ more qualified manpower with good communication skills and impose reasonable price policies and practices furthermore they should include traditional dishes made from local natural products in their menus, and increase the diversity. In addition, local governments should emphasize the importance of extending food inspections in the region, including the manpower living in the region and the natural products they grow at home in the recreation center, increase the marketplaces in the region, make the sitting areas useful and increase, and regularly perform pest control and increase the number of sinks. As a result; when the recreational activities of Zeyve Bazaar are evaluated in the context of socialization and it increases the life motivation of individuals, protect them from the feeling of loneliness, prevents some stress-related health problems and contributes to social integration of people (Kurar, 2019), it has been also determined that they are satisfied with the fact that it creates a different experience for visitors from the region and surrounding cities.

This study can be a source for future academic studies on gastronomy-themed recreation centers, determining the standards of recreation centers, revealing people's expectations from recreation centers, shedding light on relevant institutions and organizations, and gastronomic products can be effective together with touristic elements such as nature, history and water.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Gastronomy-themed recreation centers positively affect the psychological motivation of people. In this context, increasing the number of preferred areas regionally and nationally is seen as positive in terms of the expectations and experiences of the society.

Various environmental problems arise as a result of recreational activities using gastronomic products. In this regard, local governments need to carry out various studies to increase the environmental awareness of the people.

The expectations of the visitors from the local authorities regarding the recreation area should be investigated and necessary studies should be carried out. Recreation areas should be planned especially considering gender, age, disability and economic equality.

In recreation areas, more space should be allocated for gastronomic local products, and shops that comply with hygiene conditions should be planned for the sale of fresh and organic products.

#### **ETHICAL TEXT**

“In this article, journal writing rules, publication principles, research and publication ethics rules, and journal ethics rules were followed. “Responsibility for any violations that may arise regarding the article belongs to the author.

According to the purpose of the research, ethical approval was obtained with the decision of Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee dated 18.04.2022, meeting 03 and numbered 48 in order to conduct the interviews.

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