THE PERCEPTION OF CULINARY STUDENTS ON OCCUPATIONAL IMAGE OF CULINARY: A CASE STUDY AT TOURISM AND HOTEL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

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Abstract-The tourism sector is growing rapidly in the world and the professional culinary has a vital importance in the sector as it is the centre of food production. A student naturally takes occupational image into consideration while making a decision on their future occupation. Occupational image plays a vital role for occupational decision process. This study aims to determine the occupational image of culinary job from the perspective of the culinary students and reveal the determinants of occupational image. The participants of this study are the students of Culinary Departments at Silifke-Taşucu Vocational School of Higher Education. The Factor Analysis was applied to the data we got from the survey via SPSS 23.0.

Keywords - Occupational Image, Culinary, Education, Image

I. INTRODUCTION

Vocational Schools of Higher Education are the associate degree educational intuitions in Turkish education system. They train the students to meet the need of intermediate staff for the industries, who are between the executive managers and headworkers in rank. Their education time normally last two years but sometimes they may have extra one year if that school has preparatory classes for foreign language. The students are supposed to acquire the sufficient knowledge and the skills according to the industry they will work after graduation. They have more theoretical knowledge than headworkers and more practical skills than bachelors. The summer internship period-lasting at least 60 labour days- reinforces their practical knowledge and skills(Görmüş & Bektaş, 2002, p. 20). Most of those schools have the departments related to the tourism such as Tourism and Hotel Management, Tourism and Travel Agency, Tourist Guiding and Culinary. This paper seeks to identify the factors that lead the culinary student to choose the Culinary Department. Nowadays Culinary Department has been very popular among students who are at the step of choosing a university department after high school. It receives enough students to fill in the quota while the other departments have difficulty to receive full complement of quota. The culinary students at Silifke-Taşucu Vocational College have courses not only about traditional local cuisine but also international kitchen. They learn all of the cooking techniques around the world, time planning, basic of the nutrition, menu planning, banquet, hygiene and sanitation and garnishing the dishes to present to the guests, etc. They also have a course of first aid as they often face small or big work-place accidents.

The interest towards Culinary Departments shows parallelism with interest towards food and food tourism around the world. Close relationship between food and tourism has been a visible tourism research area for the past three decades. Scholarly and industrial activities show an increased interest in food and food tourism(Ellisa, Park, Kim, & Yeoman, 2018, p. 250). Cooking and preparing some side dishes are creative results of the delicate balance of practical application and physical science. Some scientific rules are taken into consideration while the chefs are performing culinary. They have to learn and use some techniques, evaluate ingredients quality and comply with timing (Baldwin, 2018; Horng & Hu, 2008). Cooking has been more than just “cooking”; its scope has gone beyond its lexical meaning. It symbolizes a life style, culture, flavour discovery and trying and creating new tastes(Baldwin, 2018).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Turkish Cuisine

From view point of food tourism, there are several factors that make Turkey attractive. Turks have interacted with diverse cultures throughout history, which leads Turkish cuisine to have a variety of dishes(Okumus & Cetin, 2018, p. 342). There are quite a lot of reasons for this reality.Oneof the reasons is that the Turks established a lot of relations with different nations during the big migration started in the Middle Asia and ended in Anatolia. Secondly, the Ottoman Empire reigned quite large area in the world-Middle East, North Africa, the Balkans, East Europe. Some characteristics of the kitchens of the countries under the reign of Ottoman Empire gathered as Ottoman Palace Kitchen. Thirdly, the abundance of feedstock provided an opportunity to

nourish the Turkish cuisine due to various climate and geographic characteristics. Turkish commercial cuisine has started great progress by increase of tourism investments. Tourism managers and investors have given more importance for kitchen planning as it is gaining importance for a tourism enterprise(Arısoy, 2011). Turks invented various dishes which are very popular all around world such as first readymade soup (i.e. tarhana) and yogurt and ayran. Turkey is home to various sub-cultures (e.g. Arabs, Armenians, Greeks and Jews) as a result of that Anatolia was first occupied by Romans, and was one of the main routes to holly lands of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The mobility of these people caused a lot of interactivity with locals and created a rich background for traditional food culture to emerge(Okumus & Cetin, 2018).

2.2. Image and Occupational Image

As "image", which was produced under unusual circumstances and has had some curious and unexpected impacts, is a subjective opinion, it cannot be the true identity of an object. Therefore, images are derived from subjective perspectives and information(Boulding, 1956). The image is the first impression about a person, an institution or a profession etc. that comes into being by itself into a person or people's mind of a person is. This impression begins at the moment of seeing, hearing, or feeling, and gradually becomes established. In this respect, the formation (the reflection of the image projection to the mind) of the image takes place within the first minute, while the placement/creation of the image takes the short and medium term(Fidan, 2013).

With angel of economics, image is also a generalization of human behaviour in terms of decision. Decision involves images in the mind of alternative futures, with varying degrees of probability, related to some acts or behaviour of decision makers, which are then ordered in terms of preference. Behaviour then consists of acting in a way that is expected to realize the image of the most preferred future(Boulding, 1956).

Image was a matter of fact cumulating by if and only travelling, touching, tasting and smelling and not a subject to feel anxiety about for the last fifty years. Yet in time, as result of improvement of technology and communication media, an action or a politics of a person or an institution in a remote corner of the world may face a reaction in another remote corner of the world so that the fact of image has gained a lot of importance and globalized in "technosfer" media permanently (Fidan, 2013).

An individual becomes informed by choosing data or information presented by the activities, commercials or promotion activities of the mass media. He/She compiles and gathers data or information in his/her brain and make some sense out of them by organizing them there. Thus, an individual creates or forms an image by going through processes of perception, attitude, knowledge/information, possibility and service. An image leads individuals to quite various attitudes(Cüceloğlu, 1991; Karpat, 1999). The term "image" has different meanings for every different individual. Some of them approach positively while the others negatively claim that image is formed/created from artificial characteristics or behaviour patterns and is fake and far from reality. It does not matter whether the approach towards image is positive or negative; the term "image" has been an inseparable part of our lives (Dinçer, 1998).

Occupational image is an image formed by a social status, ability and behaviour patterns, and shared by the members of that occupation. As for perceived occupational image, it is the respect towards to the members of the occupation, their status in the society, the judgements and thoughts about their abilities and behaviour patterns (Birnbaum & Somers, 1989). The success of occupations today depends on not only technical knowledge and abilities of the people working in the field but also the image of that occupation, as matter fact, the occupational image has got a vital value for the job. If a job has got a nice image, the members are expected to be successful in performing their jobs. The attitudes and behaviours, success and the ways of communication of the doers of the job play a vital role in developing an occupational image(Bağçeci, Çetin, & Ünsal, 2013). Professional image is a person's beliefs, ideas and impressions about the profession.Occupational image are all the impressions formed in the public eye about that job.There are many direct and indirect factors that determine a occupational image.These are the success of the profession, public relations studies, information and data obtained from many different communication channels and processes, media and cultural factors, as well as the attitudes and behaviours of those executing the profession (Örer, 2006). The professional image consists of internal and external stakeholders' perceptions of the organization. It is the thoughts, information and emotional responses of the people who receive professional services that the professionals present. Image is the opinions of internal stakeholders (employees), external stakeholders, the media, non-governmental organizations and opinion leaders on the occupation. A positive professional image brings confidence and competence to the profession while providing self-confidence and professional satisfaction to employees (Karaköse, 2007).

There are factors that make up the image of a profession. These factors, socio-cultural, bureaucratic factors, as well as the feeling of people doing that profession, clothing, makeup, forms of communication or the places we work are the factors

that make up the image of the profession as a whole. The judgments about how the institutions / organizations and professions are known or perceived by their environment can often be due to the impressions of the employees in the institution. Employees in the institutions they are affiliated with their contribution to the professional majesty may be positive or negative. Because when people make an evaluation about the image of a profession, they make evaluations by considering the appearance, speech and behaviours, clothing, and achievements of the people who conduct the profession. Not only how we look but also how we behave, how we talk, our body language is a message we send to the people in front of us when we use it. As a result of these messages, occupational image is formed (Örer, 2006)

When people make a judgement on value for a profession, they usually do this by making an inference from their experiences, the publications of the media, and the environment. Individuals create an image by coming to a conclusion about an occupation and members based on an experience about that profession or its members (Çınar & Demir, 2009)Profession is defined as the work that is gained by a certain education and has been adopted by the rules based on systematic knowledge and skills, to produce useful goods and services for people and to earn money in return. It is also defined as a job that requires a certain level of skills, theoretical knowledge, education and diploma, and brings status, prestige and income, while changing the quality from society to society (Örer, 2006).

III.METHOD AND DATA COLLECTION

This is an exploratory and descriptive research study, as the variables and factors affecting occupational image of Culinary are tried to be determined. Population of the research is Culinary Students studying at vocational school of higher education in Turkey. Sample of the study is Culinary program students studying at Selçuk University, Silifke-Taşucu Vocational School of Higher Education in 2018-2019. Data were collected by literature survey and face-to-face survey method. The questionnaire was constituted by adopting and revising statements in Canöz and Çerçi (2017)'s study and applied to the first and second grade culinary program students. 169 students completed the survey. Since 8 of the filled surveys were invalid, 161 questionnaires were taken into consideration. Questionnaire form consists of 40 questions. First 18 items are related to occupational image whereas 5 of them related to the reasons they choose the department and 8 of them are related to the fears in future about the their occupation they choose. There are 9 demographic questions in the questionnaire. The items related to occupational image are rated by Likert scale: 5- I totally agree, 4- I agree, 3-I do not have an idea, 2-I do not agree and 1-I absolutely do not agree.

IV.FINDINGS

4.1. Reliability Analysis

In the questionnaire form there are 18 items aimed at determining the opinions of the students about the culinary occupational image. In the reliability analysis for these items, the reliability according to the Cronbach's Alfa index coefficient was found to be 0.86, which is high enough to be reliable.

4.2. Distribution of Data

In this section you will find the distribution of the demographics of the participants. Participants consisted of 161 students, 53.4% of is female and 46.6 % is male. 97.5% of participants were between the ages of 17-25. While 47.2% of participants live in city centre, 39.7% of participants stated that they live in county, 13% of them live in village. They overwhelmingly do not have an intention of changing their departments (83.9%). Most of them (81.4%) do not have a family member related to culinary occupation.

The distribution of Features Related to the Preferences of Culinary Department Students is given below. The reason "It's my ideal" to choose the department is overwhelmingly distinguished by the percentage of 54.7. The second significant data we get from the table is "finding a good job" which is 29.8%.

68,3% of the participants gave place to Culinary Department among 1-5 preference order, and 78,9% of them entered the University Entrance Exam once. None of them said 4 times or more.

Distribution of fears related to occupational future of Culinary Department Students is also found out.The most fearful item for a culinary student is 'occupational accident' which prevents them doing their job (31%) where as "long working hours" is least one. 'Unappriciation' is seen as the second most fearful item (30%).

Variables	Factors			
4.career opportunities	,757			
1. making a lot of money	,696			
2.high status in society	,658			
3.the most important occupation in the sector	,644			
8.opportunity of finding a job easily	,600			

7.psychological satisfaction for us	,559			
9.easy and enjoyable profession	,537			
6.important for national image and economy	,438			
16. Cooks are kind and patient people		,799		
17. Cooks are honest people		,702		
15.It does not harbour non-moral practices		,599		
18. Cooks have powerful communication skills		,568		
5.It is perceived as a respectable profession by the society		,464		
13. This profession requires having sufficient knowledge on various fields			,791	
12.The cooks have a high level of general culture			,567	
14. The word "cook" evokes ethical practices			,499	
10. It is a profession that requires professionalism				,732
11. It's an art; it not a usual profession that anybody can do				,651

Table 1: Distribution of Factors

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization;Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

As it is seen in table 1, factors have been categorized under 4 groups. These factors are named as characteristics, status, ethics and significance. Among the variables, the items 'Cooks are kind and patient people' and 'This profession requires having sufficient knowledge on various fields" have the highest scores, which belong to the factor of 'characteristics'

In Table 2 below, you see the variables affecting the image of Culinary Occupation and mean scores for the factors that are formed by variables. Interpretation of the arithmetic meanings of the findings obtained in the study is based on the following intervals.

1,00 ≤ arithmetic mean ≤ 2,60: Low

2,60<arithmetic mean ≤ 3,40: Medium

3.40 <arithmetic mean ≤ 5.00: High

Factors	Descriptive Statistics			Factor Mean
		Mean	Std. Deviation	
Characteristics of cooks/Cooking	powerful communication skills	3,87	1,13335	3,95
	kind and patient people	3,51	1,33753	
	a high level of general culture	3,66	1,07300	
	This profession requires having sufficient knowledge on various fields	4,05	1,0235	
	It is a profession that requires professionalism	4,65	,74507	
	It's an art; it not a usual profession that anybody can do	4,40	,75046	
	easy and enjoyable profession	3,53	1,19912	
Status	career opportunities	4,35	,89729	3,87
	high status in society	3,82	,95452	
	finding a job easily	4,01	,94860	
	making a lot of money	3,96	,94133	
	psychological satisfaction for us	3,58	1,16490	
	respectable profession by the society	3,54	1,14014	
Ethics	The word "cook" evokes ethical practices	3,99	,81385	3,73
	Theyare honest	3,27	1,18721	
	It does not harbour non-moral practices	3,93	1,06391	
Significance	important occupation in the sector	4,27	,96169	4,14
	important for national image and economy	4,01	,99365	

Table 2: Average Points Regarding Variables and Factors that Constitute the Image of Culinary Occupation

According to the average scores, occupational image perception have scores above average; even it can be evaluated as high, in terms of all the factors that are classified as characteristics of professionals, status, ethics and importance. The items belonging to 'ethics factor' have the lowest average score. The items belonging to 'significance factor' have the highest average score.

V.CONCLUSION

This study aims to determine how the students studying at culinary department at Silifke-Tasucu Vocational School of Higher Education, Selcuk University perceive occupational image of 'culinary occupation' and the factors which are influential on this perception. The scale that is developed by the researchers and consists of 18 variables believed to be effective in the perception of the culinary occupational image was applied to 161 students studying culinary at university by the face-to-face questionnaire method. According to the survey results, the common opinion among the students regarding culinary is that 'culinary is an occupation that requires professionalism'. To the participants, culinary is not a kind of job that anybody can do, they think they perform unusual job, in fact, it is an art. The participants think that culinary requires having sufficient knowledge on various fields. To them it is more important for the tourism sector than for the country image and economy. It is moderately accepted by the participants that culinary occupation helps them to find a good job easily but they think that it is a profession with career opportunities. We can conclude that culinary has really high level of image in the eyes of students. This result is confirmed with preference orders of students.

When it is considered that the culinary profession is very important for the tourism sector, high sense of professional image of the students studying culinary at university is very important for the sustainability of the culinary profession in Turkey. So this study indicates that occupational image perception of culinary students in Turkey is very encouraging.

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