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A Theoretical Research on the Constraints of Development of Gastronomy Education in Turkey

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the possible positive impacts which may occur if the constraints are eliminated, by revealing the constraints preventing the development of gastronomy education. For this purpose theoretical research has been made about the constraints in the field of gastronomy education in Turkey. As a result of the research it is concluded that main constraints in the development of gastronomy education are protectionist attitude of Turkish family structure on children, not including the science of gastronomy in basic and advanced training curriculum in Turkey, not to make an quantitative and qualitative investment in gastronomy education. Within the framework of the main results applicable suggestions were developed to improve gastronomy education in Turkey.

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1. Introduction

Physical and mental well-being at every stage of life and maintaining health are possible with the adequate and balanced nutrition of food production. Science interested in this pursuit is called gastronomy (Gillespie, 2006; Santich, 2004; Solier, 2010; Harrington & Ottenbacher, 2010). Gastronomy can be defined as arranging the food and beverage activities that the indispensable primary factor in their daily lives in a systematic way (Engler, 2010; Adria, 2009; Ko, 2010). As a matter of fact it is indicated that the need to eat and drink is indispensable according to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Gastronomy as a process that not only directly affects mental health and physical health, but also provides the necessities of psychological and sociological needs constitutes a source of scientific studies which left mark in 21st century (Kivela & Crofts, 2006; Brown, 2011; Avciokurt, Sariođlan & Girgin, 2007).

The development of gastronomy has led to increase the diversity and quantity of food and beverage production. Growth and diversification of food and beverage production provide a commercial value for the science of gastronomy (Pedersen, 2012; Cheng, Godwin & Hamouz, 2011). Increasing disposable incomes of individuals with the development of industrial revolution and phenomenon of eating outside as a result of leisure time are the most important factors in providing commercial value. As a result of the development of this phenomenon gastronomy has become an important industry by means of triggering food and beverage sector operate as a commercial business (Zakaria, Wahab & Jasmi, 2010; Aktaş, 2001; Aymankuy & Sariođlan, 2007).

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2. Current Status of Gastronomy Education in Turkey

The primary purpose of individual, family and society is to become healthy and productive. A symbol of being healthy and productive is physical, mental, spiritual and social well-developed body structure and continuation of this structure (Scarpato, 2002; Güven, 2005). Physical and mental well-being at every stage of life and keep healthy are possible with the adequate and balanced nutrition (Brunson & Smith, 2001; Tanır et. all, 2001). Meeting these conditions is possible with the quantitative and qualitative development of gastronomy in educational systems of the countries (Marsico, and others, 1998; Harrington, Mandabach, & Thibodeaux, 2008; Ruetzler & Taylor, 2009).

Turkish cuisine, especially in terms of cultural wealth and diversity of food-drink is one of the most important cuisines (Karaosmanođlu, 2007; Aktaş, 2001; Sariođlan, 2007). However when the rate of population about the gastronomy and gastronomy education in Turkey are examined in other countries, it can be expressed that it keeps in the background qualitatively and quantitatively (Hegarty, 2011; Zahari, Jalis, Zulfily, Radzi. & Othman, 2009; Aymankuy & Sariođlan, 2007; Harrington, Mandabach, VanLeeuwen & Thibodeaux, 2005; Stitt, 1996). It can be said that in the direction of reality that gastronomy sector has an important position in Turkish economy, it hasn't reached the desired levels of gastronomy education today.

Gastronomy education is given in two separate parts including secondary and higher education level in Turkey. At the secondary level it operates under the departments of food and beverage and kitchen in Anatolian Hotel and Tourism Vocational High Schools and Vocational School For Girls. The number of students studying gastronomy in secondary education is around 4600 approximately in 80 schools (Ministry of Education General Directorate of Commerce and Tourism Education).

Gastronomy education is given in two parts including graduate and undergraduate level. At the undergraduate level in the gastronomy and culinary arts and food and beverage management departments, approximately 1470 students at 24 graduate level have been provided training. At pre-graduate level in 39 culinary departments, approximately 1785 students have been provided training for gastronomy (2012 Higher Education Institutions Student Selection and Placement Guide).

In the light of these data, it can be confirmed that quantitative status of education of gastronomy in Turkey is quite low. In addition the quantitative gastronomy education in turkey is inadequate; it is not easy to say that it is adequate in qualitative terms. Thus, we may encounter the results that a large part of teaching staff and faculty members providing education did not receive adequate training in gastronomy and laboratory equipments needed for gastronomy education are insufficient. In the light of these data, it is concluded that a strategic plan that can be applied is needed for the development of education in gastronomy (Ministry of Education, Department of Educational Research and Development, 2009, 2006, 2000).

3. Constrains on Development of the Gastronomy Education in Turkey

Turkey is a highly developed country in terms of gastronomic items with the effect of factors such as its geographical location, Anatolian civilizations that lived in the past and intercontinental spread of Ottoman Empire. Although Turkey has a wide, potential and effective gastronomic item, it is quite behind the desired level for gastronomy education. In this section, the factors that have appreciable extent on the development of gastronomy education in turkey have been examined.

3.1. Constraint-I: Defensive Training of Individuals with Turkish Family Structure:

Individuals acquire the capability, conceptual and factual skills in their families first. In this context, the individuals acquire the basic skills of gastronomy in their families. Gastronomy education contains pretty much capability and concept skills as well as conceptual and factual skills. However, different from all countries on earth, the Turkish family structure adopts the protectionist style of rising children (Sariođlan, 2012; Atalay, Konař, Beyazıt & Madenođlu, 1993).

Protectionism factor in the structure of Turkish family impoverishes the individuals in terms of ability, self-confidence and practical skill that is a component of gastronomy education. In particular those parents do gastronomic phenomena and applications, which can be easily done by children, they with protectionist instinct, impoverish the basic gastronomy education that the children can obtain in their families. In this context it can be said that there is absence of a specific course about the gastronomy and it postpones the individuals to acquire gastronomic skill.

3.2. Constraint-II: Gastronomy Education doesn't Take Place in Turkish Education Policy at Desired Level:

It is not easy to express that gastronomy education in the Turkish National Education Policy is in the desired degree. Indeed, primary and secondary educations lack the lesson that is in the field of gastronomy in the curriculum (Sariođlan, 2012). In this context it can be said that there is absence of a specific course about the gastronomy and it postpones the individuals to acquire gastronomic skill.

3.3. Constraint-III: Not Performing Active Quantitative and Qualitative Research and Development Investments on Gastronomy Education in Turkey:

Including public and private initiatives, investment in the field of gastronomy in Turkey takes place at very lower levels. Although it contains Ottoman Palace Cuisine, Turkish Cuisine Culture and it has a very wide framework in gastronomy, research and development investments in the field of gastronomy are at a very low level. It can be said that that investments allocated to research and development of gastronomy and gastronomy education are very low qualitatively and quantitatively is the most important constraint against the education of gastronomy in Turkey.

4. Conclusions and Suggestions

In the study it has been concluded that gastronomy is one of the most important science branches that individuals need in daily life. In the literature review making up the first part of the study, it has been concluded that Turkey can not provide both quantitative and qualitative adequacy in the science and education of gastronomy. In this context, in the second part of the study, constraints preventing the development of gastronomy education have been examined. In this study, various proposals have been developed in order to avoid the constraints on the development of gastronomy education in Turkey. These are;

* Measures should be taken which can be accepted as a basis for the education of gastronomy and which support the individuals' creativity, skills and practices in the home kitchen culinary. Non-formal education programs should be developed for parents on this subject.

* Ministry of education should apply the courses developing the skills of gastronomy in the curriculum of primary, secondary and higher education.

* Public and private initiative investments should be increased both qualitatively and quantitatively to develop the gastronomy education in Turkey.

In the event of effective implementation of the recommendations of the study mentioned above, science of gastronomy, education of gastronomy and the value added will increase. In this context, the development of healthy generations will be provided by expanding gastronomic science and education in Turkey and the added value of the science of gastronomy will increase. This study is thought to be a basis for the future studies of gastronomy education in Turkey.

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