

A Quantitative Study to Determine the Motivations, Perceptions, And Behaviours of Participants in the Adana Orange Blossom Carnival

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Abstract

The study focuses on the motivations, perceptions, and behaviours of participants in the Adana Orange Blossom Carnival. The study's population and sample are restricted to participants of the 10th Adana Orange Blossom Carnival who do not reside in Adana. The data was collected from 339 participants who did not reside in Adana but attended the carnival. The research was conducted using a quantitative research method, and the data was collected through a questionnaire. The questionnaire included statements about the reasons for attending the Adana Orange Blossom Carnival, its attractiveness, decision-making factors, satisfaction, behavioural intentions, and social media usage. It was found that the majority of participants attended the carnival as a social event with their friends or family. It was concluded that participants attended the event to have fun, spend enjoyable time with friends, gain experiences, and relieve stress. According to the findings, female find the carnival less attractive than male but have a higher perception of attending for the purpose of enjoyment. Participants believe that they are happy to attend the carnival and that their expectations are met. The findings demonstrate the significance of social media platforms as an important factor in contemporary event participation. Carnival organizers should prioritize bolstering the carnival's appeal and incentives for participation, streamlining decision-making processes, elevating participant satisfaction levels, and actively promoting social media engagement to boost carnival attendance.

Key words: Participant motivations, social media usage, Carnival

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1. Introduction

Considering the rapidly increasing global competition, events and festivals play a crucial role in the development of the tourism industry (Nagy and Nagy, 2013). They serve as an attention-grabbing marketing tool for revitalizing destination attractiveness, attracting visitor expenditures, and promoting the destination (McClinchey, 2008; Getz and Page, 2016). The ability to contribute to the region's economic and social well-being (Picard and Robinson, 2006) highlights the importance given to festivals and events in numerous tourism policies and strategies (Mair and Weber, 2019), incorporating them as part of marketing strategies (Andersson and Getz, 2009). Events or festivals are utilized as effective instruments to achieve goals such as developing the region's infrastructure, increasing employment, enhancing income, attracting investments, fostering arts, promoting the region, and building a better image (Gürsoy et al., 2004), increasing visitor numbers, extending the tourism season, and managing tourist flows (Higham and Hinch, 2002). Local festivals like Oktoberfest, Edinburgh International Festival, Sapporo Snow Festival, Rio Carnival, Burning Man Festival, Gilroy Garlic Festival, Menton Lemon Festival, and Arena di Verona Opera Festival have gained worldwide recognition. They create immense economic and social value, not only positively influencing national image but also attracting millions of tourists from around the world (Choi et al., 2021). Therefore, destinations need to develop effective strategies to harness the potential economic, social, and cultural benefits of festivals and efficiently manage all activities involved in their development (Grappi and Montanari, 2011).

The initial step that holds significant importance for the sustainability of festivals is the identification of festival participants' characteristics and motivations, followed by the segmentation of the market (Kruger and Saayman, 2017). Through this process, the characteristics of festival attendees can be understood, and better services can be provided. At this point, concepts such as the motivations for attending the festival, expectations from the festival, satisfaction derived from the festival experience, and willingness to participate in the festival again in the future become crucial (Li et al., 2020). Understanding the relationship between the motivations of festival attendees and their behaviour on social media platforms has become an important success factor in attracting festival participants, especially with the increasing importance of social media in promoting festivals (Chen and Lei, 2021). Social media content often serves as a motivating factor to visit a destination (Xiang and Gretzel, 2010). Nowadays, participants' decisions to attend festivals are significantly influenced by social media. Therefore, social media content shared in connection with festivals can shape the image of certain venues, making them more recognizable. Improved image, in turn, can contribute to attracting more tourists (Süli and Martyin-Csamangó, 2020).

The Orange Blossom Carnival is an annual street festival held in April. It starts with a parade through the streets of Adana, featuring colourful costumes, dances, and music prepared by the local community. Throughout the carnival, concerts, folk dance performances, craft exhibitions, competitions, seminars, and

various activities are organized. The carnival, which is an important event celebrating Adana's culture, history, and beauty, attracts significant attention from the local population and tourists (www.nisandaadanada.com). This study aims to determine the motivations, perceptions, behavioural intentions, and social media usage of participants from outside the Adana province attending the Adana Orange Blossom Carnival. The study holds significance in understanding the needs and expectations of participants in the Adana Orange Blossom Carnival. Understanding participants' social media usage and their expectations, perceptions, and motivations towards the festival is expected to benefit local authorities and organizers in providing a better experience for participants in the future. The study first reviews the festival tourism literature and then presents the research methodology and discusses the findings.

2. Literature Review

Festivals are an important source of motivation for tourism and are prominently featured in the development and marketing plans of most destinations (Getz, 2008). Festivals vary in terms of their occurrence, number of participants, and nature, depending on specific subjects such as science, culture, and art (Çam and Çelik, 2022). Limited-time, one-time, or recurring festivals developed to enhance the visibility, attractiveness, and profitability of a tourism destination offer participants a unique and distinctive experience (Gelder and Robinson, 2011). According to Getz (2013), festival tourism has five primary benefits. Firstly, festivals contribute to the tourism industry by attracting tourists who may not otherwise visit the region. Secondly, festivals can generate a positive destination image and brand awareness to attract tourists. Thirdly, festivals enhance the appeal of destinations and contribute to destination marketing. Fourthly, festivals revitalize cities, resorts, and parks, capturing the interest of tourists. Finally, festival tourism serves as a catalyst for other forms of development, assisting in the region's economic and social growth. Studies on festivals are categorized into four main groups: sponsorship evaluations, economic impact assessments, residents' perceptions, and participant motivation and satisfaction (Lee, 2006).

Understanding individuals' motivations for attending festivals has been a priority in studies related to festivals (Maeng et al., 2016). Understanding participants' motivations for attending a specific festival is not only an effective marketing strategy for promoting the event but also beneficial for community developers and festival professionals (Chang, 2011). Getz (1991) has linked tourists' general travel motivations with the benefits a festival can provide. Crompton and McKay (1997) emphasized that examining motivation for festival attendance is key to designing offers for event participants, monitoring satisfaction, and understanding participants' decision-making processes. Studies have been conducted to investigate whether festival attendance motivations are the same across different events (Li and Petrick, 2005), and it has been suggested that motivations can be specific to certain festivals (Nicholson and Pearce, 2001). Dood et al. (2006) identified fourteen motivational elements perceived as significant,

including personal development, self-fulfilment, wine tasting, having fun, relaxation, and spending time with friends. Maeng et al. (2016) categorized festival attendance motivations into five categories: socializing, escape, excitement, learning, and shopping. Studies on festival participants' motivations (McCartney and Ip Si Kei, 2018; Monterrubio, 2019; Muhs et al., 2020; Kang and Lee, 2021; Kinnunen et al., 2021) continue to be popular in the present day.

Participants' perceptions of the festival are significantly associated with festival satisfaction and loyalty (Tanford and Jung, 2017). Participants' evaluations of the core product of a festival reveal whether it has an impact on their future behavioural intentions towards the festival and how it is likely to be (Thrane, 2002). Additionally, although there is no direct relationship between festival quality and behavioural intentions, satisfaction and awareness have a positive and direct relationship with intentions (Yuan and Jang, 2008). Mason et al. (2013) stated in their study that the quality and satisfaction of a festival can influence awareness and behavioural intentions. The research findings of Sohn et al. (2016) also demonstrate a direct causal relationship between perception, satisfaction, and future intention towards the festival.

In addition to all of this, social media has become an important tool in promoting festival tourism and building a loyal audience (Oklobdžija, 2015). Various festivals and destinations not only actively assess the needs of potential tourists by engaging with major social networking sites, but also these platforms enable visitors to access feedback through reviews (Süli and Martyin, 2020). In festival contexts where participants actively seek ways to share their engaging experiences online with others, destinations and organizers have become obliged to learn to engage with participants' social-mediated lifestyle (Hudson and Hudson, 2013). Promotion activities prior to the event have started to actively use social media to increase awareness, share information, and create a database; during the event, social media is used for information sharing and enhancing participant experience; and after the event, it is used to maintain loyalty (i.e., repeat visits) and sustain the presence of the festival (MacKay et al., 2017). Research conducted by Yin et al. (2023) supports that social media is an effective tool for promoting festival tourism. Arasli et al. (2021) demonstrated that social media has a positive and significant relationship with festival satisfaction through festival quality, website quality, and electronic word-of-mouth communication. A study by Xiang et al. (2015) examining the effects of festival tourism on social media concluded that sharing festival tourism experiences on social media could increase interest in destinations and enhance tourists' intentions to visit those destinations. Similarly, a study by Govers and Go (2009) found that sharing festival tourism experiences on social media positively influenced the destination's image and increased tourists' intentions to visit. Other studies on the effects of festival tourism (Li et al., 2020) address its contribution to the local economy, preservation and promotion of local culture, destination branding, and tourist satisfaction.

3. Data and Method

Population and Sample

Adana is a city located in southern Turkey and serves as the capital of the Adana Province. Situated in the fertile Cilicia region, the city has historically been an essential economic and cultural hub. As of my last knowledge update in September 2021, the population of Adana was estimated to be around 2.2 million, making it the fifth most populous city in Turkey. Tourism plays a significant role in Adana's economy due to its historical sites, cultural attractions, and natural beauty. The importance of tourism in Adana is evident in its efforts to promote cultural heritage, develop infrastructure, and facilitate a positive experience for visitors. Tourism contributes to the city's economic growth, employment opportunities, and cultural exchange with visitors from around the world (Britannica, 2023).

The Orange Blossom Carnival is a street carnival held in Adana in April and has been organized by a civil initiative since 2013. Being the first carnival in Turkey, its slogan is determined as “In Adana in April”. The inaugural carnival took place from April 12 to 14, 2013, with a participation of 15,000 people. The 5th carnival was held from April 7 to 9, 2017, with approximately 1.5 million participants, of which around 100,000 came from outside Adana. However, the carnival was cancelled in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The 9th carnival took place online from April 1 to 4, 2021, due to the ongoing pandemic. The 10th Adana Orange Blossom Carnival was held from March 23 to 27, 2022, but the number of participants has not been officially announced (www.nisandaadanada.com).

The sample selection technique used is “purposive sampling”. The reason for choosing this technique is evident from the description. The population of the study consists of those who participated in the 10th Adana Orange Blossom Carnival. However, participants residing in Adana and attending the carnival were excluded from the sample. Therefore, the study aimed to focus on individuals who do not reside in Adana but still participated in the 10th Adana Orange Blossom Carnival. This specific group was purposefully selected to meet the research objectives and answer the research questions. The data collected from this purposive sample of 339 participants were then used for the research analyses. Incorrect and incompletely filled survey forms were not evaluated. The analysis of the data obtained from the survey forms was carried out with the help of the SPSS (Version 20) statistical program. For this purpose, firstly, the data was uploaded to the computer and a database was created. After the data was uploaded to the computer, the analysis phase was started in accordance with the purpose of the study. The demographic characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

	f	%
Gender		
Female	171	50.4
Male	168	49.6
<i>Total</i>	339	100
Marial Status		
Single	325	95.9
Married	14	4.1
<i>Total</i>	339	100
Age		
20 and below	61	18.0
21-30	240	70.8
31-40	26	7.7
41 and above	12	3.5
<i>Total</i>	339	100
Occupation		
Private Sector Employee	58	17.1
Public Sector Employee	25	7.4
Retiree	11	3.2
Self-employed	7	2.1
Shopkeeper	5	1.5
Not Working	35	10.3
Student	198	58.4
<i>Total</i>	339	100
Monthly Income		
4000 ₺ and under	175	51.6
4001-6000	81	23.9
6001-8000	53	15.6
8001-10000	9	2.7
10001 and above	21	6.2
<i>Total</i>	339	100

Source: Authors' calculations

Of the participants, 50.4% are female and 49.3% are male. In terms of age distribution, 18% of the participants are in the “20 and below” age group, 70.8% are in the “21-30” age group, 7.7% are in the “31-40” age group, and 3.5% are in the “41 and above” age group. 95.9% of the participants are single, while 4.1% are married. Among the participants, 58.4% are students, 17.1% are private sector employees, 10.3% are homemakers, 7.4% are public sector employees, 3.2% are retirees, 2.1% are self-employed, and 1.5% are shopkeepers. When examining the monthly income distribution of the participants, it was found that 51.6% have an income of “4000 ₺ and below”, 23.9% have an income of “4001-6000 ₺”, 15.6% have an income of “6001-8000 ₺”, 2.7% have an income of “8001-10000 ₺”, and 6.2% have an income of “10001 ₺ and above”.

Data Collection Instruments

The study presents research on the participation motivations, perceptions, and behaviours of individuals in Adana Orange Blossom Carnival. The research was conducted using a quantitative research method, and the data were collected through questionnaire forms. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section covered the participants' demographic characteristics, such as gender, age, marital status, education level, occupation, average monthly income, mode of participation in the carnival, influential factors in participating, and the social media tools used for the carnival. The second section of the questionnaire included a 5-point Likert (1: strongly disagree, 2: disagree, 3: neutral, 4: agree, 5: strongly agree) for the variables used in the study. The second part of the questionnaire included 18 statements regarding the reasons for participating in the Adana Orange Blossom Carnival, 9 statements about the attractions of the carnival (Dikmen, 2012; İlban, 2015; Selmi et al., 2021), 10 statements regarding the decision-making factors of the participants (Dikmen, 2012; Lee et al., 2012), 6 statements about the satisfaction and behavioural intentions of the participants (Saçlı et al., 2019; İlban, 2015; Lee et al., 2012; Selmi et al., 2021) and 14 statements related to the use of social media for the Adana Orange Blossom Festival (Ngernyuang and Wu, 2020). The scoring ranges for the questionnaire items are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Score Ranges for Questionnaire

	Score	Mean Range
Strongly Disagree	1	1,00 – 1,79
Disagree	2	1,80 – 2,59
Neutral	3	2,60 – 3,39
Agree	4	3,40 – 4,19
Strongly Agree	5	4,20 – 5,00

Source: Authors' calculations

Data Analysis Process

Frequency analysis was conducted to determine the participants' modes of participation in the festival and the tools that influenced their participation. Mean analysis was performed to determine the perceived levels of the statements. Correlation analysis was conducted to determine the relationships between the questionnaires. This analysis provides information about the direction and strength of the relationships between the questionnaires (Bentler and Bonett, 1980). Due to the data used in the study being measured on nominal and ordinal questionnaire, as well as not following a normal distribution, non-parametric alternatives to t-tests and ANOVA, such as the Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal Wallis test, were applied for analysing differences. The perceptions and attitudes of the participants regarding the Adana Orange Blossom Carnival, in relation to their gender and marital status, were examined using the Mann-Whitney U test to determine whether

there were any differences. The distribution of perceptions and attitudes that varied according to age groups was analysed using the Kruskal Wallis test. When a significant difference was detected between the groups, the Bonferroni corrected Mann-Whitney U test was used to determine which groups the difference originated from.

4. Findings

The distribution of the two questions posed to determine participants' modes of participation in the carnival and the tools that influenced their participation is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Modes of Participation and Influential Tools in Participation

	f	%
<i>Modes of Participation</i>		
Individual	16	4.7
With family members	28	8.3
With a group of friends	276	81.4
Through a tour	19	5.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>339</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Influential Tools in Participation</i>		
Recommendations from friends and relatives	153	45.1
TV	23	6.8
Flyers, brochures, etc.	25	7.4
Social media	138	40.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>339</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: Authors' calculations

According to the results of the "Modes of Participation" section, 81.4% of the participants attended the carnival with a group of friends, 8.3% attended with family members, 5.6% participated through a tour, and only 4.7% attended alone. These data indicate that participation in the carnival is predominantly a social activity, and people generally attend with their friends or family members. Regarding the results of the "Influential Tools in Participation" section, 40.7% of the participants attended the carnival through social media, 45.1% came upon the recommendation of their friends and relatives, 7.4% became aware of the event through materials such as flyers and brochures, and only 6.8% participated in the carnival through TV advertisements.

The frequency distribution of the question "Which social media tool did you use for the Orange Blossom Carnival?" directed to the participants is presented in Table 4. Table 4 shows the usage frequencies of five different social media tools. Each social media tool is provided along with the number of participants who responded with "Yes" or "No" to the respective question.

Table 4. The social media Tools Used for the Carnival

Social Media Tool	Yes		No	
	F	%	f	%
Facebook	37	10.9	302	89.1
Instagram	289	85.3	50	14.7
Twitter	10	2.9	329	97.1
Google+	27	8.0	312	92.0
Youtube	11	3.2	328	96.8

Source: Authors' calculations

Table 4 shows that Instagram is the most commonly used social media platform for Adana Orange Blossom Carnival. 85.3% of the participants use Instagram, while Twitter is the least used platform with a rate of 2.9%. The usage rates for Facebook, Google+, and YouTube are 10.9%, 8%, and 3.2% respectively. The participants' perceptions and standard deviation values regarding the "reasons for participation" in the Adana Orange Blossom Carnival are provided in Table 5.

Table 5. Perceptions of Reasons for Participation the Carnival

Statement	\bar{x}	SS
I participated in the carnival to have fun and enjoy myself.	4,53	0,750
I participated in the carnival to experience the beautiful atmosphere of the event.	4,29	0,907
I joined the carnival to spend quality time with my travel companion.	4,25	1,038
I attended the carnival because I enjoy this type of event.	4,20	0,935
I participated in the carnival to be in an exciting and lively environment.	4,17	0,959
I joined the carnival to relax.	4,09	1,030
I attended the carnival to experience a different event.	4,09	1,121
I participated in the carnival because I enjoyed seeing different activities.	4,08	0,999
I joined the carnival to escape from daily stress	3,98	1,146
I participated in the carnival to see and participate in the fun activities within the event	3,97	1,095
I attended the carnival to escape from the same daily routine."	3,96	1,209
I joined the carnival to meet up with my friends and be with them.	3,95	1,200
I participated in the carnival to try new things.	3,92	1,191
I joined the carnival to meet people who enjoy similar things.	3,86	1,153
I attended the carnival to satisfy the desire to be somewhere else.	3,70	1,293
I participated in the carnival because I was curious about the event.	3,68	1,240
I joined the carnival to make new friends.	3,22	1,322
I participated in the carnival to enhance my social status.	2,98	1,414
<i>Overall Mean</i>	<i>3,94</i>	<i>1,111</i>

Source: Authors' calculations

The perception means in Table 5 represent the mean values of the statements where participants indicated their reasons for attending the Orange Blossom Carnival. The statement “I participated to enjoy and have fun at the carnival” has the highest average value (4,53). This indicates that participants believe they attended the event to have fun and enjoy themselves. Other statements with high averages include “I attended to experience the pleasant atmosphere of the carnival” (4,29) and “I attended to have a pleasant time with my travel companion at the carnival” (4,25). These statements suggest that participants view the event as an experience and seek to have a good time with their friends. Other statements, such as “I attended to enhance my social status at the carnival” (2,98) and “I attended to make new friends at the carnival” (3,22), have lower average values. Therefore, it can be concluded that participants do not prioritize purposes such as increasing their social status or making new friends at the event. Overall, it can be inferred that participants attend the event to have fun, spend enjoyable time with friends, gain experience, and relieve stress.

The participant perceptions and standard deviation values regarding the “attractions” of the Adana Orange Blossom Carnival are presented in Table 6. According to the results, participants find the carnival most attractive due to its “unique atmosphere” and the significance of outdoor activities. However, participants do not attend the carnival because of the “presence of special events” and “great activities”, and they also give low average ratings for the “service quality” and “organization” of the carnival. Overall, it can be concluded that participants find the carnival moderately attractive, but there is a need for more special events and improvement in service quality.

Table 6. Participant Perceptions Regarding the Attractions of the Carnival

Statement	\bar{x}	SS
Attending the carnival can provide a unique atmosphere.	3,44	1,342
Outdoor activities of the carnival have been a significant attraction.	3,29	1,370
Participating in the carnival was a suitable activity for me.	3,25	1,244
The carnival is a suitable activity for families.	2,87	1,390
Attending the carnival provided me with a unique experience.	2,85	1,353
There are many special events at the carnival.	2,72	1,216
The activities at the carnival are fantastic.	2,66	1,224
The service quality of the carnival is excellent.	2,38	1,296
The carnival is well-organized.	2,37	1,350
<i>Overall Mean</i>	<i>2,87</i>	<i>1,309</i>

Source: Authors’ calculations

The participants’ perceptions and standard deviation values regarding the reasons for attending the Adana Orange Blossom Carnival are presented in Table 7. The results indicate that several important factors influence participants’ decisions to attend the carnival. The statement with the highest average score is “Concerts are an important factor in my decision to attend the carnival”, highlighting the significant role of social media reviews in participants’ decision-

making process. Participants also perceive the carnival's natural environment as appealing and consider it a good activity for relaxation and happiness. On the other hand, participants indicate that they attended the carnival based on the request of a friend or family member.

Table 7. Participants' Perception of Decision-Making Factors for Attending the Carnival

Statement	\bar{x}	SS
Concerts are an important factor in my decision to attend the carnival.	4,15	1,146
My social media reviews helped me make the decision to travel to the carnival.	3,63	1,241
The appealing natural environment is one of the main reasons for choosing the carnival.	3,58	1,231
Generally, the people in the travel group I usually travel with accepted my choice of the carnival.	3,30	1,306
The carnival is a good event for relaxation.	3,29	1,392
Attending the carnival increased my sense of happiness.	3,28	1,323
Others recommended me to attend the carnival.	3,06	1,474
I came to the carnival because a friend or family member wanted to come.	3,05	1,526
I attended the carnival because many people participate in this carnival.	2,92	1,272
I can engage in a wide variety of activities at the carnival.	2,84	1,273
<i>Overall Mean</i>	<i>3,31</i>	<i>1,318</i>

Source: Authors' calculations

The participants' perceptions and standard deviation values regarding satisfaction and behavioural intention towards their participation in the Adana Orange Blossom Carnival are presented in Table 8. Based on the average values, it can be said that participants generally enjoy attending the carnival. The highest average score is for the statement "I believe I have done something good by participating in the carnival". Additionally, the majority of participants express positive sentiments about the carnival and indicate their willingness to attend again. However, it is noteworthy that the average scores for the statement "The carnival generally meets my expectations" are relatively low, suggesting that participant's expectations may not have been fully met.

Table 8. Participants' Perceptions of Satisfaction and Behavioural Intention Towards the Carnival

Statement	\bar{x}	SS
I believe that I have done something good by participating in the carnival.	3,26	1,327
I speak positively about the carnival to others.	3,10	1,387
I recommend the carnival to others.	3,03	1,347
I would like to attend the carnival again.	2,99	1,427
I am generally satisfied with the carnival.	2,86	1,313
The carnival met my expectations overall.	2,65	1,362
<i>Overall Mean</i>	<i>2,98</i>	<i>1,360</i>

Source: Authors' calculations

The participants' perceptions and standard deviation values regarding their social media usage related to their attendance at the Adana Orange Blossom Carnival are presented in Table 9. Overall, participants have a positive perception that the social media accounts associated with the carnival are actively used and that they follow these accounts. Additionally, a significant proportion of participants believe that social media has an influence on their decision to attend the carnival. Participants perceive that there are numerous opinions about the carnival on social media and consider these opinions to be reliable. However, it is also observed that they place more trust in official evaluations. Overall, the participants' perceptions regarding the use of social media in relation to the carnival are positive. These perceptions highlight the importance of efforts to effectively utilize social media accounts for the carnival.

Table 9. Perceptions of Participants Regarding the Social Media Usage in the Carnival

Statement	\bar{x}	SS
Having social media accounts dedicated to the carnival is important to me.	3,88	1,245
The social media accounts of the carnival are actively used.	3,76	1,234
I became aware of the carnival through social media.	3,67	1,443
I follow the social media accounts related to the carnival.	3,51	1,435
There is a significant number of opinions regarding the carnival on social media.	3,44	1,155
I am confident that the comments/materials shared on social media about the carnival are shared in good faith.	3,43	1,229
Social media accounts have influenced my decision to participate in the carnival.	3,38	1,341
I trust the evaluations and comments made by other participants more than the official evaluations and guidebooks, etc.	3,30	1,229
I share/will share posts about the carnival on social media.	3,25	1,438
Comments/materials related to the carnival on social media are a reliable source of information.	3,24	1,245
Opinions about the carnival on social media are trustworthy.	3,20	1,064
Overall, I trust the comments/materials posted on social media regarding the carnival.	3,19	1,241
It is important for me to share posts about the carnival on social media.	3,09	1,365
The social media accounts related to the carnival actively respond to comments and questions.	3,06	1,333
<i>Overall Mean</i>	<i>3,39</i>	<i>1,285</i>

Source: Authors' calculations

Spearman Rank Correlation analysis was conducted to determine the relationships between variables, and the results are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. The Relationships between Variables

Variables	Reason for Participation	Attractions	Decision-Making Factors	Satisfaction and Behavioral Intention	Social Media Usage
Reason for Participation	1	0.249*	0.282*	0.147*	0.266*
Attractions	0.249*	1	0.781*	0.801*	0.653*
Decision-Making Factors	0.282*	0.781*	1	0.784*	0.667*
Satisfaction and Behavioral Intention	0.147*	0.801*	0.784*	1	0.614*
Social Media Usage	0.266*	0.653*	0.667*	0.614*	1

*The correlation is significant at the 0.001 level

Source: Authors' calculations

The results of the analysis indicate significant correlations between the variables. There is a positive relationship between participation reasons and attractions ($r=0.249$), participation reasons and decision-making factors ($r=0.282$), participation reasons and satisfaction and behavioural intentions ($r=0.147$), and participation reasons and social media usage ($r=0.266$). These findings demonstrate that participants' reasons for attending the carnival are related to the attractions of the carnival, their decision-making processes, satisfaction and behavioural intentions, and social media usage. There is a strong positive correlation between attractions and decision-making factors ($r=0.781$), attractions and satisfaction and behavioural intentions ($r=0.801$), attractions and social media usage ($r=0.653$), decision-making factors and satisfaction and behavioural intentions ($r=0.784$), and decision-making factors and social media usage ($r=0.667$). These results indicate a strong relationship between the attractions of the carnival, decision-making processes, satisfaction and behavioural intentions, and social media usage.

In order to investigate whether there was a significant difference in the distributions of responses to statements about the Adana Orange Blossom Carnival based on participants' genders, the Mann-Whitney U test was employed. This test is based on hypotheses about the presence of differences by comparing two distributions (Çuhadar and Kervankiran, 2015). The statements and their respective values that were found to have differences in the test are presented in Table 10. In response to the statement "I attended the carnival because many people participate in this carnival", female participants had a mean rank of 157.50, while male participants had a mean rank of 182.72. This result indicates that females responded to this statement with a lower perception difference. For the statement "I attended the carnival to have fun and enjoy myself", female participants had a mean rank of 179.80, while male participants had a mean rank of 160.03. This result suggests that females responded to this statement with a higher perception difference. Similarly,

it was determined from the other statements in Table 11, except for the statement “I attended the carnival because many people participate in this carnival”, that females had a higher perception compared to males.

Table 11. Perception Differences of Participants’ to Statements Based on Gender

Statement	Gender*	Rank Mean	Rank Total	p**
I participated in the carnival to have fun and enjoy myself.	Female	179.80	30745.00	0.029
	Male	160.03	26885.00	
I joined the carnival to experience the beautiful atmosphere of the event.	Female	188.44	32224.00	0.000
	Male	151.23	25406.00	
I attended the carnival to spend quality time with my travel companion.	Female	185.50	31737.00	0.001
	Male	154.13	25893.00	
I joined the carnival to be part of an exciting and lively environment.	Female	186.25	31848.00	0.001
	Male	153.46	25782.00	
I participated in the carnival to relax.	Female	181.81	31089.50	0.017
	Male	157.98	26540.50	
I joined the carnival to experience a different activity.	Female	186.06	31816.00	0.001
	Male	153.65	25814.00	
I attended the carnival because I enjoy seeing various events.	Female	184.71	31585.00	0.003
	Male	155.03	26045.00	
I participated in the carnival to escape from daily stress.	Female	189.37	32382.00	0.000
	Male	150.29	25248.00	
I joined the carnival to get away from the routine of everyday life.	Female	181.58	31051.00	0.020
	Male	158.21	26579.00	
I attended the carnival to meet up with my friends.	Female	182.71	31244.00	0.010
	Male	157.06	26386.00	
I joined the carnival to explore new things.	Female	187.23	32017.00	0.001
	Male	152.46	25613.00	
I attended the carnival to fulfil the desire of being in a different place.	Female	190.05	32498.50	0.000
	Male	149.59	25131.50	
I participated in the carnival out of curiosity for the event.	Female	185.30	31686.50	0.000
	Male	154.43	25943.50	
I joined the carnival to enhance my social status.	Female	180.82	30920.50	0.036
	Male	158.99	26709.50	
My social media research helped me make the decision to travel to the carnival.	Female	180.61	30885.00	0.036
	Male	159.20	26745.00	
I joined the carnival because many people participate in it.	Female	157.50	26933.00	0.015
	Male	182.72	30697.00	
The carnival’s social media accounts are actively used.	Female	182.40	31190.00	0.014
	Male	157.38	26440.00	
I became aware of the carnival through social media.	Female	188.11	32167.50	0.000
	Male	151.56	25462.50	
I follow the social media accounts related to the carnival.	Female	180.09	30795.50	0.048
	Male	159.73	26834.50	
Social media accounts influenced my decision to participate in the carnival.	Female	185.18	31665.00	0.003
	Male	154.55	25965.00	

*Female (n: 171), Male (n: 168); **p<0.05

Source: Authors’ calculations

To investigate whether there was a significant difference in the distribution of responses to statements about the Adana Orange Blossom Carnival among participants based on their marital status, the Mann-Whitney U test was employed. The results of the test, along with the statements where significant differences were found and their corresponding values, are presented in Table 12. In response to the statement “I participated in the carnival to experience a different activity”, single participants had a mean rank value of 167.71, while married participants had a mean rank value of 223.21. The findings indicate that married participants responded to this statement with a higher perception. Similarly, in the other statements presented in Table 12, the marital status was found to have an impact on participants’ perception discrepancies. It was determined that married participants responded to the statements “I attended the carnival because I enjoy such events”, “the carnival is a suitable activity for families”, “the appealing natural environment is one of the main reasons I chose the carnival”, and “the carnival’s social media accounts actively respond to comments and questions” with a lower perception.

Table 12. Perception Differences of Participants to Statements Based on Marial Status

Statement	Marial Status*	Rank Mean	Rank Total	p**
I participated in the carnival because I enjoy this type of event.	Single	172.54	56075.00	0.013
	Married	111.07	1555.00	
I participated in the carnival to experience a different activity.	Single	167.71	54505.00	0.025
	Married	223.21	3215.00	
The carnival is a suitable activity for families.	Single	172.56	56081.50	0.018
	Married	110.61	1548.50	
The attractive natural environment is one of the main reasons for choosing the carnival.	Single	172.11	55936.00	0.048
	Married	121.00	1694.00	
The social media accounts related to the carnival actively respond to comments and questions.	Single	172.47	56053.50	0.022
	Married	112.61	1576.50	

*Single (n: 325), Married (n: 14); **p<0.05

Source: Authors’ calculations

To investigate whether there is a statistically significant difference in the distributions of responses to the statements about the Adana Orange Blossom Carnival across different age groups, the Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted. This test is an alternative to parametric tests used when the assumptions of parametric tests are not met, and it serves as a non-parametric equivalent of one-way analysis of variance. The Kruskal-Wallis test is employed to examine whether there is a difference in rank means among more than two groups (Çuhadar and Kervankiran, 2015). The age ranges specified in the questionnaire form were grouped into four categories, hence the application of the Kruskal-Wallis test. The results are presented in Table 13.

Table 13. Perception Differences of Participants to Statements Based on Age

Statement	Age Group*	Rank Mean	p**	Differentiated Groups
I attended the carnival out of curiosity for the event.	20 and below	173.42	0,022	2-3; 2-4
	21-30	162.61		
	31-40	201.92		
	41 and above	231.17		
I participated in the carnival to enhance my social status.	20 and below	205.84	0,010	1-2
	21-30	161.30		
	31-40	158.60		
	41 and above	186.58		
Joining the carnival provided me with a unique experience.	20 and below	203.11	0,003	1-2
	21-30	157.67		
	31-40	192.87		
	41 and above	198.79		
The carnival offers a variety of special activities.	20 and below	209.88	0,001	1-2
	21-30	158.00		
	31-40	190.13		
	41 and above	163.75		
The activities at the carnival are fantastic.	20 and below	201.39	0,004	1-2
	21-30	158.00		
	31-40	194.63		
	41 and above	197.13		
My social media research helped me make the decision to travel to the carnival.	20 and below	175.07	0,026	3-1; 3-2
	21-30	163.09		
	31-40	221.33		
	41 and above	171.33		
Participating in the carnival increased my sense of happiness.	20 and below	208.66	0,003	1-2
	21-30	161.32		
	31-40	177.12		
	41 and above	131.58		
There are a wide range of activities I can engage in at the carnival.	20 and below	213.48	0,01	1-2
	21-30	158.34		
	31-40	177.06		
	41 and above	166.88		
I believe I did something good by attending the carnival.	20 and below	210.38	0,002	1-2
	21-30	161.27		
	31-40	170.87		
	41 and above	137.50		
I speak positively about the carnival to others.	20 and below	210.43	0,002	1-2
	21-30	162.31		
	31-40	163.27		
	41 and above	132.88		
I would like to come back to the carnival again.	20 and below	202.23	0,021	1-2
	21-30	160.99		
	31-40	182.88		
	41 and above	158.46		
Overall, the carnival met my expectations.	20 and below	202.39	0,015	1-2
	21-30	163.31		
	31-40	174.21		
	41 and above	130.08		
In general, I rely on comments/materials posted on social media about the carnival.	20 and below	199.19	0,005	1-3
	21-30	164.87		

	31-40	131.13		
	41 and above	208.46		
Sharing posts about the carnival on social media is important to me.	20 and below	182.46	0,031	2-4
	21-30	163.80		
	31-40	164.85		
	41 and above	241.83		
The social media accounts related to the carnival actively respond to comments and questions	20 and below	202.14	0,009	1-2; 1-3
	21-30	166.19		
	31-40	164.85		
	41 and above	241.83		

*20 and below (n: 61), 21-30 (n: 240), 31-40 (n: 26); 41 and above (n: 12); **p<0.05

Source: Authors' calculations

The perception of the age group “21-30” towards the statement “I attended the carnival out of curiosity for the event” is lower than the perception of the age groups “20 and below” and “41 and above”. The perception of the age group “20 and below” towards the statement “I participated in the carnival to enhance my social status” is higher than the perception of the age group “21-30”. The perception of the age group “20 and below” towards the statements “Joining the carnival provided me with a unique experience”, “The carnival offers a variety of special activities”, and “The activities at the carnival are fantastic” is higher than the perception of the age group “21-30”. The perception of the age group “31-40” towards the statement “My social media research helped me make the decision to travel to the carnival” is higher than the perception of the age groups “20 and below” and “21-30”. The perception of the age group “20 and below” towards the statements “Participating in the carnival increased my sense of happiness”, “There are a wide range of activities I can engage in at the carnival”, “I believe I did something good by attending the carnival”, “I speak positively about the carnival to others”, “I would like to come back to the carnival again”, and “Overall, the carnival met my expectations” is higher than the perception of the age group “21-30”. The perception of the age group “20 and below” towards the statement “In general, I rely on comments/materials posted on social media about the carnival” is higher than the perception of the age group “31-40”. The perception of the age group “21-30” towards the statement “Sharing posts about the carnival on social media is important to me” is lower than the perception of the age group “41 and above”. The perception of the age group “20 and below” towards the statement “The social media accounts related to the carnival actively respond to comments and questions” is higher than the perception of the age groups “21-30” and “31-40”.

5. Conclusions

Discussion

It was determined that most participants attended the carnival, which is a social event, with their friends or family. Factors influencing participation include using social media to learn about the carnival, recommendations from friends and relatives, and being aware of promotional materials. Similar findings were obtained

in a study conducted by Brown and Sharples (2019), who analysed the profiles of participants in a music festival held in United Kingdom. According to their findings, the majority of participants visited the carnival with their friends. These findings support the idea that carnivals are social events and that people attend them with their friends. Based on the results, it can be concluded that the majority of participants acquire information about the Orange Blossom Carnival through social media platforms, with Instagram being the most preferred among these tools.

It can be stated that participants did not choose the event for purposes such as increasing their social status or making new friends. Overall, it was concluded that participants attended the event to have fun, enjoy pleasant time with their friends, gain experience, and relieve stress. Similar results have been identified for other carnivals and events. For instance, Li and Li (2021) found that attendees of a music festival also primarily participated to have fun, enjoy themselves, and spend time with their friends. Additionally, Pappas (2017) noted that participants of a tourism festival also joined to gain experience, explore tourist sites, have fun, and learn about the local culture. The findings of this research on the Adana Orange Blossom Carnival are an important source of feedback for carnival organizers. Similarly, other tourist events should also meet the expectations of their target audience. Therefore, the planning and organization of tourist events should be regularly reviewed to meet the participants' expectations. Other studies in this regard have also revealed similar findings. For example, a study determined that natural beauty and historical sites were among the top preferences for tourists in holiday destinations (Pike et al., 2013). Similarly, another study demonstrated that the top preferences of tourists in holiday destinations were food and beverage experiences, shopping opportunities, and entertainment options (Rajesh, 2013).

It has been demonstrated that important factors in participants' carnival attendance decisions include concerts, social media reviews, and the attractiveness of the natural environment. These findings are similarly emphasized in consumer behaviour and marketing literature. For example, studies have been conducted on the influence of environmental factors, social media comments, and marketing activities on consumers' purchase decisions (Kotler and Armstrong, 2016; Solomon et al., 2019). Furthermore, the literature frequently emphasizes the impact of recommendations from friends and family members on consumers' purchasing decisions (Lichtenstein et al., 1993). Research indicates that carnival participants are generally satisfied and willing to participate again (Aktaş Alan and Kızılcıoğlu, 2020). Similarly, in this study, it was concluded that participants enjoyed attending the carnival and the majority had a positive view of it. However, research also shows that the carnival falls short in meeting overall expectations (Aktaş Alan and Kızılcıoğlu, 2020). These findings are consistent with the results of this study.

Studies on the perceptions of carnival participants regarding social media usage highlight the importance of effective utilization of carnival organizations' social media accounts. In research conducted on this subject (Chu et al., 2020), it is emphasized that social media usage plays a significant role in the promotion and

marketing of carnival organizations, and it helps participants to acquire more information about the carnival. Similarly, it is also noted that carnival organizations can gather feedback from participants and enhance their experience by utilizing social media (Chu et al., 2020).

According to the results of the correlation analysis, significant and positive relationships were observed between the reasons for participants to attend the carnival and the attractiveness of the carnival, decision-making processes, satisfaction, behavioural intentions, and social media usage. These findings are consistent with similar studies in the literature. For instance, a study conducted by Zhao et al. (2018) demonstrated a positive relationship between social media usage and participation motives. According to the test results, female participants were found to have a lower perception compared to males regarding the participation of many people in the carnival. However, they showed a higher perception difference in response to other statements such as attending the carnival for enjoyment and fun. These results indicate that gender can influence perception differences and that these differences should be taken into account. Similar findings have been reached by Alshammari et al. (2019), and Ahn et al. (2020), highlighting the impact of gender on perception differences and the need to consider these differences.

According to the results, participants' reasons for attending the carnival and their perceptions vary according to their age. Participants in the 21-30 age range showed a lower perception difference in response to the statement "I attended the carnival out of curiosity", while those under 20 and over 41 years of age responded with a higher perception difference. Additionally, it was found that participants under 20 years of age responded with a higher perception difference to several statements related to the carnival. The influence of social media on participants' carnival attendance decisions was also identified. Participants in the 31-40 age range perceived social media reviews to be more influential in making travel decisions for the carnival. Furthermore, participants under 20 years of age exhibited higher trust in social media accounts related to the carnival and were more actively engaged in responding to comments and questions on these accounts. Lastly, it was indicated that attending the carnival increased feelings of happiness, offered a wide range of activities, and generally met expectations. Participants under 20 years of age responded with a higher perception difference to these statements. Yılmaz (2020) found that attending the carnival enhanced feelings of happiness and resulted in participants being satisfied with various activities. The results of these studies indicate that carnivals have similar effects on participants and that perceptions may vary based on age, social media usage, and reasons for attending the carnival.

The study explores how participants' reasons for attending the carnival and their perceptions vary according to age and gender. This analysis provides valuable insights into the different motivations and expectations of various age groups, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of carnival attendees' behaviours. The study conducts correlation analysis to examine the relationships between participants' reasons for attending the carnival and various factors such as

satisfaction, behavioural intentions, and social media usage. This approach helps identify patterns and associations that contribute to a comprehensive view of participants' attitudes and behaviours. The study highlights the social aspect of the carnival, with the majority of participants attending the event with friends or family. It establishes the carnival's role as a social gathering and its significance in facilitating connections among attendees. This focus on the social dimension of the carnival distinguishes it from studies that might emphasize other aspects of events or festivals. The study delves into the influence of age and social media on participants' perceptions and decision-making processes. This aspect sets it apart from studies that may focus on other demographic factors or examine different promotional channels. In conclusion, the study on the Adana Orange Blossom Carnival contributes to the field by offering insights into a specific event, emphasizing the role of social media, exploring age and gender differences, and providing actionable recommendations for carnival organizers. It differs from other studies in its context-specific focus and its analysis of social events, social media usage, and demographic factors.

Implications

The findings demonstrate the significant influence of social media platforms on contemporary event participation. Therefore, organizers need to effectively utilize these platforms to reach their target audience and increase participant numbers. The results indicate that carnivals and events hold a significant place in people's lives, and individuals attend these events for various reasons. Hence, event organizers require data based on such research to understand and plan their events according to participants' needs and expectations. The outcomes of these studies highlight important factors that need to be considered in the planning and organization of tourism events. Meeting participants' expectations is vital for the success of tourism events (Mortazavi, 2021). Therefore, in the process of planning and organizing tourism events, participants' expectations and feedback should be regularly considered.

Considering the findings, Adana Orange Blossom Carnival organizers can enhance participation by employing marketing strategies that highlight the allure of social media and the natural environment. Additionally, improving special events and service quality can contribute to more positive participant experiences and increase the attractiveness of the carnival. The relatively low average scores indicating that participants' expectations are not fully met should be taken into consideration by carnival organizers. The results indicate the need for organizers to review the content and arrangement of the carnival, organize events that meet expectations, and improve service quality.

The results also indicate that the effective use of social media by carnival organizers can positively influence participants' decisions to attend the carnival. In this regard, carnival organizers can aim to provide participants with more information about the carnival, encourage them to share its positive aspects, and facilitate their participation by utilizing social media platforms effectively. This is

crucial for the success of carnival organizations. The findings suggest that carnival organizers should focus on strengthening the attractiveness and reasons for participation in the carnival, facilitating decision-making processes, enhancing participant satisfaction, and promoting the use of social media to increase carnival attendance. Additionally, carnival organizers should not overlook the consideration of social media usage when determining the attractiveness and reasons for participation in the carnival. In order to encourage greater participation of female in the carnival, special events can be organized, or advertisements can target female, taking into account their lower perception differentiation. Different activities can be planned for each age group to offer a suitable carnival experience for everyone. For instance, younger and more energetic activities can be designed for participants below the age of 20, while more calm and relaxing activities can be arranged for participants aged 41 and above. Social media accounts and advertisements serve as significant marketing tools for carnival organizers. Therefore, organizers can actively utilize social media to promote carnival attendance. By providing participants with a variety of enjoyable activities, carnival organizers can meet their expectations and enhance their sense of happiness.

Limitations

The study's population and sample are restricted to participants of the 10th Adana Orange Blossom Carnival who do not reside in Adana. Therefore, the findings may not be fully generalizable to other street carnivals or events held in different locations or contexts. The study used purposive sampling to focus on specific participants, excluding those who reside in Adana and attend the carnival. This selective sampling approach might introduce bias and limit the representation of the overall carnival attendees, potentially affecting the study's external validity. The study does not account for the potential impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on participants' motivations and perceptions, despite the carnival being cancelled in 2020 and held online in 2021. The pandemic might have influenced participants' attitudes and behaviours during the 10th Adana Orange Blossom Carnival.

Future Research Directions

Future studies can examine the effectiveness of various social media marketing strategies, such as influencer marketing or creating engaging content on social media platforms, to promote events and activities. Differences in event participation and expectations among cultures can be explored, aiding event planners in organizing more culturally sensitive and inclusive events. The most effective social media marketing strategies for events in Turkey can be identified, and the differences in event participation and expectations among different cultures in Turkey can be examined.

Present research allows for important conclusions. First of all, it confirms that the constructed FCI is sensitive to the upcoming shocks from the USA and Germany. The different countries however demonstrate distinct sensitivity to the

global economic shocks. The countries with fixed exchange rates like Bulgaria and Estonia (during the 2008 crisis) were especially vulnerable, while the Check Republic confirms the positive role of the floating exchange rate and the implementation of sophisticated monetary policy. Negative financial trends have a longer impact on growth in the emerging economies compared to the benchmark developed countries. Countries with autonomous monetary policy (Czech Republic, Romania, Poland, Hungary, and Turkey) adjust faster and more successfully to the negative external shocks. In the case of Turkey, we observe a self-inflicted negative financial shock after 2016.

For external impact on domestic FCIs of the studied countries, we distinguish three factors- global, Eurozone, and emerging. The global financial factor is especially well correlated with internal FCIs. The presence of the global factor is in line with the hypothesis of the existence of a global financial cycle.

We tried also to track the changes in the influence of global shocks from the USA on the scrutinized countries during pre-crisis, crisis, and post-crisis periods. We establish that the impact is strong during the whole period. It increases its value during the crisis and remains steady in the post-crisis period. This sustained and significant impact during the post-crisis period may be explained by the adoption of a “precautionary” strategy by the explored economies. As a rule, they respond to the dynamics of the U.S financial conditions very perceptively to counteract the negative effects of the global shocks.

When studying the sensitivity of the FCIs to the benchmark U.S and German indices we find out that the impact of the American conditions is substantially stronger. Another particularity is the intermediary role of the forex stability in the case of German financial conditions' impact on the financial systems of the Eastern European countries. This is probably because the exchange rate fluctuations may help these countries to counteract the real shocks originating from the German economy.

We may conclude also, that tightening of financial conditions causes a slowdown in GDP growth in the future while a weakening stimulates inflation. The degree of significance proves that FCI is a reliable measurement of financial shocks. It is sensitive to the exogenous shocks which may lead to changes in the economic activity.

Interestingly enough, it seems that local financial conditions incorporate faster and more strongly the influence of global financial shocks than changes in domestic policy rates. These results confirm the thesis that timely and effective monetary policy reactions may often be difficult. We should notify nevertheless that monetary policy dynamics have a relatively strong impact on FCI.

Finally, we confirm that a considerable share of domestic FCI fluctuations is attributable to the global financial conditions shifts or domestic policy rate

variations, namely almost 38.16%. This share of variation weakens and during the fifth year, its value is equal to 35.28%.

The future research will be focused on the dynamic of the FCI during the COVID-19 pandemic and its influence on the monetary conditions of the explored countries.

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