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PARTICIPATION IN AN OUTDOOR MUSIC FESTIVAL EFFECTS ON SOCIAL INTEGRATION

SAĞBETULLAH MERIÇ

Department of Recreation Management, Faculty of Tourism, Van Yuzuncu Yil University

The process of social integration enables individuals to adapt to societal norms. It is timely for tourism scholars to evaluate the growing phenomenon of outdoor music festivals, which are associated with participation in processes of social integration. The current study investigates the extent to which participating in an outdoor music festival affected participant levels of social integration. In line with the research purpose, a questionnaire was applied to the participants ($N = 426$) of the MillionFest'19 festival in Eskişehir, Turkey. The study results show that participation in the festival has a medium- and high-level effect on dimensions of social integration. It is found that participating in an outdoor music festival provides elements of bilateral relations, physical development, and emotional development.

Key words: Outdoor music festival; Social integration; Festival attendance; Turkey

Introduction

There have been many studies on tourist motivations over the past 50 years because it is widely accepted that a better understanding can have a significant impact on future travel patterns. Understanding why people travel and what factors influence their behavioral intentions to visit a destination can benefit tourism planning and marketing (Pereira et al., 2022). Examples of travel motivations include desires such as having fun, relaxation, self-discovery, prestige, and developing kinship relations (Meriç & Turay, 2020; Yuan et al., 2005).

A desire for social integration has been an important travel motivation both historically and in the current era (Backman et al., 1995; Douglass et al., 2022; Uysal et al., 1993). Social integration is a sociological concept used to indicate unity and integrity in the social structure. Social integration is the process of maintaining the interdependence of different groups that make up the society in a specific order (Özdil, 2017).

Individuals who travel to listen to live concerts or to experience the creation or performance of music may be defined as music tourism participants (Cudny, 2013). Music festivals are attractive for tourism regions and contribute economically

Address correspondence to Sağbetullah Merıç, Department of Recreation Management, Van Yuzuncu Yil University, Turkey. Tel: +905469798036; E-mail: smeric@yyu.edu.tr

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to the region where they are held (O'Sullivan & Jackson, 2002). In addition, these festivals are important social interaction areas that allow people to socialize (Hazel & Mason, 2020). Therefore, it is possible to state that people participate in festivals to provide social integration, apart from having fun, rest, and pleasure (Arcodia & Whitford, 2007; Borges et al., 2021). Festivals are seen as a way to enhance the attractiveness of a holiday location.

Previous literature has focused on the economic impact of festivals and events (Bilgili et al., 2012; Doğrul et al., 2015; O'Sullivan & Jackson, 2002; Özbalci & Var, 2013). However, few studies focus on the sociocultural effects of festivals (Doğan & Yetim, 2011; Fredline et al., 2003; Schlenker et al., 2005; Sert, 2017). Therefore, the sociocultural impact is difficult to measure. The success of a festival is often measured in terms of its economic contribution to the community, region, and event stakeholders (Schlenker et al., 2005). In recent years, the importance of the social effects of festivals has begun to be emphasized more (Orhun & Meriç, 2020) because the way local people perceive the effects of tourism on their lives is significant. These recent studies have generally focused on the social impacts of festivals on local people (Ritchie & Inkari, 2006; Sert, 2017).

In this study, the level of social integration was evaluated in terms of festival participants. The research aims to investigate the effect of participating in an outdoor music festival on the social integration level of the participant. In this direction, in the first part, the concept of social integration and festival is discussed and defined. Afterward, information was presented in terms of the festival and participants whose data were collected. Finally, the data obtained within the scope of the research were analyzed, and suggestions were presented in line with the results.

Social Integration

Social ties interact between people living together, bringing them closer or further apart (Özer & Kaçmaz, 2020). Individuals may take a defensive position due to negative experiences from social life and may display a closed attitude towards socialization. Individuals who contribute to others force defensive individuals to give up their defensive tendencies. When contributions are supported with respect and reverence, the advocacy process turns into social differentiation (Blau, 1960). Social integration is achieved by the acceptance of social differentiation by individuals with a defensive tendency.

The concept of social integration emerged with Durkheim's (1951) work on social conditions. Durkheim stated that having a stable social structure and regular social norms is protective for the individual. Research has revealed that the suicide rate is higher in unmarried individuals with fewer social bonds. Social integration is hypothesized to have a curvilinear relationship with depressive symptoms such that having either too few friends (underintegration) or too many (overintegration) is harmful to mental health (Brisette et al., 2000).

Social integration, or the degree to which an individual is psychologically attached to other people in a group, is a multifaceted phenomenon. If contact can lessen prejudice and hostility derived from ignorance, the reverse can also be the case (Ferraz & Serpa, 2021). Concepts such as integrity, solidarity, community, social groups, social capital, trust, and social networks are used for similar purposes in the literature. Social integration is critical to strengthen the social structure, ensure its sustainability, and prevent the fragmentation of the whole that holds the society together (Karaca, 2012).

In the socialization process, which is defined as the individual's adaptation to the community, two elements focused on "difference" and "similarity" come to the fore. Reactions to these elements express individual identity (Özdil, 2017). As in social integration, it is necessary to face some processes and environments in identity acquisition. Attitudes performed in these processes and environments constitute identity. To explain this situation with an example, we can assume that an academic asked us to comment on an article he wrote. Making compelling criticism increases the other person's respect for our competence but does not endear us too much. Making complementary explanations instead of criticism makes the other person feel positive towards us but does not create a reason for them to respect our judgments (Blau, 1960).

Festivals and MillionFest'19

Connecting with others, living and working together, networking, establishing relationships and

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social connections—this happens at events such as at reunions, street parties, company events, and trade fairs. This concerns whether or not social relationships are strengthened and/or new social relationships are formed. Festivals are cultural, artistic, and social events organized by society at certain intervals in a destination to celebrate a unique value or commemorate a significant event or person (Schlenker et al., 2005). These events, which are designed to occur within a limited period, are held in public (Douglass et al., 2022). Festival organizations, which include cultural, artistic, and sportive elements, are important tools used in creating an image of modern tourism (Bilgili et al., 2012).

Much of the world's political, social, and economic structures have arisen from philosophies, ideologies, and experiences constructed by the dominant culture. When evaluated in this context, festivals are important events that enable a multicultural society to emerge (Arcodia & Whitford, 2007; Hazel & Mason, 2020). A common social purpose can be developed, and a multicultural society structure supported by encouraging greater participation in festivals. In the globalizing world, the multicultural society structure is widely adopted and accepted.

It is a fact that festivals increase tourist expenditures. Festivals often support local businesses, contributing to hotels, restaurants, craft workshops, entertainment venues, and destination service industries (O'Sullivan & Jackson, 2002). The economic impacts of festivals are significant, but they also have social impacts that can profoundly impact society. For this reason, it is necessary to determine and examine the economic and social effects of festivals in a balance. This balance is necessary to develop festivals and promote a sustainable approach (Delamere et al., 2001).

Festivals are cultural events that strengthen the bonds of harmony in society. Festivals, which can create and maintain social unity, bring together people with a common denominator (Borges et al., 2021). The social bonds that develop through the festival organization can be preserved far beyond the short life of the festival. If festivals are regular events, this can significantly benefit in the long run (Arcodia & Whitford, 2007).

Festivals do not require physically expensive investments due to their nature. That is why they have a unique charm. The realization of festivals depends on the cooperation of local people and organizers rather than large-scale hotels, facilities, natural beauties, and artificial attractions (Sert, 2017). The effects of low-cost festivals contribute to urban development by contributing to the image of the city.

Festivals have many positive aspects as well as various negative aspects that can affect the host community. For example, economic profit initiatives can damage the sociocultural values and traditions of the host destination (Brown & Sharpley, 2019). In addition to these, negative effects such as substance abuse, alienation from society, and increased criminal activities can be mentioned (Getz, 1997).

The first of the MillionFest festivals was held in Eskişehir in May 2017. At the festival, where various artists gave concerts in the evenings, the participants could participate in various activities during the day. During the festival, festival participants with suitable tickets could set up tents and stay in the camping area. When the first festival was held, the participants had fun to the fullest without leaving the festival area by protecting themselves with bags from the rain and mud caused by bad weather conditions. These colorful images found comprehensive coverage in the Turkish press. The second festival was held on September 27–30, 2018. The third of Millionfest Eskişehir was held at Eskişehir Mola facilities September 26–29, 2019.

Methodology

The research aims to determine the effect of participating in an outdoor music festival on the level of social integration. The main hypothesis of the research—the view that participating in the music festival contributes to the social integration of people—was tested. For this research, which was planned as quantitative research, data were collected from primary individuals. In this context, data were collected from the festival participants using the survey technique. The information obtained through the questionnaire was analyzed and interpreted with the SPSS program, and suggestions are presented in the conclusion part by evaluating these findings.

The research universe consists of the participants of the outdoor music festival organized by

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MillionFest in Turkey-Eskişehir September 27–30, 2018. Since it was not possible to reach all of the participants, sample selection was made. Although information about the number of participants in the festival was requested from the organizing committee, no clear information on this subject could be reached. For this reason, the unlimited universe sampling formula was used to determine the sample size. Five hundred questionnaires were distributed, and appropriate data from 426 people were used in the research. With easy sampling, the data were obtained from volunteers who were easily accessible.

A questionnaire consisting of two parts was used. In the first part, there were four items to determine the age, gender, education level, and residence of the participants. The second part of the research, the "Social Integration Scale" by Yilmaz et al. (2006) was used. This scale, which was created by making use of the study by Hall (2004) in which he evaluated the perceptions of college students about campus recreation programs, has been used in various studies in Turkish (Doğan & Yetim, 2011; Küçükbaş Duman, 2020; Yilmaz et al., 2006). The expressions in the Turkish questionnaire were compared with the expressions in the English (original) questionnaire. The questionnaire was presented to the participants in Turkish. A 5-point Likert classification ranging from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree* was used to measure the level of social integration of the respondents.

Research Findings

In this section, the analysis results of the collected data and explanations of the findings obtained from the data are included. Firstly, the demographic data of the participants of the study are presented. Afterwards, the factor analysis results of the social integration scale are presented. Finally, the relationship between the factors of the social integration scale and the averages of the factors are presented.

When the gender of the participants in the research is examined, it is seen that the number of men and women is close to each other. The majority of the participants (50.9%) were male. Considering the age of the participants, the number of those aged 18–24 (57.3%) was more than half of the participants. It is seen that the majority of the participants were either university graduates or those who continued their university education (71.4%). The majority of the participants live in metropolitan cities (63.6%) (Table 1).

All questionnaire items in the research were adapted from the multi-item scales used in the previous study, and the original statements were not changed. In the questionnaire form, the items belonging to the factors were placed in a mixed order. Within the scope of the research, the opinions of the participants were taken in terms of 38 items. Table 2 shows the factor analysis results of the structures measured by the questionnaire.

Confirmatory factor analysis was applied to the social integration scale. In the exploratory factor analysis, factor finding and theory generation process based on the relationships between variables were performed. In confirmatory factor analysis, it is a matter of testing a hypothesis about the previously determined relationship between variables (Büyüköztürk, 2002). While performing factor analysis, oblique (direct oblimin) was applied with maximum probability. This method assumes that there is no correlation between orthogonal rotation (e.g., varimax) while correlation returns between factors (Yang, 2005).

In factor analysis, Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) sampling adequacy measurement and Bartlett's sphericity test were used to test the suitability of the

Table 1
Demographic Information (N = 426)

	N (%)
Gender	
Female	209 (49.1%)
Male	217 (50.9%)
Age	
Less than 18	48 (11.3%)
18–24	244 (57.3%)
25–30	86 (20.2%)
31–35	20 (4.7%)
Greater than 35	28 (6.6%)
Education status	
Primary education	96 (22.5%)
University	304 (71.4%)
Master's degree/Ph.D.	26 (6.1%)
Legal domicile	
Village	11 (2.6%)
District	42 (9.9%)
City	102 (23.9%)
Metropolis	271 (63.6%)

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Table 2
Confirmatory Factor Analysis Social Integration

Please Provide Your Opinion About Participating in This Festival	Factor Loading	Eigenvalue	Variance Explained	Cronbach Alpha
Emotional development		4.61	12.68	0.881
It contributes to the development of my self-confidence.	0.594			
The pleasure I get with the feeling of success reaches its peak.	0.650			
It increases my sense of adventure.	0.492			
It helps me get away from stress.	0.549			
It contributes to me being knowledgeable, moral and helpful.	0.583			
Physical development		4.04	10.65	0.898
It makes me feel very healthy physically.	0.478			
It improves my sports skills.	0.620			
It maintains my body shape and provides fitness.	0.537			
It increases my physical strength.	0.418			
It improves my balance and coordination.	0.634			
Development of bilateral relations		3.70	9.75	0.853
It increases my respect for other people.	0.579			
It allows me to build strong friendships.	0.651			
It allows me to be in solidarity with my friends.	0.620			
It allows me to be with my friends and have a good time.	0.517			
It allows me to meet new people and expand my social circle.	0.563			
Development of personal skills		3.40	9.15	0.891
It helps me improve my leadership skills.	0.627			
It improves my ability to detect problems.	0.536			
It improves my problem-solving skills.	0.472			
It increases my ability to use time well.	0.569			
It helps me grow as an individual.	0.617			
National and cultural development		2.71	7.13	0.896
It contributes to the development of national identity and love for the country.	0.651			
It contributes to the promotion of the country.	0.532			
It helps the passage of our culture from generation to generation.	0.591			
Increases folkloric wealth and competition between provinces and regions.	0.582			
Community development		2.46	6.47	0.814
Participating in the festival has an effect on obeying the rules of customs and law.	0.467			
Allows people of different political views to come together.	0.591			
It allows people from different cultures to come together.	0.681			
It enables people with different economic backgrounds to come together.	0.627			
It allows people of different faiths to come together.	0.597			
Development of group relationships		2.05	5.41	0.893
Develops my group collaboration skills.	0.615			
It improves my sense of belonging to a group.	0.592			

Note. Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy: 0.943. Bartlett's test of sphericity: 9544.225 ($p = 0.00$). Total variance explained: 61.24.

data. KMO was found to be 0.943, and the Bartlett's test of sphericity was found to be 9544.225 at the 0.00 significance level. The statistical data obtained support factor analysis for these items (Hair et al., 2010).

The statements about participating in this festival such as—"Improves my ability to cope with many tasks," "Provides weight control," "Enables me to share something in common with other people," "Gives working habits," "Contributes to the development of national feelings and social integration," "Helps to promote and maintain traditions and customs," "It would be beneficial for me to divide the work with the group"—were excluded from the study due to the low factor load and the representation of more than one factor. The factor loading of

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the items other than these items ranged from 0.418 to 0.681. The total explained variance of the seven-factor structure was calculated as 61.24.

In the literature, Cronbach's alpha value of 0.7 and above is accepted in terms of reliability (Meriç & Turay, 2020). Cronbach's alpha values of the factors have values between 0.814 and 0.898. This finding reveals the reliability of the research data.

The information, including the means, standard deviation values, and correlation coefficients of the social integration factors, are presented in Table 3.

When the averages of the social integration factors are examined, the factor with the highest average (*M*: 4.10) is the Development of Bilateral Relationships factor. This information shows that festivals are significant events in terms of establishing bilateral relations and developing bilateral relations. Formica and Uysal (1996) obtained similar results in their research at a jazz festival in Italy.

It was determined that the participants who participated in the Emotional Development, Development of Personal Skills, National and Cultural Development, Development of Group Relationships factors have close averages (*M*: 3.65–3.80). The second factor with the highest average (*M*: 3.96) is the social development factor. This information shows that the participants mostly agree with the views such as the festivals contribute to the customs and law, bring together people with different political views, and bring together people with different beliefs and economic income. Similar results to this information were found in Faulkner et al. (1999).

The factor with the lowest mean (*M*: 3.42) was determined as the factor of physical development. Apart from music, there are also entertaining and improving recreational activities during the day (Getz, 1997). Although the physical development provided by these activities is the factor with the lowest average, the factor average is above the general average. Participants think that festival participation provides physical development, albeit at a low level.

A correlation analysis was performed to determine the relationship between social integration factors. When the information obtained is examined, it is seen that all factors have a moderate and high level of relationship among themselves. This relationship is significant even at the 0.01 significance level.

In the study, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and independent sample *t*-test analysis was used to investigate whether the seven determined social integration factors differ according to the selected demographic characteristics (Table 4). The result obtained is that social integration factors did not significantly differ in four demographic variables (gender, age, education, local domicile). Dimensions of Physical Development and National and Cultural Development differed only by gender. Women's participation levels in these two dimensions are higher than men's. Social integration factors do not vary significantly according to the selected variables because the behavior is general for all groups. These findings are similar to research data of Uysal et al. (1993) and Schlenker et al. (2005).

Conclusions

Since the desire to celebrate specific dates and events is essential human behavior, it has played a crucial role in society from past to present. Festivals, which were primarily held for celebration

Table 3
Correlations Among Social Integration

	M (*SD*)	ED	PD	DBR	DPS	NCD	CD	DGP
Emotional development (ED)	3.80 (0.82)	1						
Physical development (PD)	3.42 (1.02)	0.685**	1					
Development of bilateral relations (DBR)	4.10 (0.77)	0.725**	0.472**	1				
Development of personal skills (DPS)	3.65 (0.88)	0.730**	0.648**	0.656**	1			
National and cultural development (NCD)	3.79 (0.90)	0.580**	0.565**	0.582**	0.553**	1		
Community development (CD)	3.96 (0.76)	0.565**	0.417**	0.667**	0.565**	0.583**	1	
Development of group relationships (DGR)	3.77 (1.02)	0.794**	0.644**	0.631**	0.684**	0.518**	0.506**	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

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Table 4
Variation of Delineated Factor Groupings by Demographic Variables

Variable	ED	PD	DBR	DPS	NCD	CD	DGR
Gender							
Female	3.84	3.55	4.17	3.72	3.90	4.02	3.84
Male	3.75	3.29	4.03	359	3.68	3.90	3.70
F test	2.95	2.62	2.92	5.18	1.11	4.08	1.43
Significance level	0.25	0.00	0.07	0.14	0.01	0.11	0.15
Age							
Less than 18	3.86	3.52	4.05	3.65	3.76	3.81	3.82
18–24	3.79	3.35	4.15	3.68	3.81	3.99	3.75
25–30	3.74	3.39	3.97	3.57	3.71	3.91	3.73
31–35	3.90	3.63	4.06	3.67	3.73	3.94	3.87
Greater than 35	3.88	3.76	4.14	3.70	3.92	4.09	3.92
F test	0.32	1.36	0.93	0.24	0.37	0.84	0.28
Significance level	0.85	0.24	0.44	0.91	0.82	0.49	0.88
Education status							
Primary education	3.86	3.53	4.02	3.65	3.83	3.90	3.78
University	3.79	3.39	4.12	3.67	3.80	3.98	3.77
Master's degree/Ph.D.	3.63	3.36	4.10	3.52	3.45	3.93	3.71
F test	0.86	0.72	0.64	0.33	2.02	0.32	0.05
Significance level	0.86	0.48	0.52	0.71	0.13	0.72	0.94
Legal domicile							
Village	3.90	3.45	4.12	3.81	4.34	4.01	3.90
District	3.76	3.46	4.05	3.65	3.73	3.90	3.72
City	3.78	3.38	4.02	3.63	3.84	3.97	3.77
Metropolis	3.80	3.42	4.13	3.66	3.76	3.96	3.77
F test	0.11	0.06	0.61	0.14	1.62	0.12	0.09
Significance level	0.95	0.97	0.60	0.93	0.18	0.94	0.96

Note. ED, Emotional development; PD, Physical development; DBR, Development of bilateral relations; DPS, Development of personal skills; NCD, National and cultural development; CD, Community development; DGR, Development of group relationships.

purposes in the past, are mostly carried out for entertainment, relaxation, and socialization. Therefore, outdoor music festivals, which allow camp and include various entertainment, are essential for young people to participate. In this research, the role of participating in an outdoor music festival on social integration has been examined.

In the research, it was observed that the participants of the outdoor music festival participated in the factors that express the level of social integration. These factors consist of dimensions such as the development of bilateral relations, physical development, emotional development, national and cultural development, development of personal skills, group relations and social development. The highest participation was in the development of bilateral relations, which showed that the festival contributed to socialization and social integration. Thus, it has been confirmed that participating in the festival positively affects social integration (Backman et al., 1995; Bozkurt et al., 2017; Faulkner et al., 1999; Uysal et al., 1993; Yuan et al., 2005).

The contribution of outdoor music festivals to social integration revealed by this research should be taken into account by festival organizers and local governments. With previous research (Borges et al., 2021; Brown & Sharpley, 2019) many advantages of these festivals such as having fun, resting, and traveling have been revealed. These strengths need to be preserved and maintained. Festival planners also need to acknowledge that the festival structure needs to change over time. Music festivals, which appealed to a certain audience years ago, now bring together people with completely different orientations. For this reason, outdoor music festivals can be seen as an alternative to virtual applications that allow people to meet.

It is clear that music festivals, in which people attend to experience the festive atmosphere and have fun, contribute to the integration of people.

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However, this social integration can lead to some situations such as excessive alcohol use and drug use (Douglass et al., 2022). Since social integration requires people to act in harmony and meet at a common point, negative situations should be investigated. Negative results of social integration provided by music festivals can be determined with research to be done on this subject. It is thought that this research contributes to the literature in terms of revealing that festivals make a significant contribution to social integration by addressing the thoughts about festivals. However, the application of the study is limited to a single festival, which is a musical event. Studies can be conducted with a larger sample covering different types of festival activities in different geographies.

ORCID

Sağbetullah Meriç: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1949-623X

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