

Emerging Trends Affecting Food and Beverage Menu Planning: A Review of Turkish Gastronomy Journals

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Abstract

In recent years, food and beverage menu planning has undergone a significant transformation due to the changing dynamics of consumer behavior, sustainability concerns, and technological innovation. Thus the current study systematically reviews peer-reviewed research papers published between 2023 and 2025 in three prominent Turkish gastronomy journals; Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies (JOTAGS), Aydın Gastronomy and Journal of Gastronomy, Hospitality, and Travel (JOGHAT) to identify emerging trends affecting food and beverage menu planning. 119 articles were used for thematic content analysis in accordance with the PRISMA protocol. The results indicated six main trends: (1) inclusion of indigenous and/or geographically indicated products in menus; (2) classic recipes with healthy ingredient substitutions; (3) sustainability-driven practices; (4) technology integration; (5) artistic visual food presentation and service styles; and (6) experiential reinterpretation of traditional dishes. This synthesis highlights the practical implications for foodservice professionals in a rapidly changing gastronomic environment and maps the emerging academic discourse in Türkiye. It concludes by pointing out research gaps and future directions, especially in the areas of food design, consumer acceptance, and the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in menu planning.

Keywords: *Gastronomy trends, Turkish gastronomy literature, food and beverage management*

Introduction

Foodservice businesses' success relies on maintaining their profitability while operating at maximum efficiency. One of the most significant managerial instruments for achieving this balance is the menu. The menu is the most important sales tool to generate revenues for these establishments, so they should strive to keep up with the trends as well as analyze the factors that effect consumer expectations and/or change their preferences. This way, foodservice professionals would be able to make their menu revisions based on customers' needs and wants. There are a number of factors influencing food and beverage trends such as global food crises, increased health concerns and sustainability awareness of consumers along with technological advancements changing the way the business is done (Corvo et al., 2022; Gere et al., 2022; Tomalia et al., 2024; Yıldız & Yılmaz, 2020). Thus, foodservice establishments are going through innovation and local cultural revival on the global scale (Polimenov, 2025; Yulistiyono et al., 2023). Turkish gastronomy sector is not an immune to these pressures. Their strategies are also becoming more and more in line with current trends. It is obvious that comprehension of scholarly discourse surrounding menu planning could provide a better understanding of this change.

Menu planning used to be described mainly in operational terms: what dishes could be made reliably, at an acceptable cost, using the skills and ingredients available. The paradigm shift in food and beverage industry necessitated re-considering traditional menu planning and food service methods. One major factor effecting this paradigm shift, the COVID-19 pandemic in particular, has increased the demand for healthier and functional food options especially for home delivery and creative table service styles addressing sustainability, locally-sourced food, food safety and personalization (Jain et al., 2022; Özen & Akpınar, 2022; Pandey, 2023;

Sharma et al., 2024). In Türkiye, these expectations also tend to merge international food trends with local culinary values. As a result, restaurants and other foodservice operations find themselves balancing long-standing traditions with new pressures tied to modernization, sustainability, health, aesthetics, and technology (Altın & Şimşek, 2024; Altundağ, 2025; Çetinsöz & Polat, 2018; Kutal & Seçim, 2024).

Over time, the notion of what constitutes a successful menu has also evolved. In addition to taste and profitability, modern menu strategies are evaluated based on how well they align with environmental ethics, transparency, health outcomes, and emotional engagement (Aydın & Yılmaz, 2024; FSR Magazine, 2024; Sharma et al., 2022; Sullivan et al., 2021; Yılmaz, 2025). Customers increasingly expect menus which clearly show nutritional information and are easy to access online. Besides that, they prefer menus including dishes from diverse cultures but prepared by using ethical ingredients. Operators, in turn, feel obliged to use flexible, evolving planning approaches supported by AI, predictive data tools, and insights into customer behavior (Abdelmassih & Arendt, 2020; Islam et al., 2023; Shen et al., 2024; Yoon et al., 2020). Although practitioners discuss these changes frequently, the academic literature that examines them in a systematic way is still relatively scattered. Some studies (Çetin & Arman, 2025; Erkan & Bilici, 2023; Yarış & Arıcı, 2025; Şahin, 2025) focus on local products, others on technology or sustainability, while a number of papers explore plating styles or experiential concepts. What is missing is an overarching synthesis that shows how these strands relate to one another and where Turkish scholarship aligns with or diverges from international patterns.

The purpose of this study is to offer such a synthesis. By reviewing recent issues of three prominent Turkish gastronomy journals, the

aim is to determine and classify trends reshaping menu development and to understand how academic authors interpret the shifting role of menus in their scholar discourse. The review also reveals areas that remain underexplored to guide the industry practitioners.

Theoretical Background

Scholars and practitioners agree that menus are more than lists of dishes. They shape expectations, guide decision-making, and determine the concept. They serve as an intermediary to communicate establishment's culinary identity. Consumer choices are shaped around menu design and content. Customer satisfaction and operational effectiveness are directly related to menu (Baiomy et al., 2019; Lai et al., 2020; Şahin & Yazıcıoğlu, 2018). Chefs, menu planners, and foodservice professionals also agree that culinary landscape is very dynamic. Their customers also become more knowledgeable and conscious about what they eat or drink. They should be aware of trends to innovate their services and stay competitive. Their capacity to customize the menu to fulfill consumers' needs and keeping up with changing trends stands as a key differentiator. (Doğan, 2022; Gheribi, 2017). All around the globe, including Türkiye, the menu is also used like a canvas for the expression of regional identity, hospitality values, and culinary heritage (Crillo, 2022; Köselelden & Güvenç, 2025; Selçuk & Seçim, 2023).

Menu planning trends are dynamic. They are constantly evolving due to several reasons some of which are cultural changes, health movements, economic ups and downs, and technological advancements (Keşkekçi & Gençer, 2023; Özdemir & Buldaç, 2021). Menu's original function was limited to be simply a useful document for listing dishes; yet, today menu is a carefully curated narrative that reflects consumer values as well. These consumer values concentrate on sustainability, locality, and ethical sourcing as well as wellness and personali-

zation (National Restaurant Association, 2024). Incorporated with fusion techniques, social media influences, aesthetics, and data-driven customization, these trends can transform menus into experiential tools (Astania & Azhar, 2025; Mihalache, 2016; Wang, 2012). Based on the information above, foodservice professionals must be aware of the trends to make the right decision in the present day and foresee future consumer behavior to forestall potential threats such as close downs and bankruptcies.

Menu planning, which was once established upon mainstream movements and culinary traditions, is now being reinterpreted by dynamic demands, technology enabled systems and customer-driven strategies (İş, 2024; Kayran & Atçı, 2024; Moskowitz et al., 2016). While customers started to seek experiences that fit their values and lifestyles such as plant-based living, localism, zero waste, or personal diets; menu development styles have also diversified for brand identity and differentiation (Ju et al., 2022; Innova Market Insights, 2024; Kızıldemir & Kaderoğlu, 2021). Businesses must use their ability to stay flexible and adapt to broader global influences and emerging trends in an ever-growing unstable market for survival and encourage repeat business (Al-Hubaishi et al., 2024; Kaya et al., 2024; Stephens, 2024; Zeng et al., 2014).

Recent studies (Alzuhairi & Doğan, 2021; Barlak & Başar, 2025; Bayesen, 2025; Cooke, 2025; Çavuş et al., 2018; Çekiç & Bayar, 2024; Erden, 2024; Ginani et al., 2020; Tomalia et al., 2024) in gastronomy highlight several key shifts in how menus are being developed today. Chefs and operators are increasingly turning to local and indigenous ingredients to reflect regional identity and culinary heritage. Sustainability also plays a major role, with practices such as zero-waste approaches and sourcing from nearby producers becoming more common. Technology is reshaping the field as well, with digital

menus and AI tools allowing for more personalized dining experiences. At the same time, classic dishes are being reinterpreted in creative ways that blend tradition with contemporary flavors. Health-focused changes such as replacing traditional ingredients with lighter or more nutritious ones are also on the rise, alongside growing interest in functional foods and wellness-oriented offerings. Other emerging trends include limited-time or seasonal menus, the increasing presence of alternative and plant-based proteins, and a heightened emphasis on visually striking presentation. Media-driven dining concepts continue to influence how dishes are crafted and showcased, making aesthetics and storytelling more important than ever. These topics show how gastronomy has developed into an interdisciplinary field where culinary creativity interacts with digital innovation, nutritional science, and cultural sensitivity. These themes reflect both a global movement and specific cultural dynamics relevant to Türkiye's diverse food heritage and evolving consumer base.

Scholarly research on these trends will have a significant impact on the food and beverage industry's future. Popular media or industry reports often focus on market data or consumer surveys. But academic studies provide theoretical foundations with longitudinal perspectives, and evidence-based insights that improve practice by critically examining the development of menu strategies. These researches investigate consumer behavior and try to discover novel trends. They also make evaluations of the viability of adopting emerging trends. Additionally, they offer valuable information for creating gastronomy education programs. They also support policy making for sustainable food systems, and suggest strategic plans for food-service businesses seeking to innovate in a constantly changing environment.

Method

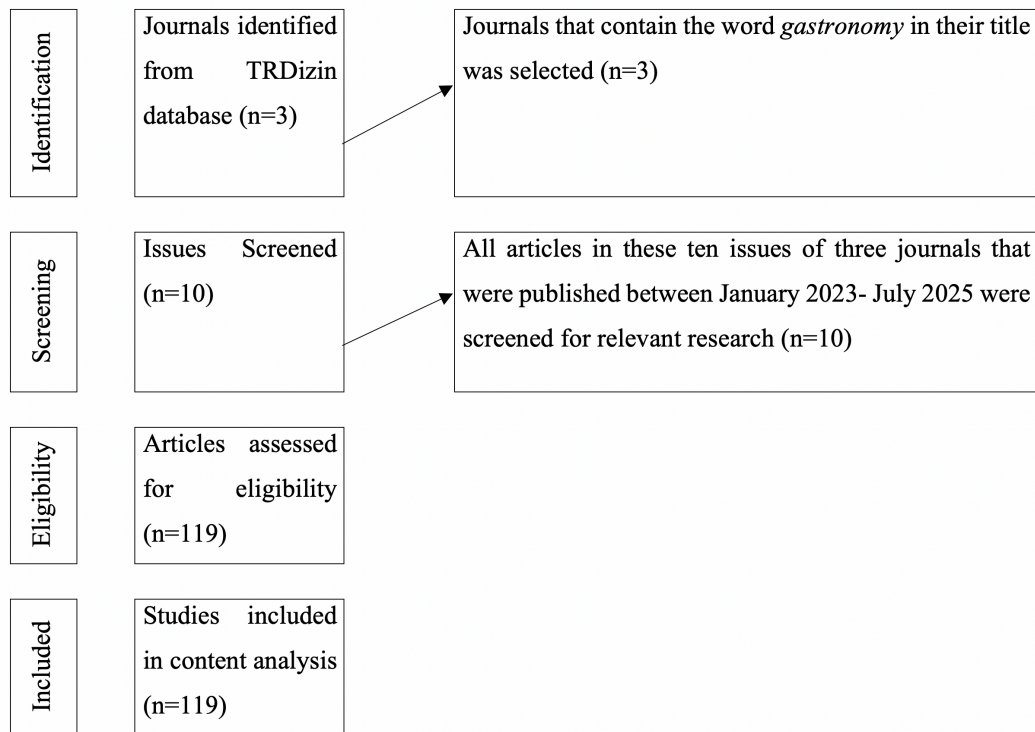
This study employed a qualitative content anal-

ysis method grounded in a systematic literature scanning model to identify emerging trends in food and beverage menu planning. While the systematic review enabled a comprehensive and transparent identification of relevant publications to minimize selection bias; qualitative content analysis facilitated the coding, categorization, and interpretation of recurring themes and conceptual patterns. This approach is particularly suitable for highlighting emerging trends, allowing for a structured examination of thematic evolution within the selected body of literature (Finfgeld-Connett, 2014). Articles published between January 2023 and July 2025 in three peer-reviewed, TRDizin-indexed Turkish gastronomy journals, namely *Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies (JOTAGS)*, *Aydın Gastronomy*, and *Journal of Gastronomy, Hospitality, and Travel (JOGHAT)* were analyzed. The study aimed to identify and classify how academic scholarship reflects emerging themes and conceptual changes in food and beverage menu planning. Keywords, abstracts, and titles were coded using MAXQDA 24 software in order to identify dominant themes. The guiding research questions are:

1. What are the emerging trends in food and beverage menu planning in Turkish gastronomy journals from 2023 to 2025?
2. How do these trends align with international developments in gastronomy literature?
3. What conceptual or methodological gaps remain in the reviewed journals?

A systematic review methodology was applied to ensure analytical rigor, transparency, and replicability. As seen in Figure 1, the review structured the data identification, screening, and inclusion procedures in accordance with PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines (Moher et al., 2009).

Figure 1
PRISMA flowchart of the study (Moher et al., 2009).



Based on their scholarly impact, indexing status, and thematic relevance, three peer-reviewed academic journals with a focus on gastronomy were chosen. Ten issues total—all volumes and issues published between January 2023 and July 2025—were analyzed, producing 119 arti-

cles pertinent to the study's objectives. Table 1 summarizes total number of articles published in these journals along with the percentage representation (14%) of these 119 articles to the total of 829 articles.

Table 1
Scope of research

Journal	Issues per year	Total no of articles published (2023-2025)	No of articles subject to study	% representation
JOTAGS	4	460	56	12%
AYDIN GASTRONOMY	4	82	21	25%
JOGHAT	2	287	42	15%
	10	829	119	14%

Aydın Gastronomy, Journal of Gastronomy, Hospitality, and Travel, and Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies were the selected ac-

ademic journals as primary data sources based on the following inclusion criteria:

- relevance to the field of food & beverage and gastronomy
- frequency of publication and consistency across years
- indexing in TRDizin
- language accessibility (Turkish and/or English)
- track record of publishing peer-reviewed, empirical and theoretical work on food and beverage topics

Exclusion criteria included studies unrelated to food and beverage menu planning and pre-2023 studies.

Two researchers who has expertise in qualitative content analysis conducted the coding process. A pilot coding on 24 articles that represent 20% of dataset was performed to clarify code definitions and review overlapping categories. Thus, a preliminary code tree was developed. It was finalized through discussions. After the pilot phase, the MAXQDA 24 program was used to independently code the articles. Inter-coder reliability was assessed through Cohen’s Kappa coefficient; which yielded a value of 0.82 indicating a strong agreement (McHugh, 2012).

This study do not require ethics committee approval.

Findings and Discussion

A two-phase coding process was used to analyze the articles. Article titles, abstracts and keywords were read in full and annotated for relevant content related to menu trends, culinary innovation, service formats, or technology use in food planning during initial screening and classification. A general inductive approach was employed to identify frequently occurring themes and categories. Thematic coding was based on inductive coding principles so that emergent themes were categorized and grouped under key trend domains.

Based on the thematic content analysis of 119 peer-reviewed articles published between January 2023 and July2025 in three leading gastronomy-related journals, the systematic review identified six emerging trends shaping today’s food and beverage menu planning. These themes indicates the change in consumer preferences as well as the changing scholarly discourse shaped around tradition, innovation, and sustainability. Table 2 indicates the six thematic categories emerged from the analysis:

Table 2
Key emerging trends in Türkiye’s gastronomy journals

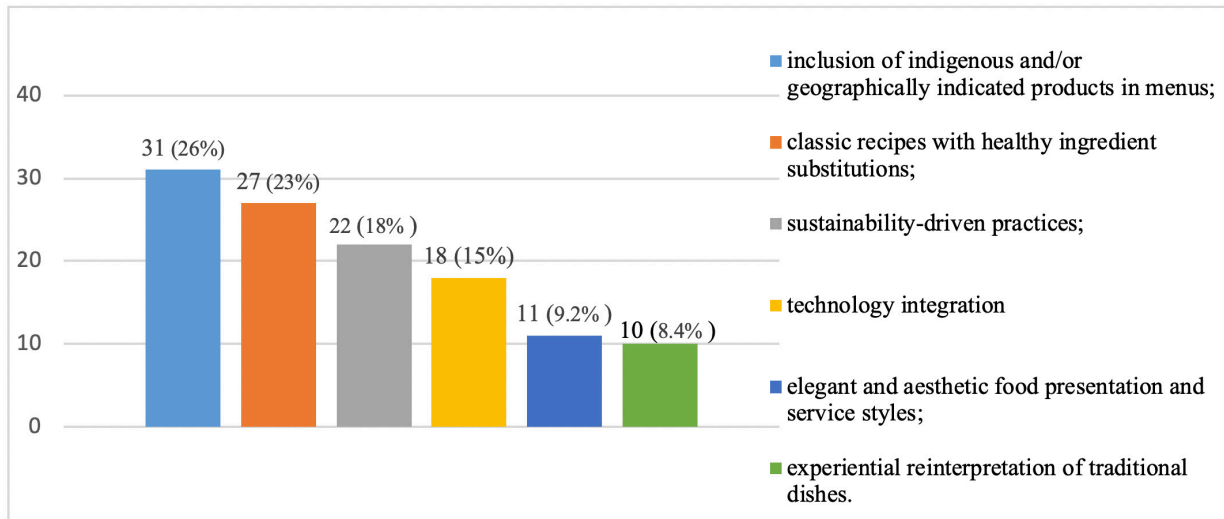
Theme	Description	Example focus in Turkish studies
inclusion of indigenous and/or geographically indicated products	menus that incorporate regional or geographically indicated ingredients and traditional culinary techniques	inclusion of <i>Çorum’s Yonuz plum</i> or <i>Sübye</i> in restaurant menus
healthier classic recipes	reformulation of traditional dishes with healthier substitutes	gluten-free <i>börek</i> or sugar-free lemonade
sustainability practices	zero-waste design, local sourcing and eco-friendly labelling	‘Orange Flag’ certification in Turkish restaurants
technology integration	digital menus, ai personalization, contactless services	qr-code menu and ordering systems
artistic visual presentation	visual emphasis in plating, ambiance, and tableware	using plates with local motifs, design with color
experiential dining	storytelling, sensory engagement, and cultural reinterpretation	3D or 4D printed food, shape morphing of foods

Themes, in harmony with global gastronomy trends, reflect Turkish interpretations and focus in Turkish gastronomy studies about menu trends. There is also an emphasis and balance of taste, health, authenticity, and emotional

engagement in the reviewed articles (Ceyhun Sezgin & Ateş, 2024; Çetinkaya & Genç, 2025; Karahan & Sünnetçioğlu, 2024; Kendirci & Üzgün, 2023; Kılıç et al., 2023; Yılmaz, 2025; Yıldız & Buyruk, 2024).

Figure 2

Thematic distribution of studies



The most frequently mentioned theme in menus was the inclusion of indigenous and/or geographically indicated products in menus. This practice exemplifies the growing significance of culinary heritage and cultural authenticity. Restaurants use geographically indicated ingredients that are specific to a region or employ traditional preparation methods in an effort to evoke a sense of place and identity through their offerings. Academic articles frequently emphasized the potential of such ingredients as it promotes sustainability, regional recognition, attract more guests and enhance visitor experience. This trend was discussed to support both ecological and cultural strategies while enhancing perceived quality, authenticity, and differentiation. Products are also mentioned to serve local development both ecologically and economically (Akyol & Ünal, 2024; Curoğlu & Saruşık, 2024; Erkan & Bilici, 2023; Güler & Meryem, 2025; Temizel, 2024).

The second most recurring theme mentioned across all journals was about interpretation of traditional recipes with healthier ingredients or cooking techniques to develop alternative, functional products. Examples included making gluten-free or allergy-sensitive versions of traditional recipes, using plant-based proteins in meat-based recipes, and replacing refined sugars with natural ones; sous-vide or slow-cook them. These substitutions were emphasized to reduce environmental problems caused by dietary habits while reflecting consumers' increasing health concerns and their desire for menus that meet a variety of dietary needs or trends such as celiac disease, food intolerances or diet trends. Studies showed that adaptations were the result of a motivation to improve nutritional value without compromising sensory quality attributes such as texture, flavor, appearance or consumer acceptability (Acun et al., 2024; Çiftçi & Yüncü, 2024; Duman & Sarper, 2023; Kendirci & Üzgün, 2023).

Another crucial element of menu development throughout the reviewed literature was sustainability-driven practices that ranked in the third place. Several studies addressed various practices such as utilizing seasonal and locally grown ingredients, controlling portion sizes to reduce food waste, reevaluating food waste and managing inventory levels wisely. Restaurants have been also promoting plant-forward eating, less plastic usage and environmentally friendly cooking methods to lessen their impact on the environment. Some articles also looked at embedding sustainability communication on menus to educate their guests and promote trust and transparency. Exemplary practices included identifying carbon footprints or offering information about ethical sourcing (Çetin & Arman, 2025; Erçetin & Güneş, 2023; Köselelden & Güvenç, 2025; Mutlu, 2024; Öztürk & Kanoğlu, 2024).

The fourth most frequently recurring theme was the use of technology and digital transformation in the planning and delivery of menu experiences. Studies under review indicated that AI-supported menu optimization and QR code-based customization have been growing in popularity along with digital menus and mobile ordering. It was also indicated that technological tools use customer behavior and preference data for creation of highly customized dining experiences as well as streamlining procedures. Several articles highlighted how AI can be used to list popularity index for dishes and manage inventory in real time besides increasing menu flexibility by considering industry trends and customer feedback. Studies also emphasized how culinary chefs use virtual reality and augmented reality applications to feed their creativity and productivity (Akay & İnce Karaçeper, 2024; İnce Karaçeper, 2024; Kılıç et al., 2023; Şahin, 2025; Uçgun, 2025).

Artistic visual presentation and service styles ranked fifth as a component of contemporary

menu trend. Articles argued that plate shape, visually appealing plating, the harmony of the plate and the food in terms of shape, color, size and portion, and simple presentation techniques all had a positive effect on taste perceptions and a significant impact on the perceived value of dishes. They also claimed that these are the determining factors in consumers' evaluation of food products and their acceptance or preference of one product over another. Additionally, studies emphasized that the overall dining experience was enhanced with well-coordinated tableware, carefully selected background music, and storytelling of the dishes by wait staff. These enhancements were often developed with social media interaction in mind, recognizing the impact of visual platforms like Instagram on eating preferences (Ercan et al., 2024; Ercik et al., 2023; Ercoşkun, 2025; Karahan & Sünnetçioğlu, 2024).

The fifth most frequently mentioned theme in menus was experiential reinterpretation of traditional dishes to positively influence taste perception of consumers. Instead of merely replicating traditional recipes, chefs are now enhancing the dining experience with use of storytelling, theatrical presentations, molecular gastronomy applications and sensory cues. The reviewed articles discussed various multi-sensory techniques, such as sound, plating aesthetics, and themed service rituals, to enhance memory and emotional engagement. Rather than being merely a consumption act, this method reflects a deeper understanding of dining as an immersive, cultural, and narratively driven experience (Başkaya Sezer et al., 2024; Yarış & Arıcı, 2023; Yılmaz et al., 2025).

Conclusion

The purpose of this review is to critically interpreting the existing body of knowledge for a conceptual understanding of emerging menu trends as well as laying down the conceptual gaps and future direction. The literature iden-

tifies six thematic concentrations representing the evolving gastronomic ecosystem in Türkiye. The main highlight of 2023–2025 publications is the transition of culinary heritage from a static tradition to a primary anchor for technological and sustainable experimentation. Another important outcome of the review is the emphasis on preservation of culinary culture through modernization instead of pure innovation. This transformation could be interpreted as the future success of the Turkish gastronomy relying on successful integration of technology to protect local values and identity in a globalized market rather than adopting the most technology in planning menus. Thus, foodservice professionals should treat these trends as inseparable from their operation and create authentic yet modernized menus to enhance emotional engagement of their customers.

Results indicate that scholars define popular food and beverage menu strategies as inclusion of indigenous and/or geographically indicated products in menus, classic recipes with healthy ingredient substitutions, sustainability-driven practices, technology integration, artistic visual food presentation and service styles, and experiential reinterpretation of traditional dishes.

There is a shift from static, product-focused menu planning to a more dynamic, multidisciplinary approach that considers consumer psychology, cultural narratives, technological advancements, and sustainability requirements indicated by all six of these themes. Moreover, the reviewed articles show that the success of foodservice professionals in menu development in the future will depend on their capacity to integrate these themes with a holistic approach; striking a balance between operational efficiency and experiential richness, authenticity and innovation. This comprehensive synthesis offers practitioners a strategic guide and a map of current scholarly thinking to help them adapt to a rapidly changing gastronomic environment.

This study helps understanding the cultural, sustainable, and aesthetic dimensions of menu trends and food and beverage planning by reviewing Turkish gastronomy literature. The findings show that Türkiye's gastronomy academia is engaging with global trends while also emphasizing its culinary heritage. There is an emphasis about traditional values and contemporary technologies coming together to transform menus into instruments of strategic branding, health promotion, and storytelling. However, there seems to be limited inclusion of digital innovation, AI personalization, food design and service research which point research areas that could be expanded upon in future studies.

As a conclusion, Turkish gastronomy journals contribute valuable qualitative insights into how traditional and sustainability values can be integrated into menus and food & beverage planning. Yet, some of topics that dominate global discourse as functional foods, AI-assisted planning systems, and plant-based innovations are noticeably lacking or underrepresented in reviewed journals. Furthermore, while aesthetics and experiential dining is discussed, there is a scarcity of research on consumer perception and/or acceptance to digital menus, alternative foods, new diets or technology-driven personalization. Thus research into food design, AI-driven practices, dietary innovations like vegan or alternative protein offerings, and consumer acceptance of new products and/or healthier substitutes could expand the scope of gastronomy studies.

The generalizability of current findings is limited by the absence of large-scale consumer data or mixed-methods empirical research. So future research should examine consumer perceptions, cross-cultural comparisons, and the cost-benefit analysis of innovation in Turkish foodservice operations to address the acceptance gap. Since authenticity is highly valued by Turkish diners,

practitioners should also execute pilot consumer behavior researches before implementing technology-driven personalization. Gastronomy education should also emphasize design thinking, modernization of traditional recipes, Turkish food culture, sustainability and technology adaptations besides technical skills.

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