

USING TURKISH SOAP OPERAS (TV SERIES) AS A MARKETING COMMUNICATION TOOL: A RESEARCH ON TURKISH SOAP OPERAS IN KAZAKHSTAN

Niyazi GÜMÜŞ

Yrd. Doç. Dr., Kastamonu Üniversitesi, İİBF, ngumus@kastamonu.edu.tr

Gülzira ZHAXYGLOVA

Yrd. Doç. Dr., Kastamonu Üniversitesi, İİBF, gzhaxygulova@kastamonu.edu.tr

Maiya MİRZABEKOVA

Öğr.Gör., Kastamonu Üniversitesi, Turizm Fakültesi, melekmaiya@mail.ru

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ABSTRACT

In order to survive in the highly-competitive environment and to reach as many consumers as possible, brands make changes in the marketing communication tools they employ. Presently television soap operas (TV series) are decidedly one of the most effective marketing communication channels frequently utilized by brands. Via placing their products in soap operas or endorsing the television characters with their brand or products, modern brands seek to impress the consumers. Within that context, Turkish soap operas have lately gained much popularity in a good number of regional states particularly Middle Eastern, Balkans and Caucasus countries. It is thus the purpose of present study to analyze using Turkish soap operas aired as a marketing communication tool in Kazakhstan and investigate its effects. The face-to-face interview concocted within the scope of this research was conducted between 1-25 March 2016 among 186 citizens residing in Kazakhstan- Almaty city and were selected via convenience sampling method.

Keywords: Turkish soap operas, marketing communication, product placement, Kazakhstan

TÜRK DİZİLERİNİN PAZARLAMA İLETİŞİM ARACI OLARAK KULLANILMASI: KAZAKİSTAN'DAKİ TÜRK DİZİLERİ ÜZERİNDE BİR ARAŞTIRMA

ÖZ

Markalar, yaşadıkları yoğun rekabet karşısında ayakta kalabilmek ve daha fazla tüketiciye ulaşabilmek için kullandıkları pazarlama iletişim araçlarında değişiklik yapmaktadırlar. Günümüzde markaların yararlandığı pazarlama iletişim mecralarından biri de şüphesiz Televizyon dizileri olmaktadır. Markalar, dizilerde kullandıkları ürün yerleştirme uygulamaları ile ya da marka ya da ürünleri dizi karakterlerine kullandırmak suretiyle tüketicileri etkileme arayışı içine girmektedirler. Bu kapsamda son yıllarda çok sayıda Türk dizisi özellikle Ortadoğu, Balkanlar ve Kafkaslar olmak üzere çok sayıda bölge ülkesinden talep görmektedir. Bu doğrultuda araştırmanın amacı Kazakistan'da gösterilen Türk dizilerinin pazarlama iletişimi aracı olarak kullanılması ve etkilerini öğrenmektir. Araştırma kapsamında hazırlanan anket 1-25 Mart 2016 tarihleri arasında Kazakistan'ın Almatı şehrinde yaşayan ve kolayda örnekleme yöntemi ile seçilen 186 kişiye yüz yüze uygulanmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Türk dizileri, pazarlama iletişimi, ürün yerleştirme, Kazakistan

INTRODUCTION

By virtue of the high rating figures they have, television soap operas directly reach a large number of viewers and with respect to marketing they might also be influential in purchase decisions. Brands resort to product placement practices, particularly in popular soap operas, so as to raise a positive perception for their brand among the consumers. Television soap operas have only limited effects among national scale viewers whilst when aired in different countries, soap operas can facilitate advertising national brands and also promote natural treasures as well as social, economic and cultural structure of one nation to citizens of different nations. From that viewpoint it goes without saying that soap operas bear huge responsibility in the promotion of a country.

In parallel with the economic development and stability Turkey has recently maintained and risen as the authorized country in its immediate geographical region, it commenced to export a number of television soap operas to other countries. It has been confirmed that exported Turkish soap operas play critical role in the promotion of Turkey and Turkish culture. With such an attribution Turkish soap operas are defined in a number of analyses as Turkey's "soft power" (Arbatli and Kurar, 2015: 38; Deniz, 2010: 52).

Within the scope of present study, with the preliminary purpose of detecting the use of Turkish soap operas as a marketing communication tool in our sister country-Kazakhstan, below listed questions have been sought for answers;

- Which Turkish soap operas are watched in Kazakhstan and why?
- Which elements are remarkable in Turkish soap operas?
- Do Turkish soap operas contribute to historical and cultural promotion of Turkey?
- Do Turkish soap operas contribute to the promotion of product and brands placed in soap operas?

TV SOAP OPERAS AS A MARKETING COMMUNICATION TOOL

The use of television series as a marketing communication tool is important with the reason for that traditional television commercials can be changed by the audience, doing another work during the advertisement or recording the program and watching the ad-free version. These behaviors of audience indicate an important problem for advertisers. In this context the declining activity of traditional advertising has led to an increased interest in strategies for placing products in media products. (Marchand et al., 2015). Product placement practices have helped the advertiser who wants to overcome this problem. The first practice which was started with the appearance of cigarette brands in 1920s Hollywood movies was used by Procter & Gamble in the 1930s. Later, due to poorly regulated initiatives and negative publicity for the commercialization of the media content, it has not been much preferred for a while. Later, due to poorly regulated initiatives and negative publicity for the commercialization of the media content, it has not been much preferred for a while. But product

placement practices began to be preferred again in the 1960-70, in the 1980s and 1990s. As a result, it can be said that it started to be used with E.T in Hollywood in 1982 for the first time as professional and planned (Odabasi and Oyman, 2007: 77; Kit and Qui P'ng, 2014: 138; Williams and others, 2011).

In the 2000s, Bond films came to the forefront with products placed. For instance Heineken, Virgin Atlantic, Coca-Cola, Smirnoff and, of course, Ford, Omega, Sony and Aston Martin are examples of these brands in Quantum of Solace (Wilson et al., 2008). But a new agreement with the British private jet company Ocean Sky has probably been the biggest sponsorship agreement. Product placement applications are used mainly in feature films, TV series or programs, video clips and games extensively. But at this point it seems that the most commonly used product placement media are TV series (Sapmaz and Tolon, 2014). Odabaşı and Oyman (2007: 377) define the concept of brand placement as a paid message that aims to influence the audience by placing a branded product in a film or television program in a planned and inconspicuous manner since the placement is not a product but a brand. In another study, it is expressed that companies ensure the product or brand name to be shown for a certain period of time during movie, series, etc. display by movies, series or television producers or licensees (Kit and Qui P'ng, 2014). In another study, the issue was approached with a different perspective, and the product placement was defined as a way to reduce the costs and risks for the cinema producing industry and make a cost effective investment for advertisers (Carvalho et al., 2008).

As of 1995 TV soap operas started to be broadcast in the prime time band of a good number of channels. Today on the other hand in almost all channels a range of soap operas are aired. There has been a steady rise in the number of television soap operas providing tremendous advertisement revenues to brands and this effect is created with the spread of soap operas to a wider section of community. With the help of protagonists (star characters) in soap operas, it becomes much easier to adopt values unique to consumption culture, consumption patterns, lifestyles, gender roles and miscellaneous personality traits presented to TV viewers (Aydın, 2014: 6274).

TV series provide information about consumptive lifestyles to individuals through beautiful houses, eye-brightening clothes, expensive cars, valuable gifts, jewelry, and parties. Through the series audiences are invited to desire exaggerated clothes, homes, jewels, and everything about wealth in short, ask and consume this rich life (Kula, 2012: 508). In other words, popular culture products that modern people can consume on this area are determined by mass media and presented to consumers (Güllüoğlu, 2012).

It is identified that studies dealing with using TV soap operas as a marketing communication tool have been analyzed with respect to two dimensions the first of which is product placement practices. Product placement concept is defined such; Product placement practice is, in return for a given price, a type of commercial communication that places in a visually and/or audio-visually detectable way the signs of a brand/institution within the context of an entertainment media. Product placement has been classified

as visual product placement, audio or oral product placement and audio/visual product placement (Çakır and Kınıt, 2014: 21).

According to Russell, there are three types of product placement: visual, verbal and story line. Visual placement is appearance of the brand on the screen. Screen placements can have different levels depending on the number of images on the screen, the style of the product-oriented camera and the like factors. Verbal placement refers to usage of the brand name in the dialogs. Voice tone, place in the dialog and the character that spoke the brand is important in such placements. Finally, a story line placement is placing the brand into the story (Russell, 2002:307). Gupta and Lord (1998) studied product placement applications in a two-dimensional approach. These dimensions in categorization are the presentation of the mark and the visibility of the mark. Placements according to presentation are classified as visual, only auditory and both visual and auditory placement of the brand. In another study, usage of the product by the characters of movie/serial is expressed as active product placement, display of the product or the brand while shooting of the movie or TV program is expressed as passive placement (Jan and Martina, 2013).

In product placements, the places in which films and soap operas are filmed have been termed as destination placement aside from audio & visual product placements. Using destinations as product placement in films and soap operas creates a positive image on a particular destination against its rivals in this highly-competitive tourism industry and also assists in promoting long-term popularity for the destination. It is particularly true that destinations placed in historical films play effective role in an international arena (Yılmaz and Yolal, 2008: 188). Studies manifested that the image largely affecting destination preferences of tourists has strongly been structured by soap operas thereby impacting viewers' purchase decisions (Şahbaz and Kılıçer, 2009: 47)

In product placement studies the second practice is aimed to meet the brands with target mass via popular characters of soap operas. Celebrities have, at all times, been a subject of wonder; hence their daily routines, physical image, apparel, products they use, private lives etc. are a source of inspiration for many viewers. In the eyes of general public athletes, models, singers, writers, politicians, soap opera actors/actresses are model figures who may have been effective players in viewers' purchase decisions (Altuna and Arslan, 2014: 188).

In a study delving into the effects of product placement practices on consumers' attitudes towards a brand it was manifested that positive product placement practices contributed to adopting a positive attitude towards advertised brands (Başgöze and Kazancı, 2014: 47). In another study on effect of product placement on consumer behaviors, it was found that product placement is more effective in increasing brand awareness and brand recognition than directly influencing consumers' purchase decisions, and the placement must be made gracefully to avoid disturbing the audience and very prominent brands and products are not accepted (Kit and Qui P'ng, 2014). Again, in a similar study it was

found that product placement practices are less annoying than traditional ads and influence consumer attitudes more positively than traditional advertising. In the same study it is suggested that brands should consider product placement applications as a part of marketing communication mix (Carvalho et al., 2008). Advantages of product placement applications are listed below (Corniani, 2001; Baş, 2013);

- A pre-arranged "emphasis effect";
- The planned appearance of the products and brands;
- Development of an active audience interest;
- Product and brand intensity at a predetermined level;
- High audience segmentation;
- The opportunity to present product categories for which advertising restrictions and limits might be applied;
- Ensure that the message required to be given in practice is given not only during the advertising campaign but also every watch.
- An actor that will never play in the commercial film (celebrity endorsement) of a product under normal conditions, can be pronounced the brand name in his replica or used the product.

In addition to the advantages mentioned above product placement shows to consumers how to use products in everyday life, creates sense of reality, brings prestige to the brand by product usage of famous and popular players, is a 'less aggressive and softer' promotional activity than the ad, and provides possibility of screening the product placed program in different countries repeatedly at different times in different channels (Ateşalp and Taşdemir, 2014). There are some weak points in addition to the positive aspects mentioned above for product placement applications. For example, there are lack of detailed information about the product, and shortcomings such as where the product or brand will be placed in the program (Odabaşı and Oyman, 2007:380). Product placement that has a significant advantage over advertising is a preferred application via creating positive values for audience and advertiser in the integrated marketing communication process. But joint action by the sectoral units, creative approach and professional process management are required for development of the product placement practices and mutual benefit of the parties (Sapmaz ve Tolon, 2014: 42). In addition, the appearance of a product with loved actors in films, series, or television programs can contribute to the persuasiveness and sincerity of the message that want to be given to the audience. In this context, the return rate and the fact that whether the message actually reaches the audience is an important consideration matter. Momentarily minute based measurement of the TV watching rates can positively influence the evaluation of these applications. As a result, the most suitable strategies will increase the benefits they will gain by considering these situations which may cause negative perceptions by advertisers, and by considering the personality, lifestyle and cultural characteristics of the target group (Öztürk and Okumuş, 2010: 27). Brands should not think that they will have the advantage and

disadvantage mentioned above of the product placements in a day and not forgot that this is a long term process as a part of integrated marketing efforts of the brands (Jan and Martina, 2013).

TURKISH SOAP OPERAS IN KAZAKHSTAN

Turkey, by means of the regional and economical power it possesses, has become a rising authority in its immediate region and globe. Turkey's growing attraction bolstered the demand for Turkish soap operas among regional states seeking to know Turkey better. In parallel with globalization too soap operas have now become salient components of international trade just as goods and services and compared to the past there are now greater numbers of soap operas aired in higher number of countries among which Kazakhstan takes the front line. The fact is Kazakhstan was the first country with the longest list of Turkish soap operas (42) aired on TV in 2011 (turkelpress, 2011). Next to Kazakhstan Turkish soap operas are aired circa 75 countries including Africa and can reach over 400 million viewers and provide a profit of 150 million dollars to film producers (www.aljazeera.com.tr, 2014). The Turkish series, which attracted audiences especially from the Turkic Republics, the Middle East and the Balkans, have spread to other countries in recent years. The Turkish series that entered the Ukrainian, Pakistani, Russian and Chinese markets last year, now generate export revenue by reaching the audience mass in more than fifty countries (Karlıdağ and Bulut, 2014: 76).

In Kazakhstan which met the TV first in Almaty in 1958, program languages were 40% Kazakh 60% Russian. KTK, the first private TV channel, started its broadcasting life after independence in 1993. Apart from Tan-TV and TVIN, which have more limited broadcasting, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, local cable and terrestrial commercial channels located in approximately 12 regional centers of the country are also broadcasting in this period besides the channels of Russia. At the beginning of the 2000's, franchising series, entertainment programs, competition programs are mainly broadcast on these channels (Thomas, 2010).

Turkey's soap opera exportation to Kazakhstan commenced in 2011 with "Deli Yürek" (Crazy Heart) TV series (soap opera) (Karahana, 2012). By means of Turkish soap operas in Kazakhstan these two sister countries get a chance to better know each other, hence their cultural & social partnership the foremost of which is in economic integration can exponentially rise. Turkey, thanks to its exported soap operas, can grab a share to promote its historical and cultural features and can also advertise commercial products and brands placed in soap operas. Also touristic and commercial products shown in soap operas can promulgate an international demand that could positively affect Turkish economy.

METHODOLOGY

Within the scope of current research conducted between 01-25 March to determine the effects of Turkish soap operas as a marketing communication tool on TV viewers in Kazakhstan, face-to-face interviews were distributed among 220 participants selected via convenience sampling method in

Kazakhstan/ Almaty. Nevertheless 34 interview forms were excluded from the research due to incompletely-filled data. Analyses were based on the data collected from a total of 186 interviews. In the first part of this interview form with two sections, demographic questions are present and in the second part there are evaluation statements on Turkish soap operas. Statements in the second part have been adapted from image scale used by Şahbaz and Kılıçer (2009). To ensure that questions are correctly construed by respondents, interview form was translated into Kazakh and Russian languages.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This part exemplifies analysis of the data collected within the scope of research and interpretation of the findings obtained at the end of analysis. Firstly demographic features of participants are examined; next evaluations of participants on Turkish soap operas are investigated.

Demographic Features

Table 1. Demographic Features of Participants

Gender	N	%	Average Monthly Income	N	%
Male	40	21,5	Below 30.000 Tenge	18	9,7
Female	146	78,5	31000-50000 Tenge	31	16,7
Age	N	%	51000-70000 Tenge	24	12,9
18-25	56	30,1	71000-90000 Tenge	39	21
26-35	49	26,3	91000-110000 Tenge	44	23,7
36-45	35	18,8	111000 Tenge and above	30	16,1
46-55	29	15,6	Education level	N	%
56 and above	17	9,1	Elementary education	33	17,7
Total	186	100	High school	49	26,3
			University	91	48,9
			Master's	13	7
			Total	186	100

Table 1 demonstrates demographic features of participants. As seen in the table, the majority of 186 participants were basically females and participants were aged between 18-25. With respect to income level 91,000-110,000 Tenge constituted the largest portion. Lastly as education level of participants analyzed it was seen that university graduates constituted a wider segment.

Habits of Watching Soap Opera

Table 2. Participants' Views on Turkish Soap Operas

How many hours do you watch TV in a day?	N	%	How many TV Soap operas do you follow?	N	%
Below 1 hour	39	21,0	I never watch	43	23,1
Between 1-2 hours	75	40,3	I rarely watch	56	30,1
Between 3-4 hours	52	28,0	1-2 soap operas	59	31,7
Between 5-6 hours	13	7,0	3-4 soap operas	24	12,9
Above 7 hours	7	3,8	Above 5 soap operas	4	2,2
What do you watch most on TV?	N	%	What things attract you most in Turkish soap	N	%

			operas?		
News	111	59,7	Nature and Climate	65	34,9
Soap operas	47	25,3	Turkish People's life	67	36,0
Other	12	6,5	Turkish History	24	12,9
Documentaries	7	3,8	Furniture & Decoration of the house where soap opera is filmed	23	12,4
Sport Program	1	,5	Turkish music and songs	7	3,8
Entertainment Program	8	4,3	Total	186	100,0
Total	186	100,0			
What kind of TV Soap operas do you watch?			During when do you watch Turkish soap operas?		
	N	%		N	%
Dram	43	23,1	Morning	35	18,8
Comedy	89	47,8	Afternoon	34	18,3
Melodrama	36	19,4	Evening	103	55,4
Romantic	18	9,7	Night	14	7,5
Total	186	100,0	Total	186	100,0
Of which countries' soap operas do you watch?			What things about the actors/actresses attract you most in Turkish soap operas?		
	N	%		N	%
Kazakhstan	77	41,4	His/her role	84	45,2
Russian	48	25,8	His/her physical outlook	71	38,2
Turkish	51	27,4	The clothes s/he wears	19	10,2
Indian	5	2,7	His/her lifestyle	11	5,9
Korean	5	2,7	Other	1	,5
Total	186	100,0	Total	186	100,0
Would you like to live the life of a Turkish soap opera actor/actress?			Have you ever bought a product you saw in a Turkish soap opera?		
	N	%		N	%
Yes	111	59,7	Yes	114	61,3
No	69	37,1	No	72	38,7
Other	6	3,2	Total	186	100,0
Total	186	100,0			
Have you ever visited a place you saw in a Turkish soap opera?			Would you like to go to this place one day?		
	N	%		N	%
Yes	82	44,1	Yes	164	88,2
No	104	55,9	No	22	11,8
Total	186	100,0	Total	186	100,0

Table 2 details the views of participants on Turkish soap operas. As the table is analyzed it surfaces that participants watch 1-2 hours of soap operas on average and most participants follow 1-2 soap operas; the most popular TV programs are news followed by soap operas and comedy is the most popular genre; popular countries are Russia and Turkey. As for Turkish soap operas, respondents stated that the factor that draws their attention most in Turkish soap operas is Turkish people's lifestyle. It is followed by Turkey's nature and climate. Participants usually watched Turkish soap operas during evening hours. As regards the actors/actresses in Turkish soap operas the factor that draws their attention most is the role of actors/actresses. As participants were questioned about which Turkish soap operas they

followed, their responses were such; Muhteşem Yüzyıl (Great Century), Şehrazat (Scheherazade), Çilek Kokusu (Smell of Strawberries), Asi (Rebel), Kiralık aşk(Love for Rent), Yaprak Dökümü (Fall of the Leaf), Karagül (Dark Rose), Deniz Yıldızı (Starfish), Yerle Gök Arası (Between the Heaven and the Earth), Berivan, Gümüş (Silver), Zerda (Saffron) , Kara Sevda (Blind Love), Binbir Gece (A Thousand Nights), Deli Yürek (Crazy Heart), Feriha, Kuzey Güney (North and South), Paramparça (Shattered). More than half of the participants dreamed of living the life of characters and almost half of the participants reported to have visited a place they saw in a Turkish soap opera. Almost all participants shared their dream to visit the places they saw in Turkish soap operas. When participants were questioned about the places they remembered to have seen in Turkish soap operas, the list highlighted cities of İstanbul, Ankara, Antalya, Alanya, İzmir Ürgüp, Kayseri, Bodrum, Zonguldak. More than half of the participants stated to have purchased a product they saw in a Turkish soap opera. Highlighted products are furniture, jewelry, clothes, villa etc. Lastly the participants of this research were asked about which brands they recalled to have seen in Turkish soap operas and the list highlighted Beko, Arçelik, Altinyıldız, Taç, Özdilek, Kıgılı, Albeni, Adil Işık, Batik, Atasay, Ekol, Beymen, Tifany, Çilek, Tofaş, İpekyol, Metro, Aker, İnci brands.

Evaluations on Turkish Soap Operas

Table 3. Results on the Frequency Distribution of “I Find Soap Operas Filmed in Turkey Intriguing” Statement

	N	%	Cumulative percentage
I strongly disagree	17	9,1	9,1
I disagree	19	10,2	19,4
I am undecided	62	33,3	52,7
I agree	53	28,5	81,2
I strongly agree	35	18,8	100,0
Total	186	100,0	

As the results on the frequency distribution of “I Find Soap Operas Filmed in Turkey Intriguing” statement is examined it surfaces that the majority of responses are 33,3% referring to the phrase “I am undecided”. As the mean values of other statements are examined, it surfaces that participants consider Turkish soap operas to be intriguing.

Table 4. Results on the Frequency Distribution of “The Reason I Watch Soap Operas Filmed in Turkey is I Like Cultural Features of Turkey” Statement

	N	%	Cumulative percentage
I strongly disagree	12	6,5	6,5
I disagree	16	8,6	15,1
I am undecided	58	31,2	46,2
I agree	53	28,5	74,7
I strongly agree	47	25,3	100,0
Total	186	100,0	

As the results on the frequency distribution of “The Reason I Watch Soap Operas Filmed in Turkey is I Like Cultural Features of Turkey” statement is examined it surfaces that the majority of participants

agree with this statement. This finding evidences that cultural features of Turkish soap operas are a significant reason behind soap opera watching habits of participants.

Table 5. Results on the Frequency Distribution of “The Reason I Watch Soap Operas Filmed in Turkey is I Dream of Being in their Place” Statement

	N	%	Cumulative percentage
I strongly disagree	32	17,2	17,2
I disagree	9	4,8	22,0
I am undecided	65	34,9	57,0
I agree	53	28,5	85,5
I strongly agree	27	14,5	100,0
Total	186	100,0	

As the results on the frequency distribution of “The Reason I Watch Soap Operas Filmed in Turkey is I Dream of Being in their Place” statement is examined it surfaces that on average the percentage of the participants agreeing with this statement is two times more than disagreed ones. These findings also evidence that participants dream of being in the place of soap opera actors/actresses.

Table 6. Results on the Frequency Distribution of “The Reason I Watch Soap Operas Filmed in Turkey is I like their Plots” Statement

	N	%	Cumulative percentage
I strongly disagree	8	4,3	4,3
I disagree	11	5,9	10,2
I am undecided	62	33,3	43,5
I agree	50	26,9	70,4
I strongly agree	55	29,6	100,0
Total	186	100,0	

As the results on the frequency distribution of “The Reason I Watch Soap Operas Filmed in Turkey is I like their Plots” statement are examined, it surfaces that the ratio of disagreed ones is remarkably low. These findings also evidence that participants find plots of Turkish soap operas intriguing.

Table 7. Results on the Frequency Distribution of “The Reason I Watch Soap Operas filmed in Turkey is I like its Historical, Architectural and Cultural Attractions on the Background” Statement

	N	%	Cumulative percentage
I strongly disagree	15	8,1	8,1
I disagree	20	10,8	18,8
I am undecided	65	34,9	53,8
I agree	45	24,2	78,0
I strongly agree	41	22,0	100,0
Total	186	100,0	

The percentages in the table show that historical, architectural and cultural attractions on the background of Turkish soap operas play effective role in their popularity among viewers.

Table 8. Results on the Frequency Distribution of “Turkish Soap Operas Greatly Help Promoting Turkish Products” Statement

	N	%	Cumulative percentage
I strongly disagree	2	1,1	1,1
I disagree	6	3,2	4,3
I am undecided	145	78,0	82,3
I agree	29	15,6	97,8
I strongly agree	4	2,2	100,0
Total	186	100,0	

As the results on the frequency distribution of “Turkish Soap Operas Greatly Help Promoting Turkish Products” Statement is examined it surfaces that majority of respondents are undecided. Although the ratio of agreed ones is significantly higher than disagreed ones, it is still noteworthy that the ratio of undecided ones is also quite high.

Table 9. Results on the Frequency Distribution of “Turkish Soap Operas Remarkably Contribute to Promoting Turkey” Statement

	N	%	Cumulative percentage
I strongly disagree	2	1,1	1,1
I disagree	3	1,6	2,7
I am undecided	141	75,8	78,5
I agree	23	12,4	90,9
I strongly agree	17	9,1	100,0
Total	186	100,0	

As the results on the frequency distribution of “Turkish Soap Operas Remarkably Contribute to Promoting Turkey” statement is examined it surfaces that majority of respondents are undecided. Still the ratio of agreed ones is significantly higher than disagreed ones.

Table 10. Results on the Frequency Distribution of “Soap Operas Filmed in Turkey Remarkably Contribute to Turkey’s Positive Image” Statement

	N	%	Cumulative percentage
I strongly disagree	11	5,9	5,9
I disagree	9	4,8	10,8
I am undecided	56	30,1	40,9
I agree	62	33,3	74,2
I strongly agree	48	25,8	100,0
Total	186	100,0	

As the results on the frequency distribution of “Soap Operas Filmed in Turkey Remarkably Contribute to Turkey’s Positive Image” statement is examined it surfaces that majority of respondents agree with this statement. It can thus be argued that Turkish soap operas positively affect Turkey’s image.

Table 11. Results on the Frequency Distribution of “Using Product Placement in Turkish

Soap Operas Enables the Product to be Memorable for Consumers” Statement

	N	%	Cumulative percentage
I strongly disagree	11	5,9	5,9
I disagree	7	3,8	9,7
I am undecided	53	28,5	38,2
I agree	65	34,9	73,1
I strongly agree	50	26,9	100,0
Total	186	100,0	

As the results on the frequency distribution of “Using Product Placement in Turkish Soap Operas Enables the Product to be Memorable for Consumers” statement is examined it also surfaces that majority of respondents agree with this statement. As evidenced by high ratios, product placement plays a remarkable role in marketing communication in the view of participants.

Table 12. Results on the Frequency Distribution of “Using Product Placement in Turkish Soap Operas Enables the Viewers to Gain a Positive Perception on the Advertised Product or Brand” Statement

	N	%	Cumulative percentage
I strongly disagree	7	3,8	3,8
I disagree	14	7,5	11,3
I am undecided	54	29,0	40,3
I agree	59	31,7	72,0
I strongly agree	52	28,0	100,0
Total	186	100,0	

As demonstrated by the figures in this table majority of respondents agree with this statement. The ratio of disagreed ones is comparatively lower.

Table 13. Results on the Frequency Distribution of “If a Character in the Soap Opera is Debased by a Moral Scandal, Brand Reputation of Placed Product in a Turkish Soap Opera is Negatively Affected” Statement

	N	%	Cumulative percentage
I strongly disagree	10	5,4	5,4
I disagree	13	7,0	12,4
I am undecided	63	33,9	46,2
I agree	59	31,7	78,0
I strongly agree	41	22,0	100,0
Total	186	100,0	

It is assumed that findings of the table above also significantly offer a gist for brands. As seen in this table actors/actresses in aired soap operas are required to pay heed to the privacy of their life since a negative perception on the star might create a negative perception towards the brand reputation of placed product.

Table 14. Results on the Frequency Distribution of “Compared to other Advertisement Forms, Product Placement Practices in Turkish Soap Operas create a More Positive Effect on Consumers” Statement

	N	%	Cumulative percentage
I strongly disagree	9	4,8	4,8
I disagree	12	6,5	11,3
I am undecided	61	32,8	44,1
I agree	68	36,6	80,6
I strongly agree	36	19,4	100,0
Total	186	100,0	

As the results on the frequency distribution of “Compared to other Advertisement Forms, Product Placement Practices in Turkish Soap Operas create a More Positive Effect on Consumers” statement is examined it once again surfaces that product placement is significant in marketing communication. In creating a positive perception towards a particular brand it is seen that product placement practices fuel a more positive effect on consumers rather than TV advertisements.

Table 15. Results on the Frequency Distribution of “Product Placement Practices in Turkish Soap Operas Increase a Product’s Attraction” Statement

	N	%	Cumulative percentage
I strongly disagree	10	5,4	5,4
I disagree	10	5,4	10,8
I am undecided	51	27,4	38,2
I agree	63	33,9	72,0
I strongly agree	52	28,0	100,0
Total	186	100,0	

Results on the Frequency Distribution of “Product Placement Practices in Turkish Soap Operas Increase a Product’s Attraction” statement is examined it is detected that product placement practices significantly bolster a product’s attraction and this finding is in parallel with the previous finding.

Table 16. Results on the Frequency Distribution of “Products Used by the Characters in Turkish Soap Operas Enable the Consumers to Gain Interest towards this Product” Statement

	N	%	Cumulative percentage
I strongly disagree	13	7,0	7,0
I disagree	6	3,2	10,2
I am undecided	55	29,6	39,8
I agree	66	35,5	75,3
I strongly agree	46	24,7	100,0
Total	186	100,0	

With respect to the effect of soap opera characters on marketing communication soap opera characters play effective role to raise interest among consumers towards this product as seen on the frequency distribution of “Products Used by the Characters in Turkish Soap Operas Enable the Consumers to Gain Interest towards this Product” statement.

Table 17. Results on the Frequency Distribution of “I would like to Purchase the Products I see on my Favorite Characters in a Turkish Soap opera” Statement

	N	%	Cumulative percentage
I strongly disagree	14	7,5	7,5
I disagree	4	2,2	9,7
I am undecided	49	26,3	36,0
I agree	59	31,7	67,7
I strongly agree	60	32,3	100,0
Total	186	100,0	

With respect to the effect of soap opera characters on marketing communication more than half of the participants have a positive attitude towards purchasing a placed product as seen on the frequency distribution above.

Table 18. Results on the Frequency Distribution of “I Consider Purchasing a Product or Brand I see in a Turkish Soap Opera” Statement

	N	%	Cumulative percentage
I strongly disagree	11	5,9	5,9
I disagree	10	5,4	11,3
I am undecided	49	26,3	37,6
I agree	57	30,6	68,3
I strongly agree	59	31,7	100,0
Total	186	100,0	

As the results on the Frequency Distribution of “I Consider Purchasing a Product Brand I see in a Turkish Soap Opera” Statement is analyzed it also surfaces that a brand or product placed in a Turkish soap opera plays lead role in the preferences of Kazakh consumers.

Table 19. Results on the Frequency Distribution of “I would like to Purchase Brands Placed in Turkish Soap Operas more than Brands Advertised on TV” Statement

	N	%	Cumulative percentage
I strongly disagree	14	7,5	7,6
I disagree	1	,5	8,1
I am undecided	47	25,3	33,5
I agree	61	32,8	66,5
I strongly agree	62	33,3	100,0
Total	186	100	

Lastly as the results on the frequency distribution of “I would like to Purchase Brands Placed in Turkish Soap Operas more than Brands Advertised on TV” statement is examined it surfaces that majority of respondents agree with this statement. Only a small portion of respondents disagree.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Within the context of this study conducted to investigate the use of Turkish soap operas in Kazakhstan as a marketing communication tool, below-listed findings have been collected;

- Consisting of a sum of 186 participants totally, the majority of this research is females; mean age is between 18-25 and in terms of income level the majority of participants have an income level between 91,000-110,000 Tenge. With respect to education level university graduates represent the majority.
- As seen in the tables, participants watch 1-2 hours of TV a day and most of them follow 1-2 soap operas, the most popular television programs are news and soap operas and comedy is the most popular genre, Russian and Turkish soap operas are the most popular soap operas as per nationality.
- The most attractive factors in Turkish soap operas are highlighted as Turkish people's lifestyle followed by the nature and climate of Turkey. Participants usually watch Turkish soap operas during evening hours. As regards actors/actresses in Turkish soap operas the factor participants pay most attention is the role played by an actor/actress.
- Participants follow Turkish soap operas, Muhteşem Yüzyıl (Great Century), Şehrazat (Scheherazade), Çilek Kokusu (Smell of Strawberries), Asi (Rebel), Kiralık aşk(Love for Rent), Yaprak Dökümü (Fall of the Leaf), Karagül (Dark Rose), Deniz Yıldızı (Starfish), Yerle Gök Arası (Between the Heaven and the Earth), Berivan, Gümüş (Silver), Zerda (Saffron) , Kara Seveda (Blind Love), Binbir Gece (A Thousand Nights), Deli Yürek (Crazy Heart), Feriha, Kuzey Güney (North and South), Paramparça (Shattered).
- Participants remember the places İstanbul, Ankara, Antalya, Alanya, İzmir Ürgüp, Kayseri, Bodrum, Zonguldak etc. from Turkish soap operas they watched.
- This research manifested that more than half of the participants purchased a product they have seen in a Turkish soap opera. Highlighted purchased products are furniture, jewelry, clothes, and villa. Participants remembered from Turkish soap operas the brands; Beko, Arçelik, Altınyıldız, Taç, Özdilek, Kiğılı, Albeni, Adil Işık, Batık, Atasay, Ekol, Beymen, Tifany, Çilek, Tofaş, İpekyol, Metro, Aker, İnci etc.
- Findings of this study revealed that participants considered the plots of Turkish soap operas intriguing and cultural features of Turkish soap operas and historical, architectural and cultural attractions on the background also accounted for a determining reason behind watching soap operas.
- Participants were mostly undecided whether Turkish soap operas remarkably contributed to promoting Turkish products. Still the ratio of agreed ones was significantly higher than disagreed ones.

- It was unveiled that using product placement in Turkish soap operas enabled the product to be memorable for consumers and also product placement practices positively contributed to adopting a positive attitude towards brands.
- Likewise it was also identified that product placement practices in Turkish soap operas, compared to TV advertisements, created a more positive effect on forging a positive perception towards brands and bolstering product attraction.

To conclude it can reasonably be argued that brands and products placed in Turkish soap operas play critical role in affecting the preferences of consumers having participated in the research and can be utilized as a remarkably-effective marketing communication tool. In line with this detection to increase the effect of product placement practices and ensure their sustainability it would be a further effective method for filmmakers to be highly selective in product placement practices, to present Turkish brands and products and to select actors/actresses leading a decent private life among the public.

It is thus considered that present study is significant in terms of evidencing the contribution Turkish soap operas to Turkish culture on top and in promoting both commercial & touristic products. Further to that this study is deemed to considerably clarify economic, social and cultural agreements between both countries. Finally it is suggested that future studies are conducted to include a wider sampling size and other Turkic states for further analysis.

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