

Evaluation of Gastronomic Identity of Adana in Terms of Destination Branding¹

Adana İli Gastronomik Kimliğinin Destinasyon Markalaşması Açısından Değerlendirilmesi

Barış Vaiz DİNLER, Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University, Turkey, barsdinler@outlook.com

Orcid No: 0000-0003-0072-4861

İbrahim İLHAN, Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University, Turkey, ibrahim@nevsehir.edu.tr

Orcid No: 0000-0002-6614-9356

Aziz Gökhan ÖZKOÇ, Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University, Turkey, azizgozkoc@nevsehir.edu.tr

Orcid No: 0000-0001-8420-8228

Abstract: The aim of this study is to understand the local gastronomic elements of destinations in the branding process of destinations. To achieve this goal, Adana province, which has a large kitchen culture in Turkey is chosen. Although there are studies related to destination branding process of Adana province in the literature review, no study has been found to determine the place of gastronomic elements in the branding process. This study is important for eliminating this gap. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, it was deemed appropriate to use the questionnaire method. The questionnaire was applied to the visitors who participated in the "Adana Flavor Festival" and experienced, the one of the local gastronomic element called, "Adana Kebabi". 298 observations were obtained in the study. The observations obtained were subjected to frequency, percentage, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, reliability and correlation analysis. In the analyzes; It was found that the perception of destination branding of Adana province is high, the image perception of Adana kebab is very high and image of Adana kebab has a moderate positive relationship with the branding process of Adana province.

Keywords: Destination, Branding, Local Gastronomy

JEL Classification: L83, L66, M39

Özet: Bu çalışmanın amacı destinasyonların sahip olduğu yerel gastronomik unsurların, destinasyonların markalaşma sürecindeki yerini anlamaktır. Bu amaca ulaşabilmek için, Türkiye'de geniş bir mutfak kültürüne sahip illerden biri olan Adana ili seçilmiştir. Yapılan yazın taramasında Adana ilinin destinasyon markalaşması süreci ile ilgili çalışmalar yer alsa da içinde barındırdığı gastronomik unsurların markalaşma sürecinde yerini belirleyen bir çalışmaya rastlanılmamıştır. Bu çalışma bu boşluğu giderme açısından önem arz etmektedir. Çalışmanın amaçlarına ulaşması için anket yönteminin kullanılması uygun görülmüştür. Hazırlanan anket formu, Adana ilinde düzenlenen "Adana Lezzet Festivaline" katılan ve "Adana Kebabı" deneyimleyen ziyaretçilere uygulanmıştır. Araştırmada 298 veri elde edilmiştir. Elde edilen veriler, frekans, yüzde, aritmetik ortalama, standart sapma, güvenilirlik ve kolerasyon analizlerine tabi tutulmuştur. Yapılan analizlerde; Adana ilinin destinasyon markalaşması algısının yüksek, Adana kebabının imaj algısının ise çok yüksek düzeyde olduğu ve Adana kebabının, Adana ilinin markalaşma süreciyle orta seviyede pozitif yönlü bir ilişkisi olduğu tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Destinasyon, Markalaşma, Yerel Gastronomi

JEL Sınıflandırması: L83, L66, M39

1. Introduction

Destinations are complex products that consists of the whole of direct or indirect tourism services provided by many institutions and organizations that attract and host tourists with its

¹ Compiled from the Barış Vaiz Dinler's thesis of the same name.

Makale Geçmişi / Article History

Başvuru Tarihi / Date of Application : 28 Eylül / September 2020

Kabul Tarihi / Acceptance Date : 9 Aralık / December 2020

various tourism resources. Due to these features, destinations are the main products of tourism, but they are also the most difficult tourist products to manage and market (Özdemir, 2014: 3). Achieving success in the marketing of destinations takes place with the representation of the most correct combinations. One of these combinations is branding (Goeldner et al., 2000 Cited from Özdemir, 2014: 109-110).

There are many definitions for brand; a name, sign and symbol that distinguishes it from competitors in some ways by its consumers and reveals the distinctive features of the product (Babat, 2012: 1), definitions consumers make regarding what they hear, see, read, watch or experience firsthand about products or services (Bozkurt, 2014: 47), 'A label covering many things related to an object in order to provide information and associate with its (Tosun, 2014), logo or any symbol that identifies the manufacturer and the seller, promises to provide the consumer with various product-related features, benefits and services, also protects them from competitors that look like the same product, and differentiates them (Kotler, 2000: 188; Aaker, 1991). When the definitions of the brand are examined, it is seen that there is essentially a tool (label, logo, symbol, etc.) that performs the functions of 'differentiation', 'identification' and 'positioning'.

Based on the definition of branding, destination branding can be defined as conveying its unique identity to visitors by differentiating it from other destinations in the market. (Qu, Kim & Im, 2011: 43). In addition, the destination brand; is the ability to convey the promise of a unique and unforgettable holiday experience related to the destination (Kerr, acted from 2006. Çetinsöz & Son, 2017: 1003). It can be said that destinations aim to be a brand in order to make tourists realize this differentiation (Unur & Çetin, 2017: 64). It is often possible to find information in the literature that destination branding is more difficult than branding of other products due to differences between destinations and other products (Baker & Cameron, 2008; Pike, 2005; Fan, 2005; Morgan, Pritchard & Pride, 2004). All destinations are unique and every destination has an attraction that differs from other destinations. One of these attractions is the local gastronomic elements.

In the fact that local gastronomic elements are the attraction of a destination, production and consumption forms (raw material usage, agricultural methods, processed foods, restaurant dishes, local cooking methods, emotional characteristics, cultural heritage). These features create an attraction to the destination when original, instructive and creative tourism experiences are added with elements such as rural life, natural beauties, outdoor recreation. By attracting more visitors and investors to the destination with these attractions, they will help the development of a destination as a brand (Yıldız, 2015: 25-26). Foods and beverages

are elements that can be considered in the culture category of a destination. Like every element in a person's daily life cycles, eating and drinking behavior is a part of their culture (Delamont, 1994: 37 act. Fox, 2007). The role of gastronomic elements in the choice of destination may be a determining factor for the tourist coming to that destination, rather than whether it is the main attraction of the destination. The reason for this is that eating and drinking behavior, which is a behavior that people do regularly, continues during the travel (Somos & Li, 2016: 18). In addition, the consumption of gastronomic products increases the satisfaction of tourists other than their travel purposes and serves as a social purpose (Henderson, 2009: 317). In recent years, increased competition among destinations has led to the development of different attractions to attract the attention of potential tourists. Gastronomic elements are also frequently used in recent years as an attraction for a destination (Lin, Pearson & Cai, 2011: 30). Gastronomy tourism is based on the branding of destinations for market leverage and promotion. Thus, rural areas, where gastronomy tourism can be experienced in the best way, are important sources of differentiation for destinations. However, one of the important parts of a destination's culture is the kitchen (Hall & Sharples, 2003: 10). In order to use the gastronomic resources available to a destination, first it will have to work on the factors that affect the quality of life of the local people, such as infrastructure, traffic flow, safety etc. (Williams, Williams & Omar, 2013: 9).

The aim of this study is to determine the effect of unique local gastronomic elements in the branding processes of the destinations, each of which is located in the destinations. Destinations are considered to have a share in the local food and beverage in destinations branding processes. Therefore, in this study; Adana Kebab, which is one of the local gastronomic resources of Adana province, aims to determine the place of Adana province in the branding process.

2. Method

2.1. Hypotheses

The hypotheses to be tested in this research can be listed as follows;

- H1: Participants' has a positive perception about destination branding of Adana region
- H2: Participants' developed a positive image for the local gastronomic element, Adana kebab,
- H3: There is a significant relationship between the image perceived by the Adana kebab and the branding perceptions of Adana destination.

2.2. Population and Samples

The population of the research is composed of local visitors participating in Adana flavor festival took place at the 12th, 13rd, 14th of October 2018, and the samples are gathered from the participants who experienced Adana kebab. The reasons for this can be listed as follow;

- Being a gastronomic festival
- Mostly includes local gastronomic identity values
- Assuming that the number of samples is easier to reach
- Having assumptions that both the expressions regarding destination branding and the expressions about the local gastronomic element will be more reliable.

To ensure the reliability of the answers to be given in this study and to ensure the questionnaires are filled completely without errors ‘Convenience sampling’ has been selected as the sampling method. In this sampling technique, researcher tries to collect data from the easiest and most accessible subjects until he/she reaches the number of samples he/she needs for his/her study (Gürbüz & Şahin, 2016: 134). The number of local visitors participated in the festival is unknown. In cases where the number of population is unknown, the formula of $n = t^2 p q / d^2$ is used when determining the sample volume (Yazıcıoğlu & Erdoğan, 2014: 86). In this study, confidence interval was accepted as 95% ($\alpha = 0.05$) and it was accepted to contain $d = 0.05$ as a sample error. Assuming that the main mass is completely heterogeneous, the probability of occurrence (p) is considered as 0.5. The probability of the opposite event not happening is calculated as $q = 1 - p$. In this sense, p and q values are accepted as 0.5. Finally, the theoretical value (t) 0.5 confidence interval and degree of freedom are taken from the t table as 1.96 at the level of $N = \infty$ (Yazıcıoğlu & Erdoğan, 2014: 438). As a result of the mathematical operations, the number of samples to be reached was determined to be $N = 384.16 \Rightarrow 384$. In addition, the fact that the festival has lasted 3 days and some visitors did not want to participate in the survey made it difficult to reach the sample size. For this reason, 362 samples were reached during the festival.

2.3. Obtaining Data

Survey method used as data obtaining tool. The survey form of the research Kılıçhan & Köşker (2015) applied in the study of Van breakfast, which is specific to province of Van; A questionnaire form prepared by Qu, Kim & Im (2011) and Yergaliyeva (2011). Survey forms were handed out to visitors attending the festival. The applied survey consists of 3 parts. In the first part, 11 questions are included to determine the demographic characteristics of the participants. In the second part of the survey, there are statements about Adana province consist of 25 questions in order to evaluate the destination branding process of Adana

province through the eyes of the visitors. In the third and last part of the questionnaire, there are 15 expressions about “Adana Kebab”, a local gastronomic product specific to the region. The second and third part of the questionnaire form consist of a 5-point Likert scale and there is no open-ended questions. In the first part of the survey form, many of the demographic information (occupation, age, income, place of residence, number of arrivals in Adana province and other options) were asked open-ended. In order not to affect validity and reliability, participants were asked where they originally lived before the survey was given. Questionnaires of the participants who live in the research region and the participants who selected more than one option in the second or third part of the questionnaire and the participants who skipped a question are all considered as invalid. In this context total of 362 questionnaires distributed and 298 were found to be suitable for analysis. The questionnaire forms were distributed by hand, and were waited until they filled both in order to prevent the papers from disappearing and against a question mark in the minds of the participants when answering.

2.4. Reliability of Measurement and Distribution of Data

Before the data was resolved, it was checked whether the data collected by the questionnaire was within the specified limits and whether it contained any errors. Firstly, the reliability measurement of the research was made and it was determined that the Cronbach’s Alpha value of the destination branding scale was 0.926 and the Cronbach's Alpha value of the local gastronomic element scale was 0.942. According to value range given below, both measurements are highly reliable (Özdamar, 1999: 522):

- The scale is unreliable when $00 \leq (\alpha) \leq 0.40$.
- When $0.41 \leq (\alpha) \leq 0.60$, the scale is of low reliability.
- When $0.61 \leq (\alpha) \leq 0.80$, the scale is moderately reliable.
- When $0.81 \leq (\alpha) \leq 1.00$, the scale is highly reliable

Table 1. Scales and Reliability Coefficients Used in the Research

Scales	Number of Statements	Cronbach Alpha(α)
City Brand	25	0,926
Local Gastronomic Element	15	0,942

Normality test was performed before deciding on the which analyzes to be applied. Data on normality test are given in.

Table 2. Normality Distribution

Descriptive Statistical Datas			
Statements		Statistic	Standart deviation
City Brand	Skewness	-,598	,141
	Kurtosis	1,327	,281
Local Gastronomical Element	Skewness	-2,064	,141
	Kurtosis	6,610	,281

In the generally accepted opinions about the normal distribution of data, skewness and kurtosis values are examined. In some sources these values are distributed between +1.0 and -1.0 (Hair et al. 2014: 34), between +1.5 and -1.5 (Tabachnick & Fidel, 2013: 79) or between +2.0 and -2.0 (George & Mallery, 2010: 21-22). In addition, it is stated that the data is normally distributed when the skewness value is less than 3 and the kurtosis value is less than 8 (Kline, 1998: 63). Looking at the values in the table, it is seen that they are in the range that Kline (1998) suggests. In this sense, it can be said that the data is normally distributed.

2.5. Limitations and Assumptions

As with most researches in the social sciences, there are some limitations in this research. Due to the constraints in terms of time and cost, the study was held in “2nd Adana Flavor Festival” which has been organized in Adana every year. The study is limited to the opinions of the visitors participating in the research. The biggest limitation of the research is undoubtedly the time constraint. As the sample frame selection has been the “2nd Adana Flavor Festival” held in Adana between 12/10/2018 and 14/10/2018 caused the perform of the surveys in three days.

The assumptions of this research can be stated as follows;

1. The sample used represents the research population
2. The answers given by the respondents to the questionnaire were correct and true.
3. They know the gastronomic element used in the research and respond accordingly.
4. Participants who answered the questionnaire correctly understood the questionnaire
5. Local gastronomy and local cuisine-related statements in the survey were answered by the participants without being affected by the festival environment.

2.6. Practice

Appropriate statistical programs were used in the analysis of the data. Since the scores on the scale are between 1.00 and 5.00, it is assumed that branding and local gastronomic image perception levels are high as the scores approach 5.00 and low when they approach 1.00

Table 3. Range Values of Arithmetic Averages

Value	Options	Range Values of Arithmetic Averages	Outcome
5	Strongly Agree	4,21-5,00	Very High Level
4	Agree	3,41-4,20	High Level
3	Hesitant	2,61-3,40	Middle Level
2	Disagree	1,81-2,60	Low Level
1	Strongly Disagree	1,00-1,80	Very Low Level

3. Findings

In this part of the study, the frequency analysis findings made to profile the participants and determine the brand perceptions and local gastronomic image of Adana province are included.

Table 4. Demographic Findings

Gender	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Man	190	63,8
Woman	108	36,2
Total	298	100
Marital status		
Married	160	53,7
Single	138	46,3
Total	298	100
Age		
0-18	17	5,7
19-29	105	35,2
30-40	70	23,5
41-50	67	22,5
50 and higher	39	13,1
Total	298	100
Profession		
Student	74	24,8
Worker	54	18,1
Engineer	10	3,4
Public Employee	106	35,6
Artisan	33	11,1
Unemployed	13	4,4
Retired	8	2,7
Total	298	100
Province of Residence		
Mersin	51	17,1
Niğde	24	8,1
İstanbul	22	7,4
Ankara	18	6
Konya	11	3,7
Other	167	56,0
Abroad	5	1,7
Total	298	100
İncome (Monthly)		
0-1000 TL	75	25,2
1001-2500 TL	55	18,5
2501-5000 TL	130	43,6
5001-7000 TL	19	6,4
7000 TL and higher	19	6,4
Total	298	100
Number of Visits to Adana		
First	49	16,4
Second	41	13,8
Third	44	14,8

Fourth	25	8,4
Fifth and higher	139	46,6
Total	298	100
Education Level		
Primary education	13	4,4
Secondary education	71	23,8
University (Undergraduate)	198	66,4
Postgraduate	16	5,4
Total	298	100
Other	92	30,9
Total	298	100
Source Of Information		
Previous Visit	53	17,8
Tour operator / Travel agency	10	3,4
Trade shows	22	7,4
Advertisements	2	0,7
Friends, families	125	41,9
TV/Radio	3	1
Web sites of hotel or destinations	5	1,7
News Paper/Journal/ Brochure	4	1,3
Locals	14	4,7
Other	92	30,9
Total	298	100

Table 4 shows the demographic characteristics of the participants and their aim of coming to Adana, how often they came and the source of information that made them to travel to Adana. Most of the participants are, male (63.8%) and married (53.7%). Participants are mostly between the ages of 19-29 (%35,2). In addition there is not much difference between the 30-40 age range (23.5%) and the 41-50 age range (22.5%). It can be said that participants are mostly young and middle aged group. Generally it can be seen that most of the participants are working in the public sector (35.6%). This is followed by students (24.8%). The vast majority of the visitors who answered the questionnaire are public employees and students. It was determined that the participants came from 46 different provinces in total. The first five provinces with the most frequencies are listed in the table. It was determined that the participants came mostly from Mersin (17.1%), Niğde (8.1%), Istanbul (7.4%), Ankara (6%) and Konya (3.7%). In the light of these results, visitors who traveled to Adana during the festival, mostly came from neighboring provinces, but also from distant cities such as Istanbul and Ankara. When the monthly income of the participants is analyzed, it is seen that it is generally between 2500-5000 TL (middle income) (43.6%). In addition, another majority of the participants were found to have low or no income (25.2%). In general, the participants visited Adana frequently (46.6%) (more than 5 times). When we look at the number of those who visited Adana for the first time, those who visited twice and those who visited three times, it is seen that there is not much difference between them. Participants are generally higher educated (undergraduate) (66.4%). It is seen that the mostly “other” option

was selected for the purposes of the participants to visit Adana province (30.9%). The “other” option asked open-ended in the questionnaire form. It was determined that there were more people who responded as family and relative visits for arrival purposes. Apart from this, among the answers, the purpose of arrival, such as education and participating in the festival, was specified. It is also seen that the participants came to Adana for holiday (25.8%) and business purposes (22.5%). The participants, who marked the friends and relatives option as the source of information, are in the majority (41.9%). Considering the responses given by the participants for the purpose of visiting Adana, it can be thought that the reasons to visit are spending time with family or relatives and participate in some activities. Social media is highly regarded as a source of information for the participants who marked the other option. In addition, it is stated that those who come for education, work and just attend to the festival marked this option. In addition, it is observed that among the participants, there are some visitors who came to Adana being influenced by their previous visits (17.8%).

Table 5. Ranking of factors affecting the choice of resort

Factors Affecting The Choice Of Resort	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Local Cuisine	156	17,4
Cheapness	151	16,9
City Image	132	14,8
Climate	116	13
Landscape and Natural Environment	112	12,5
Entertainment and Sports	76	8,5
Historical And Cultural Attraction	57	6,4
Safety	46	5,1
Health Facility	26	2,9
Other	22	2,5
Total	894	100

In Table 5, a ranking of the factors affecting the choice of holiday destination has been made. The data were entered into the statistics program as 3 different variables and the participants were asked to list the first 3 answers they gave. As a result of multiple response analysis, although the total number is 894, the main sample number is 298. It is seen that the first three factors affecting the participants' choice of holiday location are “local cuisine” (17.4%), “cheap” (16.9%) and “city image” (14.8%). The other option is the least marked option. This other option was left open-ended and participants were asked to write down what they thought in the field left blank. It has been found that the answers written on the other option are generally focused on “attending festivals”.

In the questionnaire applied, the descriptive statistical information of the participants' responses to the statements regarding the destination branding process of Adana province are given in table 6.

Table 6. Descriptive Statistics of the Expressions Related to the Destination Branding Process of Adana Province

Regarding Statements of Adana Province in the Destination Branding Process	N	Min	Max	\bar{x}	S.d
Has easy Access to transportation	298	1	5	3,81	1,21
Has a relaxing atmosphere	298	1	5	3,44	1,19
Prices are affordable in tourism managements	298	1	5	3,61	1,02
Has natural beauties.	298	1	5	3,99	0,92
Has green spaces, parks, promenade and recreation areas.	298	1	5	4,02	0,88
Helpful local people	298	1	5	4,13	1,01
Has archeological artifacts	298	1	5	3,53	0,91
Has historical artifacts	298	1	5	3,66	0,88
Has a local cuisine and gastronomic culture.	298	1	5	4,50	0,80
It is suitable for families with children to visit.	298	1	5	3,90	1,03
Has tourism information offices.	298	1	5	3,41	0,93
Favorable climate conditions	298	1	5	4,10	1,05
There are cultural activities and festivals	298	1	5	4,38	0,83
Has various shopping opportunities.	298	1	5	4,18	0,88
Has a clean and unspoilt environment.	298	1	5	3,53	1,16
Has advanced infrastructure facilities.	298	1	5	3,05	1,30
It is a safe and secure city.	298	1	5	3,09	1,34
Has a regular traffic flow.	298	1	5	2,90	1,28
Has a planned structure.	298	1	5	2,80	1,27
Has night life facilities.	298	1	5	3,53	1,10
Has entertainment facilities.	298	1	5	3,75	0,96
Has various recreation opportunities	298	1	5	3,56	0,96
Has quality accommodation facilities.	298	1	5	3,76	1,26
Has quality food and beverage establishments	298	1	5	4,24	0,99
There are various tour / excursion opportunities in the region	298	1	5	3,78	1,05
General Average				3,71	0,63

As it can be seen in Table 6, it has been determined that the perceptions of the participants regarding the branding of Adana province are generally at a high level (\bar{x} : 3.71 p: 0.63). In this case, the H1 hypothesis is valid. The statement “it has a planned construction” and the statement “it has a regular traffic flow” (\bar{x} : 2.90 p: 1.28) are the ones with the lowest average. The statement “it has advanced infrastructure possibilities” (\bar{x} : 3.05 p: 1.30) and “it is a safe and secure city” (\bar{x} : 3.09 p: 1.34) statements that are close to the general average but with low values.

In the questionnaire applied, the frequency distributions of the expressions about “Adana kebab as a local gastronomic product” are also shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Findings on the Effect of the Perceptions of the Participants on the Image of Adana Kebab on the Branding of the Destination

Statements about Local Gastronomical Product: Adana Kebab	N	Min	Max	\bar{x}	S.d
Adana is a gastronomy tourism region	298	1	5	4,17	0,98
Adana Kebab is an important attraction in visiting Adana.	298	1	5	4,42	0,85
There are different quality and qualification kebab salons in Adana.	298	1	5	4,43	0,88
Adana kebab is recognized	298	1	5	4,61	0,72
The quality of Adana kebab is high	298	1	5	4,56	0,76
The variety of Adana kebab is high	298	1	5	4,30	0,96
Kebab salons use cooking techniques unique to the region.	298	1	5	4,39	0,87

Kebab salons reflects the Adana culture	298	1	5	4,30	0,93
Adana Kebab is popular	298	1	5	4,54	0,83
Kebab salons gives customers a cultural experience	298	1	5	4,09	1,06
Kebab salons offer their customers gastronomic experiences to get to know Adana cuisine.	298	1	5	3,93	1,20
Easy access to kebab salons	298	1	5	4,32	0,90
Adana kebab is delicious.	298	1	5	4,63	0,75
I would like to come Adana again for Adana kebab	298	1	5	4,41	0,97
I would like to recommend my friends to come to Adana for Adana kebab.	298	1	5	4,47	0,90
General Average				4,37	0,68

As can be seen in Table 7, the general average of the expressions regarding the “perceived image of Adana kebab, which is a local gastronomic product” is very high (\bar{x} : 4,37 s.s: 0,68). In this context, H2 hypothesis was accepted. When the statements examined one by one, expressions other than the “Kebab salons offer customers gastronomic experiences for getting to know Adana cuisine” expression (\bar{x} : 3,93 pp: 1,20) are close to the general average. Expressions below the general average but close to the average are; “Kebab salons are easy to access” (\bar{x} : 4,32 ss: 0,90), “Kebab salons reflect Adana culture” (\bar{x} : 4,30 ss: 0,93), “The variety of Adana kebab is high” (\bar{x} : 4,30 ss: 0,93) and “Adana is a gastronomic tourism region” (\bar{x} : 4,17 ss: 0,98). The remaining statements are above the average.

Correlation analysis that determines whether there is a significant relationship between the image perceived by the Adana kebab and the destination branding perceptions of the participants are shown in table 8.

Table 8. Findings on the Effect of the Perceptions of the Participants on the Image of Adana Kebab on the Branding of the Destination

		Image of Local Gastronomic Element Scale
Destination Branding Scale	Pearson correlation coefficient (r)	,591
	Significance level (p)	.000
	N	298

According to Table 8, it has been determined that the perception of the local gastronomy image of the local tourists visiting Adana Flavor Festival positively affects the branding of the destinations at a “moderate” level ($p = 0.00$, $p < 0.01$, $r = 0.591$). In other words, as the perception of local tourists increases, the branding perceptions of destinations also increase. In this sense, H3 hypothesis was accepted.

4. Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to understand the place of local gastronomic elements owned by destinations in their branding process. In this study, Adana province was chosen due to its

wide culinary culture. Participants, who visited and experienced Adana kebab were 19-29 years old, consisting of public employees, has a middle income (2500-5000 TL monthly income) mostly from the surrounding provinces and has a post graduate education level.

The participants' purpose of visiting Adana is generally to spend time with their families or relatives and attending in some activities at the destination. In order to determine what kind of destination the participants prefer in the selection of their resort, from first place to third "local cuisine", "cheap" and "city image". Although the purpose of the visit to Adana and the sources of information are concentrated on the visit of friends, family and relatives, it is seen that gastronomic factors are effective in the destination choice of the visitors. In addition, the number of visits to Adana reveals the conclusion that the participants frequently visit. There is not much difference between the visitors who's visited first, second and three times visitors to Adana. Accordingly, it was determined that the visit to the destination was repeated. These results are in line with the results of the study (Yüce, 2018), where the local tourists, who came to Kastamonu, evaluated the cuisine of Kastamonu, and the importance of the local cuisine in the image of the destination of Kastamonu. In addition, based on the findings, it can be said that the city of Adana is visited frequently for local gastronomic elements and the destination is visited to experience Adana Kebab. These findings are in line with the study where Kılıçhan & Köşker (2015) measured the effect of Van breakfast on destination branding in the province of Van.

It was concluded that the general perceptions of the participants were high in Adana's destination branding process. In this sense, H₁ hypothesis was accepted. When the statements are examined one by one, it can be seen that Adana has a high perception of destination branding, but has some problems in terms of construction, traffic order, infrastructure and security. Apart from these, it can be thought that the area where the data is collected is a festival with a gastronomy theme, the statement "cultural activities and festivals are organized" with the statement "it has local cuisine and food culture", but considering the promotion of various festivals and cuisine culture held in Adana in the media, it may also be an indication that the events organized in the province and the local cuisine elements are promoted.

The general average of the statements regarding the perceived image of Adana kebab, which is a local gastronomic product, is very high. In this sense, H₂ hypothesis was accepted. It can be seen from the results, it is concluded that the perceived image related to Adana kebab is at a very high level, but the guests cannot have the cultural and gastronomic experience they expect. In the studies encountered in the literature, it has been argued that the

gastronomic presentation made with cultural and historical atmosphere in regions without a unique gastronomic identity will be effective in branding the destination (Gordin & Trabskaya, 2013). In this sense, it can be thought that meals should be served with a more cultural and historical atmosphere. Apart from this, it can be seen that participants do not see Adana province as a gastronomic destination. When the process of creating a gastronomic destination in the literature (Williams, Williams & Omar, 2013) is examined, the fact that the elements that make up the destination is not sufficient is an obstacle to being a gastronomic destination. In this sense, it can be said that the construction, traffic order, infrastructure and security deficiencies identified in the branding process of Adana province are the obstacles to this situation as the reason for the failure of Adana province to come to the fore with its gastronomic elements. It can be seen in the results that; visitors thinks Adana kebab is a important gastronomic attraction for Adana province. In demographic findings it has been concluded that the local cuisine is the first ranked factor of the destination preferences combining it with the participants repeated answer of their visits to Adana province, it can be said that Adana kebab can be used as an attraction element and may be a reason for traveling to Adana province. This result is in parallel with studies (duRand, Heath & Alberts, 2003, Göker, 2011, Selwood, 2003, Şengül, 2018) determined that the local gastronomic elements can be both a side attraction and a key attraction element for destinations. It can be seen in the results, Adana kebab is popular and well known among the visitors. Finally, It can be said that Adana kebab as a local gastronomic element has an effect both on the intention of coming back and on the intention of suggestion as well as on the loyalty of the destination. In line with these results, it has been supported in parallel with the studies in the literature that local gastronomic elements have an effect on revisiting (Kınalı, 2014).

Correlation analysis was used to determine the position of Adana kebab, which is a local gastronomic product, in the process of destination. According to the findings, there is a positive correlation between the two factors. In other words, an increase in the visitors' perception of Adana Kebab image in return increases their perception of the branding process of Adana province. In this sense, H₃ hypothesis was accepted. In line with these results, it can be used as an attraction factor in the branding of Adana kebab, which is a gastronomic element. These results are in line with the study aimed at determining the effect of local cuisine elements on visitors in the attractiveness of destinations (Şengül & Türkay, 2016), which show that gastronomic products have a place in branding of destinations.

In short; Adana kebab, which is one of the local gastronomic elements, is a resource that can be used for Adana in the destination branding process. In this sense, it is possible for

Adana to become a branded destination that stands out with its local gastronomic appeal if it pays more attention to traffic flow, security and construction issues and eliminates these negativities. It is frequently stated in the literature that the local culture is reflected and experienced in another situation where visitors will give importance to local dining experience. Therefore, it is necessary to serve Adana kebab and other gastronomic products in a more cultural way and to provide visitors with a gastronomic experience accordingly. This study can be developed with a longer and broader definition of the population for future studies. Apart from these, this issue can be approached from a wider perspective by taking the opinions of foreign tourists or tourists who are more interested in this subject. In addition, Adana kebab is considered as an example because it is a product registered with a geographical indication in this study. By conducting similar studies among other products, the place of local gastronomic elements in destination branding can be revealed more generally. Similarly, the framework can be extended by doing this type of study in other regions of Turkey.

REFERENCES

- Aaker, D. A. (1991). *Managing Brand Equity*. The Free Press., New York.
- Babat, D. (2012). Branding Cities as a Tourism Product: Case of Hatay. Master Dissertation, Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University, Graduate school of Social Sciences. [In Turkish].
- Baker, M.J., Cameron, E. (2007). Critical Success Factors İn Destination Marketing. *Tourism And Hospitality Research*, 8(2), 79-97.
- Bozkurt, İ. (2004). *İletişim Odaklı Pazarlama: Tüketiciden Müşteri Yaratmak*. Media Cat Books, İstanbul. [In Turkish].
- Çetinsöz, B. C., Son, L. (2017). The Role of The Stakeholders in The Process of Destination Branding: A Research on Silifke. The First International Congress On Future Of Tourism September 28-30 in Mersin, Turkey Conference Proceedings, pp: 1001-1015. [In Turkish].
- DuRand, G.E., Heath, E. & Alberts, N. (2003). The Role Of Local And Regional Food İn Destination Marketing: A South African Situation Analysis, *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 14(3/4), 97-112.
- Fan, Y. (2005). Branding The Nation: What İs Being Branded, *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 12(1), 5-14.
- Fox, R. (2007). Reinventing Gastronomic Identity Of Crotain Tourist Destinations, *Hospitality Managment*, (26), 546-559.
- George, D. & Mallery, M. (2010). *SPSS for Windows Step by Step: A Simple Guide and Reference, 17.0 update*. Pearson, Boston, USA.
- Gordin, V. & Trabskaya, J. (2013). The Role Of Gastronomic Brands İn Tourist Destination Promotion: The Case Of St. Petersburg, *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 9(3), 189-20.
- Göker, G. (2011). Gastronomy Tourism As A Element Of Destination Attraction (An Example Of Balıkesir) Master Dissertation, Balıkesir University, Graduate School of Social Sciences. [In Turkish].
- Gürbüz, Ş. & Şahin, F. (2016). *Sosyal Bilimlerde Araştırma Yöntemleri*, Seçkin Yayıncılık, Ankara, Turkey. [In Turkish].
- Hair, Jr J.F., William, C.B., Barry, J. B. & Rolph, E.A. (2013). *Multivariate Data Analysis*, Pearson Education Limited, Edinburgh, England.
- Hall C.M. & Sharples, L. (2003). The Consumption Of Experiences Or The Experience Of Consumption? An Introduction To The Tourism Of Taste Food Tourism Around The World. in *Development, Management And Markets*, C.M. Hall, L. Sharples, R. Mitchell, N. Macionis & B. Cambourne (Eds.), Butterworth Heinemann, Oxford, England.
- Henderson, J.C. (2009). Food tourism reviewed, *British Food Journal*, 4(111), 317-326.
- Kılıçhan, R. & Köşker, H. (2015). The Importance of Gastronomy on Destination Branding: Case of Van Breakfast, *Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies*, 3 (3), 102-115.
- Kımalı, N. (2014). The Importance Of Regional Cuisine In Touristic Attraction Power Of Destinations And A Case Of Erzurum Cuisine, Master's Dissertation, Atatürk University, Graduate School of Social Sciences. [In Turkish].
- Kline, R.B. (1998), *Principles And Practice Of Structural Equation Modelling*. The Guilford Press, NewYork.
- Kotler, P. (2000). *Marketing Management Millenium Edition*. Prentice-Hall, Inc., New Jersey.
- Lin, Y.C. & Pearson, T.E. & Cai, L.A. (2011), Food As A Form Of Destination Identity: A Tourism Destination Brand Perspective, *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 11(1), 30-48.
- Morgan, N. & Pritchard, A. & Pride, R. (2004). *Destination Branding: Creating the Unique Destination Proposition*. Elsevier, Burlington.
- Özdamar, K. (1999). *Paket Programlar ile İstatistiksel Veri Analizi 1*. Kaan Kitabevi, Eskişehir, Turkey. [In Turkish].
- Özdemir, G. (2014). *Destinasyon Yönetimi ve Pazarlaması*. (Detay Yayıncılık, Ankara). [In Turkish].
- Pike, S. (2005). Tourism Destination Branding Complexity, *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 14(4), 258-259.
- Qu, H., Kim, L.H. & Im, H. (2011). A Model Of Destination Branding: Integrating The Concepts Of The Branding And Destination İmage, *Tourism Management*, (32), 465-476.
- Selwood, J. (2003), The Lure Of Food: Food As An Attraction İn Destination Marketing. *Prairie Perspectives*, DOI: 10.1016/B978-0-7506-5503-3.50013-0.
- Somos, F. & Li, S.Y.R. (2016) Implementing Food Tourism İn Destination Branding– A Case Study Of Copenhagen, Master's Dissertation, Aalborg Universtat, The Faculty Of Humanities, Kopenhagen, Denmark.
- Şengül, S. & Türkay, O. (2016), The Role Of Local Cuisine On Destination Selection (Case Of Mudurnu), *Int. Journal of Management Economics and Business*, 12(29), 63-87.
- Şengül, S. (2018), The Impact Of Destination Gastronomy Brand Equity Components On Travel Intention (The Case Of Bolu), *AİBÜ Journal of Graduate School of Sciences*, 18(1), 1-22.
- Tabachnick, B.G. & Fidel, L.S. (2013), *Using Multivariate Statistics*, Pearson Education. Boston, USA.
- Tosun, N.B. (2014). *Marka Yönetimi*. Beta Basım A.Ş, İstanbul. [In Turkish].

- Unur, K. & Çetin, N. (2017). Local Tourists' Brand Perceptions of Kızkalesi as a Tourism Destination, *Journal of Business and Economic Studies*, 5(2), 63-79. [In Turkish]
- Williams, H.A., Williams, R.L. & Omar, M. (2014) Gastro-Tourism As Destination Branding In Emerging Markets. *Int. J. Leisure and Tourism Marketing*, 4 (1), 1-18.
- Yazıcıoğlu, Y. & Erdoğan, S. (2014). *SPSS Uygulamalı Bilimsel Araştırma Yöntemleri*. Detay Yayıncılık, Ankara. Turkey [In Turkish]
- Yergaliyeva, A. (2011), The Contribution Of The Local Cousine In The Process Of Destination Branding (A Case Study Of Restaurants In Uralsk Area), Master Dissertation, Balıkesir University, Graduate School of Social Sciences. [In Turkish].
- Yıldız, Ö. (2015). Economic Sustainability of Local Food & Beverage Production as a Tourist Attraction: The Example of Kazdağı. Ph.D. Dissertation, Dokuz Eylül University, Graduate School of Social Sciences. [In Turkish].
- Yüce, N. (2018), Importance Of Local Cusine On Destination Image: Example Of Kastamonu Province. Master Dissertation, Kastamonu University, Graduate School of Social Sciences. [In Turkish].