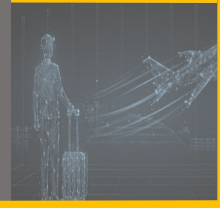




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Turizm Destinasyonu Olarak Konya Şehrinin Marka Kişiliği

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Öz

Marka kişiliği (brand personality) kişilik özelliklerinin, markalarla özdeşleştirilmesi ile ortaya çıkan bir süreçtir. Tüketicilerin belirli bir markaya bağlılık göstermelerinde marka kişiliği önem taşımaktadır, çünkü marka kişiliği satınalma kararlarını etkilemekte ve rakipler arasından seçim yapmayı sağlamaktadır. Dolayısıyla pazarlamacılar ve işletmeler bu yaklaşımı göz önüne alarak markaların hangi kişilik özelliklerinin tüketiciler gözünde geçerlik kazandığını belirlemekte ve pazarlama iletişiminde bu özellikleri ön plana çıkarmaktadırlar. Destinasyon imajı; genel imaj, destinasyon markası, ve marka kişiliği ile ilişkilendirilebilmektedir. Bu bağlantı kişilerin hayat tarzları ve değerler sistematığının bir destinasyonu seçim sürecinde kilit derecede önemli olduğunu göstermektedir. Turistin destinasyon imajı hakkındaki düşüncesi ile destinasyonun marka kişiliği ne kadar çok uyuyorsa o destinasyona ziyaretle sonuçlanacak bir davranış eğilimi gözükecektir. Bu çalışma marka ve pazarlama dünyasına tüketici maddelerinden daha çok seyahat destinasyonları açısından bakmaya çalışmıştır. Hem yerli hem de yabancı turistler nezdinde turistik destinasyon olarak Konya ilinin marka kişiliği boyutları Aaker'in (1997) ölçeğinde uygulanmış, farklılaşmaları araştırılmış, destinasyon imajı ile marka kişiliği ilişkilendirilmiş ve araştırma sonuçlarına dayanılarak ilin destinasyon olarak pazarlaması hakkında ipuçları elde edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Marka İmajı, Destinasyon, Marka Kişiliği, Destinasyon Markası, Destinasyon İmajı, Destinasyon Marka Kişiliği

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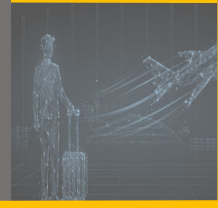
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The Brand Personality of Konya City As A Touristic Destination

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Abstract

Brand personality is a process emerging as a result of identification of personality properties with brands. Brand personality takes importance for consumers to exhibit loyalty towards a certain brand since brand personality affects decisions of purchasing and enable to make a choice between competitors. Therefore, considering this approach, marketers and enterprises determine which personality properties become valid for consumers and bring these properties into the forefront in the communication. Destination image is associated with tourist self-image when examining in the model of general image, destination brand and brand personality. This relationship shows that lifestyles of individuals and their systematics of values are of vital importance during process of choosing a destination. How much opinion of the tourist regarding destination image is in accord with his/her self-concept, tendency of behavior, which shall result in visiting that destination, shall be exhibited. This study addresses brand and marketing world in terms of travelling destinations rather than items of consumers. Dimensions of brand personality of Province of Konya, which is a touristic destination for both domestic and foreign tourists, were executed in accordance with Aaker's (1997) scale, its differentiations are investigated, the destination image is associated with tourist self-image, and based on results of the study, clues about destination marketing of the province are obtained.

Keywords: Brand Image, Destination, Brand personality, Destination Brand, Destination Image, Destination Brand Personality

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1. INTRODUCTION

Konya is one of the first inhabited cities in the history of mankind, and still contains traces of many ancient civilisations which gives it the atmosphere of a museum city. Because of its locations in the middle of the barren Anatolian steppe, it used to be one of the most important trading centres on the Silk Road. The fertile land around the city means Konya is also the heart of Turkey's grain industry, with farming a major industry. Steeped in tradition, it is one of the most conservative and religious places in the country, and best known as the adopted home of Celaleddin Rumi, the Sufic mystic who founded the Whirling Dervish sect. Today it is still a centre of Sufic practice and teaching, and one of the highlights for visitors is the Mevlâna Museum, the former lodge of the dervishes.

In this day, a group of writers assert a claim that reveals the value of branding concept aimed at developing tourist destination marketing by defining specifically branding processes of destinations. (Morgan and Pritchard 2002; Morgan, Pritchard, and Piggott 2003). Therefore, firstly some concepts has to be clearly identified in terms of tourism: Brand; all words including person names, shapes, letters, numbers, sings like forms and packages of goods that can be displayed or expressed in similar ways and can be augmented on condition that they identify a corporate's product or service and differentiate them from its competitors (Ar, 2004: 4). Destination image, generally can be defined as all mental schemas, believes and ideas of individuals about a place or destination (Baloğlu and McCleary,1999). Destination brand can be defined as "perceptions about a place that are imprinted on a tourist mind as reflected by the organizations." (Cai,2002:273).

Brand personality comes into existence by identifying personality characteristics with brands and is the answer to such question as "If the brand were a person, what kind of person would it be?" which comes out in accordance with consumers' tendency to buy products and brands that match with their own personalities. (Tıǧlı, 2003). The most effective structure for understanding brand personality; Aaker's (1997) consists of 5 main dimensions which are sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness. Under these main dimensions; it is a scale reflecting 42 personality characteristics including such adjectives as corporate, honest, friendly, cheerful, daring, rugged, lively, creative, masculine, intelligent, successful, upper class, daring, sportive and smooth etc. In this issue, Ekinci (2003) sets destination image with a trimeric model which includes general image, destination image and brand personality in destination brand and associates destination image with tourist's self-image. This association reveals that people's life styles and value systems are of key importance in choosing a destination(Ekinci 2003).

As a result, brand personality is a process that comes out by identifying personality characteristics with brands. Brand personality is very important for consumers to show brand loyalty for a specific brand, because brand personality affects buying decision and choice between the competitors (Tengilimoǧlu, Gral and Akgz, 2022). So that the marketers and companies take this approach into consideration and determines which personality characteristics gain validity among consumers and features these characteristics in marketing communications.

2. METHOD

The aim of this study is to apply brand personality dimensions of Konya as a tourist destination in the eyes of both domestic and foreign tourists in Aaker's (1997) scale, to search for the differentiation and relying on these research results to submit some recommendations about what can be done for the marketing of destination. It is aimed to answer the following question in this study.

- Whether the brand personality perception of this destination differentiate in the eyes of domestic and foreign tourists or not?

The population of the study consists of domestic and foreign tourists who have visited Konya. As it is difficult to reach all the members of population, it is preferred to sample among this population: 197 domestic tourists and 192 foreign tourists.

In this study, a six-part survey was conducted to collect data. In the survey J. Aaker's (1997) Brand Personality scale which consists of 42 questions and 5 sub- dimensions was applied. The dimensions of this scale are respectively Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication and Ruggedness.

The differentiation of the domestic and foreign tourists' perception of Konya's Brand Personality was tested with Independent Sampling t-Test.

3. FINDINGS

Table 1 Demographics of Respondents

Question	Answer	N	%
Nationality	Domestic	197	50,6
	Foreign	192	49,4
Sex	Women	205	52,7
	Men	184	47,3
Age	Younger than 20	23	5,9
	21-30 ages	126	32,4
	31-40 ages	113	29,0
	41-50 ages	63	16,2
	51-60 ages	38	9,8
	61and over	26	6,7
Marital Status	Single	162	41,6
	Married	194	49,9
	Seperate/Divorced	33	8,5
Educational Status	High School	66	17,0
	Associate Degree	46	11,8
	Bachelor's Degree	191	49,1
	Postgraduate Degree	86	22,1
Average Monthly Income	Less than250 \$	13	3,3
	Between 250-500 \$	85	21,9
	Between 500-750 \$	46	11,8
	Between 750-1000 \$	95	24,5
	Between 1000-1250 \$	67	17,2
	Between 1250-1500 \$	25	6,4
	Between 1500-1750 \$	12	3,1
	Between 1750-2000\$	21	5,4
Over 2000 \$	25	6,4	
How many Days The Attendants Stayed in Konya	Excursion (One-day)	2	0,5
	1-3 days	305	78,4
	4-6 days	67	17,2
	7 and more	15	3,9
The Attendants Have Been to Konya Before	Yes	164	42,2
	No	225	57,8
The Attendants Think of Visiting Konya Again	Yes	353	90,7
	No	36	9,3

More than half of the attendants (50,6%) consists of domestic tourists. Female participants comprises more than half (52,7%) of the people who participated in the research. The most intensive age range is 21-30 (32,4%) of the people who participated in the survey. Almost half of the attendants (49,9%) are married. The participants who have Bachelor's Degree (49,1%) are prominent in terms of educational status. It is observed that the participants who have an income of 750-1000 \$ (24,5%) and 250-500 \$ (21,9%) with regard to income level distribution are quite high. As it is observed that the number of the days that the attendants stayed in Konya is 1-3 days, it is highly considerable (78,4%). More than half of the attendants (57,8%) have not been to Konya before. It is so highly considerable that 90,7 percentage of the attendants think of visiting Konya again.

Table 2 The Image That Konya City Made On The Domestic and Foreign Tourists

Attendant	Image 1	Image 2	Image 3
Domestic	Mevlana 87, %45,3	Peacefull 48, %25,8	Clean 40, %22,0
Foreign	Moral 19, %10,1	Modern 15, %15,0	Holy 15, %20,8
General	Mevlana 88, %23,1	Peacefull 56, %19,6	Clean 44, %17,3

When it is considered the image that Konya city made on the domestic and foreign tourists as general perspective; the images of Mevlâna (%23,1), Peacefull (%19,6), Clean (%17,3) are obtained respectively. It is seen that same images deducted from domestic tourists with the same rank. On the other hand, the images of Holy (%20,8), Modern (%15,0), Moral (%10,1) are obtained respectively from the foreign tourists in a different way; when it is compared to domestic ones.

Table 3 What Domestic and Foreign Tourists Feel From Their Visit To Konya City

Attendant	Feeling 1	Feeling 2	Feeling 3
Domestic	Peace 100, %52,4	Happiness 83, %46,6	Excitement 51, %29,0
Foreign	Happiness 33, %17,6	Comfortableness 6, %27,3	Spirituality 2, %28,6
General	Peace 123, %32,5	Happiness 88, %44,0	Excitement 52, %28,4

When it is considered what domestic and foreign tourists feel from their visit to Konya city as general perspective; the feelings of Happiness (% 44,0), Peace (%32,5), Excitement (%28,4) are obtained respectively. It is seen similar for the domestic tourists with a difference that the feeling of Peace (% 52,4) takes the first rank instead of the feeling of Happiness (% 46,6). On the other hand, the feelings of Spirituality (% 28,6), Comfortableness (% 27,3), Happiness (%17,6) are obtained respectively from the foreign tourists in a different way; when it is compared to domestic ones.

Table 4 The Results of Reliability Analysis

		No. of Questions	Average	Cronbach's Alpha
Brand Personality	Domestic	42	3,785	0,933
	Foreign	42	3,696	0,893
Sincerity	Domestic	11	4,258	0,878
	Foreign	11	3,985	0,702
Excitement	Domestic	11	3,569	0,814
	Foreign	11	3,665	0,774
Competence	Domestic	9	3,889	0,798
	Foreign	9	3,730	0,874
Sophistication	Domestic	6	3,544	0,775
	Foreign	6	3,534	0,764
Ruggedness	Domestic	5	3,321	0,761
	Foreign	5	3,262	0,759

Brand Personality Scales that were conducted to both domestic and foreign tourists were found to be highly reliable according to Cronbach's Alpha values over 0,7 point on the averages (Table 4).

Domestic tourists find Konya more sincere and more competent. There is no difference between domestic and foreign tourists' perceptions of Konya City's excitement, sophistication, and ruggedness personality (Table 5).

1,773 t statistical value that is calculated to determine whether domestic tourists' perceptions of brand personality differ from foreign tourists' perceptions was not found statistically significant at 0,05 significance level (Sig.=0,084>0,05). Mathematical difference detected between the averages was found statistically insignificant. No difference was found between domestic and foreign tourists' perceptions of brand personality (Table 5).

5,605 t statistical value that is calculated to determine whether domestic tourists' perceptions of Konya city's sincerity personality differ from foreign tourists' perceptions was found statistically significant at 0,01 significance level (Sig.=0,000<0,05). After examining the averages, the score domestic tourists obtained from sincerity dimension is 4,258, the average score foreign tourists obtained was 3,985. The domestic tourists' perceptions of Konya's sincerity personality is greater than foreign tourists' perceptions (Table 5).

Tablo 5 The Results of t-Test in Accordance to domestic and foreign tourists' brand personality

	Attendant	No.	Average	Standard Deviation	t	Sig.
Sincerity	Domestic	197	4,258	0,582	5,605	0,000**
	Foreign	192	3,985	0,358		
Excitement	Domestic	197	3,569	0,671	-1,602	0,110
	Foreign	192	3,665	0,504		
Competence	Domestic	197	3,889	0,629	2,524	0,012*
	Foreign	192	3,730	0,610		
Sophistication	Domestic	197	3,544	0,596	0,160	0,873
	Foreign	192	3,534	0,650		
Ruggedness	Domestic	197	3,321	0,754	0,907	0,365
	Foreign	192	3,263	0,489		

-1,602 t statistical value that is calculated to determine whether domestic tourists' perceptions of Konya city's excitement personality differ from foreign tourists' perceptions was not found statistically significant at 0,05 significance level (Sig.=0,110>0,05). Mathematical difference detected between the averages in excitement dimension was found statistically insignificant. No difference was found between domestic and foreign tourists's perceptions of Konya's excitement personality.

2,524 t statistical value that is calculated to determine whether domestic tourists' perceptions of Konya city's competence personality differ from foreign tourists' perceptions was found statistically significant at 0,05 significance level (Sig.=0,012<0,05). After examining the averages, the score domestic tourists obtained from competence dimension is 3,889, the average score foreign tourists obtained was 3,730. The domestic tourists' perceptions of Konya's competence personality is greater than foreign tourists' perceptions.

1,600 t statistical value that is calculated to determine whether domestic tourists' perceptions of Konya city's sophistication personality differ from foreign tourists' perceptions was not found statistically significant at 0,05 significance level (Sig.=0,873>0,05). Mathematical difference detected between the averages in sophistication dimension was found statistically insignificant. No difference was found between domestic and foreign tourists's perceptions of Konya's sophistication personality.

0,907 t statistical value that is calculated to determine whether domestic tourists' perceptions of Konya city's ruggedness personality differ from foreign tourists' perceptions was not found statistically significant at 0,05 significance level (Sig.=0,365>0,05). Mathematical difference detected between the averages in tough dimension was found statistically insignificant. No difference was found between domestic and foreign tourists's perceptions of Konya's ruggedness personality.

4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The data of the brand personality of the Konya city as a touristic destination that is obtained from this survey gains importance as a perspective in what ways Konya city would differ in destination marketing and points of importance in the process of being a brand city (Akgöz, Göral and Tengilimoğlu, 2016).

In accordance with the results, it can be tested the differences of domestic and foreign tourists' brand personality conceptions of Konya city by not only using Aaker's scala but also some other implimentations of this scala into Turkish culture in local dimensions for the following surveys of cultural comparisons. In this issue, Aksoy and Ozsömer's (2007) local implimentation of Aaker's scala into Turkish culture could be used. As it is known, Aaker and others (2001) tested the scala both in Japan and Spain as different cultures and observed different new dimensions when compared to the basic one in USA. In the further more detailed surveys, the classification of foreign tourists visiting Konya city according to their region, country an even cultures might help the understanding of whether they have different city brand perceptions.

When it is considered the relation of satisfaction of Konya city visit between foreign tourists' brand personality dimensions, it is found that the sincerity personality that participant tourists perceive of Konya city increases, their satisfaction level also increases though there is a negative relationship between foreign tourists' perceptions of city's sincerity personality. As the author's opinion from a different perspective: "Could it be said that foreign tourists do not find themselves sincere, friendly which they look for in Konya destination and if they find the destination the more friendly and sincere, the more they are satisfied? In this manner, if they feel the city character of peace, love, sufism, spirituality and

happiness; could it be a living experience like it is done in touristics Budhism temple activities in the far east? Could some live activities be done in Konya where foreign tourists experience the dervish tekke (the place they live) life such as wearing, having food, whirling and just living the philosophy like the dervishes and could it be a different, new and more profitable touristic income generating way that Konya city lacks off?" The author believes that asnwrs to those questions in the next researches could be a lighting point for the promotion and marketing of the Konya city.

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