



The Effect of Tourists' Brand Identity Perceptions on Their Purchasing Behavior¹

 Ceyhun KEDİKLİ²  Didar Sarı ÇALLI³

Abstract

This study aims to examine the effects of tourists' brand identity perceptions on their purchasing behavior within the tourism industry. Recent changes in tourist expectations and service standardization have increased the importance of understanding how brand identity perceptions influence purchasing behavior. A quantitative research method was employed, and data were collected through an online survey administered to domestic tourists who had stayed at least once in four- and five-star hotels in Antalya. A total of 737 valid questionnaires were analyzed using frequency analysis, factor analysis, correlation analysis and regression analysis. The findings reveal that tourists' brand identity perceptions have a strong effect on experience-oriented purchasing behavior, while a weaker but statistically significant effect is observed on corporate strategy-oriented purchasing behavior. Based on these findings, practical implications are presented for tourism businesses aiming to strengthen their brand identities and enhance purchasing behavior. The study is expected to contribute to the tourism marketing literature by providing empirical evidence based on accommodation-focused brand identity perceptions.

Keywords: Tourism Industry, Brand Identity, Purchasing Behaviour

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1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism can be defined as moving from one's environment and region to another country or city for social, cultural, and economic purposes (UNWTO, 2025a). Businesses established for this purpose constitute the tourism industry. The tourism industry is recognized as a significant driver of economic growth worldwide (Buhalis & Darcy, 2011). The global travel and tourism industry provides several benefits, including employment creation, income generation, and economic development (UNWTO, 2025b). Furthermore, the tourism sector is considered an important tool for strengthening the brand image of countries and achieving competitive international advantage in terms of destinations (Pike, 2008).

One of the key requirements for countries to establish a brand image is the development of a brand identity for their tourism brands, or at least the establishment of such a perception in the minds of participants. Brand identity is a concept that describes the image a brand creates in the minds of consumers (Aaker, 1996). Brand identity consists of a series of elements that reflect the brand's values, personality, and unique characteristics, and shapes the emotional and cognitive perceptions

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² Sakarya University of Applied Sciences, Graduate Education Institute, Tourism Management, Türkiye, Y215026001@subu.edu.tr. Orcid ID: 0009-0003-3346-0337.

³ Corresponding author, Sakarya University of Applied Sciences, Tourism Faculty, Department of Tourism Guidance, Türkiye, didarsari@subu.edu.tr. Orcid ID: 0000-0001-5517-2924.

consumers associate with the brand (Kapferer, 2008). Strengthening brand identity can increase the brand's competitiveness and enhance consumer loyalty and preference for the brand (Kotler & Keller, 2012).

Once destinations acquire a brand identity, they lead to an increase in tourists' purchasing tendencies based on parameters such as consumer experience and perception. In this sense, it is known that consumers are influenced by a number of factors that determine the product or service purchasing process and decisions (Engel et al., 1990). Brand identity is defined as a concept that distinguishes a product from other products, instills in consumers feelings of brand ownership, trust, loyalty, and sharing the brand with other consumers, and enables the manufacturer to establish a strong and stable position in the market (Aaker, 1991). Therefore, it can be said that brand identity is an important marketing strategy that directly influences consumer purchasing intentions and behaviors. Increasing competition and experience-based differentiation in the tourism industry have compelled tourism businesses to place greater emphasis on branding and brand identity as strategic tools (ETC and UNWTO, 2009)

Factors such as brand identity, brand perception, brand reputation, and brand value play a significant role in tourists' destination choices (Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2008). In the tourism industry, the impact of brand identity on purchasing behavior is particularly important because it shapes tourists' holiday and travel experiences (Morgan et al., 2004). The values emphasized by brand identity, such as mission and vision, can influence tourists' purchase intentions in their destination and accommodation choices (Stepchenkova & Morrison, 2008). Therefore, strengthening brand identity in the tourism industry is critical for improving tourists' holiday and travel experiences and enhancing the competitiveness of destinations.

Based on this information, this study aims to determine the impact of tourists' brand identity perceptions on purchasing behavior. To ensure positive results, the study was conducted with hotel customers. When the tourism industry is mentioned, hotels are often the first things that come to mind. This study primarily explores the effects of brand identity on purchasing behavior in the tourism industry. The research examines the concept of brand-related concepts, and brand identity. Next, tourists' purchasing decisions and preferences, along with the factors influencing these decisions and preferences, are examined. The study makes a significant contribution to the literature by revealing tourists' brand identity perceptions and purchasing behaviors. It also offers appropriate policy recommendations for the private sector and decision-making stakeholders to ensure rapid and effective responses.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Branding plays a significant and influential role in consumer purchasing decisions. Branded products and services that instill a sense of quality and assurance in consumers contribute to manufacturers' sales and marketing activities. Branding, which has spread across every sector over time, has fostered an environment of trust and quality, while also raising many questions for consumers during the purchasing process. Brands have both facilitated consumers' decision-making process and spurred thoughtful action. In tourism, the concept of branding has become a crucial element for guests purchasing tourist products (Şengel et al., 2014; Appiah & Danquah, 2020). Every tourist traveling for relaxation, entertainment, and many other reasons plans a perfect vacation. Therefore, the concept of branding serves as a guarantee for tourists. Studies have been conducted and continue to be conducted to both improve marketing activities in tourism and ensure guest satisfaction.

Temeloğlu (2006), who conducted research on brands and tourist purchasing behavior in tourism, obtained significant results in his study using five-star hotels as an example. According to the study, the number of hotels has increased with the development of tourism, and the number of domestic and foreign tourists has also increased in parallel. In cities with significant tourist potential due to their historical and natural beauty, tourists' expectations of hotel establishments have begun to differ due to the ever-evolving environmental and technological influences. In parallel with this situation, five-star hotels, which already offer high comfort and quality, have been able to quickly respond to these diverse needs and have gained a greater market share compared to other tourist establishments. Five-star hotels that make rapid and high-quality improvements in response to requests and expectations have gained a competitive advantage. Meeting their requests and expectations has created satisfaction in tourists, leading to repeat visits.

According to the results of a study by Tandoğan and Özkeroğlu (2020), who made similar findings, there are significant differences between guests' hotel preferences. According to the study, as visitors' education and income levels increase, their preference for branded boutique hotels also increases. As is well known, boutique hotels offer the same amenities and comfort as five-star hotels, while also being quieter and more secluded from the crowds. Additionally, boutique hotels are smaller than five-star hotels, allowing them to provide more personalized attention to their guests. This is precisely why many tourists have chosen boutique hotels over five-star hotels. These advantages have attracted visitors who previously preferred five-star hotels to their establishments. The boutique hotel operators cited in the study report that the vast majority of their guests return and encourage others to return by recommending them to their relatives. Another difference, based on the study's results, is that boutique hotels with established branding are more popular among visitors. This suggests that visitors have a higher desire for comfortable and well-equipped service, and that the businesses' personalized services are highly valued. Furthermore, among tourist establishments, hotels with established branding attract greater tourist interest. Considering all these factors, hotels that provide high comfort and quality in a quiet environment attract more visitors and increase their potential for loyal customers.

Çabuk et al. (2013), who conducted a study directly related to brand purchasing behavior in tourism, investigated the situations in which tourist consumers tend to make repeat purchases. According to the results of research conducted on hotels with different concepts, there are many reasons why tourists tend to make repeat purchases. One of the most important reasons, as in previous studies, is the brand factor. Four- and five-star hotels equipped with high technology and amenities are preferred, especially by high-income tourists. Furthermore, the higher service quality of hotels in this concept plays a significant role in consumers' preference and recommendation of these establishments. Furthermore, research has shown that tourists are more likely to choose hotels with corporate identities that are similar to their own personalities. Therefore, it is important for hotels to create a corporate brand identity that attracts tourists' attention and to conduct advertising and marketing activities in line with this identity. This can help differentiate brands and build a loyal guest base. Ası and Özdemir (2023), in a study conducted on several 4- and 5-star hotels, revealed a positive relationship between brands and tourists' purchasing behavior. Hotel establishments provide comfortable, peaceful, and personalized service to their guests throughout their stay. This will create a positive image of the brand in tourists' minds. Furthermore, a hotel brand with a positive impression from tourist consumers is likely to be chosen again. The lack of any difference in quality and comfort among the hotels in the study indicates that the brand that offers the best brand experience to tourist

consumers and best appeals to their emotions and thoughts will make a difference. Guests who are satisfied with their brand experience will be more likely to choose the same brand again.

A study by Bian and Liu (2011) identifies the relationship between brands and tourists' purchasing decisions. The study observed that tourists make hotel choices based on many factors related to brands. For example, the existence of a positive relationship between brand concept dimensions, such as the value of a hotel brand in the eyes of individuals and the awareness it creates, and tourist purchasing behavior is supported by the research results. Furthermore, the aforementioned brand dimensions appear to be highly influential in tourists' satisfaction and contribute to their repurchase intentions.

Horner and Swarbrooke (2020) clearly articulate the changes tourism has undergone from its recent past to the present, and the resulting differences in tourist behavior. Tourists' attitudes toward brands have undergone significant changes, particularly in the millennium, when technological advancements accelerated. Brands that adapted to the opportunities offered by these technological advancements or integrated them into their businesses were preferred by tourists during this period. Furthermore, the global COVID-19 pandemic, as in many sectors, has driven consumers to branded businesses in the tourism sector for reasons of trust and hygiene. It is supported that consumer behavior in tourism is focused on price, performance, and quality in all areas of tourism. Branded products and services generally offer comprehensive and high-quality services to consumers, creating an environment of trust in tourism and becoming a reason for increased preference. Furthermore, it can be argued that branded tourism establishments are more successful in achieving customer satisfaction and translating this into repeat purchases.

Brand identity, which systematically reveals how strong and rich brands are built, encompasses the elements that enable communication between the consumer and the brand (De Chernatony, 1999; Çevrimkaya et al., 2024). Kocaman (2012), who argues that brand identity plays a significant role in the marketing of tourism products, argues in his study that the elements that form the brand identities of destinations influence brand image. Accordingly, considering the tourist resources and activities of a designated destination, it can be said that numerous elements influence the brand identity of mass tourism destinations. Tüfekçi et al. (2016) argue that brand identity elements highlight the competitive characteristics of destinations. Domestic and foreign tourists consume the destination's natural outputs, the supply resources, by identifying them with the destination. Based on this, it is understood that resource-focused tourism activities shape the brand identity of destinations. In recent years, as competition in the tourism market has increased, destinations are engaged in fierce competition to increase their market share.

Köşker et al. (2019) evaluated the brand identities of the 10 cities with the highest tourist demand in Turkey, arguing that destinations should create distinctive, accurate, and memorable brand identities that can express themselves and provide them with a competitive advantage. This is attributed to the significant role brand identity plays in tourists' preferences and decisions. The study identified how the cities of Istanbul, Antalya, Muğla, Izmir, Ankara, Nevşehir, Aydın, Denizli, Gaziantep, and Hatay used colors in their adopted brand identities, how they stood out with touristic values and local symbols, what slogans they used, and how they positioned themselves in their logos. One of the most important findings of the study is that all of these cities strive to stand out with their historical and cultural richness, while Gaziantep and Hatay also strive to stand out with their gastronomic culture. The results of the study suggest that Istanbul, Antalya, and Gaziantep have been able to create their

own unique urban brand identities in terms of tourism, while other cities are striving to develop their own brand identities.

A study conducted by Yavuz (2007) focused on the development of city brand identities. According to the study, the fundamental requirement for developing a successful destination brand is establishing a qualified brand identity. Cities with established brand identities can differentiate themselves from their competitors. The study emphasizes that cities must possess certain distinctive identity components to become international brands. In another study, Civelek (2016) emphasized the need to address brand identity and related issues such as image, marketing, and communication. The study argues that branding is not only a goal for commercial organizations but also for countries and cities. To this end, city governments should create a city's brand identity. The positive image created by the brand identity is believed to play a significant role in the city's marketing.

Konecnik and Go (2008), in their study on Slovenia's brand identity, suggests that the issue needs to be approached from a different perspective. He argues that studies on the subject generally argue that demand-driven tourists focus on the destination's brand image, whereas the concept of tourism destination brand identity should be examined from a supply-side perspective. The study argues that studies on the branding activities of tourist destinations are primarily conducted in terms of perceived image. It is believed that the abundance of demand-side studies has led to insufficient emphasis on supply-side studies. This leads to an inconsistent perspective, oversights, and misunderstandings regarding the branding opportunities and limitations of tourist destinations. Wheeler et al. (2011)'s study on the brand identity of Victoria, Australia, argues that Victoria has significant tourism potential but lacks the brand identity necessary to utilize this potential. In this context, he emphasizes that a multitude of values, including cultural, social, economic, historical, and geographical, must be considered to fully utilize the touristic features offered by a destination. The study states that there are many sustainable brands in the region, and that other brands should be supported to contribute to regional tourism. It is believed that regional, organically developed brands are attractive to tourists. All of these factors contribute to the development of Victoria's brand identity, which in turn will encourage tourist purchasing.

A study by Worlu et al. (2015) on this subject suggests that the creation and development of brand identity in Nigeria, along with Nigeria's tourism-focused marketing activities, will contribute to tourists' perception of Nigeria as a tourist destination. In addition, it is recommended that Nigeria take steps to foster a sense of security in tourists' minds. According to the study's findings, creating various package tours to improve accommodation quality and marketing these tours to local agencies and tour operators will positively impact the development of Nigeria's brand identity. It is anticipated that these studies will contribute to the efficient use of the country's tourism potential. These studies in literature shed light on the impact of tourists' brand identity perceptions on their purchasing behavior, and this inspired this study.

3. METHOD

The study method is quantitative research method. To obtain the data needed for the field research, a questionnaire was preferred as a data collection tool. For this purpose, the "Brand Identity Scale" developed by Goi et al. (2014) and adapted to Turkish by Yüksekbiçgili (2017) was used to measure tourists' brand identity perceptions. The "Purchasing Scale" developed by İşlek (2012) was used to measure the purchasing behavior of tourist consumers in the study. These two scales deemed appropriate for the study were adapted to the research and a 5-point Likert type survey form was created. *The survey form used in this article was deemed ethically acceptable by the Sakarya*

University of Applied Sciences Rectorate Ethics Committee with decision number 40/29 dated 11/01/2024.

Brand identity is considered a fundamental marketing construct that shapes consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral intentions. Previous studies suggest that strong brand identity enhances trust, perceived value, and emotional attachment, which in turn influence purchasing-related behaviors (Aaker, 1996; Kapferer, 2008; Kotler & Keller, 2012). In the context of tourism, where services are intangible and experience-based, brand identity perceptions play a critical role in reducing perceived risk and guiding tourists' purchasing decisions. Based on this theoretical framework, the present study proposes hypotheses that examine the effect of tourists' brand identity perceptions on different dimensions of purchasing behavior. Two hypotheses were developed and tested in the research within the context of the variables included in these scales. Hypotheses.

H1: Tourists' brand identity perceptions influence their experience-focused purchasing behavior.

H2: Tourists' brand identity perceptions influence their corporate strategy-focused purchasing behavior.

The research population consisted of domestic tourists staying in Antalya, and the sample consisted of 737 domestic tourists who had stayed at least once in 4- and 5-star hotels in Antalya. A total of 737 domestic tourists were surveyed in the study, all of whom were used in the analysis process. The survey form was obtained online using a combination of convenience and snowball sampling methods. Data was collected online between January and April 2024. The questionnaire was administered via Google Forms and distributed through digital platforms such as e-mail and WhatsApp. Snowball sampling is a sampling method used when members of the target population cannot be found. To apply this technique, it is first necessary to contact a member of the population. Convenience sampling, on the other hand, is a method in which all willing participants are included in the data collection process. The snowball sampling method was used as a starting point, and data was obtained from all willing participants. In practice, the snowball sampling method was used to reach initial participants who met the research criteria, and subsequently, convenience sampling was applied by including all voluntary respondents who agreed to participate in the study.

In scientific research, validity and reliability are key considerations during the data collection process. Errors made by the researcher during the data collection phase play a significant role in the validity and reliability of the study. Validity is the degree to which the appropriate scale determined for the research measures the intended subject (Ural & Kılıç, 2013). In this study, scales frequently used and accepted in the literature were chosen to measure brand identity and purchasing behavior variables. This fulfills the requirement of validity. Reliability, on the other hand, is the degree to which a scale or test consistently and consistently measures the intended phenomenon. The most common method used to measure scale consistency is the alpha coefficient, also known as Cronbach's alpha. Alpha values range from 0 to 1. For a scale to be considered acceptable, an alpha coefficient of at least 0.7 is required (Coşkun et al., 2019). Separate reliability analyses were conducted for both scales used in the study. Accordingly, Cronbach's alpha was 0.97 for the brand identity scale, consisting of 23 items, and 0.93 for the purchasing behavior scale. According to these results, the research data produced reliable results. Although the Cronbach's Alpha values obtained in the study are relatively high, this result can be explained by the conceptual consistency and unidimensional structure of the scales used. The items within the brand identity and purchasing behavior scales measure closely related perceptions associated with service quality, experience, and trust, which may naturally lead to high

internal consistency. Similar high reliability values have also been reported in previous studies employing these scales in tourism and service-oriented research contexts.

The data were analyzed using a computer-aided statistical analysis program. First, to determine whether the distribution of the survey data was normal, skewness (1.389-0.261) and kurtosis (1.628-0.535) values were examined. Analysis results revealed that the scales' kurtosis and skewness values ranged from -2 to 2. The results ranged from -2 to 2, indicating a normal distribution of the data (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Based on the results, analyses were conducted using parametric tests, and the findings were reported. Within the scope of the study, exploratory factor analysis was conducted to examine the construct validity of the scales. Pearson correlation analysis was used to determine the direction and strength of relationships between variables, and simple linear regression analysis was performed to test the research hypotheses.

4. FINDINGS

When the gender distribution of the tourists participating in the research is examined, it is seen that of the 737 participants, 375 (50.9%) were male and 362 (49.1%) were female (Table 1). The majority of the tourists participating in the research were male. The majority of the tourists (72.7%) were married, and the remaining (27.3%) were single. When the distribution of the participants by age was examined, the majority were between the ages of 31-43 (n= 247, 33.5). In addition, 27.1% (n= 200) of the participants were between the ages of 44-56, 23.3% (n= 172) were between the ages of 18-30, 12.9% (n= 95) were between the ages of 57-64, and 3.1% (n= 23) were aged 65 and over. Accordingly, it can be said that the tourists participating in the research were predominantly young and middle-aged.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics on participants

Demographic Characteristics	Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	375	50,9
	Female	362	49,1
Marital Status	Married	536	72,7
	Single	231	27,3
Age	18-30	172	23,3
	31-43	247	33,5
	44-56	200	27,1
	57-64	95	12,9
	65 and above	23	3,1
Education	primary education	6	0,8
	secondary education	74	10,1
	higher education	657	89,1
Profession	Architect	34	4,6
	Engineer	153	20,8
	Teacher	196	26,6
	Doctor	75	10,2
	Lawyer	42	5,7
	Tourism professionals	145	19,7
	Academic	27	3,7
	Civil Servant	65	8,8
Monthly Income	17.002 and below	33	4,5
	17.002-25.000	49	6,6
	25.001-35.000	88	11,9
	35.001-45.000	172	23,3
	45.001-55.000	150	20,4
	55.001 and above	245	33,2

When the results regarding the participants' educational background are examined, it is seen that a significant portion of them have received higher education (n= 657; 89.1%). 10.1% (n= 74) of the participants are high school graduates, and 0.8% (n= 6) are primary school graduates. 26.6% (n= 196)

of the participants are teachers, 20.8% (n= 153) are engineers, 19.7% (n= 145) are tourism professionals, 10.2% (n= 75) are doctors, 8.8% (n= 65) are civil servants, 5.7% (n= 42) are lawyers, 4.6% (n= 34) are architects, and 3.7% (n= 27) are academics. A significant portion of the participants (33.2%) have an income of 55,001 TL and above and constitute the majority.

Table 2: Factor analysis of brand identity perception

Brand Identity Perception	Factor Loading
The hotel I stayed at is an establishment that strives to provide the best possible service.	0.927
The hotel has reliable employees.	0.913
The hotel has a staff that treats its guests with respect.	0.910
The hotel has employees who are trained in their duties.	0.909
The hotel has a corporate identity.	0.907
The hotel provides quality service.	0.901
The services offered at the hotel are compatible with each other, and work is carried out without interruption.	0.898
The hotel has knowledgeable employees.	0.891
The hotel offers quality in-house services.	0.889
I felt at ease during my stay.	0.885
The hotel has a corporate name that reflects the brand's focus.	0.870
The hotel offers quality entertainment activities.	0.863
The hotel has a logo that reflects the brand's name.	0.852
The hotel has a highly engaged and successful management team.	0.845
Advertising by hotel brands reflects the organization's focus.	0.844
The hotel offers a wide range of opportunities (entertainment, excursions, shows, and other hotel services). The hotel has a strong slogan that reflects the brand's focus.	0.837
The hotel specializes in specific areas (entertainment, food, service, customer service, etc.).	0.751
The hotel has attractive promotional materials (advertisements, brochures, social media, billboards).	0.681
The hotel has a useful website.	0.665
The hotel I stayed at is an establishment that strives to provide the best possible service.	0.659

Principal Components Analysis with Varimax Rotation: Eigenvalue = 13,68; Total Variance Explained = 72.0%; KMO = 0.976; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: $\chi^2 = 18329.599$, df = 190, $p < 0.001$. Evaluation interval: 1 (Strongly Disagree) – 5 (Strongly Agree).

Factor analysis was conducted to determine the final version of the variables in the study. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) coefficient and the Bartlett Sphericity test were used to measure the suitability of the data for factor analysis. The study sample size should be large enough to ensure reliability of the correlation. A value approaching 1 from the KMO test indicates suitability, while a value below 0.5 indicates unsuitability. The Bartlett value is expected to be less than 0.05 (Kalaycı, 2010). The factor analysis revealed a KMO value of 0.976. The Bartlett test concluded that $p=0.000<0.05$. Thus, the brand identity scale was found to be suitable for factor analysis. Table 2 presents the factor analysis results conducted with the factor loadings of all items in the brand identity scale. This table reveals the emergence of a single-factor structure. Factor analysis of the Brand Identity scale shows that the total explained variance of this one-dimensional structure is approximately 72%.

Table 3 presents the results of the factor analysis for the Buying Behavior Scale. The factor analysis concluded that the KMO value was 0.940. The Bartlett's test yielded $p=0.000<0.05$. Thus, the purchasing identity scale was found to be suitable for factor analysis.

Table 3 presents the results of the factor analysis conducted using the factor loadings of all items in the purchasing behavior scale. The factor analysis results reveal a two-factor structure. The resulting factors were named according to their topics. Accordingly, factor 1 was named "Experience-driven purchasing behaviors" and factor 2 "Corporate strategy-driven purchasing behaviors." The total variance explained by the factors in the purchasing behavior scale was 73.1%. Furthermore, "Experience-driven purchasing behaviors" explained 61.3% of the desired characteristic, while

"Corporate strategy-driven purchasing behaviors" explained 11.8% of the desired characteristic. Based on this information, the factors constituting the scale have an appropriate distribution and level of explanation.

Table 3: Factor analysis of the purchasing behavior scale

Experience-Oriented Purchasing Behavior	Factor Loading
If I'm not satisfied with a hotel brand's products/services, I share this with my close circle.	0.934
If I'm satisfied with a hotel brand's products/services, I recommend the brand to my close circle.	0.930
If I'm satisfied with a hotel brand's products/services, I share this with my close circle.	0.920
I'll choose a hotel brand again if I'm satisfied with its products/services.	0.919
I research a hotel brand's product/service before purchasing it.	0.912
Buying a tourism product/service I enjoy from a hotel brand I'm satisfied with increases my satisfaction.	0.882
Advertisements for a hotel brand positively influence my intention to purchase that brand's products/services.	0.852
I prefer to purchase products/services from well-known hotel brands.	0.848
I trust the information I obtain about hotel brands' products/services.	0.831
If the information about hotel brands found on online booking sites is created by a consumer, I trust this information.	0.790
I trust the information I obtain about hotel brands through online booking sites.	0.789
Corporate Strategy-Oriented Purchasing Behavior	Factor Loading
I participate in sweepstakes organized by a hotel brand.	0.809
Celebrities' involvement in a hotel brand's advertising campaigns plays a significant role in my preference for that hotel brand.	0.703
If the hotel brand I'm not satisfied with notices this and contacts me, I may change my mind.	0.628

Principal Components Analysis with Varimax Rotation: KMO = 0.940; Total Eigenvalue = 10.23; Total Variance Explained = 73.1%; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: $p < 0.001$. Evaluation interval: 1 (Strongly Disagree) – 5 (Strongly Agree).

Correlation analysis was conducted to determine the direction and strength of the relationships between variables in the study (Table 4). Correlation analysis is an analysis technique that allows determining the strength of the dependence or relationship between two variables measured at interval or ratio levels. For the analysis to yield reliable results, the data must have metric properties (Coşkun et al., 2019). There are different types of correlations calculated using different methods and referred to by different names. The most commonly used of these is Pearson's correlation. The correlation coefficient obtained as a result of the test is expressed as r and can take values between -1 and +1 (Kalaycı, 2010).

Table 4: Correlation analysis of variables

Variables		1	2	3
Brand Identity Perception (1)	r value	1		
	p value			
Experience-Oriented Purchasing Behavior (2)	r value	.790**	1	
	p value	.000		
Corporate Strategy-Oriented Purchasing Behavior (3)	r value	.187**	.255**	1
	p value	.000	.000	

Correlation Coefficient: (r); Significance Value: (p); (**) A significant relationship at the .001 level

In the study, correlation analysis was conducted to measure the relationship between the dimensions of brand identity and purchasing behavior. A strong ($0.70 < r = .790 \leq 0.89$) and linear relationship was found between the variables of brand identity and experience-oriented purchasing behavior ($r = 0.790$; $p = 0.000$). According to this result, as tourists' brand identity perception increases, an increase in experience-oriented purchasing behavior is expected. There is a positive, albeit low, relationship ($p = 0.000 < 0.005$) between the variables of brand identity and Corporate Strategy-oriented purchasing behavior ($r = 0.187$; $p = 0.000$). According to this result, it is expected that as tourists' brand identity perception increases, an increase in corporate strategy-oriented purchasing behavior will also occur. Similarly, a positive, albeit low, relationship ($p = 0.000 < 0.005$) was found between the variables of

experience-oriented purchasing behavior and Corporate Strategy-oriented purchasing behavior ($r=0.255$; $p=0.000$).

Table 5: The effect of brand identity perception on experience-oriented purchasing behavior

Independent Variable	β	t value	p value	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	p value (Model)
Brand Identity Perception	0.790	34.981**	0.000*	0,625	0,624	1223.694	0,000*

*Significant at $p<0.05$

** $t>1.96$

Dependent Variable: Experience-Oriented Purchasing Behavior

The R² value displayed in the model summary table indicates the effect of the independent variable, brand identity perception, on the dependent variable, tourists' experience-driven purchasing behavior. According to Table 5, approximately 62% of tourists' experience-driven purchasing behavior (induced R² value) is explained by brand identity perception. Furthermore, the significance value for both the model and the interaction between the dependent variables met the statistically desired standards ($p=0.000<0.05$). According to this result, brand identity perceptions influence experience-driven purchasing behavior ($\beta=0.790$, $p=0.000$, $t=34.981$). These results demonstrate that hypothesis H_1 is supported.

Table 6: The effect of brand identity perception on corporate strategy-oriented purchasing behavior

Independent Variable	β	t value	p value	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	p value (Model)
Brand Identity Perception	0.187	5.156**	0.000*	0,035	0,034	26.584	0,000*

*Significant at $p<0.05$

** $t>1.96$

Dependent Variable: Corporate Strategy-Oriented Purchasing Behavior

Table 6 presents the results of the regression analysis measuring the effect of brand identity perception on corporate strategy-driven purchasing behavior. The results show that approximately 3.5% of the variance (induced R² value) in corporate strategy-driven purchasing behavior is explained by brand identity perception. While this appears to be a weak effect, there is model significance ($p=0.000<0.05$), demonstrating an interaction between the variables in the model. Furthermore, the findings reveal that tourists' brand identity perceptions influence corporate strategy-driven purchasing behavior ($\beta=0.187$, $p=0.000$, $t=5.156$). These results demonstrate that hypothesis H_2 is supported. The results of both hypotheses can be seen in the model presented in Figure 1.

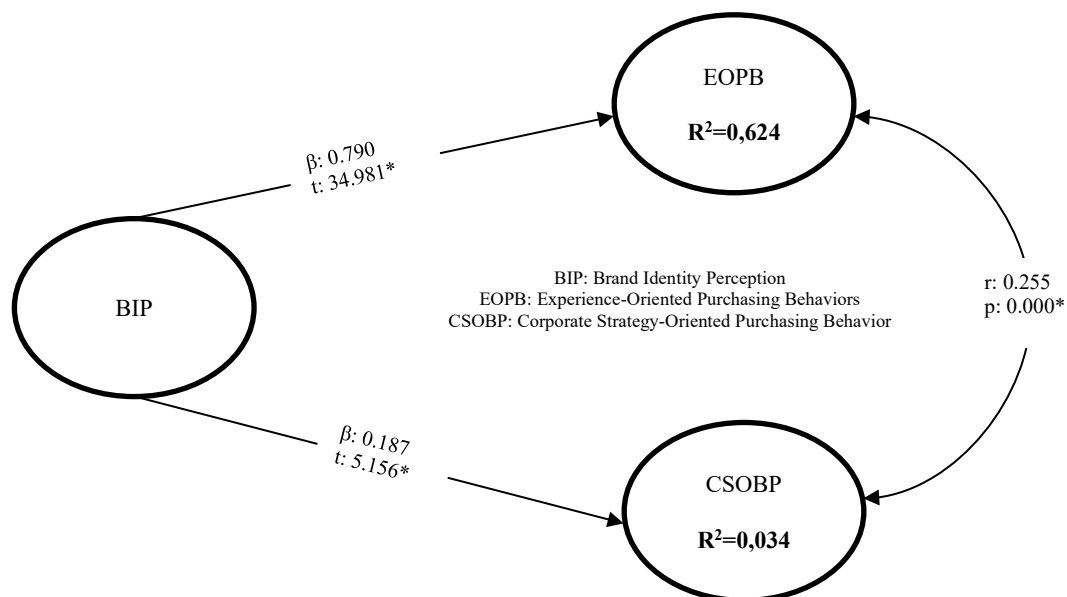


Figure 1: Research model and results

5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This study examined the effects of tourists' brand identity perceptions on their purchasing behavior within the context of accommodation businesses, particularly hotel brands. The findings provide empirical evidence that brand identity perception is a significant determinant of tourists' purchasing behavior; however, its influence varies considerably across different purchasing behavior dimensions.

The results reveal that brand identity perception has a strong explanatory power on experience-oriented purchasing behavior. This finding indicates that tourists' purchasing decisions are primarily shaped by their direct service experiences, emotional evaluations, and perceptions of service quality associated with hotel brands. Elements such as staff behavior, service consistency, corporate image, and in-house experiences play a decisive role in forming positive brand identity perceptions, which in turn encourage repeat purchases and recommendations. This result is consistent with previous studies emphasizing the importance of experiential and emotional components of branding in tourism and hospitality contexts (Kocaman, 2012; Ası & Özdemir, 2023).

In contrast, although the effect of brand identity perception on corporate strategy-oriented purchasing behavior is statistically significant, its explanatory power remains relatively low. The low explained variance suggests that purchasing behaviors driven by corporate strategies—such as promotions, sweepstakes, or celebrity endorsements—are influenced by additional factors beyond brand identity perception. This finding implies that while corporate strategies may support purchasing decisions, they do not constitute the primary driver of tourists' purchasing behavior when compared to experiential brand elements. Therefore, corporate strategy-oriented practices should be considered complementary rather than dominant mechanisms within hotel branding strategies. Previous studies have also emphasized that experiential factors such as service quality, emotional engagement, and perceived value play a decisive role in shaping tourists' purchasing behavior in hospitality settings (Çabuk et al., 2013).

An important implication of these findings is that the results should be interpreted primarily within the context of hotel and accommodation businesses rather than destination branding in general. Since the measurement items used in the study predominantly focus on hotel-related brand identity components, the findings offer more direct managerial insights for hotel operators and hospitality managers. From a practical perspective, hotel businesses aiming to strengthen purchasing behavior should prioritize enhancing experiential brand identity dimensions, such as service quality, employee performance, and customer experience design, while integrating corporate marketing strategies as supportive tools.

Overall, this study contributes to the tourism marketing literature by empirically demonstrating the differentiated effects of brand identity perception on distinct purchasing behavior dimensions. By distinguishing between experience-oriented and corporate strategy-oriented purchasing behaviors, the study provides a more nuanced understanding of how brand identity operates within the hospitality industry. Future studies may extend this research by examining different accommodation types, incorporating international tourist samples, or integrating additional variables such as perceived value, trust, or digital brand engagement to further explain purchasing behavior in tourism contexts.

Practical Implications

When using tourism supply sources, brand identity, and the marketing activities and sales revenues of brands and destinations, two distinct purchasing behaviors must be considered. The first of these

is that when using brand identity to enhance tourist perceptions, tourist experiences must be considered, and brand identity formation and development should be conducted accordingly. This can be explained by considering tourists' previous experiences and their wishes and opinions. Therefore, incorporating tourist wishes and opinions into brand identity activities can play a significant role in purchasing behavior, directly impacting customer satisfaction. Another factor is considering businesses' strategies when enhancing tourists' perceptions of brand identity. By incorporating their corporate strategies and marketing activities into their brand identities, businesses can attract tourists' attention and interest. Therefore, it can be argued that incorporating corporate strategies into brand identity creation and development activities will positively impact sales activities.

Hotel businesses can develop various strategies to strengthen their brand identities and influence tourists' experience-focused and corporate strategy-focused purchasing behavior. In this regard, strategies such as clearly communicating brand values, creating a brand personality suited to the target audience, and focusing the brand on values such as sustainability and social responsibility can be developed. Furthermore, hotels can strengthen their brand identities by offering tourists unforgettable experiences. These experiences can contribute to emotional connection with tourists by highlighting the destination's unique cultural characteristics, natural beauty, and local flavors. Furthermore, experiences such as interactive events, tours with local guides, and opportunities to interact with local people can play a supportive role in boosting tourists' interest in hotels.

Tourism supply sources can strengthen their brand identities by effectively utilizing digital marketing strategies. Reaching their target audience through social media platforms, blogs, websites, and other digital channels can contribute to brand visibility. Furthermore, the hotel businesses' unique features and experiences can be promoted through digital content, thereby attracting tourist attention. Tourism destinations can strengthen their brand identities by developing customized marketing strategies targeted to different market segments. For example, adventurous activities and events can be offered for young travelers, while child-friendly facilities and activities can be planned for families. This way, destinations can diversify their brand identities by offering experiences tailored to the needs and preferences of different tourist groups. Tourism destinations should focus on continuously improving customer experience to increase tourist satisfaction and strengthen brand loyalty. In this context, investments can be made in staff training and quality control systems to provide better service for tourists. Furthermore, continuous improvement processes can be implemented to improve service quality by being responsive to tourist feedback and complaints. Partnerships can be organized with stakeholders in tourism regions to organize joint campaigns. Partnerships with hotel chains, restaurants, tour operators, and local businesses are important for strengthening a destination's brand identity and providing tourists with holistic experience. Joint campaigns can be beneficial for cross-promotion and increasing brand awareness.

Limitations and Future Studies

While the study reveals significant results on the brand-purchase axis, it is limited to a single destination and covers a specific time period. Therefore, there are significant limitations related to the fieldwork process, particularly time and cost. Furthermore, the lack of face-to-face data collection and the fact that the data were collected only from participants who had experienced 4- and 5-star hotels are significant research limitations. Therefore, future studies could focus on a more in-depth examination of the effects of brand identity on different tourism segments, explore the effects of

brand identity on digital marketing strategies and its role in sustainable tourism, and explore the same research hypotheses in different destinations and utilize comparative analyses.

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Yazar(lar) Hakkında/About Author(s)

Ceyhan KEDİKLİ/ Y215026001@subu.edu.tr

Completed his master's degree at Sakarya University of Applied Sciences. He currently teaches food and beverage services at Karamürsel Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School. His research focuses on brand identity, purchasing behavior, neuromarketing, and esports in the tourism industry.

Didar Sarı ÇALLI/ didarsari@subu.edu.tr

Asst. Prof. Dr. Sarı Çallı, completed her bachelor's degree in Economics at Istanbul University, her master's and doctoral degrees in Tourism Management at Sakarya University, Institute of Social Sciences.

She currently serves as a faculty member and Vice Head of the Department of Tourism Guidance at Sakarya University of Applied Sciences. Her research interests include Tourism Management and Economics.

Dr. Sarı Çallı is the Language Editor of the Journal of New Tourism Trends.

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