



Destination Image and Relationship: The Moderating Role of Local Cuisine Experience

* Ezgi ERKMEN^a , Zehra DİLİSTAN SHİPMAN^a 

^a İstanbul Bilgi University, School of Tourism and Hotel Management, Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts, İstanbul /Turkey

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Abstract

Destination branding has increased its importance in recent years due to intense competition in international tourism. As such, understanding of which attributes contribute to destination branding is especially important to identify and differentiate the destination. As a result, the purpose of this study is to explore the moderating role of local cuisine on the relation between destination image and relationship. In doing so, this study employed an empirical causal research design using structural equation modeling along with multi-group analysis. Data were collected from foreign travelers visiting İstanbul. Even the results did not confirm the moderating role of local cuisine experience, the study evidenced the direct and indirect effects of local food on image, satisfaction and trust. That is, from the point of destination branding, the current research validates the argument that local cuisine can be positioned as a separate peak experience rather than being a component of overall travel experience.

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* Corresponding Author

E-mail: ezgi.erkmen@bilgi.edu.tr (E. Erkmen)

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