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The current paper is primarily concerned with extending the current knowledge about place identity by developing a comprehensive model, revolving around on destination image, satisfaction, intention to (re)visit and recommend within the marketing discipline. In recent decades, destination image has been acknowledged as a significant aspect in enhancing tourism and destination marketing. In a context of such relentless competition between countries and their tourism industries, having information about a specific destination carries a strategic power, which strengthens the tourism industry and influences destination image.

Perceived as being at the forefront of change in the Middle East and Central Asia, Turkey has attracted the world's attention with its unique political, social and cultural context. However, as a tourism destination, Turkey appeals to Middle Eastern residents more than people from other counties by virtue of the Ottoman Empire's legacy and Middle Eastern impressions surrounding Turkish culture; since 2005, the number of Middle Eastern tourists visiting the country has increased a whopping 200 percent, partly a result of the phenomenon of Turkish television series having been dubbed into Middle Eastern languages and broadcast there.

In order to gain a competitive edge in the tourism industry, the government strongly supports marketing activities for strengthening the destination images of countries (Aziz et al., 2012). In the case of Turkey, Turkish officials portray their country as balancing its Eastern history with Western modernity, resulting from a combination of the Ottoman Empire's historical inheritance and the modern values of the Turkish Republic, established in 1923 (Morgan et al., 2011; Turkish Culture and Tourism Office, 2015).

By examining the conceptual model which has been designed based on previous studies, this study challenges the claims for place identity as a key element of destination image, contending that attitudes towards TV series can influence visitors' motivation and intention to (re)visit or recommend the place.

Despite the significance of and the attention on the relationship between place identity and destination image, little systematic research has examined the effect of the attitude towards TV series on consumer evaluations of destination image. This study aims to addresses a number of research gaps noted in the literature about the role of place branding and destination image from visitors or potential visitors' perspective.

This study adopts a mix-method research design – a predominantly quantitative approach, is supported by insights from an exploratory phase encompassing in-depth interviews and focus groups discussions. Based on a qualitative study and the existing literature, a conceptual framework was developed. In the second phase this framework will examine visitors' perceptions of the influences of place identity and destination image in the UK, Iran, and Turkey.

The key contribution stemming from this research is a multi-disciplinary foundation for place identity to provide a holistic perspective of the domain in place

branding/image/identity/destination literature. This study will try to grasp a broader viewpoint of place identity by examining whether the incorporation of the attitude towards TV series as an element of advertisement influences destination image and intention to (re)visit or recommend among visitors. The outcome of this research will add a novel perspective to the growing body of marketing literature (particularly place identity/branding and corporate communication). It is hoped that future research will build on the research findings so that further avenues can be explored.

References

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