

T.C. DOĐUŐ UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

RESEARCH ON THE CULTURAL DESTINATION BRAND EQUITY  
USING QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS ON THE CUSTOMERS STAYING  
IN HOSTELS IN ISTANBUL

Master Thesis

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ISTANBUL, January 2017

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## ÖNSÖZ

Çalışmamda beni destekleyen tez danışmanım Doç. Dr. Özlem TAŞSEVEN'e,  
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## **ABSTRACT**

Generally, when referring to destination brand equity, four dimensions are taken into consideration: awareness, associations, perceived quality and loyalty. This research includes a fifth dimension: cultural brand assets. The suggested model, centered on cultural destination brand equity, was tested from the view of international tourists staying in hostels in Istanbul. This research examines the relationship between enduring travel involvement and dimensions of customer based brand equity for tourism destination. Moreover, relationship between future behaviors and consumer satisfaction were examined.

**Keywords:** Enduring Travel Involvement, Destination Brand Equity, Place branding, Customer based brand equity, Dimensions of Customer based brand equity, Overall Brand Equity, Future Behaviors, and Consumer Satisfaction.

## ÖZET

Genellikle, destinasyon marka değerine atıfta bulunulduğunda, dört boyut dikkate alınır: farkındalık, marka çağrışımları, algılanan kalite ve sadakat. Bu araştırma, beşinci boyutu içermektedir: kültürel marka varlıkları. Bu çalışmadaki araştırma modeli, kültürel marka değeri üzerine odaklanarak, İstanbul'daki hostellerde kalan uluslararası turistlerin bakış açısı ile test edilmiştir. Bu araştırma, turizm destinasyonları için sürekli seyahat katılımı ile müşteri odaklı marka değeri boyutları arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektedir. Ayrıca turistlerin gelecekteki davranışları ile turist memnuniyeti arasındaki ilişki incelenmiştir.



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization of the World increased the diversity and volume of cross-border transactions in services and goods. In the same way, tourism industry has gone global and traveling to distant holiday destinations becomes more popular (Yuwo, Ford and Purwanegara, 2013). Therefore an immense competition among cities in order to attract more tourists has arisen. According to Yuwo, Ford and Purwanegara (2013), cities must build up influential city branding strategies to draw the attention in back demand travellers' minds as possible alternatives, to increase their tourism revenue. Destination branding topic was selected for this research because it is a new and popular field for reserchers. This study aims to measure cultural destination brand equity of Istanbul.

It should be emphasized that tourism is a service. Berry (1986) states that to tangibilize the intangible is a major issue. Branding is a main element to transform the intangible character of service to tangible. Popescu (2012) argues that besides its utility of traveller destination selection, city branding also improves the city's probability of attaining new investments, new residents, new financiers and tourists. However, brand equity in different markets must be understood well in order to have a success in creation of strong brands globally (Yoo and Donthu, 2002; Buil and Martinez, 2013). This understanding provides corporations to keep and improve this worthy entity. Moreover, it is significant to grasp the impact of brand equity on customers' behavior and manners (Buil and Martinez, 2013; Hoeffler and Keller, 2003).

Eventually, consumer actions are the key determinant of the value creation of a brand in the market. Buil and Martinez (2013) state that the examination of their findings has become an urgent and challenging task for this reason. Current literature on city branding suggests that there is a positive correlation between brand equity and consumer responses (Buil and Martinez, 2013) and they present empirical studies to examine this issue using different dimensions of brand equity, such as familiarity or market share (Hoeffler and Keller, 2003; Buil and Martinez, 2013). However, little attention has been given for understanding of tourists' satisfaction through their overall experience with a heritage destination (Yao, 2013). Destination brand equity is adopted by studies that focus on corporate and product brand equity (Aaker, 1991). Aaker (1991) classified the brand equity

construct into five dimensions: awareness, associations/image, perceived quality, loyalty and other proprietary assets. Awareness refers to name and characteristics, associations/image to perceived value and personality, perceived quality to buyer's perception, and loyalty to repurchase and recommendation.

Similar to products and services, destinations are also branded. Kladou and Kehagias(2014) defines destination branding as marketing activities to create a logo, name, symbol, other graphic or word mark for identifying and differentiating a destination from its competitors. According to Ritchie and Ritchie (1998), destination branding promises an unforgettable travel experience uniquely connected to the destination; It also serves to strengthen and empower the emotional connection between the visitor and the destination, and reduces consumer search costs and perceived risk.

Focusing on cultural destination brands, specific cultural assets have been investigated, either in terms of their impact on brand equity or on a specific brand equity dimension (Kladou and Kehagias, 2014). For the purpose of this study and consistent with Kladou and Kehagias (2014) cultural assets are the assets that can contribute to create a competitive advantage (Kladou and Kehagias, 2014). Moreover, so far few studies have built on tourists' evaluations of various cultural assets (Kladou and Kehagias, 2014). However, these studies usually do not have a clear view of which cultural assets are actually important and contribute to their branding efforts.

Literature on destination brand equity is not characterized only by limited research on the importance of the assets dimension. Also the present study, which seeks to take previous research (e.g. Boo et al., 2009; Kladou and Kehagias, 2014) to the next level, tests a more complete model of brand equity in case of a cultural destination.

Finally, the study is organized as followed. The literature review starts with discussing brand equity and destination brand equity dimensions briefly and followed by enduring travel involvement and customers' future behaviors and satisfaction. Next, the theoretical model and hypotheses are presented. After the information about the research methodology is employed and the data collection process, a detailed analysis of the research findings is presented. In the following, the thesis makes an outline of conclusions, implications and limitations of the research.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter introduces and discusses the following constructs: Destination branding, customer-based brand equity, destination based brand equity, brand awareness, brand associations, brand quality, loyalty, cultural assets, enduring travel involvement, customers` future behavior and satisfaction. This review critically evaluates the different variables that are included in the research model and discuss their interrelationships. First, a brief introduction is provided to explain brands, destination brands and their respected benefits.

"A name, symbol, or design, signs, the statement, of which a dealer or vendor of goods and services and to distinguish them to identify a group of designed as a combination of the brand defines the American Marketing Association competitors" (Keller, 2008). Following this definition, brands make it easier for consumers to detect and differentiate services and goods. Additionally brands have a significant role in setting links among products and customers (Yuwo, Ford and Purwanegara , 2013).

Davis (2002) argues that brands serve two main functions. First, it provides functional information that helps consumers to differentiate its products from the rivals. Furthermore, it provides legal functions which mean it protects the statutory rights of individuals (organizations). From the synthesis view, brand is not only a name or logo, but it is a complicated phenomenon. Indeed, a brand is a set of expectations and associations inspired from the customer's experience with a product (firm) (Davis, 2002; Vinh and Nga, 2015). In the light of this perspective, brand is considered to be a set in which a product is an integral part (Vinh and Nga, 2015). Brand satisfies not only functional needs, but also the emotional needs of customers (Vinh and Nga, 2015). Compared to the traditional view has become more and more popular among contemporary scholars. Product only exists in a specific life cycle, whereas brand can be tied with a series of products (Vinh and Nga, 2015). Therefore, brand is able to have a longer life cycle.

It is apparent that a place is a product under the description of brand, however destination branding is complicated because there are a lot aspects to a place like the economical, cultural, technological, social and political matters associated with places as products (Yuwo, Ford and Purwanegara, 2013).

To address the varied aspects of a brand associated with a place, the process for image setting necessitates a longer time horizon and compliance in terms of city policies and marketing endeavors to gain customer reliability (Dinnie, 2011; Yuwo, Ford and Purwanegara, 2013). Hadrikurnia (2011) states that there are three key factors which are required in the branding of a place as a tourism destination. The first factor includes the physical units of the city such as complexes and substructures. The second factor covers the individual units of the city like mankinds, residents, and travellers who are influenced by elements (such as cultural, social, personal and psychological elements). Finally the third factor includes organizational factors which are the groups that consist of individuals who share the similar goals, beliefs, etc. One difficulty in the branding process is to build trust in the various constituencies of the city concerning what the city will do for protecting and enhancing the living conditions of its occupants and tourists (Yuwo, Ford and Purwanegara, 2013). At this point, the core brand position of the cities must be consistent although they have a diversity of distinct target masses to serve (Dinnie, 2011; Yuwo, Ford and Purwanegara, 2013).

## **2.1 Destination Branding**

Destination branding is a complex and multidimensional concept. This section will review the different conceptualization of destination branding.

According to the traditional aspect, destinations are well-described geographical zones, such as a territory, an isle or a city (Hall, 2000; Vinh and Nga, 2015). Although traditional view argues that places are highly divided by the obstacles of politics and geography, regardless of paying attention to the tourists' choices or tasks of tourism industry. Recently, destination is referred as a cognitive concept which can be interpreted subjectively by tourists, depending on their travel plan, aim of visit, cultural background, educational grade and previous experience (Vinh and Nga, 2015; Mohamad, 2012). For example, London might be considered as a destination by a German business traveler, whereas a leisure Japanese tourist who spends a tour at six European countries in two weeks may consider Europe as a destination (Vinh and Nga, 2015). Another example, some of the travelers of a cruise ship might assume the cruise ship as a destination, whereas other tourists on the same ship may count the seaports visited during the journey

as their destination (Vinh and Nga, 2015; Buhalis, 2000). Based on this viewpoint, a destination can be regarded as a place where people travel to and stay for a period to satisfy their expectations and needs (Vinh and Nga, 2015) where the facilities and services are designed to meet the tourists' needs (Vinh and Nga, 2015). It is a combination of all the experiences, services and products supplied for visitors (Vinh and Nga, 2015; Buhalis, 2000).

On the other hand, there are certain difficulties in case of determining the brand of destination in comparison to a mass product (service). Tourist destinations are associated with lots of factors like tourism policy, accommodation, tourism industry and tourist attractions (Vinh and Nga, 2015; Cai, 2002) likewise, the name of a destination usually precocerted by the current name of the location (Vinh and Nga, 2015; Kim et al., 2009). Thus theoretically, the definition of destination brand is dispersed.

Ritchie and Ritchie (1998) have introduced a commonly used definition of brand. Ritchie and Ritchie (1998) argue that destination brand can be a name, symbol, logo, word mark or other graphic that identifies and distinguishes the place, and conveys the unforgettable travel experience uniquely associated with the place, at the same time serving to reinforce and strengthen the enjoyable memories of the place experienced. Like Baker and Cameron (2008) state in their article, place branding aims to reinforce the authenticity of a traveller destination, and support the formation and development of positive images so as to differentiate and attract target markets. Therefore, destination branding processes have an important role in government strategies to attain a competitive advantage in tourism industry (Aziz et al., 2012; Vinh and Nga, 2015).

## **2.2 Customer-based Brand Equity**

Keller (1993) states "in terms of the value of brand information consumer brand marketing brand for the differential effect". Farquhar et al. (1991) maintain that brand equity increase the utility or adds value to a product by its brand name. Furthermore Aaker (1991) came up with a commonly used definition of brand equity by expressing full discretion of customers to the brand and particularly help customer understands easily. Accoring to Aaker (1991), brand equity, brand assets and the value of a company and/or a product or service for customers of the company by the name of its symbol values provided products and it is

possible to easily understand. According to Aaker (1991), perceived quality of brand, brand awareness, brand loyalty, and brand associations refers to the four main components came into being. In below, these constructs will be introduced briefly by referring to Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993).

Brand awareness is the knowledge that a consumer has about a particular brand. It is about how to aware potential consumers about the brand and make them familiar about the product and service. Logos, tag-lines, packaging, pricing etc. can build this kind of awareness for customers (Yuwo, Ford and Purwanegara, 2013).

Brand image is defined as the total of ideas and thoughts which are related to a brand to differentiate the brand from the competitors in consumers' memory. In order to create a strong brand image, there must be a harmony between the expectations of the consumers and brand positioning. Hence firms must fulfill the goal of matching customers' expectations to get when they using the branded good or service (Yuwo, Ford and Purwanegara, 2013).

According to Aaker (1996), are perceived in terms of product quality, which is of paramount importance to have perfect customer, and the customer that product was a significant factor in motivating effect is not miss. in comparison to alternative's brand. As a result perceived quality has an important influence on brand equity by affecting the awareness, image, and also customers' loyalty. Moreover perceived quality has an effect on the image of the brand, especially in terms of perceptions of price and value.

Brand loyalty is one of the significant brand equity dimensions. Aaker(1991) states that brand loyalty for a client is indicative of the confidence in a brand. If customers associate themselves with the brand, then they will build loyalty towards the brand. In addition, improving the level of brand loyalty and keeping the customer loyal will provide growing volume of purchases, commitment to rebuy and positive word of mouth. Increasing the correspondence between the brand and customer's expectations will make the brand more important and provide more loyal customers which can protect the organization from competitor attacks. In addition, increasing popularity of the concept brand equity has increased the importance of marketing strategies (Keller, 2003). In particular, in terms of

customer-based brand equity brand measurement tool is mandatory and is regarded as an important aspect. (Pappu et al., 2005).

Despite the fact that there are some conflicts about this concept whether customer-based brand equity can be applied into the tourist destination rather than a product due to its complexity and incomprehensibility; there are tentative researches on customer-based brand equity that have been implemented to tourism destinations (Konecnik and Gartner, 2007; Vinh and Nga, 2015).

Konecnik and Gartner (2007) conducted the first study which implements to the customer-based brand equity model into a tourist destination. Studies of Boo et al. (2009), Konecnik and Gartner (2010), Pike et al. (2010), Myagmarsuren and Chen (2011) and Vinh (2015) followed it. Most of the studies, that apply customer-based brand equity into tourist destinations, have adopted Aaker's (1991) model and its four main components which are destination brand awareness (destination brand associations), destination perceived quality, destination brand image and destination brand loyalty (Vinh and Nga, 2015). The next section will discuss in detail the construct of destination based brand equity and the dimensions that constitute and affect the construct.

### **2.3 Destination Based Brand Equity**

According to Prichard and Morgan (1998), similar to products and services, destinations can be branded, too. However, different than a good or service, a destination brand name is generally preconcerted by the current name of the location (Sarvari, 2012). What makes branding powerful lies in the fact that it increases the customer awareness about the destination and forms positive images about it (Sarvari, 2012). Definitions of tourism destination brands (Blain et al., 2005; Sarvari, 2012) inspired by marketing, as the notion may be enlarged to both tangible and intangible products (Aaker, 1991).

Analyzing brand equity with respect to the customer's viewpoint is crucial for the success of developing powerful brand equity for a place, destination or a city (Yuwo, Ford and Purwanegara, 2013). However, research on marketing literature points out that the application of doctrines of product brands cannot be applied directly into services (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 2003). Konecnik and Gartner (2007) studied whether the product brand

notion can be applied into tourist destinations. As a result, studies on destinations suggest that the generality of a brand ought to be determined regarding to tourism features and destination attributes (Tasci et al., 2007; Konecnik and Gartner, 2007; Sarvari, 2012).

In 2007, Konecnik and Gartner found that the four dimensions of the brand equity construct successfully served for developing a brand equity gages for a tourist destination (Yuwo, Ford and Purwanegara, 2013). The first dimension, which is awareness, involved the tourists' perception of the destination in case of they have ever heard about the city and if so what characteristics do they recall. Moreover it involved acquaintance of illustrations, slogans and logos related to the city (Yuwo, Ford and Purwanegara, 2013).

The second dimension, brand image, involved tourists' impressions about the image of the city destination, its peripheries, and its attributions such as nature, paysage, weather, and cultural offerings (Yuwo, Ford and Purwanegara, 2013). Later, Konecnik (2010) discovered that this dimension is the most significant component of CBBETD (Consumer-Based Brand Equity for a Tourism Destination) in terms of travel destination preferences of customers.

As the third dimension of the brand equity construct, brand quality, was also found to be significant due to its effect on customer behaviors (Konecnik and Gartner, 2007; Yuwo, Ford and Purwanegara, 2013). Brand quality focused on the traveler's impressions about the factors which develop the general environment of the city destination. These factors are the quality of the cuisine, accommodations, ambience, security, services and value for money (Yuwo, Ford and Purwanegara, 2013). Brand image deals with consumer ideas that held on their memories in terms of city features when they have given the city name and general images. On the other hand, brand quality deals with the perceptions of quality assigned to those particular features (Yuwo, Ford and Purwanegara, 2013).

Eventually, the fourth dimension, which is brand loyalty, also has an important effect on travelers' preferences of a particular destination (Konecnik and Gartner, 2007; Yuwo, Ford and Purwanegara, 2013). Brand loyalty focused on customers' willingness to revisit the city and their desire to suggest the destination to other travelers (Yuwo, Ford and Purwanegara, 2013). These dimensions will be explained in detail in the following sections.



### **2.3.1 Brand Awareness Dimension of Destination Brand Equity**

Aaker (1991) defined brand awareness as “the ability of the potential buyer to recognize and recall that a brand is a member of a certain product category”. Brand awareness comprises brand recall and brand recognition. Brand recall is the measure of how well consumers remember a brand name correctly when they see a product category. On the other hand, brand recognition is consumers’ ability of recognizing a brand by getting some cues (Chi et al., 2009; Vinh and Nga, 2015).

Applied to the tourism industry, destination brand awareness is stated as the brand’s power of existing in customers’ mind (Konecnik and Gartner, 2007; Boo et al., 2009; Vinh and Nga, 2015). Some studies define the power of the brand existence in the customer’s memory as destination brand salience or destination brand associations (Pike et al., 2010; Bianchi and Pike, 2011; Pike et al., 2013; Vinh and Nga, 2015). Boo et al. (2009) argue that brand awareness is the major element of a brand’s influence on tourism and hospitality business. For the success of a tourist destination, at first the destination must attract tourists’ attention (Vinh and Nga, 2015). The goal of destination marketing is increasing awareness of a destination via constructing a unique brand (Jago et al., 2003; Vinh and Nga, 2015).

It is considered that brand awareness has an important effect on consumers’ purchasing decision (Boo et al., 2009). Brand awareness is a significant predecessor of customer value (Boo et al., 2009) and has a contribution on hospitality companies’ performance (Kim and Kim, 2005; Boo et al., 2009). Moreover Konecnik and Gartner (2007) measured German and Croatian tourists’ awareness of Slovenia. The researchers used “name” and “characteristics” of the destination for measuring brand awareness and as a result they discovered that brand awareness is a significant dimension of brand equity (Boo et al., 2009).

### **2.3.2 Brand Associations Dimension of Destination Brand Equity**

According to Keller (1993), “brand image is the perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory”. In tourism industry, brand image refers to the customers’ emotional perception which is attached to any particular brand (Boo et

al., 2009; Vinh and Nga, 2015). Despite the fact that academicians and marketing managers are highly interested in the concept of destination brand image, there is not any matchless and generally admitted approach to its conceptualization (Konecnik and Gartner, 2007; Vinh and Nga, 2015). Destination brand image can be defined as person's intellectual submission of knowledge (beliefs), feelings, and global impression about an object or destination (Myagmarsuren and Chen, 2011; Vinh and Nga, 2015). It is a mix of beliefs, feelings, ideas, visuality, and perceptions about a certain destination (Tasci et al., 2007).

In addition, brand image has a crucial role on the construction of the brand equity (Keller, 2003; Boo et al., 2009). In tourism and hospitality business, brand image has been considered a major dimension of brand equity (Konecnik and Gartner, 2007; Kim and Kim, 2005; Boo et al., 2009). There have been some different methods in order to measure brand image (Boo et al., 2009). For instance, Lassar et al. (1995.) proposed a scale for the measurement of consumer-based brand equity by referring to the image dimension as the social image, which is consumer's perception of respect in which the consumer's social group holds the brand. Tsai (2005) also assumed that brand image has an effect on consumer's perceptions of social approval.

In contrast, Martinez and de Chernatony (2004) argued that the current literature indicates that brand image is a multi-dimensional concept; indeed there is not an agreement on how to measure it empirically. Dobni and Zinkhan (1990) claimed that there is variety of different definitions of brand image in the literature and this situation may be the reason of the conflict of using which scale for best result. Brand image has been significantly related to customers' self-concepts (Aaker, 1996; Boo et al., 2009). Pitt et al. (2007) emphasizes that branding is the process of building a brand image to attract the hearts and minds of consumers.

### **2.3.3 Perceived Brand Quality Dimension of Destination Brand Equity**

Customer's perceptions of the overall quality or superiority of a product or service with respects to its intended purpose refers perceived quality (Aaker, 1991). Personal experiences, personal needs, and cases of consumption may impact subjective assessment of quality (Yoo et al., 2000; Vinh and Nga, 2015). Perceived quality cannot be objectively

designated as it is a perception, but also as it is nominative judgment of what is important for the customer involved (Aaker, 1991).

According to Keller's (2003) customer-based brand equity model, there have been seven dimensions of product quality. These dimensions are performance, features, conformation quality, reliability, durability, serviceability, and style and design. In tourism industry, destinations perceived quality is interested in customer's impressions about the quality of a destination's substructure, hospitality service, and facilities such as accommodation (Pike et al., 2010; Vinh and Nga, 2015) and it is the core component of customer-based brand equity in case of implementing to a destination (Konecnik and Gartner, 2007; Vinh and Nga, 2015).

Perceived quality is a direct precessor of perceived value (Boo et al., 2009). Low and Lamb (2000) argued that perceived quality is on the center of the theory that strong brands add value to consumers' purchases. Murphy et al. (2000; Boo et al., 2009) also demonstrated that perceived trip quality has a positive impact on perceived trip value. Deslandes (2003) found that there is a positive correlation between perceived quality of a tourist destination and perceived value of that destination. Konecnik and Gartner (2007) identified perceived brand quality as a core dimension of customer-based brand equity in case of applying for a destination.

### **2.3.4 Brand Loyalty Dimension of Destination Brand Equity**

Brand loyalty has been stated as "the attachment that a customer has to a brand" (Aaker, 1991). It is the main component of customer-based brand equity and it has two dimensions as behavioral and attitudinal. Behavioral loyalty is identified as repurchase attitude (Chi et al., 2009; Vinh and Nga, 2015; Curtis et al., 2011). It can be explained as the frequency of repurchase or relative volume of same brand purchase (Pike and Bianchi, 2013). Gitelson and Crompton (1984) claimed that many destinations are visited repeatedly by tourists. Similarly, Opperman (2000) argued that destination loyalty should be considered as a lifelong visitation behavior. In this way behavioral loyalty can be used as a reasonable predictor of future destination choice (Sarvari, 2012).

Attitudinal loyalty represents the tendency to be loyal to a specific brand and it refers to customer intention of purchasing the brand as a first option (Yoo and Donthu, 2001; Vinh and Nga, 2015) or the intention to repurchase (Huong et al., 2015). In tourism industry, attitudinal loyalty refers to a tourist's willingness to revisit the same destination and suggest it to other travelers (Pike and Bianchi, 2013; Vinh and Nga, 2015). Back and Parks (2003) defined it as an outcome of multidimensional cognitive manners toward a particular destination brand. Moreover, attitudinal loyalty, which is measured via customer's intention to visit and positive word of mouth, is making a decision based on characteristics and benefits to be obtained from travel to a specific destination (Pike and Bianchi, 2013; Sarvari, 2012). Having a proper and positive attitudinal loyalty serves customers to become committed to a brand and prefer that brand instead of competitors (Sarvari, 2012).

Aaker (1991) argued that brand loyalty is the major component of a brand's equity. Lassar et al. (1995) stated, brand equity arises from the fact that consumers are much more confident than a brand's rival, and this trust turns to the loyalty of the consumers and the willingness to pay a premium price for the brand. For brand managers, generating customer loyalty is a main goal. Although Keller (2003) implemented brand loyalty as the core of customer-based brand equity, in terms of measurement, there is not a universally accepted definition for the conceptual nature of brand loyalty. As a result, there is wide variety of measurement tools which produces inconsistent results (Boo et al., 2009).

Boo et al. (2009) indicated that loyalty is a significant research area in tourism industry. Examples of the variety of research and tools about brand loyalty are as follows. Back and Parks (2003) argued that brand loyalty has been considered as a result of the multi-dimensional cognitive attitudes toward a particular brand in tourism and hospitality business. Konecnik and Gartner (2007) studied the significance of brand loyalty in Slovenia by referring to the brand equity model. In another study by Kim and Kim (2005), it was discovered that perceived brand loyalty of customers have an effect on a company's performance in the luxury hotel business.

Oppermann (2000) argued that loyalty is an important factor that should not be ignored in case of analyzing destination brands and some studies partly incorporate that concept. However, these studies only add a few measures that indirectly refer to loyalty and it was

suggested that repeated visits to a destination and intention to re-visit are indicators of place loyalty. Behavioral loyalty indicates that previous experiences have an influence on today's and tomorrow's tourism decisions, especially destination choice. According to Opperman (2000), destination loyalty should be examined continually alias observation lifelong visitation attitudes. Thus, behavioral loyalty can be used as a significative determinant of future destination choice.

### **2.3.5 Cultural Assets Dimension of Destination Brand Equity**

The importance of culture has been repeatedly emphasized on destination branding literature (Kladou and Kehagias, 2014). Branding a destination is described as the process used to develop a unique identity and personality that differs from all competitive destinations (Morrison and Anderson, 2002). Arzeni (2009) argues that building a strong relationship between tourism and culture can provide more attractiveness and competitiveness to destinations. Cultural destination brands have been particularly popular among tourism practitioners and academicians (Kladou and Kehagias, 2014). Emphasis on heritage and cultural assets is believed to have the potential for developing a special niche in the industry (Apostolakis, 2003).

Despite some limited efforts (Kladou and Kehagias, 2014), usually the assets dimension is not integrated in destination brand equity models (e.g. Boo et al., 2009; Kladou and Kehagias, 2014). The reason lies with corporate and product branding because, when referring to products, brand equity is measured by way of an intangible balance sheet asset (Pike, 2010; Kladou and Kehagias, 2014), which involves future financial performance (Kladou and Kehagias, 2014) and market share (Kladou and Kehagias, 2014). Nevertheless, in case of focusing on urban destinations, different representations of the city culture could contribute to increased attractiveness and competitiveness (Kladou and Kehagias, 2014).

Moreover, given the impact of cultural assets on positioning, cultural assets may also be seen as brand assets (Kladou and Kehagias, 2014). Consequently, specific cultural representations are potential cultural brand assets, because they are the reason why tourists perceive a destination as unique (Kladou and Kehagias, 2014). Cultural tourism and destination branding literature lead to the recognition of specific cultural assets, which

tourists may evaluate as significant cultural brand assets (Kladou and Kehagias, 2014). These assets consist of monuments/heritage sites, events, street culture, cuisine, traditions, contribution to world heritage, entertainment/nightlife options, cultural festivals, museums and art centers (Konecnik and Gartner, 2007; Kladou and Kehagias, 2014).

## **2.4 Enduring Travel Involvement**

Laurent and Kapferer (1985) demonstrated that involvement referred to a psychological state of interest, motivation, and arousal toward an activity or associated product.

Although the definition of involvement is still debatable, it has been commonly agreed that involvement is one of the major subjects of the decision-making process research, and it could lead to various consumer behaviors (Yao, 2013).

Involvement was improved in consumer behaviour and it has taken the interest of many scholars who analyzed these constructs in their researches, so they attached value to this construct (Ramos and Santos, 2014). Bloch and Richins (1983) introduced the term "self-involvement" to explain engagement which exists only in cases where the consumer is identified with the brand choice or decision. Douglas (2006) claimed that involvement can be seen as the customer attention for a product and the importance given to the purchase decision (Ramos and Santos, 2014).

Involvement has been defined and operationalized as a salient concept for understanding leisure, recreation, and tourism behaviors (Ferns and Walls, 2012). Most tourism studies have focused on examining tourists' participation in activity context either with general travel experience or with particular touristic activities, such as skiing and visiting parks, and gambling (Ferns and Walls, 2012). The general view of involvement in tourism has been focused on examining temporary personal feelings of heightened involvement that accompany a particular situation, such as destinations or travel decisions (Ferns and Walls, 2012). However, tourists' involvement with travel itself –an enduring commitment – and its impact on travel behaviors has received little attention (Ferns and Walls, 2012).

In a comprehensive framework of involvement, Rothschild (1975, 1979a, 1979b. as cited in Ferns and Walls, 2012) theorized two different form of involvement. These are

situational involvement and response involvement. Situational involvement is affected by product attributes, such as air fare cost and similarity among destination choice alternatives, as well as situational variables, such as travel companions or length of trip (Ferns and Walls, 2012). Response involvement is the consequences of the inner state of being involved, which often refers to behaviors due to their antecedent involvement (Pritchard and Brunson, 1999; Ferns and Walls, 2012).

Enduring travel involvement also differs from destination involvement (Ferns, 2012). Destination involvement can be seen as the relevance of a travel destination to the individual (Ferns and Walls, 2012). It is a tourist's evaluation of his/her engagement with a destination as central aspect of his/her life providing both hedonic and symbolic value (Filo, Chen, King, and Funk, 2011; Ferns and Walls, 2012).

On the other hand, enduring travel involvement reflects the perceived relevance of travel to the individual (Ferns and Walls, 2012). As its name implies, enduring travel involvement levels are presumed to exist on a long term basis and its levels are reasonably stable (Ferns and Walls, 2012).

Ferns and Walls (2012) argue that most tourism studies focus on examining tourists' involvement with general travel experience or with specific touristic activities, but travelers' involvement with travel itself has received little attention. Grounded on Rothschild's (1984) definition of involvement, the current study considers travel involvement as the state of motivation and interest toward travel. As a service, tourism is a highly engaging decision, especially with respect to the destination choice; high involvement processes are required, due to its intangibility and inseparability dimensions of services (Seabra et al., 2014). When customers are involved, they pay attention, perceive the importance of the decision and act in a different than when they are not (Seabra et al., 2014).

## **2.5 Consumer Satisfaction**

Satisfaction was defined as the degree to which one believes that an experience evokes positive feelings (Rust and Olive, 1994; as cited in Yao, 2013). Also, satisfaction was considered as to evaluate individual experiences collectively (J. Lee, Kyle, and Scoot,

2012). Oliver's (1980.) expectancy disconfirmation model is one of the most commonly accepted approaches for understanding consumer satisfaction in literature (Yen and Lu, 2008; Yao, 2013).

The theory proposed that consumer satisfaction is "a function of expectation and expectancy disconfirmation" (Oliver, 1980). In the purchasing process, consumers compared the actual performance with their expectation of a product, and the gap between the two determines satisfaction.

The theory was also commonly applied in the study of tourist satisfaction, which was explained as the consequence of the discrepancy between pre-travel expectations and post-travel perceptions (Huh et al., 2006; J. Lee and Beeler, 2009; Yao, 2013). For example, Pizam and Milman (1993) proposed that the disconfirmation is an effective indicator of satisfaction by studying and comparing the three segments of tourists' perception before and after they visited a specific destination.

Nevertheless, Tse and Wilton (1988. As cited in Yao, 2013) proposed reinforcement to the expectancy disconfirmation theory. They stated that consumer satisfaction was only related to actual performance. Their research emphasized that pre-visit expectation should not be considered as an influencing factor of satisfaction because tourists may have no previous knowledge or experience with the destinations. As satisfaction is a complicated concept, it would be more applicable to measure satisfaction in multiple dimensions (Yoon and Uysal, 2005; Yao, 2013).

The expectancy disconfirmation theory was referred to as a cognitive approach for understanding heritage satisfaction. Inspired by Oliver's findings (1993), a growing number of studies have proposed a cognitive-affective approach to understand tourist satisfaction by considering the emotional response to the travel experience (Bosque and Martin, 2006; Yao, 2013). Similar to the cognitive-affective approach, Pizam, Neumann, and Reichel (1978. As cited in Yao, 2013) indicated that there are two dimensions of tourist satisfaction: the instrumental or "physical" level of performance and the expressive or "psychological" level of performance. Consistent with the literature, Homburg, Koschate, and Hoyer (2006) proposed that cognition and affect influence travel satisfaction simultaneously. Cognition was the evaluation and perceived value of destination attributes



that tourists have after visiting a destination. Affect represented the feelings or emotions that tourists acquire from the travel experience. To study both cognition and affect derived from the travel experience, we investigated how physical attribute performance and emotional involvement with a destination interact and affect satisfaction (Yao, 2013).

There are some alternative definitions of satisfaction. Here are some of the most common definitions: In general, satisfaction is conceptualized as an assessment revealed that the consumption experience is at least as good as it should be (Hunt, 1977. As cited in Lee and Back, 2008). Tse and Wilton (1988. As cited in Lee and Back, 2008) have defined it as the consumer`s response to assessing the perceived inconsistency between previous expectations and actual performance perceived after product consumption.

Alternatively Westbrook and Reilly (1983. As cited in Lee and Back, 2008) have defined satisfaction as a sentimental reaction to the practices provided by, associated with certain products or services purchased, retail outlets, or even molar patterns of behavior such as shopping and buyer behavior, as well as the overall market place.

Finally, according to Oliver (1981. As cited in Lee and Back, 2008), “satisfaction is the summary of psychological state resulting when the emotion surrounding disconfirmed expectations is coupled with the consumer`s prior feelings about the consumption experience”. These definitions reflect overall positive effect and a target customer`s overall contentment in relationship with an exchange party. Overall satisfaction is featured by a cumulative construct which has been assessed by expectations and perceived performance as well as previous satisfaction (John- son, Anderson, and Fornell, 1995. As cited in Lee and Back, 2008).

## **2.6 Future Behavior**

### **2.6.1 Word-of-Mouth (WOM)**

Word-of-mouth (WOM) is defined as person-to-person informal channel between a perceived uncommercial communicator and a receiver about a product, a brand, a service, or an organization (Harrison-Walker, 2001). Because of its intangibility of a service product, a customer`s buying verdict generally involves higher levels of perceived risk in

comparison to purchase of a manufactured product. Positive WOM provides clarification and feedback opportunities therefore, it helps to decrease perceived risk (Murray, 1991; Qu et al., 2011). Furthermore, it is considered as a significant information source which affects customer's destination options (Oppermann, 2000; Qu et al., 2011).

Shanka et al. (2002) acknowledge that WOM has a positive impact on tourist's destination choices. Chi and Qu (2008) argued that travelers usually benefit from the advices of others in case of choosing a destination. Word of mouth recommendations are not only popular but also they have a crucial importance for tourism marketing due to the fact that travelers consider them as the most reliable information sources (Yoon and Uysal, 2005; Som et al., 2012). Likewise, Wong and Kwong (2004) claimed that travelers who visit repeatedly provide an increase of word-of-mouth and these recommendations affect the decisions of prospective tourists. Moreover, Hui et al. (2007) argued that travelers who were pleased from the entire journey were probably to propose the destination to others rather than to revisit it in the future (Som et al., 2012).

### **2.6.2 Re-visit Intention**

According to consumption process perspective, there are three stages of tourists' behaviors which are pre-visitation, during visitation, and post visitation (Rayan, 2002; Som et al., 2012). Chen and Tsai (2007) argued that tourists' attitudes consist of preference of destination to travel, ensuring assessments, and future behavioral intentions. The ensuring assessments refer to the travel experience or perceived value and overall visitors' satisfaction, whereas the future behavioral intentions are the traveler's judgment about the probability of revisiting the same destination and willingness to recommend it to other visitors.

It is identified by some studies that satisfaction and travel experience are the significant prerequisite for revisit intention (Oppermann, 2000; Chi and Qu, 2008; Som et al., 2012), and positive satisfaction affects travelers' rebuying intention positively (Gotlieb et al., 1994). Conversely, Um et al. (2006) discovered that satisfaction was not important in terms of influencing revisit intention to Hong Kong for European and North American travelers. In addition, Bigne et al. (2009) stated that in a competitive market even if customers are

satisfied with a product/service, they may still switch to competitor in order to reach better results.

Also, Cronin et al. (2000) argues that in comparison to satisfaction or quality, perceived value may be a preferable sign of rebuying intention. Zabkar et al. (2010) found complicated correlation between primary constructs and behavioral intentions. Their model demonstrates that, destination attributes have an effect on perceived quality which then impacts satisfaction and finally end up with revisit intention. Jang and Feng (2007) emphasized that; novelty seeking is a premise of re-traveling intention. They analyzed the impacts of travelers' novelty-seeking and destination satisfaction on re-traveling intentions in short-term, mid-term, and long-term. They discovered that satisfaction has an influence on travelers' intention for revisit in short-term, whereas novelty seeking has an influence on travelers' intention for revisit in mid-term, and long-term. Petrik (2002) argued that "novelty seeking" has a significant role in travelers' decision making process. Pearson (1970) defined novelty seeking as the level of contrast between current perception and past experience.

In tourism industry, novelty seeking is also researched as an enhancer for travelers' satisfaction (Crotts, 1993; As cited in Som et al., 2012). Mostafavi Shirazi and Mat Som (2010) analyzed whether destination attributes have an impact on re-traveling intention in Penang or not. They found revisit, which is a sign of loyalty in traveller destination, is mightily impacted by destination features. Also their research indicated that diversity of fascinations are one of the required conditions to explain repeat visitations (Som et al., 2012). There have been numerous studies which highlight the relationship between image and destination loyalty (Tasci and Gartner, 2007; Wang et al., 2011; Som et al., 2012). At this point, Chi and Qu (2008) emphasized 'destination image' as a premise of destination loyalty. It is largely adopted that destination image has an influence on tourist attitudes (Lee et al., 2005; Bigne et al., 2001).

In plenty researches, destination image is exclusive as a destination feature and is noted as an efficient medium for attracting travelers (Kneesel et al., 2010). Bigne et al. (2001) and Lee et al. (2005) have pointed out that destination image have two very important effects on behaviors: firstly, it has an influence on the destination preference decision-making

process, and secondly, it influences after decision-making attitudes such as aim to re-traveling and readiness to suggest. Lee et al. (2005) states that person with a more famous destination image perceived higher on site experience, that drive to higher satisfaction and the more positive behavioral intentions. Chen and Tsai (2007) analyzed the correlation between destination image, evaluative elements (e.g., travel quality, perceived value, satisfaction) and behavioral intentions. They came up with a result that destination image and satisfaction were two significant variables which influenced tourists' behavioral intention. Thier study indicated that destination image has influences on behavioral intentions directly and indirectly (Som et al., 2012).

## **2.7 Relationships between enduring travel involvement and dimensions of destination brand equity**

Tourists' specific heritage and cultural motivations were considered as important driving factors that could affect overall travel experience (Kay, 2009; Yao, 2013). Previous findings consistently suggested that to better satisfy a target market's demand, marketers need to understand the motivations and expectations of target tourists and connect them with the experiences that a heritage destination can offer (Yao, 2013).

Andersen, Prentice and Guerin (1997) studied the cultural tourism of Denmark. They select a few features, like historical structures, museums, galleries, theaters, festivals and events, shopping, food, palaces, famous people, castles, sports, and old towns. They detected the significant features as being castles, gardens, museums, and historical buildings, when travelers made a decision to visit Denmark (Huh, 2002).

When pursuing activities that are meaningful, enjoyable, and central to their lives, persons tend to improve complex cognitive structures and in-depth insights. In addition, these individuals are more likely to go through complicated and extensive decision-making processes in order to avoid the likelihood of making bad decisions and minimize the possibilities of negative consequences of poor choices (Lastovicka and Gardner, 1979. as cited in Ferns and Walls, 2012). Consumers who find pleasure travel significant and central to their lives will likely seek informational involvement in the cognitive schema behind their choices and preserve complex cognitive structures regarding destination options. They are likely travel enthusiasts (Goldsmith, Flynn and Bonn, 1994. as cited in Ferns and Walls,

2012). These individuals maintain perceptual vigilance for information concerning travel and travel destinations and have strong cognitive responses to related information. Strong interest is likely to motivate active and continuous information search (Corey, 1971. As cited in Ferns and Walls, 2012). For example, these enthusiasts may subscribe to or constantly read travel magazines and blogs, watch travel programs, and search travel information from those with similar interest. They are more likely to have seen or heard about travel destinations and recall and recognize these destinations.

An individual's degree of attention in travel has a straight influence on their understanding and choices of a destination. In the travel decision-making process, tourists may experience a situational involvement with destinations, a temporary intensified concern with one or more destinations because there are usually high stakes associated with the decision and consumption outputs. They evaluate functional, symbolic, and experiential attributes of a destination through both cognitive and affective processes. A number of studies have been focused on personal relevance of the destination. As posited by Lee et al. (2005), the relationship between a destination and a tourist's level of involvement is determined by the amount of personal relevance that the destination has with the individual. In other words, links between destination brands attributes and a person's needs, goals, and values will determine the level of personal relevance or involvement a tourist will have with the destination.

Although, levels of enduring involvement have been consistently and positively linked to significant behavioral indicators, such as period, periodicity, intentions, and volume of attendance, these relationships are not universal (Havitz and Mannell, 2005; Ferns and Walls, 2012). Kapferer and Laurent (1985) suggested that "involvement does not systematically lead to the expected differences in behavior". Iwasaki and Havitz (1998) proposed that brands may mediate the effects of enduring involvement on subsequent behaviors, providing an explanation for the lack of congruence. The more persons regard products or activities as significant and central to their lives, the more they venture to preserve stabilize or informational consistency between values and behaviors (Crosby and Taylor, 1983). Values give as determinants of a wide variety of specific attitudes, which in turn, have an impact on a person's behavior in specific situations (Schiffman and Kanuk, 1994. As cited in Ferns and Walls, 2012).

Similarly, pleasure experienced through travel has a link to affirmative beliefs and behaviors, which result in cognitive consistency (Rosenberg, 1960. As cited in Ferns and Walls, 2012). Persons who count pleasure travel significant, entertaining, and central to their lives will more likely attempt to maintain consistency between their values of travel and their attitudes towards a destination of choice. Values play a guiding role in choosing a destination whose image fits into their beliefs about pleasure travel.

Information seeking, whether through media and destination visits, or personal sources, results in increased expertise in travel, a common distinguishing feature of the travel enthusiast (Bloch, 1986. As cited Ferns and Walls, 2012). This expertise aids destination choices. The enthusiast tends to have knowledge or experience necessary for making judgments about destination quality and will choose destinations with adequate products and services for fulfilling or exceeding his/her expectations.

The correlation between enduring involvement and brand loyalty have been examined by some studies (e.g. Traylor, 1981, 1983; Park, 1996; LeClerc and Little, 1997; Iwasaki and Havitz, 1998. As cited in Ferns and Walls, 2012) which have different names. Traylor (1981) used the terms “ego involvement” and “brand commitment”, while Park (1996) referred to “involvement” and “attitudinal loyalty.” It is generally agreed that an individual’s enduring involvement in a product class is directly related to his/her loyalty towards a brand within the product class.

Moreover, how a product class closely matches with an individual’s ego or sense of identity, the stronger the psychological attachment of an individual will be towards a particular brand within that product class (Quester and Lim, 2003; Ferns and Walls, 2012). In a study which experiments insert coupons in newspapers, LeClerc and Little (1997;Ferns and Walls, 2012) came up with a result that brand loyalty interacted with product enduring involvement. Additionally, in a study on leisure activities Park (1996; Ferns and Walls, 2012) also realized a high correlation between involvement and attitudinal loyalty and suggested high enduring involvement is a precondition to brand loyalty.

Nevertheless, Iwasaki and Havitz (1998) stated that Park’s findings could not state whether involvement precedes loyalty. Instead, they theoretically recommended that persons go

through sequential psychological stages to be loyal participants in leisure activities. On the other hand, some studies have different conclusions. Traylor (1983) claimed that generally brand commitment or loyalty has not a direct relation with enduring involvement. He suggested that in some instances, it is possible that enduring product involvement can be high while commitment to brands is low, or enduring product involvement can be low when commitment to a brand is high. The reason of this situation is the fact that involvement and loyalty are consumer-defined phenomena. Considering some quantitative proof, the small sample size and the composition of the sample precluded Traylor from generalizing any of his findings. In an empirical examination of the link between product involvement and brand loyalty, Quester and Lim (2003) confirmed the existence of a correlation between these two constructs, but failed to establish the temporal sequence that product involvement precedes brand loyalty.

The literature review underlined that high enduring involvement is tacitly considered as a prerequisite to brand loyalty. Individuals who believe that pleasure travel is important, meaningful, and central to their lives are likely to build up high commitment to a destination and be less sensitive to situational influences. Enduring travel involvement precedes the development of destination brand loyalty. In contrast, Traylor (1983) has argued that combinations of inverse relationship of enduring involvement and brand loyalty are also possible. There is not a simple correlation between enduring involvement and brand loyalty (Quester and Lim, 2003; Ferns and Walls, 2012). The contradicting findings suggested that further empirical studies must be conducted (Ferns and Walls, 2012).

## **2.8 Relationships between brand equity dimensions and overall brand equity**

Coherent with other research (e.g. Bravo et al., 2007; Yasin et al., 2007; Jung and Sung, 2008; Buil and Martinez, 2013), and subsequent Yoo's et al. (2000) framework, this research comprises a distinct construct, which is overall brand equity, between the dimensions of brand equity and the impacts on customers' responses. In parallel with other brand equity explanations, overall brand equity is conceived to evaluate the increasing worth of the focal brand owing to the brand name (Yoo et al., 2000; Buil and Martinez, 2013). This individual construct provides an understanding of how brand equity

dimensions contribute to brand equity. If we focused on the direct impacts which brand equity dimensions can have on overall brand equity, the greatest impacts are expected to come from perceived quality, brand associations and brand loyalty. Brand awareness is a necessity however it is not enough for creating value (Maio Mackay, 2001; Keller, 2003; Buil and Martinez, 2013). As mentioned earlier, awareness is a prerequisite for brand equity because customers must be aware of the existence of brand.

On the other hand, if customers are aware of the main brands in the market, brand awareness is secondary (Maio Mackay, 2001; Buil and Martinez, 2013). Thus it is proposed that brand awareness will have a positive, though indirect, influence on overall brand equity. Overall brand equity will depend on perceived quality due to its essentiality for developing a positive evaluation of the brand in customers' memories (Farquhar, 1989; Buil and Martinez, 2013).

Moreover, perceived quality can lead to greater differentiation and superiority of the brand. Therefore it is argued that if the perceived quality of the brand is increased, then the possibility that there will be higher brand equity is also increased (Yoo et al., 2000; Kim and Hyun, 2011; Buil and Martinez, 2013). Likewise, with the help of brand associations, companies can differentiate their products from rivals and position them; also they can build favourable attitudes and beliefs towards their brands (Dean, 2004; Buil and Martinez, 2013). This, in turns, can provide higher brand equity (Yoo et al., 2000; Chen, 2001; Buil and Martinez, 2013). Consequently, it is generally accepted that brand loyalty is one of the main drivers of brand equity (e.g. Yoo et al., 2000; Buil and Martinez, 2013). Loyal customers show more affirmative reactions to a brand. Therefore, brand loyalty will contribute to growing brand equity.

According to Anholt (2007), a place brand strategy is a plan for describing the most literal, most competitive and most compulsory strategic vision for a place. This vision is then fulfilled and communicated through acts including, among others, tourism and culture. Referring especially to the process of convergence between culture and tourism, Apostolakis (2003) emphasizes heritage and cultural resources, because such attractions can be upgraded to a "special" niche in the industry.



Other proprietary brand assets, which may lead to a competitive advantage, make up the fifth dimension. In the case of a city basing its brand on culture, the items included can be monuments/ heritage sites, museums, art centers, cultural events and festivals (Richards, 2007; Konecnik and Gartner, 2007).

## **2.9 Relationships between each brand equity dimension and satisfaction**

Remember that a brand is a member of a product category to recognize certain brand awareness, is the ability for a buyer (Aaker, 1991). Similarly, Keller (1993) confirmed that brand awareness implies recognition and recall performance for a brand. Particularly, brand recognition alludes to the consumers' skill to endorse past exposure to the brand using a given brand as a cue, while brand recall demonstrates the consumers' skill to recall the brand in a given product category (Keller, 1993). Pitta and Katsanis (1995) demonstrated that the most important view of brand awareness is the primary creation of a brand node in memory.

Brand satisfaction can influence brand awareness in the sense that consumers satisfied with a provider may readily recall the name of the provider (Pappu and Quester, 2006; Lee and Back, 2008). Lee and Back (2008) brand marketing in the study (satisfaction, trust and Loyalty) customer response effects, brand associations and brand awareness) brand knowledge founded upon, state, brand awareness, brand satisfaction to the route is limited. A positive correlation between familiarity and brand satisfaction brand attitude brand awareness and remembering of the effect can be obtained.

Brand awareness improves brand familiarity as customers accrue direct or indirect brand experiences, such as exposure to brand advertisements and usage of the brand (Alba and Hutchinson, 1987; Kent and Allen, 1994; Lee and Back, 2008). It should also be considered that awareness and familiarity have been used interchangeably in previous literature (Baker, Hutchinson, Moore, and Nedungadi, 1986. as cited in Lee and Back, 2008).

Enhancement of brand familiarity may compose a better knowledge structure in a consumer's mind (Alba and Hutchinson, 1987; Campbell and Keller, 2003; Lee and Back, 2008) and strengthen trust about that brand (Laroche, Kim, and Zhou, 1996; Lee and Back,

2008), thereby leading to favorable brand assessment (Sen and Johnson, 1997; Lee and Back, 2008) and brand equity (MacKay, 2001; Lee and Back, 2008).

A tentative investigation by Chattopadhyay and Alba (1988) found that recall is an important predictor of an attitude and correlates with attitude abstractions. Some researchers viewed satisfaction as an attitude: Thinking of satisfaction measures as post-consumption attitude measures may be more stinging (LaTour and Peat, 1979. As cited in Lee and Back, 2008) and consumer satisfaction is an attitude that means a measurable evaluation orientation (Czepiel and Rosenberg, 1977. As cited in Lee and Back, 2008).

Nevertheless, other researches proposed that attitude is a wider construct than satisfaction. Oliver (1981) argued that satisfaction is progressively melted into an overall attitude toward a product or service. Bolton and Drew (1991) attitudes also mediate the alleged prior written the path to consumption satisfaction, satisfaction, post-purchase attitudes suggests that affects. Despite the fact that researchers have dissimilar observes about the relationship between satisfaction and attitude. Strong brand awareness, positive brand attitude, satisfaction, the researchers propose that affect shape. Strategic marketing, brand recall and recognition comes a strong hammer. (Robertson, 1987.as cited in Lee and Back, 2008).

If you satisfy the needs of tourism, nature tourism, tourist information, there is then positive. Overall tourist satisfaction with tourist experiences is associated with positive quality of the site other (Tribe and Snaith,1998; Lee, 2009). As a result, satisfaction is an effective pointer of the quality of on-site recreational experiences (Lee and Back, 2008; Mannell and Iso-Ahola, 1987; Yu and Lee, 2001; Lee, 2009).

Culture/heritage places, after visiting tourists, the attitudes and behaviors of in-depth information in order to obtain the target attributes, and tourism and tourists ' satisfaction there is a need to explore the relationship between. Status of visitor satisfaction or dissatisfaction after they buy tourism products and services (Fornell, 1992; Huh, 20002). If visitors are satisfied with the tourism products and services, then they will have the impulse to repurchase them or they will recommend them to others (Huh, 2002).

Glasson (1994) until now, tourist impacts and management responses provides an overview of the features of Oxford. Typically, this cultural/heritage destination of the tourists who visit about 80% satisfied. They said they wanted to do it again a, of the tourists who visit Oxford on 80% is expressed. Tourists, especially universities and colleges together with the traditions of physical environment and architecture create an atmosphere of a very happy and cute. Shopping is very popular among the residents and was accepted as friendly. However, in several areas, Oxford, bad traffic, city, a bad sign, the toilet and the condition of the crowd, the darkness-sending due to bad weather checked (Huh, 2002).

Marshall and Keller (1999) "image attribute measurements alone cannot be measured but consumer perceptions and its benefits can be reached using the brand and must contain the value measurements". The advantage of this consumer satisfaction research significance of the impact of the image-based. Because, according to the research the benefits of no display (that is functional, symbolic and experiential benefits) and the connections between degree of satisfaction in this way. Research the effect of interpersonal relationship based "benefit" when customers and received "benefits" from shopping, customers who purchase experience satisfaction. For example, Reynolds and Beatty (1999) found that the perceived high social and functional benefits would be when the salesperson customers more satisfied. In addition, Carpenter and Fairhurst (2005) there are two types of benefits consumers by like shopping you want detected: pragmatic and hedonic benefits retail purchase branded content. hedonic and utilitarian benefits provided customer satisfaction (Stephen I. Sondoh et al., 2007) has a positive impact on the.

Aaker (1991) and Rory (2000) noticed that, with the building of good brand image, customers were likely to enhance the satisfaction of usage, and would like to recommend to others. Gensch (1978) the quality of the product if it has been more easily defined such as to be effective and satisfying of the customers on the purchase intention brand image is considered to be. Graeff (1996) this promise, the customer's self-image while brand image is more similar to customer satisfaction will be affected. (2003) found a positive correlation between brand image and customer satisfaction, sharp and romantic. Many researchers, such as Su (2005), Zhi (2005), Lin (2005), Chen (2005), Xu (2006), Shi

(2006), Lin (2006), Yang (2006), and Zhang (2007), also confirmed a positive correlation between brand image and customer satisfaction (Chien-Hsiung, 2011).

There is a high correlation between satisfaction and perceived quality (Olsen, 2002, 2005). In some cases the intercorrelation is so high that it can be questioned whether quality and satisfaction is the same construct (Bitner and Hubbert 1994; Churchill and Surprenant 1982). About the order of existences between quality and satisfaction, theoretical and empirical arguments have been asserted (Cronin et al. 2000; de Ruyter, Bloemer, and Peeters 1997), and majority of the marketing scholars agree on a theoretical structure in which quality performance conduce to customer satisfaction (Dabholkar et al. 2000; Oliver 1997), which in turn impacts purchasing behavior (Johnson and Gustafsson 2000; Oliver 1999, Olsen 2002, 2005). If quality is an assessment of attribute performance and satisfaction reflects the effect of the performance on customer's mood, then quality can be used for estimating customers' feelings (satisfaction) or purchasing attitude (Olsen 2002). This view is as per the frequently used expectancy value models within attitude research (Eagly and Chaiken 1993), proposing that attitudes can be estimated from beliefs (e.g., Fishbein and Ajzen 1975). Following to satisfaction, quality performance has also been confirmed empirically; particularly when quality is framed as a specific belief evaluation and satisfaction as a more general evaluative construct (Gotlieb, Grewal, and Brown 1994; Huy Ho, 2006).

In a recent reserach conducted by Mittal and Kamakura (2001), it is presented that under some conditions, the response bias is so high that rated satisfaction is fully uncorrelated to repurchase behavior. Nevertheless, the main objective behind satisfaction-loyalty research is proving that satisfied customers are more loyal compared to unsatisfied customers (Oliver, 1997). Depending on earlier study, it is expected that the correlation between satisfaction and loyalty is weaker than the quality – satisfaction correlation (Olsen, 2002) also the satisfaction – behavioral loyalty correlation is weaker than the satisfaction – attitudinal loyalty correlation (Mittal and Kamakura, 2001; Taylor and Baker, 1994; Huy Ho, 2006).

## **2.10 Relationships between each brand equity dimension and future behaviour**

(WOM) Word of mouth, what product or service evaluation as a means of informal communication between private parties is evaluated. (Mazzarol et al., 2007; Lim and Chung, 2011). Compared with other promotional activities, WOM is a way of spreading information about products or services or tentativas cheap and reliable, therefore the spread of information or experience in consumer markets consumer expectation is considered as a key issue shaping (Lim and Chung, 2011).

We are committed to a brand or other brand to help to make the selection are initiated by loyal customers who share information or experience traditional WOM because the marketing channel is different from (Xu and Chan, 2010). WOM has a greater influence than other marketing activities such as an instrument that transmits print advertising, personal selling, and radio advertising (De Bruyn and Lilien, 2008). Xu and Chan (2010) the State Water lady more reliable, since it is not perceived as “marketing” and “information about the others, like friends and relatives made by a reality show, about trust product and service to maintain or add some salient aspects of what consumers already” (Lim and Chung, 2011).

However, overall there are both positive and negative evaluations on the perception of your product or service WOM (Lim and Chung, 2011). The purchase increases the likelihood of positive WOM, in contrast, negative WOM has a detrimental effect and increases the spread of the complaint (Xu and Chan, 2010). Positive WOM affects the evaluation of a branded product (Xu and Chan, 2010), they are loyal customers and a product, a strong association, high quality perception and proposes to create a distinctive and positive brand.

Ferns and Walls (2012) state that traveler’s enduring travel involvement positively affects their formation of destination brand equity, which is a combination of key factors that can derive the total utility that travelers place in the destination brand. Studies also suggest that customer-based destination brand equity has positive impact on tourists’ visit intentions although this relationship is typically mediated by satisfaction (i.e. Bigne´ and Andreu, 2004; Cai et al., 2004; Kim et al., 2009; Ferns and Walls, 2012). However, many of those studies have investigated post-trip travelers who have previously visited the destination. Ferns and Walls (2012) focus on examining the relationship between enduring travel

involvement and visit intentions mediated by destination brand equity during information search at tourists' pre-trip stage. The conceptual model of Ferns's study (2012) illustrated in Fig. 2 was empirically tested (Ferns and Walls, 2012).

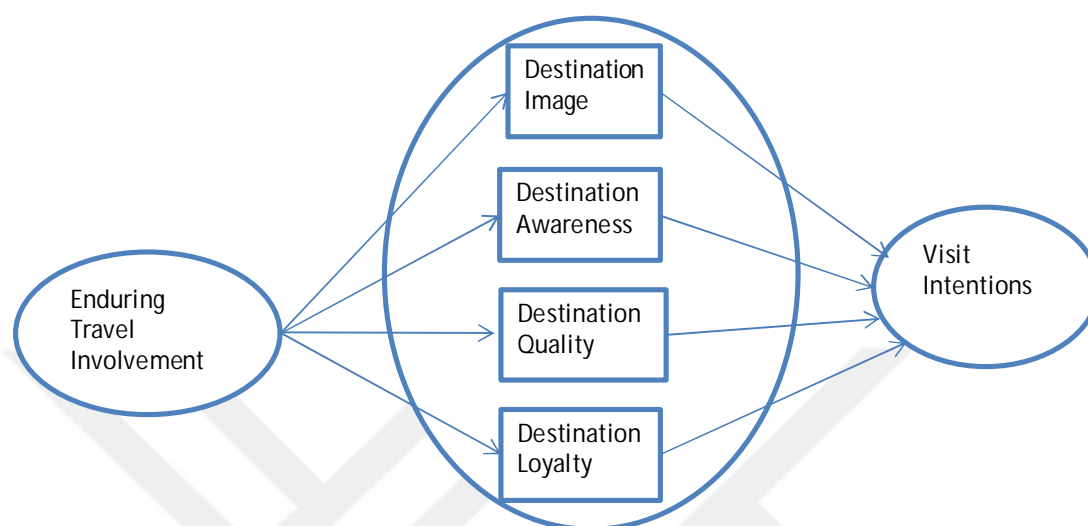


Fig. 1. Ferns's Conceptual Model (Ferns, 2012).

The attitudes that exist in the minds of tourists is expected to be partly linked to the destination image. Displays the destination of the trip, following in the evaluation and selection process will affect the future intentions of tourists. The impact of image on destination selection process has been studied by numerous researchers such as Crompton and Ankomah, 1993; Gartner, 1989; Goodall, 1988 (As cited in Chi and Qu, 2007). It is believed that destinations which have more positive images will more likely to be included in the decision making process of tourists.

In addition, destination image, perceived quality and satisfaction has a positive effect on. In other words, to have higher tourist satisfaction will provide a better image. Next, evaluation of the destination experience, add visual effects and changes (Chon, 1991; Echtner and Ritchie, 1991; Fakeye and Crompton, 1991; Ross, 1993. As cited in Chi and Qu, 2007). Eventually, destination image also influences the behavioral intentions of tourists. For instance, Court and Lupton (1997; as cited in Chi and Qu, 2007) found that the destination image under research favourably influences visitors' intention to revisit in

the future. Kotler, Bowen, and Makens (1996) the next sequence was established: the image - quality - satisfaction. In this model, the higher the image quality as perceived by the customers perceived quality corresponds to a more positive image will have the same effect. In order to define the perceived quality consumer satisfaction will be (Fornell, Johnson, Anderson, Cha, and Bryant, 1996; Kozak and Rimmington, 2000; Chi and Qu, 2007), because satisfaction is the outcome of customers' evaluation of the perceived quality.

Cultural/heritage tourism is a swiftly expanding niche market. This market is fueled by an enhancement number of internal and international tourists, and by the increasing availability of global communication (Huh, 2002). Light (1996) South Wales (Philly remedy Castle) for a particular event the tourist features of the legacy of one case has been reported. Events to encourage tourists to visit again and had a special appeal that has been successful for the event and non-event days by comparing the properties of visitors, it was clear the study of Light (1996) , most tourists cultural/heritage destination are satisfied with. This satisfaction to extend the duration of stay, leads tourists to visit again (Huh, 2002).

Karkee (2012) states that cultural difference and tourism are interlinked with each other due to their clear association and their potential in the growth of destination. Cultural difference has a significance influence on tourist satisfaction and intention to revisit (Karkee, 2012).

As a fundamental of customer's purchasing decision-making process, brand awareness is significant for customers to recall the brand in the context of a given particular product category, because awareness increases the probability that the brand will be a member of the consideration set. Additionally, awareness has an impact on decisions about brands in the consideration set, even in the absence of any brand associations in customers' minds. In low participatory decision settings, brand awareness may be at a minimum level to ensure selection. Furthermore, awareness may have an influence on customer's decision making process because it affects brand associations which form the brand image (Keller, 1998).

Generally, it has been supported that the overall image of the destination has influences on both the destination selection process and tourist behaviors (Qu et al., 2011). The

intentions of revisiting the destination and spreading a positive WOM have been the two most significant behavioral consequences in destination image and post-consumption behavior studies (Qu et al., 2011). Travelers' revisiting intention has been extensively studied in tourism research as an indicator of consumer loyalty (Qu et al., 2011). Marketing researchers put too much emphasis on the concept of customer retention because attracting new customers is more expensive compared to retaining existing customers (Rosenberg and Czepiel, 1984, as cited in Qu et al., 2011). Previously conducted studies supported that overall image is one of the most significant factors to elicit the intention for revisiting the same destination (Alcaniz et al., 2005; Qu et al., 2011).

Researchers have found that brand associations have a positive influence on customer choice, preferences and intention of purchase, their willingness to pay a price premium for the brand, accept brand extensions and suggest the brand to other customers (Park and Srinivasan, 1994; Cobb-Walgren et al., 1995; Agarwal and Rao, 1996; Hutton, 1997; Yoo et al., 2000).

The correlation between buying intention and perceived quality (Cronin and Taylor 1992) or customer satisfaction and intention (Anderson and Sullivan 1993; Taylor and Baker 1994) are supposed to be affirmative, however vary between products, industries and cases (Cronin, et al., 2000; Fornell et al. 1996). There are several tentative researches which have tested the correlations between quality, satisfaction, and loyalty (Olsen 2002; Johnson 2001; Szymanski and Henard 2001; Zeithaml 2000) and their outcomes have indicated that there were positive relations between them however varied between products, industries, and cases (Huy Ho, 2006).

Dixon, et al. (2005) claimed that despite the efforts of competitors, loyal customers are expected to consistently repurchase. Mellens et al. (1996) indicated that brand loyalty provides actual purchases of a brand, and verbal statements of preference are not adequate for guaranteeing brand loyalty. The customer's tendency to repurchase is a necessary component of commitment (Law, et al. 2004). Powers and Valentine (2008) have proposed that cumulative levels of satisfaction impact the customer's commitment to the goods or service, which in turn, influences behavioral intentions including purchase behavior (Powers and Valentine 2008). Managers must focus on marketing to be certain of their



customers' satisfaction, which provide higher levels of repeating purchase and an increasing number of loyal customers (Solvang 2007;Curtis et al., 2011).

In marketing literature, repurchases or recommendations to other customers are commonly referred as consumer loyalty (Yoon and Uysal, 2005). Therefore, the concept and grade of loyalty is one of the crucial marks applied in order to evaluate the performance of marketing strategy (Yoon and Uysal, 2005).

Oliver (1999) some of that loyalty may be conceptualised in terms of views to constitute a structure. Cronin and Tayler (1992), Homburg and Giering (2001) according to the construction of two indicators, providing positive suggestions for using “the intention of future behavior”: “repurchase intention” and “intention as the measure of references”. Tourism researchers and tourist loyalty is unfolded by a similar approach, such as a relative or friend with the intention of near a number of the wishes and opinions of the area refers to the effort to change made in this direction (Oppermann, 2000; Bigné et al., 2001; Chen and Gusoy, 2001; Cai et al., 2003; Niininen et al., 2004; Petrick, 2004).

## **2.11 Overall brand equity effects on customers' responses**

Developing a powerful brand with positive equity has positive impacts on companies' achievement through its impact on customers' responses towards brands. This research investigates two of these customer responses: Customer`s satisfaction, customer`s future behavior as WOM and purchase intention. Brand equity also positively affects customers' brand preferences.

According to marketing literature, powerful brands get privileged evaluations as well as higher overall preference (Hoeffler and Keller, 2003; Buil, 2013). In the same way, consumers who perceive a higher value in a brand are more likely to purchase it (Aaker, 1991). Researchers have discovered that brand equity has a positive impact on customers' brand preferences and purchase intentions. As an illustration, Cobb-Walgren et al. (1995, as cited in Buil and Martinez, 2013) conducted a study which involves the brands in hotel and household cleaning sectors, and they came up with a result that stocks, big brand preference and purchase intention in terms of is of great importance. Similar results are reported by Tolba and Hassan (2009). The theory of reasoned action has been applied in

order to express the intercourses between behaviours, intentions and attitudes (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; as cited in Buil and Martinez, 2013). According to this view, a positive attitude towards a brand, purchase intention leads to (Buil and Martinez, 2013). Some researchers who study in this field has revealed that there is a positive correlation between customer satisfaction and brand equity. (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993).

From the last two decades, relationship between brand equity and customer satisfaction has considered as one of the main fields of marketing research (Black, 2006). It is very significant to figure out that brand equity and customer satisfaction are interrelated and interdependent when it comes to customer satisfaction with a specific brand (Bilal and Malik, 2014). Brand equity is the complete profile about the satisfaction of a customer about a particular product or a particular brand (Bilal and Malik, 2014). The relationship between brand equity and customer satisfaction can also be defined in terms that brand equity is the measure of customer satisfaction in most of the cases (Jang, 2010). This means that if brand equity of a product is high, then the customer satisfaction will also be high (Bilal and Malik, 2014). This is the reason of why it is more emphasized that increasing brand equity is significant in order to enhance customer satisfaction (Laren, 1974). Previous researches have shown that there is a strong and positive correlation between brand equity and customer satisfaction (Torres and Tribo, 2007).

## **2.12 Consumers` Future Behaviors and Consumer Satisfaction**

In terms of the sustainability of management and tourism, promote the development of other targets that, in the determination in the areas of Marketing, especially for the purpose of tourist satisfaction, it is crucial for the continuity of the customer. In this regard, and operators are recommended (Soderlund, 1998; Lee et al., 2009).

During the trip the tourists is very important because it affects the satisfaction of tourists in terms of loyalty and future consumption is a strong determinant (Huh et al., 2006; Yao, 2013). More specifically, tourists who are happy with their previous travel experience, and friends or relatives are more willing to affect in a positive way in this direction again (Yao, 2013).

Loyalty may not always provide customer satisfaction. Some studies have shown that direct effects of satisfaction report, but the report does not lead to high satisfaction coercibly other studies reveal that (Jones and Sasser Jr., 1995; Stewart, 1997). Another possibility is based on knowledge and experience of existing conditions shows that based on estimated of future results or other resources (Tryon, 1994. As cited in Lee, 2008), after the satisfaction of accumulated and available information, is updated during the Overall evaluation of the consumption experience (Oliver, 1997; Yi & La, 2004; Lee, 2008). The updated prospect becomes a prior prospect used as a standard in measuring future consumption experience (Yi, 1990; Lee, 2008). This process, back and forth between previous and current expectations (consumer experience) satisfaction continues as long as any negativity experienced.

By doing activities for tourists` satisfaction is developing. The degree of pleasure or positive emotion and this perception, based on our experience as emerging (Beard and Ragheb, 1980; as cited in Lee, 2009). Tourist satisfaction is also significant for tourism management because it effects destination preference (Lee, 2009). Mannell and Iso-Ahola (1987; as cited in Lee, 2009) used knowledge on satisfaction to measure psychological outcomes of leisure experiences. Future behavior repurchases, suggestions and positive word-of-mouth reflect customer loyalty. Customer loyalty is one of the most beneficial pointers of identifying marketing strategies (Lee, 2009). Tourism destinations, programs, and activities can be noted as products, and the voluntariness of tourism consumers to propose them and share in positive word-of-mouth helps tourism managers to evaluate their management strategies. Hence, these variables frequently point out future behavior and tourist loyalty (Lee, 2009). On the other hand, there is a higher probability for a tourist to visit the same place again loyal. Tourism research, tourist behavior, tourist satisfaction from the model reveals (Lee, 2009).

Many recent researches provide evidence and support the significant influence of WOM on consumers` purchasing behaviour (Muhammad et al., 2013). However, the companies` marketing activities, customer satisfaction and WOM trio has not been thoroughly introduced (Muhammad et al., 2013). WOM has deep impact on consumers` judgments and it has proved that consumers consider it as a more reliable information provider in comparison to other communication channels (Muhammad et al., 2013). The more the

positive WOM being spreads around, the higher is the rate of satisfaction of the consumers (Muhammad et al., 2013).

Tourist satisfaction has become a significant concept in tourism and there are some certain strengths and weaknesses of the services offered by tourist destinations (Salim and Mwaipopo, 2016). It embraces a multitude of tangible attributes and others with less tangible characteristics that may encourage tourists to revisit a destination and recommend others to visit it (Salim and Mwaipopo, 2016). Travelers who are satisfied with their visit might not only revisit the destination, but also share a positive image of it with others (Dhankhar and Singh, 2014).

The relationship between satisfaction and after-purchase conduct has been well established by literature priorly (Hallowell, 1996; LaBarbera and Mazursky, 1983; Rust and Zahorik, 1993; as cited in Chi and Qu, 2007). In general it is accepted that satisfaction provides repurchase and positive WOM recommendation, which are major indicators of loyalty (Chi and Qu, 2007).

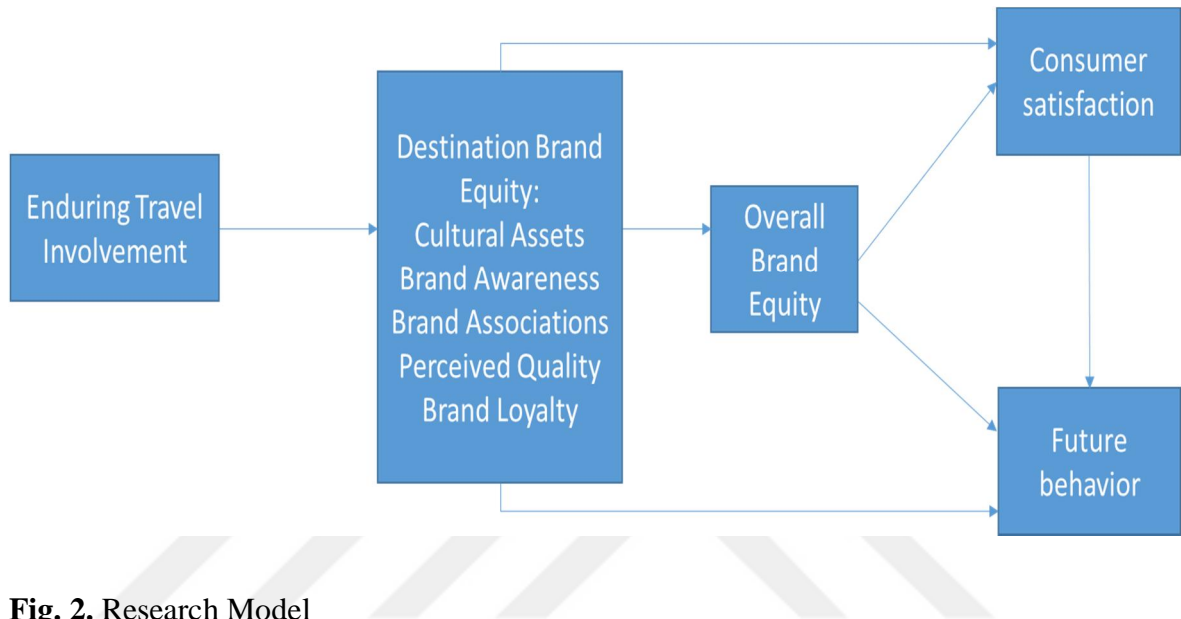
It has been found that there is a positive relationship between marketing communication customer satisfaction and loyalty the relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty several studies and/in terms of retention is very important (Anderson and Sullivan, 1993; Cronin et al., 2000; Taylor and Baker, 1994; Chi and Qu, 2007). As consumers, if you are satisfied with the product and service , and continue to have too much difficulty in deciding to buy, you won't (Chi and Qu, 2007).

The tourism industry, tourist satisfaction is a powerful mark of preference and recommendation intentions for other people again reveals (Beeho and Prentice, 1997; Chi and Qu, 2007). Satisfied tourists are more likely to return to the same place; They are also eager to share positive travel experiences with friends and relatives (Chi and Qu, 2207). WOM advices have a particularly critical precaution in tourism marketing because they are considered the most reliable and therefore one of the most sought-after sources of information for potential tourists (Chi and Qu, 2007).

### 3. RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

Research model and hypotheses will be discussed in this chapter. Hypotheses evaluate under six groups.

#### 3.1. Research Model



**Fig. 2.** Research Model

This research model was designed to determine the effect of travel involvement on destination brand equity, the effect of cultural brand assets on destination brand equity, and the effect of brand equity on consumer satisfaction and future behavior.

#### 3.2. Hypotheses

Following hypotheses were tested under six groups.

##### 1. Following hypotheses were tested relationship between enduring travel involvement and brand dimensions.

H1: There is a positive relationship between enduring travel involvement and the cultural assets dimension of destination brand equity.

H2: There is a positive relationship between enduring travel involvement and the brand awareness dimension of destination brand equity.

H3: There is a positive relationship between enduring travel involvement and the brand associations dimension of destination brand equity.

H4: There is a positive relationship between enduring travel involvement and the perceived quality dimension of destination brand equity.

H5: There is a positive relationship between enduring travel involvement and the brand loyalty dimension of destination brand equity.

**2. Following hypotheses were tested overall brand equity and brand dimensions.**

H6: There is a positive relationship between cultural assets and overall brand equity.

H7: There is a positive relationship between brand awareness and overall brand equity.

H8: There is a positive relationship between brand associations and overall brand equity.

H9: There is a positive relationship between perceived quality and overall brand equity.

H10: There is a positive relationship between brand loyalty and overall brand equity.

**3. Following hypotheses were tested relation between consumer satisfaction and brand dimensions.**

H11: There is a positive relationship between cultural assets and consumer satisfaction.

H12: There is a positive relationship between brand awareness and consumer satisfaction.

H13: There is a positive relationship between brand associations and consumer satisfaction.

H14: There is a positive relationship between perceived quality and consumer satisfaction.

H15: There is a positive relationship between brand loyalty and consumer satisfaction.

**4. Following hypotheses were tested relationship between future behavior and brand dimensions.**

H16: There is a positive relationship between cultural assets and future behavior.

H17: There is a positive relationship between brand awareness and future behavior.

H18: There is a positive relationship between brand associations and future behavior.

H19: There is a positive relationship between perceived quality and future behavior.

H20: There is a positive relationship between brand loyalty and future behavior.

**5. Following hypotheses were tested relationship between overall brand equity and consumer satisfaction and future behavior.**

H21: There is a positive relationship between overall brand equity and consumer satisfaction.

H22: There is a positive relationship between overall brand equity and future behavior.

**6. Following hypothesis was tested relationship between consumer satisfaction and future behavior.**

H23: There is a positive relationship between consumer satisfaction and future behavior.

## **4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1. Research Type**

In terms of their goals, marketing researches divide into three; which are descriptive, exploratory and casual. Gegez (2010) explains the purpose of the exploratory research as defining the problem and developing new hypothesis and alternatives. For this type of research, data must be gathered in order to determine the problems, variables and hypotheses of the research. In descriptive research, main purpose is defining the population. Before starting a descriptive research the necessary information has to be defined and the hypotheses are created. On the other hand, the purpose of casual research is analyzing the causality between variables. Based on these research types, descriptive research model fits to our study best, so the data of this study has been collected via survey.

### **4.2. Survey Design**

In this study, primary data were collected by applying quantitative methods. Data were collected by conducting survey which is one of the quantitative data collection methods. The questions of the survey were chosen and prepared by making a research on literature review and surveys that have already conducted for similar studies. In the first part of the survey questions related to current/previous visit, were asked. Then, nine scales were used which consist of 46 questions in total. Five point likert scales and seven point Semantic Differential scales were used. In the last part of the survey, demographic questions about gender, age, marital status, number of children, education status, average monthly income and working status were taken part. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix 1.

### **4.3. Scales Used in the Study**

All the scales, which are applied for the measurement of nine different variables in the study, were adapted from foreign sources and their validity and reliability tests were done. The variables and questions can be found in Table 4.1.



**Table 4.1.** Variables and Dimensions

<b>Variables of Section 2</b>	<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Source</b>
For me pleasure travel is ("Unimportant" to "Important")	Enduring Travel Involvement 1-5	Ferns, 2012
For me pleasure travel is ("Of no concern" to "Of great concern")		
For me pleasure travel ("Means nothing" to "Means a lot")		
For me pleasure travel is ("Insignificant" to "Significant")		
For me pleasure travel ("Does not matter" to "Matters a lot")		
<b>Variables of Section 3</b>	<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Source</b>
What makes Istanbul unique is its entertainment / nightlife options.	Cultural Assets 1-10	Kladou, 2014
What makes Istanbul unique is its cultural festivals.		
What makes Istanbul unique is its traditions.		
What makes Istanbul unique is its cultural events.		
What makes Istanbul unique is its street culture.		
What makes Istanbul unique is its monuments/heritage sites.		
What makes Istanbul unique is its cuisine.		
What makes Istanbul unique is its art centers.		
What makes Istanbul unique is its contribution to world heritage.		
What makes Istanbul unique is its museums.		
Istanbul is a famous cultural destination.	Brand Awareness 1-4	Kladou, 2014
When thinking about culture, Istanbul comes to my mind immediately.		
The characteristics of Istanbul come to my mind immediately.		
Istanbul has a good name and reputation.		

The culture in Istanbul is interesting.	Brand Associations 1-9	Kladou, 2014
I can trust Istanbul for a fulfilling cultural experience.		
In Istanbul I can have an authentic cultural experience.		
Istanbul has a personality.		
My friends would think highly of me if I visited Istanbul.		
This cultural destination (Istanbul) fits my personality.		
Istanbul has a rich history.		
Istanbul has an exotic atmosphere.		
The people in Istanbul are hospitable.		
I can rely on there being a good atmosphere.	Perceived Quality 1-4	Kladou, 2014
Istanbul provides quality cultural experiences.		
I admire the organization of the city's cultural aspects.		
This experience has increased my cultural knowledge.		
I enjoy visiting Istanbul	Brand Loyalty 1-4	Kladou, 2014
Istanbul would be my preferred choice for a cultural holiday.		
Istanbul met my expectations.		
I would recommend friends /relatives to visit Istanbul.		
It makes sense to visit Istanbul instead of any other city, even if they are the same.	Overall Brand Equity 1-4	Yoo and Donthu,2001
Even if another city has the same features as Istanbul, I would prefer to visit Istanbul.		
If there is another city as good as Istanbul, I prefer to visit Istanbul.		
If another city is not different from Istanbul in any way, it seems smarter to visit Istanbul.		

<b>Variables of Section 4</b>	<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Source</b>
Overall, I am satisfied with my visit to Istanbul.	Consumer Satisfaction 1-3	Lee, 2009
As a whole, I am happy visiting Istanbul.		
I believe I did the right thing to visit Istanbul.		
I am willing to revisit Istanbul.	Future Behavior 1-3	Lee, 2009
I am willing to recommend Istanbul to others.		
I will spread positive word of mouth (say positive things about the city) to others.		

#### **4.4. Sampling Strategy**

The survey population consists of foreign travelers who have different demographic characteristics. The survey was conducted with foreign travelers who visit İstanbul. The data was gathered by using convenience sampling method. This method is based on the principle of volunteering; in addition it is effective in terms of time and cost.

#### **4.5. Data Collection Process**

This thesis employed survey as a data collection method. The questionnaires were distributed to target audiences, who are the foreign travelers staying in hostels in İstanbul. 155 surveys were collected in the Kadikoy region. 40 surveys were collected in the Sultanahmet region. 205 surveys were collected in the Galata region. According to data of TUIK, approximately total population was considered as 6 millions who are staying in hostels in Istanbul yearly. Based on the sampling size formula  $n = \pi(1 - \pi) / (e/Z)^2$  with %5 significance level and %95 confidence, the minimum sample size has been defined as 400. Due to limited time and budget, 400 appropriate and complete questionnaires were received from respondents.

#### **4.6. Data Analysis Method**

In analyzing data, SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software was used. First, the reliability analysis was made to measure the consistency and accuracy. In this

way, the convenience of the scales was tested whether they are appropriate for the analysis. Moreover, frequency distributions of all demographic features were analyzed and averages were calculated and interpreted. In consideration of being Ordinal Variables, nonparametric tests were used. Regression analysis was applied. Wilcoxon test was applied and after detecting the positive relationship within the factors. Spearman correlation analysis was used to see the correlation coefficient.



## **5. RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The analysis consists of eleven sections. The first and second section discusses issues related to the demographic characteristics of the respondents and information related to their destination of visit. The third section analyzes the descriptive statistics of the variables included in the research model and the fourth section discusses the reliability of the scales used to measure the variables in the study. Fifth section discusses the correlation analysis of dimensions and sixth section discusses regression analysis. Seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth section discusses Kruskal-Wallis Analysis. Finally, the last section provides the results of the Wilcoxon Analysis within Independent Factors.

### **5.1. Demographic Informations of the Participants**

Demographic informations of the participants are given in this section.

Table 5.1.1. shows demographic informations of the participants. That table indicates that;

- Within the distribution of gender; 195 participants were male (48,8%), 205 participants were female (51,3%) and hence, it could be said that the sample represents nearly equally both genders.
- Within the distribution of age; 4 participants were under 18 years old (1,0%), 221 participants were 18-27 years old (55,3%), 119 participants were 28-38 years old (29,8%), 33 participants were 39-49 years old (8,3%), 16 respondents were 50-60 years old (4,0%), 7 respondents were over 61 years old (1,8%). The results show that most of the participants are 18-27 years old and only 14,1% of participants are 39 years old and over.
- Within the distribution of marital status; 273 participants were single (68,3%), 68 participants were living together with his/her partner (17,0%), 50 participants were married (12,5%), 8 participants were divorced (2,0%), 1 participants was widow (0,3%). These results means that only totally 27.5% of participants are not living alone but the rest may be described single.
- Within the distribution of having children; 44 participants have children (11.0%), the rest does not have any children (89,0%). Within this 44 participants who have children; 16 of them have 1 child, 20 of them have 2 children, 7 of them have 3 children and only 1 of them has 4 children.

- Within the distribution of education; 4 participants had a primary school degree (1.0%), 59 participants had a high school degree (14.8%), 190 participants had a bachelor degree (47.5%), 125 participants had a master degree (31.3%), 22 participants had a doctoral degree (5.5%). The results show that most of the participants had a bachelor degree.

- Within the distribution of income; 145 participants' income was less than €1,000 (36,3%), 89 participants' income was between 1,001 and 2,000 € (22,3%), 82 participants' income was between 2,001 and 3,000 € (20,5%), 44 participants' income was between 3,001 and 4,000 € (11,0%), 21 participants' income was between 4,001 and 5,000 € (5,3%), 19 participants' income was more than 5,001 € (4,8%). The results show that most of the participants gain less than €1,000 per month.

- Within the distribution of participants' nationalities, mainly; 82 participants were German (20.5%), 57 participants were Americans (14.3%), 39 participants were French (9.8%), 35 participants were Australian (8.8%), 23 participants were British (5.8%), 23 participants were Spanish (5.8%), 13 participants were Canadian (3.3%), 10 participants were Colombian (2.5), 10 participants were Russian (2.5%). The rest, which is less than 10 participants, was given in Table 5.1.1.

- Within distribution of occupation; 121 participants were student (30.3%), 30 participants were teacher (7.5%), 21 participants were working in the marketing (5.3%), 16 participants were accountant (4.0%), 9 participants were carpenter (2.3%), 8 participants were nurse (2.0%), 7 participants were manager (1.8%). The results show that most of the participants are student. The rest, which is less than 5 participants, was given in Table 5.1.1.

Table 5.1.1. Demographic Information of Participants

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	195	48,8
	Female	205	51,3
<b>Age</b>	Under 18	4	1,0
	18-27	221	55,3
	28-38	119	29,8
	39-49	33	8,3
	50-60	16	4,0
	Over 61	7	1,8
<b>Marital Status</b>	Single	273	68,3

	Living together	68	17,0
	Married	50	12,5
	Divorced	8	2,0
	Widow	1	,3
<b>Do you have any children?</b>	No	356	89,0
	Yes	44	11,0
<b>If yes, how many? Please specify their ages</b>	1	16	4,0
	2	20	5,0
	3	7	1,8
	4	1	,3
<b>Education</b>	Primary School	4	1,0
	High School	59	14,8
	Bachelor Degree	190	47,5
	Master Degree	125	31,3
	Doctoral Degree	22	5,5
<b>Monthly Income (in Euros or Dollars)</b>	Less than 1,000 €	145	36,3
	1,001 - 2,000 €	89	22,3
	2,001 - 3,000€	82	20,5
	3,001 - 4,000 €	44	11,0
	4,001 - 5,000 €	21	5,3
	More than 5,001 €	19	4,8
<b>Nationality</b> <i>(Only more than 10 participants was shown)</i>	German	82	20,5
	American	57	14,3
	French	39	9,8
	Australian	35	8,8
	British	23	5,8
	Spanish	23	5,8
	Canadian	13	3,3
	Colombian	10	2,5
	Russian	10	2,5
<b>Occupation</b> <i>(Only more than 10 participants was shown)</i>	Student	121	30,3
	Teacher	30	7,5
	Marketing	21	5,3
	Accountant	16	4,0
	Carpenter	9	2,3
	Engineer	8	2,0
	Nurse	8	2,0
	Manager	7	1,8

## 5.2. Information related to the destination of visit

Information related to the destination of visit is given in this section.

Table 5.2.1. shows demographic informations of the participants. That table indicates that;

- Within the distribution of visit; 286 participants have visited Istanbul only once (71.5%), 58 participants have visited twice (14.5%), 22 participants have visited three times (5.5%), 9 participants have visited four times (2.3%) and 25 participants have visited five times (6.3%). The results show that most of the participants have visited Istanbul only once.

- Within the distribution of seasons they have visited Istanbul; in Spring 43 participants have visited (10.8%), in Summer 218 participants (54.5%), in Autumn 158 participants (39.5%) and in Winter 92 participants (23.0%). The results show that most of the participants prefer to visit Istanbul in Summer.

- Within the distribution of purpose of trip to Istanbul; 353 participants have visited for vacation (88.3%), 36 participants for pay a visit to friend (s) (9.0%), 28 participants for business (7.0%), 14 participants for pay a visit to family (3.5%), 11 participants for Erasmus (2.8%), 7 participants for education, 4 participants for university trip, 2 participants for living in Istanbul (0,5%), and 2 participants for seeing a theatrical play (0.5%). The results show that most of the participants have visited Istanbul for vacation.

- Within the distribution of length of trip; mean is 15,25 days, 58 participants stayed for 1-3 days (14.5%), 181 participants stayed for 4-6 days (45.3%), 88 participants stayed for 7-10 days (22.0%), 42 participants stayed for 11-15 days (10.5%), and 31 participants stayed for 16 days and more (7.8%). That means most of the participants stays for 4-6 days.

- All participants have stayed in Hostels.

- Within the distribution of visit to other city/cities in Turkey during their trip; 106 participants have have been to other city/cities (26,5%). And also the names of those city/cities were asked. Within the answers, mainly participants have preferred to visit the West and South regions of Turkey.



Table 5.2.1. Information Related to the Destination of Visit

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>How many times have you been to Istanbul?</b>	Once	286	71,5
	Twice	58	14,5
	Three Times	22	5,5
	Four Times	9	2,3
	Five Times	25	6,3
<b>In which season(s) did you visit Istanbul? (You can check more than one option)_SPRING</b>	Spring	43	10,8
	Summer	218	54,5
	Autumn	158	39,5
	Winter	92	23,0
<b>What was the purpose of your trip?</b>	Vacation	353	88,3
	Pay a visit to the family	14	3,5
	Pay a visit to friend (s)	36	9,0
	Business	28	7,0
	Erasmus	11	2,8
	Education	7	1,8
	University trip	4	1,0
	Living in Istanbul	2	,5
	To see a theatrical play	2	,5
<b>How many days did you stay in Istanbul?</b> (Mean is 15.25 days)	1-3 days	58	14,5
	4-6 days	181	45,3
	7-10 days	88	22,0
	11-15 days	42	10,5
	16 days and more	31	7,8
<b>Where did you stay during your trip?</b>	Hostel	400	100,0
<b>Have you visited any other city during your stay?</b>	No	294	73,5
	Yes	106	26,5

### 5.3. Descriptive Statistics of Scales Items by Factors

Descriptive statistics of scales items by factors are discussed in this section.

Table 5.3.1. shows descriptive statistics of scales items by factors. That table indicates that;

- Within the distribution of Enduring Travel Involvement Factor and Items; mean of factor is 6.04, mean of “For me pleasure travel is (important)” is 6.15 and the highest one, whereas mean of “For me pleasure travel (concern)” is 5.81 and the lowest one.
- Within the distribution of Cultural Assets Factor and Items; mean of factor is 3.93 (in scale 4=Agree), “What makes Istanbul unique is its monuments/heritage sites” has

the highest average with 4.54, whereas “What makes Istanbul unique is its entertainment/nightlife options” has the lowest average with 3.25.

- Within the distribution of Brand Awareness Factor and Items; mean of factor is 4.07 (In scale 4=Agree), “Istanbul is a famous cultural destination” has the highest average with 4.42, while “When thinking about culture, Istanbul comes to my mind immediately” has the lowest average with 3.56.

- Within the distribution of Brand Associations Factor and Items; mean of factor is 4.21 (in scale 4=Agree), “Istanbul has a rich history” has the highest average with 4.66, while “My friends would think highly of me if I visited Istanbul” has the lowest average with 3.66.

- Within the distribution of Perceived Quality Factor and Items; mean of factor is 4.11 (in scale 4=Agree), “Istanbul provides quality cultural experiences” has the highest average with 4.15, while “I admire the organization of the city's cultural aspects” has the lowest average with 3.69.

- Within the distribution of Brand Loyalty Factor and Items; mean of factor is 4.31 (in scale 4=Agree), “I enjoy visiting Istanbul” has the highest average with 4.55, while “Istanbul would be my preferred choice for a cultural holiday” has the lowest average with 3.64.

- Within the distribution of Overall Brand Equity Factor and Items; mean of factor is 3.38 (in scale 3= neither agree nor disagree), “It makes sense to visit Istanbul instead of any other city, even if they are the same” has the highest average with 3.41, while “If another city is not different from Istanbul in any way, it seems smarter to visit Istanbul” has the lowest average with 3.20.

- Within the distribution of Consumer Satisfaction Factor and Items; mean of factor is 4.37 (in scale 4=Agree), “I believe I did the right thing to visit Istanbul” has the highest average with 4.42, while “Overall, I am satisfied with my visit to Istanbul ” has the lowest average with 4.32.

- Within the distribution of Future Behavior Factor and Items; mean of factor is 4.39 (in scale 4=Agree), “I am willing to recommend Istanbul to others” has the highest average with 4.44, while “I am willing to revisit Istanbul” has the lowest average with 4.23.

Table 5.3.1. Descriptive Statistics of Factors and Items

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
<b>ENDURING TRAVEL INVOLVEMENT</b>	<b>6.04</b>	<b>1.124</b>
For me pleasure travel is ("Unimportant" to "Important")	6.15	1.265
For me pleasure travel is ("Of no concern" to "Of great concern")	5.81	1.460
For me pleasure travel ("Means nothing" to "Means a lot")	6.12	1.227
For me pleasure travel is ("Insignificant" to "Significant")	6.10	1.200
For me pleasure travel ("Does not matter" to "Matters a lot")	6.01	1.390
<b>CULTURAL ASSETS</b>	<b>3,93</b>	<b>,546</b>
What makes Istanbul unique is its entertainment / night life options.	3,25	,984
What makes Istanbul unique is its cultural festivals.	3,53	,855
What makes Istanbul unique is its traditions.	4,09	,765
What makes Istanbul unique is its cultural events.	3,70	,848
What makes Istanbul unique is its street culture.	4,25	,791
What makes Istanbul unique is its monuments/heritage sites.	4,54	,714
What makes Istanbul unique is its cuisine.	4,10	,933
What makes Istanbul unique is its art centers.	3,53	,878
What makes Istanbul unique is its contribution to world heritage.	4,10	,908
What makes Istanbul unique is its museums.	3,68	,965
<b>BRAND AWARENESS</b>	<b>4,07</b>	<b>,697</b>
Istanbul is a famous cultural destination.	4,42	,721
When thinking about culture, Istanbul comes to my mind immediately.	3,56	1,068
The characteristics of Istanbul come to my mind immediately.	3,86	,947
Istanbul has a good name and reputation.	3,96	,852
<b>BRAND ASSOCIATIONS</b>	<b>4,21</b>	<b>,588</b>
The culture in Istanbul is interesting.	4,49	,664
I can trust Istanbul for a fulfilling cultural experience.	4,29	,761
In Istanbul I can have an authentic cultural experience.	4,22	,799
Istanbul has a personality.	4,46	,652
My friends would think highly of me if I visited Istanbul.	3,60	,976
This cultural destination (Istanbul) fits my personality.	3,72	,955
Istanbul has a rich history.	4,66	,580
Istanbul has an exotic atmosphere.	4,15	,864
The people in Istanbul are hospitable.	4,06	,878
<b>PERCEIVED QUALITY</b>	<b>4,11</b>	<b>,646</b>
I can rely on there being a good atmosphere.	3,99	,777
Istanbul provides quality cultural experiences.	4,15	,718
I admire the organization of the city's cultural aspects.	3,69	,928
This experience has increased my cultural knowledge.	4,14	,826

<b>BRAND LOYALTY</b>	<b>4,31</b>	<b>,674</b>
I enjoy visiting Istanbul	4,55	,655
Istanbul would be my preferred choice for a cultural holiday.	3,64	,979
Istanbul met my expectations.	4,19	,747
I would recommend friends /relatives to visit Istanbul.	4,44	,672
<b>OVERALL BRAND EQUITY</b>	<b>3,38</b>	<b>,955</b>
It makes sense to visit Istanbul instead of any other city, even if they are the same.	3,41	1,107
Even if another city has the same features as Istanbul, I would prefer to visit Istanbul.	3,32	1,021
If there is another city as good as Istanbul, I prefer to visit Istanbul.	3,23	,974
If another city is not different from Istanbul in any way, it seems smarter to visit Istanbul.	3,20	1,029
<b>CONSUMER SATISFACTION</b>	<b>4,37</b>	<b>,639</b>
Overall, I am satisfied with my visit to Istanbul.	4,32	,682
As a whole, I am happy visiting Istanbul.	4,40	,663
I believe I did the right thing to visit Istanbul.	4,42	,682
<b>FUTURE BEHAVIOR</b>	<b>4,39</b>	<b>,673</b>
I am willing to revisit Istanbul.	4,23	,843
I am willing to recommend Istanbul to others.	4,44	,677
I will spread positive word of mouth (say positive things about the city) to others.	4,39	,685

#### 5.4. Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis is discussed in this section.

Table 5.4.1. shows reliability analysis. That table indicates that;

- Within the reliability analysis of all factors are nearly equal or above 0,70.
- In accordance with the Cronbach Alpha if Item Deleted column values, all of the items' alpha values are lower from the final alpha values or have negligible differences.
  - That means all factors and their items are to be considered reliable and appropriate for analysis.
  - The Cronbach reliability coefficient was calculated for the items of each scale in the survey. Reliability is considered acceptable when the value of Cronbach alpha is higher than 0,70 and when the item-to-total correlations are higher than 0,50 (Hair et al.,1992). To assess the initial reliability of the measures, Cronbach`s alpha coefficient was calculated for each variable. The Cronbach alpha scores for enduring travel is 0,892, for cultural asset is 0,789, for brand awareness is 0,698, for brand associations is 0,838, for perceived quality is 0,780, for brand loyalty is 0,814, for overall brand equity is 0,904, for

consumer satisfaction is 0,898 and for future behavior is 0,846 respectively. All values are above 0,7 , so scales can be considered reliable with sample.

- The column headed Cronbach alpha if item deleted indicates the impact of removing each item from the scale. As all of these alpha values are lower from the final alpha values and none of the items were deleted from the scale.

Table 5.4.1. Reliability of Factors and Items

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
<b>Enduring Travel Involvement Cronbach's Alpha=0.892</b>				
For me pleasure travel is_Important	24,04	20,434	,699	,876
For me pleasure travel is_Of great concern	24,38	19,455	,656	,889
For me pleasure travel_Means a lot	24,07	19,858	,793	,856
For me pleasure travel is_Significant	24,09	20,028	,797	,856
For me pleasure travel_Matters a lot	24,18	18,932	,758	,863
<b>Cultural Assets Cronbach's Alpha=0.789</b>				
What makes Istanbul unique is its entertainment / night life options.	35,51	21,499	,385	,781
What makes Istanbul unique is its cultural festivals.	35,23	21,443	,481	,768
What makes Istanbul unique is its traditions.	34,66	22,155	,450	,772
What makes Istanbul unique is its cultural events.	35,06	21,252	,513	,764
What makes Istanbul unique is its street culture.	34,50	22,607	,366	,781
What makes Istanbul unique is its monuments/heritage sites.	34,21	22,412	,453	,772
What makes Istanbul unique is its cuisine.	34,66	21,485	,419	,776
What makes Istanbul unique is its art centers.	35,23	21,364	,474	,769

What makes Istanbul unique is its contribution to world heritage.	34,66	20,607	,552	,759
What makes Istanbul unique is its museums.	35,08	20,563	,513	,764
<b>Brand Awareness</b> <b>Cronbach's Alpha=0,698</b>				
Istanbul is a famous cultural destination.	11,37	4,945	,444	,662
When thinking about culture, Istanbul comes to my mind immediately.	12,23	3,577	,538	,602
The characteristics of Istanbul come to my mind immediately.	11,93	4,123	,486	,633
Istanbul has a good name and reputation.	11,83	4,414	,489	,632
<b>Brand Associations</b> <b>Cronbach's Alpha=0.838</b>				
The culture in Istanbul is interesting.	33,17	18,808	,601	,817
I can trust Istanbul for a fulfilling cultural experience.	33,37	18,038	,634	,812
In Istanbul I can have an authentic cultural experience.	33,44	17,741	,644	,810
Istanbul has a personality.	33,20	18,987	,581	,819
My friends would think highly of me if I visited Istanbul.	34,06	17,924	,464	,834
This cultural destination (Istanbul) fits my personality.	33,94	17,051	,602	,815
Istanbul has a rich history.	33,00	19,832	,493	,828
Istanbul has an exotic atmosphere.	33,51	18,591	,453	,832
The people in Istanbul are hospitable.	33,60	17,805	,558	,820
<b>Perceived Quality</b> <b>Cronbach's Alpha=0.780</b>				
I can rely on there being a good atmosphere.	11,98	4,107	,541	,748
Istanbul provides quality cultural experiences.	11,82	3,901	,705	,674
I admire the organization of the city's cultural aspects.	12,29	3,648	,538	,759
This experience has increased my cultural knowledge.	11,84	3,837	,586	,726

<b>Brand Loyalty</b> <b>Cronbach's Alpha=0.814</b>				
I enjoy visiting Istanbul	12,26	3,967	,675	,755
Istanbul would be my preferred choice for a cultural holiday.	13,17	3,234	,558	,832
Istanbul met my expectations.	12,62	3,570	,718	,727
I would recommend friends /relatives to visit Istanbul.	12,37	3,942	,660	,759
<b>Overall Brand Equity</b> <b>Cronbach's Alpha=0.904</b>				
It makes sense to visit Istanbul instead of any other city, even if they are the same.	9,74	7,713	,707	,907
Even if another city has the same features as Istanbul, I would prefer to visit Istanbul.	9,83	7,540	,838	,857
If there is another city as good as Istanbul, I prefer to visit Istanbul.	9,92	7,830	,826	,863
If another city is not different from Istanbul in any way, it seems smarter to visit Istanbul.	9,95	7,757	,779	,878
<b>Consumer Satisfaction</b> <b>Cronbach's Alpha=0.898</b>				
Overall, I am satisfied with my visit to Istanbul.	8,82	1,565	,811	,843
As a whole, I am happy visiting Istanbul.	8,74	1,595	,822	,835
I believe I did the right thing to visit Istanbul.	8,72	1,622	,763	,884
<b>Future Behavior</b> <b>Cronbach's Alpha=0.846</b>				
I am willing to revisit Istanbul.	8,84	1,622	,665	,856
I am willing to recommend Istanbul to others.	8,62	1,886	,763	,748
I will spread positive word of mouth (say positive things about the city) to others.	8,67	1,892	,742	,764

## 5.5. Correlation Analysis of Dimensions

Correlation analysis of dimensions are discussed in this section. In consideration of being ordinal variables, nonparametric tests were used. Correlation coefficient shows the correlation between variables. Correlation coefficient can be between -1 and +1. If the correlation coefficient is negative, there is a negative correlation between variables. If the correlation coefficient is the positive, there is a positive correlation between variables. If the correlation coefficient is zero, there is no correlation between variables.

Table.5.5.1. Correlation Test Results for Dimensions

n=400		CULTURAL ASSETS	BRAND AWARENESS	BRAND ASSOCIATIONS	PERCEIVED QUALITY
<b>CULTURAL ASSETS</b>	Correlation Coefficient	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
<b>BRAND AWARENESS</b>	Correlation Coefficient	,562**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000			
<b>BRAND ASSOCIATIONS</b>	Correlation Coefficient	,628**	,680**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000		
<b>PERCEIVED QUALITY</b>	Correlation Coefficient	,661**	,586**	,740**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000	
<b>BRAND LOYALTY</b>	Correlation Coefficient	,599**	,678**	,745**	,696**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000	,000

According to the Spearman correlation test for the relation of scale scores;

There is a positive moderate correlation between Brand Awareness score and Cultural Assets score ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $r = ,562$ ).

There is a positive moderate correlation between Brand Associations score and Cultural Assets and Brand Awareness scores ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $r = ,628$ ,  $r = ,680$ ).

There is a positive correlation between Perceived Quality score and Cultural Assets and Brand Awareness scores and positive moderate correlation with Brand Associations score ( $p < 0,05$ ,  $r = ,661$ ,  $r = ,586$ ,  $r = ,740$  ).



There is a positive correlation between Brand Loyalty score and Cultural Assets and Brand Awareness scores with a positive moderate correlation with Brand Associations and Perceived Quality scores ( $p < 0,05$ ,  $r = ,599$ ,  $r = ,678$ ,  $r = ,745$   $r = ,696$ ).

Table 5.5.2. Correlation Test Results

<b>Spearman's rho</b>		<b>Overall Brand Equity</b>	<b>Consumer Satisfaction</b>	<b>Future Behavior</b>
<b>Overall Brand Equity</b>	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	1,000 .		
<b>Consumer Satisfaction</b>	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	<b>,315**</b> ,000	1,000 .	
<b>Future Behavior</b>	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	<b>,382**</b> ,000	<b>,653**</b> ,000	1,000 .

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to the Spearman correlation test for the relation of scale scores;

There is a positive correlation between Consumer Satisfaction score and Overall Brand Equity score ( $p < 0,05$ ,  $r = ,315$ ).

There is a positive correlation between the Future Behavior score and the Overall Brand Equity score and a positive correlation with the Consumer Satisfaction score ( $p < 0,05$ ,  $r = ,309$ ,  $r = ,382$ ).

Table 5.5.3. Hypothesis Correlation Test Results (Independent Factor)

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Accepted / Rejected</b>
H21: There is a positive relationship between <b>overall brand equity and consumer satisfaction.</b>	Accepted
H22: There is a positive relationship between <b>overall brand equity and future behaviour.</b>	Accepted
H23: There is a positive relationship between <b>consumer satisfaction and future behaviour.</b>	Accepted

H21, H22 and H23 were accepted according to correlation test results are shown in table 5.5.3.

## 5.6. Regression Analysis

The hypotheses which are handled in the scope of this research; have been tested by the regression analysis techniques. Multiple regression is a type of analysis; which leads to the relationship between a dependent variable and more than one independent variable (Büyüköztürk, 2002).

Table.5.6.1. Regression Analysis (Enduring Travel involvement)

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	B	t	p	R <sup>2</sup>	F	p
	(Constant)	3,176	4,979	,000			
	BRAND AWARENESS	-,272	-1,552	,122			
ENDURING TRAVEL INVOLVEMENT	BRAND ASSOCIATIONS	,557	2,152	,033	0,127	7,269	0,000
	PERCEIVED QUALITY	-,268	-1,437	,152			
	BRAND LOYALTY	,659	3,120	,002			

The results of the regression analysis conducted to examine the effect of Brand Awareness, Brand Associations, Perceived Quality and Brand Loyalty scores on the Enduring Travel Involvement score are given in the table. As a result of the analysis, the model was statistically significant (F = 7,269, p <0,05).

According to the analysis results, Brand Associations and Brand Loyalty scores affect the Enduring Travel Involvement score positively (B =, 557, B =, 659, p <0.05).

According to the regression model, 13% of the change in Enduring Travel Involvement score explains Brand Associations and Brand Loyalty scores.

Table 5.6.2 Tolerance and VIF (Enduring travel involvement)

	TOLERANCE	VIF
BRAND AWARENESS	0,950	1,053
BRAND ASSOCIATIONS	0,896	1,116
PERCEIVED QUALITY	0,955	1,047
BRAND LOYALTY	0,908	1,102

At the same time; it is considered that there is no multi correlation; since all of the VIF values shown in the are less than 3.

Table.5.6.3. Regression Analysis (Overall Brand Equity)

<b>Dependent Variable</b>	<b>Independent Variable</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
<b>OVERALL BRAND EQUITY</b>	(Constant)	<b>-,867</b>	<b>-1,777</b>	<b>,077</b>	0,322	18,886	0,000
	<b>BRAND AWARENESS</b>	<b>,299</b>	<b>2,319</b>	<b>,021</b>			
	<b>BRAND ASSOCIATIONS</b>	,107	,558	,577			
	<b>PERCEIVED QUALITY</b>	,039	,276	,783			
	<b>BRAND LOYALTY</b>	<b>,393</b>	<b>2,569</b>	<b>,011</b>			
	<b>CULTURAL ASSETS</b>	,176	1,094	,275			

Results of regression analysis conducted to examine the effect of Brand Awareness, Brand Associations, Perceived Quality and Brand Loyalty scores on Overall Brand Equity score are given in the table. As a result of the analysis, the model was statistically significant (F = 18,886; p <0,05).

Brand Awareness and Brand Loyalty scores affect Overall Brand Equity score positively (B =, 299, B = 393, p <0.05).

According to the regression model, 32% of the change in Overall Brand Equity score reveals Brand Awareness and Brand Loyalty scores.

Table 5.6.4 Tolerance and VIF (Overall brand equity)

	<b>TOLERANCE</b>	<b>VIF</b>
<b>BRAND AWARENESS</b>	0,756	1,323
<b>BRAND ASSOCIATIONS</b>	0,746	1,341
<b>PERCEIVED QUALITY</b>	0,841	1,190
<b>BRAND LOYALTY</b>	0,685	1,460
<b>CULTURAL ASSETS</b>	0,808	1,238

At the same time; it is considered that there is no multi correlation; since all of the VIF values shown in the are less than 3.

Table.5.6.5. Regression Analysis (Consumer Satisfaction)

<b>Dependent Variable</b>	<b>Independent Variable</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
<b>CONSUMER SATISFACTION</b>	(Constant)	<b>1,097</b>	<b>4,137</b>	<b>,000</b>	0,527	44,259	0,000
	BRAND AWARENESS	,059	,842	,401			
	BRAND ASSOCIATIONS	,118	1,136	,257			
	<b>PERCEIVED QUALITY</b>	<b>,195</b>	<b>2,537</b>	<b>,012</b>			
	<b>BRAND LOYALTY</b>	<b>,447</b>	<b>5,372</b>	<b>,000</b>			
	CULTURAL ASSETS	-,020	-,229	,819			

Results of regression analysis conducted to examine the effect of Brand Awareness, Brand Associations, Perceived Quality and Brand Loyalty scores on Consumer Satisfaction score are given in the table. As a result of the analysis, the model was statistically significant (F = 44,259; p <0,05).

Perceived Quality and Brand Loyalty scores affect the Consumer Satisfaction score positively (B = 195, B = 447, p <0,05).

According to the regression model, 53% of the change in Consumer Satisfaction score is Perceived Quality and Brand Loyalty scores.

Table 5.6.6 Tolerance and VIF (Consumer Satisfaction)

	<b>TOLERANCE</b>	<b>VIF</b>
BRAND AWARENESS	0,756	1,324
<b>BRAND ASSOCIATIONS</b>	0,665	1,503
PERCEIVED QUALITY	0,680	1,470
<b>BRAND LOYALTY</b>	0,593	1,686
<b>CULTURAL ASSETS</b>	0,716	1,397

At the same time; it is considered that there is no multi correlation; since all of the VIF values shown in the are less than 3.

Table.5.6.7. Regression Analysis (Future Behavior)

<b>Dependent Variable</b>	<b>Independent Variable</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
<b>FUTURE BEHAVIOR</b>	(Constant)	,842	3,141	,002			
	BRAND AWARENESS	,010	,142	,887			
	BRAND ASSOCIATIONS	-,012	-,111	,911			
	<b>PERCEIVED QUALITY</b>	,171	2,205	,029	,572	53,297	0,000
	<b>BRAND LOYALTY</b>	,647	7,694	,000			
	CULTURAL ASSETS	,037	,419	,675			

The results of regression analysis conducted to examine the effect of Brand Awareness, Brand Associations, Perceived Quality and Brand Loyalty scores on Future Behavior score are given in the table. As a result of the analysis, the model was statistically significant (F = 44,259; p <0,05).

Perceived Quality and Brand Loyalty scores affect the Future Behavior score in the positive direction (B =, 171, B =, 647, p <0,05).

According to the regression model, Perceived Quality and Brand Loyalty scores account for 58% of the change in Future Behavior score.

Table 5.6.8 Tolerance and VIF (Future Behavior)

	<b>TOLERANCE</b>	<b>VIF</b>
BRAND AWARENESS	0,794	1,259
<b>BRAND ASSOCIATIONS</b>	0,656	1,524
PERCEIVED QUALITY	0,674	1,483
<b>BRAND LOYALTY</b>	0,617	1,620
<b>CULTURAL ASSETS</b>	0,751	1,332

At the same time; it is considered that there is no multi correlation; since all of the VIF values shown in the are less than 3.

## 5.7. Kruskal-Wallis Analysis for Enduring Travel Involvement Factor

Kruskal-Wallis Test Results for Enduring Travel Involvement Factor is shown in table 5.7.1.

Table 5.7.1. Kruskal-Wallis Test Results (Enduring Travel Involvement)

ENDURING TRAVEL INVOLVEMENT Scale		n	Mean Rank	X <sup>2</sup>	p
<b>CULTURAL ASSETS</b>	4,00	33	85,81	7,911	0,048*
	5,00	75	96,00		
	6,00	120	93,70		
	7,00	172	116,21		
<b>BRAND AWARENESS</b>	4,00	33	86,78	4,968	0,174**
	5,00	75	106,01		
	6,00	120	93,48		
	7,00	172	111,68		
<b>BRAND ASSOCIATIONS</b>	4,00	33	77,28	8,890	0,031*
	5,00	75	90,10		
	6,00	120	101,67		
	7,00	172	115,03		
<b>PERCEIVED QUALITY</b>	4,00	33	87,81	6,447	0,092**
	5,00	75	92,29		
	6,00	120	97,72		
	7,00	172	114,64		
<b>BRAND LOYALTY</b>	4,00	33	74,06	11,691	0,009*
	5,00	75	86,28		
	6,00	120	104,04		
	7,00	172	115,75		

\*(p <0,05) significance level

\*\*\*(p <0,10) significance level

According to Kruskal Wallis test for different groups of Enduring Travel Involvement level;

There is a statistically significant difference in Cultural Assets score among Enduring Travel Involvement level groups (p <0,05). Those with an Enduring Travel Involvement level of 4 have the lowest score of Cultural Assets, while those with a Cultural Assets score of 7 have the highest.

There is a statistically significant difference in Brand Awareness score among Enduring Travel Involvement level groups (p <0,05). The Enduring Travel Involvement level 4 is the highest among those with a Brand Associations score of 7, whichever is lowest.

There is a statistically significant difference between Enduring Travel Involvement level groups in terms of Brand Awareness score ( $p > 0.05$ ).

There is a statistically significant difference in Brand Associations score among Enduring Travel Involvement level groups ( $p < 0.05$ ). Enduring Travel Involvement level 4 is the highest among those with a Brand Associations score of 7, whichever is lowest.

There is a statistically significant difference in Perceived Quality score among Enduring Travel Involvement level groups ( $p > 0.05$ ).

There is a statistically significant difference in Brand Loyalty score among Enduring Travel Involvement level groups ( $p < 0.05$ ). Those with Enduring Travel Involvement level 4 have the lowest brand loyalty score while those with 7 have the highest.



## 5.8. Kruskal-Wallis Analysis for Overall Brand Equity Factor

Kruskal-Wallis Test Results for Overall Brand Equity Factor is shown in table 5.8.1.

Table 5.8.1. Kruskal-Wallis Test Results (Overall Brand Equity)

Overall Brand Equity Scale		N	Mean Rank	X2	p
<b>CULTURAL ASSETS</b>	Strongly Disagree	16	49,00	35,208	0,000*
	Disagree	36	79,68		
	Neither agree nor disagree	236	98,90		
	Agree	66	102,74		
	Strongly Agree	46	162,40		
<b>BRAND AWARENESS</b>	Strongly Disagree	16	44,17	46,811	0,000*
	Disagree	36	77,11		
	Neither agree nor disagree	236	95,56		
	Agree	66	111,50		
	Strongly Agree	46	170,40		
<b>BRAND ASSOCIATIONS</b>	Strongly Disagree	16	41,78	45,768	0,000*
	Disagree	36	76,89		
	Neither agree nor disagree	236	96,70		
	Agree	66	108,57		
	Strongly Agree	46	169,98		
<b>PERCEIVED QUALITY</b>	Strongly Disagree	16	50,78	37,988	0,000*
	Disagree	36	87,82		
	Neither agree nor disagree	236	97,64		
	Agree	66	99,09		
	Strongly Agree	46	166,73		
<b>BRAND LOYALTY</b>	Strongly Disagree	16	29,61	53,212	0,000*
	Disagree	36	75,74		
	Neither agree nor disagree	236	95,38		
	Agree	66	117,32		
	Strongly Agree	46	169,60		

\*(p <0,05) significance level

\*\*\*(p <0,10) significance level



According to the Kruskal Wallis test for the overall brand equity participation level; There is a statistically significant difference in terms of Cultural Assets score between Overall Brand Equity participation level groups ( $p < 0.05$ ). Those who say they absolutely disagree are the highest of those who indicate that they have definitely participated while the Cultural Assets score is the lowest.

There is a statistically significant difference in Brand Awareness score among the Overall Brand Equity participation level groups ( $p < 0.05$ ). Those who say they absolutely disagree are the highest of those who say they definitely join when the Brand Awareness score is the lowest.

There is a statistically significant difference in Brand Associations score between Overall Brand Equity participation level groups ( $p < 0.05$ ). Those who say they absolutely disagree are the highest of those who say they definitely join when their Brand Associations score is lowest.

There is a statistically significant difference in Perceived Quality score among the Overall Brand Equity participation level groups ( $p < 0.05$ ). The Perceived Quality score is the lowest of those who say they absolutely disagree, while the highest is the one that says they definitely agree.

There is a statistically significant difference in Brand Loyalty score between Overall Brand Equity participation level groups ( $p < 0,05$ ). Those who indicate that they absolutely do not have the lowest brand loyalty score, the highest of those who say they absolutely agree.

## 5.9. Kruskal-Wallis Analysis for Consumer Satisfaction Factor

Kruskal-Wallis Test Results for Consumer Satisfaction Factor is shown in table 5.9.1.

Table 5.9.1. Kruskal-Wallis Test Results (Consumer Satisfaction)

Consumer Satisfaction Scale		N	Mean Rank	X2	p
<b>CULTURAL ASSETS</b>	Neither agree nor disagree	18	42,00	31,901	0,000*
	Agree	206	87,29		
	Strongly Agree	176	125,93		
<b>BRAND AWARENESS</b>	Neither agree nor disagree	18	44,10	41,890	0,000*
	Agree	206	83,24		
	Strongly Agree	176	130,43		
<b>BRAND ASSOCIATIONS</b>	Neither agree nor disagree	18	42,15	62,312	0,000*
	Agree	206	77,16		
	Strongly Agree	176	137,75		
<b>PERCEIVED QUALITY</b>	Neither agree nor disagree	18	51,60	61,675	0,000*
	Agree	206	76,31		
	Strongly Agree	176	137,69		
<b>BRAND LOYALTY</b>	Neither agree nor disagree	18	30,55	77,688	0,000*
	Agree	206	75,32		
	Strongly Agree	176	141,20		

\*(p <0,05) significance level

\*\* (p <0,10) significance level

According to the Kruskal Wallis test for different groups of Consumer Satisfaction participation level;

There is a statistically significant difference in Cultural Assets score between Consumer Satisfaction participation level groups (p <0.05). It is the highest of those who indicate that they are unstable, while those who indicate that they have definitely participated in the lowest number of Cultural Assets.

There is a statistically significant difference in Brand Awareness score among the Consumer Satisfaction participation level groups (p <0.05). Those who indicate that they are indecisive are at the lowest of those who have the lowest brand awareness score, while those who indicate that they are definitely participating.

There is a statistically significant difference in the Brand Associations score among the Consumer Satisfaction participation level groups ( $p < 0.05$ ). It is the highest of those who indicate that they are indecisive, while those who indicate that they have definitely participated with the lowest score in Brand Associations.

There is a statistically significant difference in Perceived Quality score among the Consumer Satisfaction participation level groups ( $p < 0.05$ ). Perceived Quality score is the lowest of those who indicate that they are indecisive, whichever is the highest.

There is a statistically significant difference in the Brand Loyalty score among the Consumer Satisfaction participation level groups ( $p < 0.05$ ). It is the highest of those who indicate that they are indecisive, while those who have the lowest brand loyalty score are the least.

### 5.10. Kruskal-Wallis Analysis for Future Behavior Factor

Kruskal-Wallis Test Results for Future Behavior Factor is shown in table 5.10.1.

Table 5.10.1. Kruskal-Wallis Test Results (Future Behavior)

Future Behavior Scale		N	Mean Rank	X2	p
<b>CULTURAL ASSETS</b>	Neither agree nor disagree	45	54,35	44,306	0,000*
	Agree	190	87,94		
	Strongly Agree	165	132,89		
<b>BRAND AWARENESS</b>	Neither agree nor disagree	45	51,65	49,758	0,000*
	Agree	190	87,22		
	Strongly Agree	165	134,49		
<b>BRAND ASSOCIATIONS</b>	Neither agree nor disagree	45	57,21	49,758	0,000*
	Agree	190	79,76		
	Strongly Agree	165	141,43		
<b>PERCEIVED QUALITY</b>	Neither agree nor disagree	45	57,58	61,509	0,000*
	Agree	190	81,13		
	Strongly Agree	165	139,76		
<b>BRAND LOYALTY</b>	Neither agree nor disagree	45	34,46	75,324	0,000*
	Agree	190	86,39		
	Strongly Agree	165	140,35		

\*( $p < 0,05$ ) significance level

\*\*( $p < 0,10$ ) significance level

According to Kruskal Wallis test for different groups of Future Behavior participation level;

There is a statistically significant difference in Cultural Assets score between Future Behavior participation level groups ( $p < 0,05$ ). It is the highest of those who indicate that they are unstable, while those who indicate that they have definitely participated in the lowest number of Cultural Assets.

There is a statistically significant difference in Brand Awareness score among Future Behavior participation level groups ( $p < 0,05$ ). Those who indicate that they are indecisive are at the lowest of those who have the lowest brand awareness score, while those who indicate that they are definitely participating.

There is a statistically significant difference in the level of Brand Associations between Future Behavior participation level groups ( $p < 0,05$ ). It is the highest of those who indicate that they are indecisive, while those who indicate that they have definitely participated with the lowest score in Brand Associations.

There is a statistically significant difference between Perceived Quality Scores of Future Behavior participation level groups ( $p < 0,05$ ). Perceived Quality score is the lowest of those who indicate that they are indecisive, whichever is the highest.

There is a statistically significant difference in Brand Loyalty score between Future Behavior participation level groups ( $p < 0,05$ ). It is the highest of those who indicate that they are indecisive, while those who have the lowest brand loyalty score are the least.

### 5.11. Wilcoxon Analysis within Independent Factors

In this part of the study, relationship was analyzed within main independent factors, Future Behavior, Consumer Satisfaction, and Overall Brand Equity. Initially, Wilcoxon test was applied and after detecting the positive relationship within the factors, correlation analysis was used to see the correlation coefficient.

Table 5.11.1. Wilcoxon Test Ranks

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
<b>Consumer Satisfaction - Overall Brand Equity</b>	Negative Ranks	18 <sup>a</sup>	105,44	1898,00
	Positive Ranks	278 <sup>b</sup>	151,29	42058,00
	Ties	104 <sup>c</sup>		
	Total	400		
<b>Future Behavior - Overall Brand Equity</b>	Negative Ranks	11 <sup>d</sup>	87,50	962,50
	Positive Ranks	278 <sup>e</sup>	147,28	40942,50
	Ties	111 <sup>f</sup>		
	Total	400		
<b>Future Behavior - Consumer Satisfaction</b>	Negative Ranks	47 <sup>g</sup>	49,09	2307,00
	Positive Ranks	52 <sup>h</sup>	50,83	2643,00
	Ties	301 <sup>i</sup>		
	Total	400		

- a. Consumer Satisfaction < Overall Brand Equity
- b. Consumer Satisfaction > Overall Brand Equity
- c. Consumer Satisfaction = Overall Brand Equity
- d. Future Behavior < Overall Brand Equity
- e. Future Behavior > Overall Brand Equity
- f. Future Behavior = Overall Brand Equity
- g. Future Behavior < Consumer Satisfaction
- h. Future Behavior > Consumer Satisfaction
- i. Future Behavior = Consumer Satisfaction

Wilcoxon and Correlation Test results indicate that;

- Results at Table 5.11.1. say that consumer satisfaction ranks is more positive than overall brand equity ranks. It's concluded that statistically significant difference was found between Consumer Satisfaction and Overall Brand Equity factors (p-value=0.000<0.005). There is a statistically significant strong positive correlation (0.315/1.00), as well.
- Results at Table 5.11.1. say that future behaviour ranks is more positive than overall brand equity ranks. It's concluded that statistically significant difference was found between Future Behavior and Overall Brand Equity factors (p-value=0.000<0.005). There is a statistically significant strong positive correlation (0.382/1.00), as well.
- Results at Table 5.11.1. say that future behaviour ranks is more positive than overall brand equity ranks, but most of the ranks of both factors are equals. Hence, it's concluded that no statistically significant difference was found between Future Behavior and Consumer Satisfaction factors (p-value=0.511>0.005). But indeed, there is a statistically significant positive correlation (0.653/1.00).

Table 5.11.2. Wilcoxon Test Results

	<b>Consumer Satisfaction - Overall Brand Equity</b>	<b>Future Behavior - Overall Brand Equity</b>	<b>Future Behavior - Consumer Satisfaction</b>
<b>Z</b>	-14,085 <sup>b</sup>	-14,529 <sup>b</sup>	-,657 <sup>b</sup>
<b>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	<b>,000</b>	<b>,000</b>	<b>,511</b>

According to Wilcoxon test results for scale scores;

There is a statistically significant difference between Overall Brand Equity score and Consumer Satisfaction score (p <0.05). Overall Brand Equity score of participants is low in Consumer Satisfaction score.

There is a statistically significant difference between Overall Brand Equity score and Future Behavior score (p <0.05). Overall Brand Equity score of participants is low on Future Behavior score.

There is a statistically significant difference between Consumer Satisfaction score and Future Behavior score (p <0.05). Consumer Satisfaction score of participants is higher than Future Behavior score.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

The present study was designed to determine the effect of travel involvement on destination brand equity, the effect of cultural brand assets on destination brand equity, and the effect of brand equity on consumer satisfaction and future behavior.

The literature review chapter of the thesis discusses brand equity, destination brand equity dimensions, enduring travel involvement, customers` future behaviours and satisfaction. After the presentation of research the theoretical model and hypotheses, the research methodology, a detailed analysis of the research findings was provided. This section will discuss theoretical contributions, implications and limitations of the research.

One of the more significant findings to emerge from this study is that monuments/heritage sites are important attributes when tourists made a decision to visit Istanbul. The tourists particularly enjoyed the monuments/heritage sites, street culture, cuisine, traditions and contribution to world heritage of Istanbul.

This study has identified that the tourists who visited Istanbul think that they had an interesting and authentic cultural experience during their visitation. These experiments confirmed that tourists` self-image was similar to the brand image of Istanbul. Satisfied tourists are more loyal. The tourists enjoyed and were satisfied with their visit to Istanbul. They intent to revisit and are willing to recommend Istanbul to friends and relatives.

The results of this investigation show that cultural differences in the city of Istanbul have significant impact on tourist satisfaction. Moreover, these differences have significant impacts on tourists` intensions to revisit. In addition, brand associations and awareness have an influence on tourists` decision making process of visiting Istanbul city. Cultural assets, such as are monuments/ heritage sites, museums, art centers, cultural events and festivals suggest a competitive advantage. The findings indicate that Istanbul have competitive advantage on other cities.

The research has also shown that brand associations help to build favourable attitudes and beliefs towards their brands to provide higher brand equity. To illustrate, most tourists agree that Istanbul fits their life styles as a destination. Brand associations increase the

brand equity of Istanbul. Apart from that, perceived quality can drive to greater differentiation and superiority of the brand. Brand equity requires higher perceived quality and development of positive connotations in the minds of visitors. Tourists intend to visit Istanbul instead of visiting another city.

The most significant finding of this study is that tourists, who intend to revisit Istanbul, are eager to make positive recommendations. Moreover, most tourists are aware of Istanbul as a destination. In this point, it is considered that tourists, who are loyal visitors to a particular destination, are main drivers of brand equity of Istanbul. Satisfied tourists are sources of information for potential tourists and they intend to revisit Istanbul.

This study confirmed that Consumer-Based Brand Equity for a Tourism Destination was found to be adaptable for the city of Istanbul. The application of the CBBETD measure is beneficial since it does ensure strategic alternatives for Istanbul to develop its positioning with current and future tourists.

As a result of the inevitable movement of people against globalization, the emergence of tourism has caused cultural, social and political changes and developments in all countries, cities, regions and especially economic countries. If tourism is considered to have the greatest impact on destinations, that is, economic outcomes, that is, earnings, this issue is an irrevocable reality for both professionals and academics.

Image is something more than being a function of information but it is an outcome of the information perceived by the tourist. Therefore, it is the image of a destination that assesses the destination to be considered as a choice in the decision making process than the destination itself. Destination brands are effective and popular tools in the heart of communicating the image of a destination and destination marketing activities. The service performance of a destination is crucial as branding depends on the promises of service quality and keeping these promises. The success of a destination, depending on many factors, is not easy at all where many new destinations are entering the international tourism market and current destinations are trying to strengthen their competitiveness. Thus, building a strong destination brand by using a right positioning strategy and an attractive image is of paramount in the success of a destination,



The destination image is not effective in marketing activities if it represents a dream and does not match with the service performance that makes up the destination experience. Therefore it is important to understand the management and marketing functions of a destination that dominates the position of a destination in the international tourism era.

This research was conducted to analyze the characters and behavior of tourists towards cultural destinations, to evaluate the place of cultural values in the image of destination and to determine the effect of these values on cultural destination image. The important results of this study are as follows:

Within the distribution of gender; 195 participants were male (48,8%), 205 participants were female (51,3%) and hence, it could be said that the sample represents nearly equally both genders. Within the distribution of participants' nationalities, mainly; 82 participants were German (20.5%), 57 participants were Americans (14.3%), 39 participants were French (9.8%), 35 participants were Australian (8.8%), 23 participants were British (5.8%), 23 participants were Spanish (5.8%), 13 participants were Canadian (3.3%), 10 participants were Colombian (2.5), 10 participants were Russian (2.5%).

Within the distribution of Cultural Assets Factor and Items; mean of factor is 3.93 (in scale 4=Agree), "What makes Istanbul unique is its monuments/heritage sites" has the highest average with 4.54, whereas "What makes Istanbul unique is its entertainment/nightlife options" has the lowest average with 3.25. Another factor that should not be ignored in this study is that the participants believe that Istanbul has a rich history. Research hypotheses were tested and accepted in related international researches such as Ferns (2012), Kladou (2014), Lee (2009), Yoo and Donthu (2001).

Other studies related to this subject are as follows: According to the results of a study in Alanya, the perceptions related with the brand equities' in all dimensions have higher. According to their degree of impact on the effective dimensions of brand equity ranking have been identified as brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand image and perceived quality (Kocaman and Göngör, 2012).

In Antalya, according to the results of study by Çetinsöz and Artuğer the ideas of the respondents about Antalya is positive in general and the most positive idea was found to be

about the “brand equity” factor. However, according to the correlation analysis results, there is a mid-level positive relationship among the brand equity dimensions (Çetinsöz and Artuğer, 2013).

According to the results of the Effect of the Cultural Values on the Destination Image: A Search in Eskisehir 2013 Turkish World Capital of Culture, obtain from these analysis have shown that many of the participants have used internet as a source of information and travelled to explore new cultures. On the one hand the most affecting cultural values of the destination image was emotional values (Köroğlu and Güzel, 2013).

Destination managers who want to stand out with their cultural attractiveness and want to acquire a cultural destination image should be able to analyze the destination formation process well. From this point of view, this study, which focuses on cultural values, is thought to provide important clues to cultural destination managers.

The findings of the research provided strategic commitments on destination planning and destination management. From a destination management view, the research ensures comprehension for stating cultural dimensions to compose a notable experience for tourists. When the case study on Istanbul is considered, the results of high mean scores of destination feature performance pointed out that tourists were positively satisfied with their experience.

The findings of this study have many practical implications. First, enduring travel involvement enhances the brand dimensions. Second, higher level of brand dimensions enhance tourists` satisfaction, future behaviors and the overall brand equity of Istanbul. Third, consumer satisfaction, positive WOM and revisit intention enhance the overall brand equity of Istanbul. Finally, Consumers` satisfaction provides positive WOM and higher level of revisit intention.

This current research has some limitations. First, this research was conducted within one specific city: Istanbul. Findings must be commented with attention while attempting to generalize these findings in the other contexts.

Second, this research stems from the view of international tourists to Istanbul city. Other viewpoints such as perspectives of stakeholders, citizens' opinions, views of officials, local business leaders and employees might present alternative perceptions of the city and its image. Therefore, these issues call for further investigations.

Third, an additional uncontrolled factor is the possibility that the responses of the survey were collected from youth hostels due to difficulties and insufficient collaboration of hotel managers and tourism agents.

Fourth, only a few scholars have studied on cultural assets as a new scale. Due to the limited number of studies on this topic, the study was unable to benefit from reliable studies in the literature. In the light of these limitations, further studies on this topic might contribute to the relevant literature, particularly to the stakeholder perspectives.

## 7. Appendix

### 7.1 Survey

#### RESEARCH ON THE CULTURAL DESTINATION BRAND EQUITY

This questionnaire will be used for a scientific research, which is conducted to fulfill the requirements of the Master of Business Administration at Doğuş University. The study examines the effect of cultural destination brand equity on customer satisfaction and future behavior. I will be very thankful if you can spend 10 – 15 minutes in order to answer all of the questions included in the form. Your identities will be disguised and the data will be used only by the researcher for the purpose of the study. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you very much for your assistance and support.

Best Regards,

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#### FIRST SECTION:

These questions are related to your current/previous visit to Istanbul.

##### 1) How many times have you been to Istanbul?

- Once     Twice     Three times     Four times     Five times or more

##### 2) In which season(s) did you visit Istanbul? (You can check more than one option)

- Spring     Summer     Autumn     Winter

##### 3) What was the purpose of your trip? (You can check more than one option)

- Vacation     Pay a visit to the family     Pay a visit to friend (s)  
 Business     Other \_\_\_\_\_ (Please specify)

##### 4) How many days did you stay in Istanbul? \_\_\_\_\_ days

##### 5) Where did you stay during your trip?

- Hotel     Apart Hotel     Hostel  
 Home     Other \_\_\_\_\_ (Please specify)

##### 6) Have you visited any other city during your stay?

- No     Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (Please specify the name of cities)

**SECOND SECTION:**

This section measures the perceived relevance of travelling for you. For each statement please check the most suitable option by placing an X beside a number from 1 to 7.

	Unimportant						Important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
For me pleasure travel is:							

	Of no concern						Of great concern
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
For me pleasure travel is:							

	Means nothing						Means a lot
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
For me pleasure travel:							

	Insignificant						Significant
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
For me pleasure travel is:							

	Does not matter						Matters a lot
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
For me pleasure travel:							

**THIRD SECTION:**

This section measures the perceived brand equity of Istanbul. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement by placing an X beside a number from 1 to 5.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
What makes Istanbul unique is its entertainment / nightlife options.					

What makes Istanbul unique is its cultural festivals.					
What makes Istanbul unique is its traditions.					
What makes Istanbul unique is its cultural events.					
What makes Istanbul unique is its street culture.					
What makes Istanbul unique is its monuments/heritage sites.					
What makes Istanbul unique is its cuisine.					
What makes Istanbul unique is its art centers.					
What makes Istanbul unique is its contribution to world heritage.					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5

What makes Istanbul unique is its museums.					
Istanbul is a famous cultural destination.					
When thinking about culture, Istanbul comes to my mind immediately.					
The characteristics of Istanbul come to my mind immediately.					
Istanbul has a good name and reputation.					
The culture in Istanbul is interesting.					
I can trust Istanbul for a fulfilling cultural experience.					
In Istanbul I can have an authentic cultural experience.					
Istanbul has a personality.					
My friends would think highly of me if I visited Istanbul.					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree



	1	2	3	4	5
This cultural destination (Istanbul) fits my personality.					
Istanbul has a rich history.					
Istanbul has an exotic atmosphere.					
The people in Istanbul are hospitable.					
I can rely on there being a good atmosphere.					
Istanbul provides quality cultural experiences.					
I admire the organization of the city's cultural aspects.					
This experience has increased my cultural knowledge.					
I enjoy visiting Istanbul.					

Istanbul would be my preferred choice for a cultural holiday.					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
Istanbul met my expectations.					
I would recommend friends /relatives to visit Istanbul.					
It makes sense to visit Istanbul instead of any other city, even if they are the same.					
Even if another city has the same features as Istanbul, I would prefer to visit Istanbul.					
If there is another city as good as Istanbul, I prefer to visit Istanbul.					
If another city is not different from Istanbul in any way, it seems smarter to visit Istanbul.					

#### FOURTH SECTION

This section measures satisfaction with Istanbul and future behaviors towards the city. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement by placing an X beside a number from 1 to 5.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
Overall, I am satisfied with my visit to Istanbul.					
As a whole, I am happy visiting Istanbul.					
I believe I did the right thing to visit Istanbul.					
I am willing to revisit Istanbul.					
I am willing to recommend Istanbul to others.					
I will spread positive word of mouth (say positive things about the city) to others.					

## **FIFTH SECTION: DEMOGRAPHICS**

This last section measures your personal information. Please check the most suitable option for you.

### **1. Gender**

- Male                       Female

### **2. Nationality:**

Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

### **3. Age**

- Under 18                       18-27                       28-38                       39-49
- 50-60                       Over 61

### **4. Marital Status**

- Single                       Living together                       Married
- Divorced                       Widow

### **5. Do you have any children?**

- Yes                       No

If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_. Please specify their ages: \_\_\_\_\_

### **6. Education**

- Primary School                       Secondary School                       High School
- Bachelor Degree                       Master Degree                       Doctoral Degree

### **7. Occupation**

Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Monthly Income (in Euros or Dollars)**

Less than 1,000 €       1,001 - 2,000 €  2,001 - 3,000 €

3,001 - 4,000 €       4,001 - 5,000 €  More than 5,001 €

Less than 1,111 \$       1,112 - 2,222 \$  2,223 - 3,333 \$

3,334 - 4,444 \$       4,445 - 5,555 \$  More than 5,556 \$



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