



IMPACT OF TOURIST'S PERCEPTIONS OF CULTURAL DESTINATION COMPETITIVENESS ON FUTURE BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS

Turistlerin Kültürel Destinasyon Rekabetçiliği Algılarının Gelecekteki Davranışsal Niyetlerine Etkisi

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ABSTRACT

In this study, the tourists' perception of competitiveness was measured in regards to visiting the city of Kars-Ani ruin, which is an important cultural destination in Turkey. The perceptions of destination competitiveness have been investigated to see whether they affect the satisfaction of tourists regarding destination choices and possible behavioural intentions arising in the future. A total of 123 valid questionnaires were obtained from the field survey. The data were analysed using the IBM SPSS Statistic Base 22.0 package programme. First, a confirmatory factor analysis was performed for a destination competitiveness scale. The result of a regression analysis, which was conducted after this, determined that one-third of the factors for destination competitiveness affected satisfaction. Through this analysis it was determined that satisfaction also significantly affects future behavioural intentions.

Keywords: Destination competitiveness, Behavioural intentions, UNESCO, Kars-Ani ruin.

JEL codes: Z00, Z30, Z32

ÖZET

Bu çalışmada, Türkiye'nin önemli kültürel destinasyonlarından biri olan Kars iline bağlı Ani ören yerini ziyaret eden turistlerin rekabetçilik algıları ölçülmüştür. Turistlerin destinasyona ilişkin rekabetçilik algılarının destinasyon tercihi ile ilgili memnuniyetlerini ve gelecekte ortaya çıkması olası davranışsal niyetlerini etkileyip etkilemediğini tespit edebilmek amaçlanmıştır. Saha araştırması sonucu geçerli toplam 123 anket verisi elde edilmiştir. Veriler IBM SPSS 22.0 istatistik paket programı kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Öncelikle destinasyon rekabetçiliği ölçeğine doğrulayıcı factor analizi uygulanmıştır. Bu aşamanın ardından yapılan regresyon analizi neticesinde, destinasyon rekabetçiliği faktörlerinden üçünün memnuniyeti etkilediği tespit edilmiştir. Bu analiz ile birlikte memnuniyetin de gelecekteki davranışsal niyetleri önemli ölçüde etkilediği belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Destinasyon rekabetçiliği, Davranışsal niyet, UNESCO, Kars-Ani ören yeri.

JEL kodları: Z00, Z30, Z32

1. INTRODUCTION

Visits to see historical elements and spiritual cultural elements created by ancient civilisations are the foundation of cultural tourism. Tourists who travel for these experiences explain the relationship between culture and tourism. In recent years, cultural attractions have become important elements of tourist destinations (Kim, Cheng & O'Leary 2007:1366). The desire to discover and to experience different cultures, especially for cultural tourists, is increasing day-by-day (Richards, 2005). The motivation to travel, interaction, participation in and learning from cultural tourism is about exploring the lifestyle and the cultural heritage of the people of the region visited. (Lynch, Duinker, Sheehan & Chute, 2011:977).

It has been determined that visits to destinations and structures registered by the UNESCO World Heritage List have increased since 1972 (Özünel, 2011:255). The City of Ani located in the Kars province is considered an important cultural tourism destination, and an application was made to include it in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2012. Since then, the ancient city has been on the temporary list and it was added to the final list on 15 July 2016. This archaeological site is one of the most important cultural

attractions in Kars. This historic area is 42 km from the provincial centre of Kars and it is the sixteenth area in Turkey to be registered with UNESCO and the historic area attracts many domestic and foreign cultural tourists.

The cultural impacts on cultural heritage preservation, cultural image, interests of cultural tourists and destination decisions have been cited in previous studies that focused on cultural tourism (Silberberg, 1995:361; Richards, 2005; Öter & Özdoğan, 2005:217; Lynch et al., 2011:977; Ayaz, Apak & Batı, 2016:5). In this research, the goal was to determine the perception of destination competitiveness for cultural tourists visiting the Kars province to visit the City of Ani and to experience Baltic architecture. In addition, there is an exploration to determine whether the perceptions of competitiveness of the tourists visiting Kars have an effect on their behavioural intentions.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. The Relationship between Destination Competitiveness, Satisfaction and Behavioural Intention

There are many different definitions and explanations about customer satisfaction; however, according to Kotler (1997), customer satisfaction is the level of happiness or frustration created by a person's expectancies of product performance compared to their perceptions of their experience of product performance (Cheng, Chiu, Hu & Chang, 2011:5119-5120). Swan et al. (1982) assessed customer satisfaction based on cognitive thinking that analysed product satisfiability or poor results for end-users (Millan & Esteban, 2004:534). To sum up, satisfaction is a positive response generated from the result of evaluating a consumption experience (Hosany & Prayag, 2014:453).

Behavioural intentions are examined based on the number of visits and re-visits, re-purchases, recommendations to others, levels of word-of-mouth citation and willingness to pay more (Ha & Jang, 2010:4). Customer satisfaction can affect behavioural intentions, which are the main determinants of loyalty. Customer satisfaction plays a very important role in the hospitality industry, in restaurant management and in marketing (Ladhari, Brun & Morales, 2008:563; Kim, Ng & Kim, 2009:10; Heung & Gu, 2012:1169; Liang & Zhang, 2012:156). Operational measures, called destination diagnoses, are divided into subjective consumer measures (demand side) and objective industry measures (supply side) (Schalber & Peters, 2012:309). In the literature, the discussions of competitiveness are examined based on its micro and macro dimensions, generally focused on the supply side (Meng, 2006:167). However, the demand created by a destination has a special importance that determines the competitiveness of that region (Dwyer & Kim, 2003:398). Although in many studies, tourists and their needs are perceived as the ultimate driving force that influences destination competitiveness, the studies evaluating the issue from the point of view of the tourist are very limited (Zainuddin, Radzi & Zahari, 2013:801). The studies conducted to measure tourist perceptions relative to destination competitiveness as associated with satisfaction and behavioural intentions can be summarised as: Kozak sought to identify tourist perceptions of destination competitiveness in two studies in 2001. In his first study, he presented the survey findings of British and German tourists visiting Mallorca, Spain and Turkey. The main goal of that study was to determine whether there was a difference between the satisfaction levels of tourists from the two nations when they visit the same destination. Because of the study, it was determined that British tourists were likely to be more satisfied than German tourists were (2001a). In the other study, he found that Mallorca was seen as a more developed tourist destination while Turkey was considered a less developed destination, based on the findings from the British participants who visited Spain and Turkey. Overall satisfaction was found to be consistent (2001b).

Chen, Chen and Lee (2011) studied responses from tourists in the Kinmen Island, Taiwan to discover the relationship between destination competitiveness and customer satisfaction. Variables such as pre-visit perceptions, post-visit satisfaction, recommendation and revisit intentions and competitiveness with other foreign destinations were tested. Because of the study, it is argued that the unique tourist attractions of a destination can be the most important variable in destination competitiveness. Nevertheless, no relationship was found between the overall satisfaction of the tourists and destination competitiveness.

Zainuddin et al. (2013) conducted a pilot survey with tourists to measure the perceived destination competitiveness of Langkawi Island, one of the Malaysian islands. The preliminary results showed that the perceived destination competitiveness was significant and had a significant effect on the behaviour of travel intention to go to the island of Langkawi. Zainuddin, Radzi and Zahari (2016) investigates the relationship between perceived destination competitiveness, tourist satisfaction, and travel revisits intentions. As a result

of their research on the Malaysian island of Langkawi, their satisfaction, commitment, loyalty, motivation and productivity are the antecedents of customer loyalty and revisit intention.

Hallmann, Müller and Feiler (2014) worked to identify the perceptions of destination competitiveness of tourists who prefer winter sports centres in the Alps as to whether destination competitiveness affected perceived satisfaction also. Surveys were conducted on winter sports tourists in three municipalities in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The results show that from the tourists' point of view, infrastructure, accessibility, hospitality, the mix of destination activities and destination image were important factors for perceived satisfaction.

Lo, Chin and Law (2017) aimed to identify tourists' perspective on hard services (tourism infrastructure and accommodation) and soft services (various activities and special events) towards the competitiveness of rural tourism destinations. According to data from tourists visiting national parks in Malaysia, tourists are more concerned about the quality of accommodation, infrastructure, range of activities, and special events for the development of tourism destination competitiveness in rural tourism destination.

Ghose and Johann (2018) discussed the destination qualities that affect tourist satisfaction and behavioral intentions. As a result of the field research conducted with tourists visiting Poland, it has been determined that tour qualifications such as the organization, the attractiveness of the program and the tour guide have a positive effect on both tourist satisfaction and recommendation behavior. Moreover, some experience factors including tourist attractions – culture and monuments, and safety also have a positive impact on both tourist satisfaction and recommendations. Miličević, Mihalič and Sever (2017) similarly in this paper investigates destination competitiveness (measured as tourist satisfaction) in regard to destination attributes. And discussed the relationships between implementation of elements of destination branding process and destination competitiveness. Tourists visiting Croatian destinations were reached.

Virkar and Mallya (2018) researched tourist satisfaction towards transportation systems, which is one of the important components of destination competitiveness. The study conceptually analyzed the accessibility, service quality, perceived value and destination image as the dimensions of the transportation system that affect tourist satisfaction.

Considering earlier research results, the research hypotheses formed for the instant study are:

H₁: Cultural tourist perceptions of destination competitiveness perceptions have a significant effect on tourist satisfaction.

H₂: The satisfaction of cultural tourists has a significant effect on their future behavioural intentions.

3. METHOD

3.1. Purpose and Research Model

There are a limited number of previous studies that have measured tourist perception of destination competitiveness. The purpose of this study is to contribute to the body of literature by determining whether the interest of tourist in culture and heritage influence their behavioural intentions and perceptions of the competitiveness of Kars, Turkey. The model developed for the purpose of research is as follows.



Figure 1. Research Model

3.2. Determination of Scale

After examining the accessible conceptual and empirical research papers regarding destination competitiveness, it has been determined that Ritchie and Crouch (2003) made the most referrals to a 'conceptual model of destination competitiveness' (Akkuş, 2016:192). The Ritchie and Crouch conceptual competitiveness model consists of five dimensions: supporting factors and resources, core resources and attractors, destination management, destination policy, planning and development and qualifying and amplifying determinants. However, considering that the participants surveyed in this study were already tourists in Kars and not adequately familiar with this region still (or possibly any other vacation destinations), some determinants of the dimensions were removed from the survey. Within the remaining

dimensions, some further variables that were incompatible with the region in terms of destination features within the remaining dimensions were eliminated also. Finally, the destination competitiveness scale consisted of 40 variables that were identified as appropriate for the instant study. The selected variables are distributed as follows: supporting factors and resources (11), core resources and attractors (10), destination management (7), destination policy, planning and development (6) and qualifying and amplifying determinants (6).

Three expressions suggested by Kozak (2001a) as the satisfaction scale and three expressions suggested by Kim (2009) as the behavioural intention scale were used. After the determination of the scales to be used to measure these aspects, the questionnaire was divided into three parts. In the first part, taking into account the Kars-oriented destination competitiveness strategies and actions, 34 expressions were used on a 5-Likert scale (1 = 'I strongly disagree' to 5 = 'I strongly agree'). Then, six expressions were ordered to determine satisfaction and the behavioural intentions. In the second part, a semantic scale for destination policy, planning and development dimensions measured by a 7-Likert scale for six variables was used to determine the destination competitiveness scale. Finally, the respondents were asked to state their gender and age etc. to determine their demographic characteristics.

3.3. Sample and Data Collection

Located in the eastern Anatolian region of Turkey, Kars is a very important region and is the site of many civilisations and significant cultural heritage through the ages. Ottoman, Russian and Armenian architecture can be seen in and around the city. Cultural tourists come to see the City of Ani, a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site, the twelfth-century Kars Castle, the ruins of Urartu such as the rock tombs and Uratu cistern built in 1232 and Armenian, Byzantine, and Seljuk ruins, churches and historical Russian houses.

As an accessible important cultural centre, the research was expanded to include the Kars province. A quantitative method was adopted in the research and a survey technique was applied. The surveys were prepared both in Turkish and in English to reach both local and foreign tourists. No restrictions were placed on the nationality of the tourists selected as participants because English has become one of the common languages of the world. At this stage, the traditional approach (Hançer, 2003: 50), which is one of the most frequently used approaches in scale translation, was used to check whether the scale translated into Turkish was reliable, valid and fidelity to the original. First of all, the scale was translated from English to Turkish. This translated scale was then translated back into the original language. Equality between these two translations has been tested on samples speaking both languages, and its suitability has been accepted.

The questionnaires were circulated to tourists in the City of Ani, which is the most visited place in the Kars province (N. Alp, personal communication, 2 August 2017) who visited the ruins between 27 to 29 August 2017 in line with the permit obtained from the Governorship of Kars. Polls were conducted on a voluntary basis. All the survey respondents were provided with any assistance or explanations they needed.

It was not possible to reach the whole universe in the research, sampling method was used. In this study, convenience sampling of the non-random sampling method was preferred. The convenience sampling method was preferred because the sample was created with people whom data collectors can reach during their time in the field. Considering the errors that might occur in answering the questions, 150 questionnaires were distributed. Incomplete questionnaires were eliminated, leaving a total of 123 questionnaires for evaluation.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Sample Profile

The frequency analysis was applied to the demographic data of 123 questionnaires out of the original 150 questionnaires. According to the frequency analysis results, 51.2% of the 123 participants were female and 48.8% were male. According to the marital status data, 52.8% of the respondents were married and 47.2% were single.

Table 1. Findings on Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

	%	f		%	f
<i>Gender</i>			<i>Nationality</i>		
Female	51.2	63	Turkish	91.1	112
Male	48.8	60	Turkic countries	1.6	2
<i>Marital Status</i>			European countries	4.9	6
Single	47.2	58	Other	2.4	3

Married	52.8	65	Education		
Age			Primary edu.	7.3	9
18-24	9.8	12	High school	13.0	16
25-35	31.7	39	Vacational school	10.6	13
36-45	40.7	50	University	45.5	56
46-55	14.6	18	Postgraduate	23.6	29
56-65	3.3	4	Job		
Income (TL/\$)			Private sector	30.1	37
0-1499	6.5	8	Officer	26.8	33
1500-2999	31.7	39	Housewife	6.5	8
3000-4999	42.3	52	Self-employment	5.7	7
5000 and above	19.5	24	Other	30.9	38

The majority of the participants were people aged between 36 and 45 years (40.7%), followed by people aged between 25 and 35 years (31.7%). The survey results indicated that the majority of tourists visiting Kars at that time were younger people. In this survey, 91.1% of the participants were Turkish nationals, 4.9% were from European countries, 2.4% were from other countries and 1.6% were from other Turkic countries. The fact that the majority of tourists visiting Kars were Turkish nationals shows that Kars is a known destination for domestic tourism in particular.

An analysis of the educational status data showed that 56 participants (45.5%) had graduated from university and 23.6% had either an MBA or a PhD. The lowest percentage of participants were primary education graduates (7.3%). These results indicate that a cultural tourism destination such as Kars is visited by people with a higher educational level. The majority of the research participants were private sector employees (30.1%). The monthly income for 42.3% of the participants was TL/\$ 3,000–4,999, 31.7% had a monthly income of TL/\$ 1,500–2,999 and 19.5% reported a monthly income of \$ 5,000 and up. These numbers indicate that the majority of visitors to Kars have average monthly incomes.

4.2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to test the appropriateness of the destination competitiveness scale. The data showed a normal distribution. In the analysis, basic component analysis and varimax rotation options were used as an explanatory model. The KMO value, which indicates the suitability of sample size to factor analysis, was calculated as 0.729. The Bartlett's Sphericity test, which determines the suitability of the data for factor analysis, was significant ($p < 0.000$).

Table 2. Destination Competitiveness Scale Confirmatory Factor Analysis

	Standardised Factor Loading	Eigen Value	Variance Explained	Cronbach's Alpha
Factor 1–Core Resources and Attractors		5,866	17,252	89,8
The destination offers numerous outdoor activities.	,853			
The destination offers good souvenir shopping opportunities.	,785			
The destination offers special traditions.	,713			
The quality of roads in the destination is bad.	,685			
The destination has a wide range of local restaurants.	,667			
The destination offers numerous festivals, concerts and events.	,661			
The destination offers unique architecture.	,642			
The destination offers accommodations at various price levels.	,623			
The destination offers high quality transport service.	,592			
The destination offers interesting cultural and historical attractions.	,579			
Factor 2–Supporting Factors and Resources		4,258	12,522	82,1
The hospitality of the locals is very welcoming.	,816			
The variety of food (international cuisine, fast food, etc.) offered is adequate.	,704			
Accessibility to the destination is easily obtainable.	,699			
The amenities and products in the destination can be bundled.	,637			
The availability of health facilities/medical care for tourists is adequate.	,614			
The atmosphere in the destination is very welcoming towards families and children.	,588			

The atmosphere in the destination is inviting and appealing.	,565			
The companies in the destination are trying to fulfil the wishes of tourists.	,555			
Factor 3–Destination Management		3,289	9,672	72,2
Cleanliness and hygiene are held in respect in the destination.	,747			
The service quality of the staff (employess) is good.	,674			
Generally speaking, the availability of tourism information is sufficient.	,653			
The quality of accomodations in the destination is good.	,563			
There are enough banks and exchange offices in the destination.	,466			
Factor 4–Destination Policy, Planning and Development		2,605	7,662	70,8
Dull - Exciting	,766			
Unpleasant - Pleasant	,711			
Local - International	,670			
Commercialised - Non-commercial	,596			
Gloomy - Cheerful	,514			
Distressing - Relaxing	,434			
Factor 5–Qualifying and Amplifying Determinants		2,055	6,045	57,8
Prices for eating out in the destination are adequate.	,665			
I am seeking contact with the locals.	,589			
I feel safe in the destination.	,527			

Total Variance Explained: 53.153; KMO: 0.729; Bartlett Test: $p < .000$

The relationship coefficients between the variables in the scale and the Cronbach's alpha values of the variables were examined. Eight items with a factor load of less than .30 and a low correlation coefficient were removed from the analysis. Consequently, the destination competitiveness scale consisted of 32 items and five factors. In line with the meanings expressed by the items in the factors, they were named Factor 1: Core Resources and Attractors; Factor 2: Supporting Factors and Resources; Factor 3: Destination Management; Factor 4: Destination Policy, Planning and Development and Factor 5: Qualifying and Amplifying Determinants. The total variance explained ratio of the five factors was 53,153%. Looking at the total variance explained rates of the factors, it appears that the core resources and attractors had higher explanatory rates.

The Cronbach's alpha values of all the dimensions obtained after the factor analysis are within acceptable limits. The reliability values of the first two factors are higher than 0.80, while the reliability values of the other two factors are higher than 0.70. Only the final factor Cronbach's alpha value is lower than that of the others, but it is within acceptable limits.

4.3. The Impact of Destination Competitiveness on Satisfaction and Behavioural Intention

A regression analysis was conducted to see whether cultural tourist perceptions of Kars' competitiveness affected their statements regarding future behavioural intentions. The results obtained according to the analysis made to test hypothesis H_1 are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Testing the Effect of Destination Competitiveness on Satisfaction

	Beta (β)	<i>t</i>	Sig.
Independent Variables:			
<i>Core resources and attractors</i>	,627	8,860	,000*
<i>Supporting factors and resources</i>	,567	7,569	,000*
<i>Destination management</i>	,616	8,600	,000*
<i>Destination policy, planning and development</i>	,167	1,859	,065
<i>Qualifying and amplifying determinants</i>	,101	1,117	,266
R^2	,379		
Adjusted R^2	,352		
F	14,225		
P	,000		
Durbin-Watson	1,822		

* $p < 0.01$

The three factors involved in the regression model in the tables are statistically significant at the 0.01 significance level and the model variance explains 37%. When the table is examined, it is seen that the core resources and attractors ($\beta = .627$; $p = .000$), supporting factors and resources ($\beta = .567$; $p = .000$) and destination management ($\beta = .616$; $p = .000$) demonstrates a significant effect on satisfaction at the 0.01

significance level. Accordingly, at the 0.01 significance level, with a 1 unit increase in core resources and attractors, satisfaction increases by 627 units; with a 1 unit increase in supporting factors and resources, satisfaction increases by 567 units and with a 1 unit increase in destination management, satisfaction increases by 616 units. Thus, satisfaction will increase when the core resources and attractors, supporting factors and resources and destination management are improved. According to the analysis results, the third factor for destination competitiveness has an effect on satisfaction. In light of these results, hypothesis H₁, '*Destination competitiveness perceptions of cultural tourists have a significant effect on satisfaction*' is partially accepted.

The results of the regression analysis that was conducted to test the other hypothesis are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Testing Satisfaction on Behavioural Intention

	Beta (β)	<i>t</i>	Sig.
Constant	1,837	8,365	,000
Independent variable			
<i>Satisfaction</i>	,539	7,044	,000*
R ²	,291		
Adjusted R ²	,285		
F	49,615		
P	,000		
Durbin-Watson	1,916		

* $p < 0.01$

The regression model is statistically significant at the 0.01 significance level and the explanatory power of the model is 29%. The model demonstrates that the satisfaction of cultural tourists has a significant effect on their behavioural intentions at the significant level of 0.01 ($\beta=.539$; $p=.000$). That is, a 1 unit increase in satisfaction level increases the behavioural intention by 539 units. Therefore, as the level of satisfaction increases, the likelihood of tourists revisiting, recommending and using the same services increases. In this case, hypothesis H₂, '*The satisfaction of cultural tourists has a significant effect on their future behavioural intentions*' is accepted.

5. CONCLUSION

Destinations, especially in the context of tourism, exist within the limits of their competitiveness. It is obvious that preferences in today's world, where transportation is easy, often vary. Tourists can change their priorities quickly and tourism activities slow down, which affects an important source of income for the destinations. In many of the previous studies on destination competitiveness, stakeholder views were emphasised (Akkuş and Böyükyılmaz, 2020:1139-1140) and their recommendations were evaluated so that the destinations could be developed. However, tourism is not a one-sided phenomenon, and the interaction with tourists is very important in terms of understanding the future of destinations. Therefore, destination competitiveness was assessed from a tourist's perspective to determine the satisfaction and behavioural impact of this evaluation.

This research verified that the satisfaction of cultural tourists who visited Kars was affected by their perceptions of destination competitiveness. Hallmann et al. (2014), obtained similar results in a previous research. This study found this effect to be valid for three of the five destination competitiveness factors: core resources and attractors, supporting factors and resources and destination management. Therefore, satisfaction does increase if the risk factors are improved. In addition, similar to the results of the study by Zainuddin et al. (2013), satisfaction affects behavioural intentions. However, it was determined that destination policy, planning & development and qualifying & amplifying determinants had no effect on satisfaction. It has been determined that the policies regarding the destination do not affect the satisfaction of the tourists. However, the suitability of the price of eating out at the destination does not affect the satisfaction of the tourists. Given the high education level and income of the participants, this may be considered reasonable. In addition, it was observed that the communication status of the participants with the local people did not affect their satisfaction.

The City of Ani is next to the Ocaklı Village. The tourist facilities in this area are undeveloped. As many travellers have stated, in Ani, there are no facilities such as WC (portable toilet) and restaurants to meet the personal needs of tourists. In addition, the absence of health units, tourist information bureaus and souvenir shops in Ani is considered by tourists as significant shortcomings. At the entrance to Ani, there is a single office and a security point where tickets are sold. In addition, the low educational level of the staff means

there is a lack of guidance and information provided to visitors. Although visitors say Ani's destination atmosphere is very inviting and charming, these physical and human deficiencies need to be eliminated.

Aware of the shortcomings, Kars' local governments have begun to address these issues. Works that the Governorship of Kars launched in April 2017 are still in progress. Facilities are still in the construction stage, as are the planned ticket sales outlets, visitor centres, cafés, WC, places of worship, excavation house, rest stops and shopping outlets. Many of the facilities planned to be built in Ani consist of businesses that sell local ingredients, especially local culinary products, which will be an important attraction. These businesses will be very important for tourists who do not have the opportunity to come into contact with the local people. It may be interesting also to organise some traditional events for visitors to this region that are consistent with Ani's rich and multinational history. Visitors who come with tour groups to the area receive guidance services through agencies. The absence of an organisation that provides local guides for individual sightseers in Ani should be noted also as a significant disadvantage. Visitors of Ani are mainly Turkish tourists. The Kars provincial local governments will contribute to the image and development of the region, especially by supporting local people and by providing employment.

Stories about the rich historical past of Ani should be told to visitors as a marketing tool to draw return visitors to Ani. Augmented reality-based mobile applications can be designed for this purpose. This technology could let visitors experience the past associated with the Ani ruins. These narration techniques can provide visitors with a sense of the life at that time. Mobile games can also be designed to provide a pleasant experience for tourists, such as treasure hunt games from mobile augmented reality games, made especially in Turkey.

The more the level of satisfaction increases, the more tourists will want to visit the destination again. Satisfied tourists believe more strongly that they will enjoy travelling the same area once more. Tourists who are satisfied with a destination often recommend the venue by word-of-mouth which is considered one of the most reliable marketing tools as the stories that people tell from their own experiences are given more validity by other people. Therefore, it is important to remember that tourists who are satisfied with Kars will talk about their experiences there and tourists should not be considered guests but once. In addition, it is typical that tourists who are satisfied with a destination use the same services upon their return, which is a considerable advantage, especially for local businesses.

The City of Ani was chosen as the research area. However, after obtaining the necessary permits, a more comprehensive investigation could be conducted at the Kars Airport. In addition, the interval for the research could be for a longer period to reach more foreign tourists. Additional evaluations could be done to uncover any differences between domestic and foreign tourists. In addition, two different cultural tourism destinations on the same route or on similar routes could be selected for future research on the differences and rationales people express about their travel preferences.

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