DETERMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DOMESTIC TOURISTS VISITING MARMARIS AND ETHNIC RESTAURANTS SELECTION CRITERIA

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EXTENSIVE SUMMARY

In recent years, many hotels and food and beverage companies, which have attempted to differentiate themselves within the frame of mass tourism activities, open ethnic-themed restaurants. Determining the reasons of the people who prefer these restaurants is very important in an increasing competitive environment. Therefore, the aim of this study is to determine the perceptions of the local tourists who visit Marmaris on the selection criteria of ethnic restaurants and to examine the relationships between the selection criteria of ethnic restaurants and personal differences scientifically. The local tourists who visit Marmaris District of Muğla Province and have experience of dining in ethnic restaurants compose the scope of the study. Within this scope, a research was carried out by using survey technique with 404 local tourists who visited Marmaris and had experience in dining in ethnic restaurants. In order to determine arithmetic mean and standard deviation as well as differences, t-test, One Way ANOVA, Mann-Whitney U, Kruskal Wallis tests were used. The most important reasons in the selection of ethnic restaurants were the atmosphere, food quality and the attitude of the service personnel respectively.

While the choice of ethnic restaurants of local tourists differed significantly in terms of marital status, age and monthly personal income, sex did not make a significant difference. In addition, those who prefer ethnic restaurants usually go to ethnic restaurants for a family trip, socialization opportunity and pleasure. While the atmosphere of Marmaris ethnic restaurants, the quality of the food and the attitude of the service personnel are perceived as important variables in choosing these restaurants; advertising, opening time, opportunities for children are indicated as low participation variables. These results are similar to other studies in the literature. There is also a significant difference between the marital status and service speed. In terms of age groups, it is understood that especially middle age group (35-44) pay attention to food variety.

Some suggestions are made in line with the results of the research. The ethnic restaurants in the Marmaris destination should be the preferred restaurants based on the needs and expectations of the tourists. The ethnic restaurants located in the destination should give more importance to promotion and advertisement activities and thus their awareness should be increased. The lack of playgrounds for children is noteworthy, in this sense physical space planning should be done. Single tourists expect a more meticulous service in terms of service speed, so restaurants should be more sensitive to service speed. Diversity of food should be important for all age groups, restaurant menus should be revised for this purpose and the menu should include dishes suitable for all age groups. Advice is one of the most important factors for a service business. For this reason, ethnic restaurants
within the scope of the research should be more meticulous in terms of making a good impression and expert support should be obtained if necessary.