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The Mediating Role of Perceived Value in the Influence of Online Consumer Reviews on Destination Brand Loyalty

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Abstract

Information technologies are rapidly showing their effect in the tourism industry as well as in every field. Online platforms have become a significant channel where consumers frequently share their consumption experiences and take them into account in their destination preferences. If managed effectively by destinations, it can become an effective tool in shaping consumer perception and brand loyalty. According to this, it is aimed to detect whether perceived value (PV) has a mediating role in the influence of online consumer reviews (OCRs) on destination brand loyalty (DBL) in the research. The sample of the research comprises of 315 attendants who visit Istanbul for touristic purposes. Research data were collected with the survey data gathering tool. After testing the data obtained from the attendants in terms of normality, reliability and construct validity, the relationships between the variables were investigated by correlation analysis. In the last stage, the hypotheses of the research were tested with simple linear regression and hierarchical regression analysis. Consequently, the basis hypothesis (H4) of the research, "the mediating role of PV in the influence of OCRs on DBL" were accepted with full mediation influence, and also accepted other hypotheses of research (H1, H2 and H3).

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INTRODUCTION

Today, new communication technologies that have permeated every aspect of our lives have led to alters in consumer behavior. These alters have also caused radical changes in the marketing strategies and management approaches of businesses and destinations in the tourism industry (Cantallops & Salvi, 2014). Web-based review platforms are also a product of this change and transformation. OCRs are web-based applications that provide to be taken feedback from consumers and sent advisory messages to other consumers, especially in online shopping environments. Therefore, it can be said that OCRs improved consumers' information seeking behavior (Bae & Lee, 2011). It is not possible for tourism products to be experienced before by consumers like other products. For this reason, OCRs, which are a part of electronic word of mouth (eWOM), are seen as a significant way of obtaining information for consumers who have not yet experienced the tourism product (Ren et al., 2015).

OCRs directly reflect the consumption experiences of people who use the product, and can positively influence the purchasing decision of potential consumers if they provide understandable, useful and convincing recommendations (Lee et al., 2008). Touristic consumers often take into account the reviews of other consumers who have experienced these services before, in order to reduce the uncertainty about touristic destinations and tourism businesses by getting more information (Xu, 2021), to choose the best attraction center, hotel and restaurant, and to evaluate whether the service received is worth the price paid. OCRs are very important for both customers and sellers, and therefore, OCRs are one of the topics that are often turned into research topics by researchers (Schuckert et al., 2015; Yan et al., 2015). For this reason, information sources that provide eWOM about products such as websites, social media and internet review pages can be an important factor in shaping consumers' perception levels (Luo & Ye, 2019), in their purchasing decisions (Helversen et al., 2018; Erkan & Elwalda, 2018), and in costumer loyalty (Zhang & Mao, 2012). At the same time, the perception levels of tourists about the destination can also affect their reviews and evaluations about the destination on online platforms. On the other hand, touristic destinations and tourism businesses make effective use of online platforms in order to communicate with potential customers and to develop and improve the loyalty levels of their existing customers.

Based on the explanations above, this research investigates the relationships between OCRs, DBL and PV variables. One of the main assumptions of the research is that OCRs can affect DBL through PV or directly. In addition, the research focuses on the assumption that OCRs can have an effect on PV and PV on DBL. The research was carried out in Istanbul, one of the most developed destinations in Turkey in terms of information technology infrastructure, hosting the most tourists in Turkey, and one of the most well-known destinations in the world.

When the literature is observed, it has been detected that there is a study conducted by Erdinç (2019) directly related to the subject. In this study, the mediating effect of reviews on social media platforms in the relationship between PV and brand loyalty was examined in the context of sports products. Erdinç's (2019) study is remarkably similar to this research. The subject covered in the related study is discussed in the context of the tourism industry in this research. However, in this research, it was not limited to the reviews made by consumers on social media, but their relations with the relevant variables were examined by taking into account the reviews made on all online platforms. In addition, this study examines whether PV has a mediating role in the relationship between other variables, unlike Erdinç's research.

There are many studies indirectly related to the subject of the research in the tourism literature. In these studies,

the effects of OCRs on touristic consumers' holiday decisions, hotel performance or the brand value of restaurants were researched (Xie et al., 2014; Philips et al., 2015; Torres et al., 2015; Zhao et al., 2015; Xie et al., 2016; Kim et al., 2016; Chan et al., 2017; Xie et al., 2017; Park & Chen, 2017; Philips et al., 2017; Brzozowska-Wos & Schivinski, 2019; Danish et al., 2019; Sharifi, 2019; Bsheer et al., 2020; Dhahak & Huseynov, 2020; Zeng et al., 2020; Güler & Huseynov, 2021; Tseng et al., 2021). However, since there is no study directly related to the subject within the scope of the tourism industry in the literature, it can be said that this research will conduce to the literature. Considering this gap in the literature, in the research, it is purposed to determine whether the PV has a mediating role in the impact of the perspectives of domestic tourists visiting Istanbul for touristic purposes to OCRs on Istanbul's DBL. In this direction, it is thought that the reviews made by the tourists who have visited Istanbul in the online platforms will shape the perceived value of the other tourists about the destination. In addition, it is assumed that the other tourists' destination brand loyalty for Istanbul will be shaped through their perceived values, which are shaped according to OCRs. The reason for carrying out this research is to fill this gap in the literature.

Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

Online Consumer Reviews (OCRS)

With the introduction of the Internet into daily life, a new virtual communication environment has emerged that makes it possible to exchange information between service providers and consumers, as well as to share information between consumers. OCR platforms can be shown among the virtual communication channels that provide information sharing among consumers (Park & Nicolau, 2015). In order to improve the service quality of businesses and destinations, tourism managers are trying to benefit from customers' comments effectively. In this sense, it is seen that many hotel chains, tourism distributors, tourism intermediaries and destinations have designed online review platforms where their customers can share their positive and negative experiences, suggestions and complaints (Ren et al., 2015).

OCRs are a significant electronic word of mouth (eWOM) communication tool (Yaylı & Bayram, 2012; Wang et al., 2015; Kim & Lee, 2015; Park & Nicolau, 2015; Menendez et al., 2020; Huang & Pape, 2020). The eWOM notion is frequently expressed to as online comments, online advices or online reviews (Cantallops & Salvi, 2014). eWOM can be expressed as informal communications that consumers have with other consumers through digital technologies about the products they use and the sellers of these products (Litvin et al., 2008). OCRs are also an eWOM tool where consumers convey their impressions of the products they use to other consumers. eWOM makes the market more transparent for consumers. Consumers who provide eWOM through OCRs take an active role in the value chain and can affect the features and prices of products (Park & Kim, 2008). However, the identifiability and quality of reviews is significant for other consumers to be influenced by and consider OCRs based on eWOM (Tsao & Hsieh, 2015).

Online review platforms are usually located on the official websites of destinations and hotels. Apart from official websites, the most followed review sites, holiday reservation and sales platforms (TripAdvisor, booking.com, trivago, tatilsitesi.com, şikayetvar.com, etstur.com, neredekalinir.com, tatilsepeti.com etc.) also serve this purpose. Furthermore, social media platforms (twitter, facebook, youtube, instagram etc.) are channels where visitors frequently comment on destinations and businesses and are followed by a wide audience. Social media accounts where reviews are shared can be official accounts of the business and destination, as well as individual accounts or accounts of other institutions other than official accounts. The reviews made on these platforms provide an important

database for businesses and destinations about consumers' destination preferences, expectations from destinations, levels of loyalty to the destination, perceptions of the services they receive from the destination, satisfaction levels and complaints. At the same time, these reviews can be an important reference source that potential tourists take into account when choosing their destination.

Regardless of whether the business is small or large, online platforms are an important communication channel through which accommodation business customers can convey their positive or negative opinions and experiences about the business they are staying at. It is very important for managers to try to find solutions for complaints that emerge as a result of customers' negative experiences (Zheng et al., 2008). Issues to be considered in the management of online consumer complaints, which are among the OCRs; responding to customers' complaints in a timely manner, being transparent and giving confidence (Stevens et al., 2018). Customers who express their dissatisfaction with negative reviews not only do not choose the business or destination again, but may also damage the reputation and image of the business or destination. For this reason, managers should be able to manage online reviews containing complaints in the best way and have the ability to produce fast and reasonable solutions for these complaints (Zheng et al., 2008). Complaints and reviews should be carefully examined and current problems should be tried to be corrected by taking a proactive attitude in order to prevent possible future complaints and to maintain customer relations in the long term (Ren et al., 2015).

Destination Brand Loyalty (DBL)

Conceptually, a brand defines the goods and services offered by a business and can be expressed as a name, sign, term, design or symbol that will varify these goods and services from their competitors (Lau & Lee, 1999). In today's world where consumers have so many brand choices, constituting and retaining brand loyalty is vital for both businesses and destinations. Brand loyalty has a critical importance in the sustainability of purchases and demand for goods and services. Furthermore, brand loyalty contributes to increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of marketing and branding activities. A significant amount of resources are allocated for initiatives such as providing brand-related experiences to consumers to increase brand loyalty (Ramaseshan & Stein, 2014). Repeated purchases of a brand do not provide sufficient evidence that brand loyalty has improved. In order for brand loyalty to occur, the purchase action is expected to be made consciously. Therefore, consumers with high brand loyalty show their loyalty to the brand with repetitive purchasing actions as well as developing a positive attitude towards the brand (Tepeci, 1999). In this context, it is seen that the notion of traditional brand loyalty is generally investigated under two headings as behavioral and attitudinal brand loyalty. Behavioral loyalty refers to the repeat purchase actions of consumers in a certain time period (Mellens et al., 1996; Gommans et al., 2001). Attitudinal brand loyalty, on the other side, is the disposition of consumers to be loyal to the unique values of the brand product up to a certain period (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). In other words, attitudinal brand loyalty does not only reflect repeat purchasing behavior of consumers, but is also a result of their multidimensional attitudes towards a brand. In addition, attitudinal brand loyalty is fed not from operational strategies, but from attitudinal variables such as loyalty and trust (Back & Parks, 2003). Dimensions of attitudinal brand loyalty can be classified as cognitive, emotional and behavioral dimensions. Brand loyalty development efforts are mostly based on mass media in the past, and today it is based on efforts to develop brand image mainly through electronic marketing tools. Personalized messages addressed to consumers in the electronic environment are more geared towards the cognitive dimension. Messages for the emotional dimension,

on the other hand, focus on issues such as trust, security and privacy (Gommans et al., 2001).

In terms of destinations, brand loyalty has the same conceptual connotation. The concept of DBL can also be examined under two dimensions as behavioral and attitudinal brand loyalty. In terms of destinations, behavioral loyalty shows the frequency of repeat purchases of touristic consumers and the volume of preference for the same brand destination. In terms of destinations, attitudinal loyalty can be explained as a touristic consumer's commitment or attitude to the destination by having the intention to revisit the destination and positively recommending the destination to others (Bianchi & Pike, 2011). A perspective that assumes a relationship between touristic consumers' previous and subsequent experiences pertaining to the destination and their visits to the destination, in other sayings, emphasizing the continuity of travelers' lifetime visits is presented in destination loyalty (Oppermann, 2000). On the other hand, some tourism motivations can hinder destination loyalty. These sources of motivation can be expressed as the desire to move away from the monotony of daily life and the expectation to discover new destinations, people and different cultures. Touristic consumers in search of innovation and change often do not intend to revisit destinations they have visited before. On the other hand, touristic consumers who do not want to take risks by seeking novelty tend to revisit the same destination. In short, touristic consumers who are motivated by other sources of motivation rather than the destination price will want to revisit destinations that they know well, which they are sure will experience the same comfort and positive travel experience (Alegre & Juaneda, 2006).

There is a high level of interaction between consumer markets with high brand loyalty and brand destinations. This interaction helps the brand to better understand the characteristics and needs of its customers. Thus, brands have the opportunity to manage their long-term relationships with their customers at a much lower cost (Hur et al., 2011). Brand loyalty theoretically provides significant advantages to destinations and businesses that first gain the loyalty of consumers, and prevents other competitors from entering the market. In addition, the benefits (ease of use, quality, etc.) provided by the brand to the user increase the consumer brand loyalty towards the brand. While the prices of products with high brand loyalty do not fall below a certain price level, it is observed that other brands have to cut prices in order to compete (Wernerfelt, 1991).

Perceived Value (PV)

According to Zeithaml (1988), PV can basically be expressed as the low price paid for the product, the product meeting the expectation, the product quality that emerges in return for the price paid for the product, and the benefits obtained from the product. According to Woodruff (1997), customer value reflects the perceived preferences and evaluations of customers regarding the attributes, attribute performances and results of the products they use to meet their needs.

It is possible to classify the PV as the PV before and after the sale. Expected PV before sale, it includes the expectations of consumers regarding the benefits and costs that will arise as a result of purchasing and using the product. The concept of PV after sales can be expressed in a similar way. After-sales PV refers to consumers' expectations that a balance will occur between the benefits of the product and the costs incurred after using the product (Spreng et al., 1993). Customers evaluate the benefits they expect from the product they buy, that is, the outputs and the costs they incur, by comparing the inputs with the offers of other businesses and make the final decision (Yang & Peterson, 2004). This approximation, which is based on the comparison of the benefits obtained by the consumers and the costs incurred, deals with the PV more with its cognitive and rational aspects (Sánchez et

al., 2006). However, it is also seen that the PV is handled in a multidimensional structure in the literature. According to this perspective, PV consists of the functional dimension, and the emotional dimension in which the purchasing behavior of the consumer is examined. The functional dimension includes rational and economic evaluations of consumers. The quality of goods and services is included in this dimension. The emotional dimension, on the other hand, is examined under two headings: the emotional dimension (internal feelings) and the social dimension (the social effects of purchasing behavior) (Roig et al., 2006). If it is considered for the tourism industry, it can be said that the value perceived by the customer does not only consist of price and quality, that is, cognitive dimensions. The value perceived by the customer has a multidimensional structure that includes elements such as self-satisfaction, aesthetics, prestige, pleasure, commercial transaction and pleasure. Providing services in accordance with the multidimensional structure of PV will improve the positive experiences of touristic consumers. In addition, it will be gone beyond providing quality and affordable service, and tourists will be satisfied and loyal customers thanks to their positive experiences (El-Adly, 2019). The PV of tourists related to the destination can be expressed as a process in which tourists receive information, choose, organize and commentate as a result of their experiences in the destination in order to embody the value of their experience in the destination (Prebensen et al., 2012).

According to Petrick (2002), it can be said that the PV of services is divided into five dimensions: behavioral price, quality, monetary price, emotional response and reputation. With respect to Sweeney and Soutar (2001), the dimensions of PV are social value, emotional value (development of social self), functional value depending on the monetary value of the product, and functional value depending on the performance or quality of the product. While emotional value is the benefit provided of emotional states arising from the product, and social value can be expressed as the benefit attained from the product's social personality improvement feature. On the other side, functional value depending on the monetary worth of the product is the benefit ensured by the product as a result of the reduction of the costs incurred. Functional value depending on the performance or quality of the product can be specified as the benefit of the quality or performance of the product.

Hypotheses Development

Online reviews can be an important factor in consumers' purchasing decisions (Fang, 2016). Consumers, especially when choosing among destinations, take into account some reference groups and are affected by these reference groups. In addition to the information about the destination, consumers use these reviews as a source of information in their destination preferences by examining the reviews of consumers who have visited the destination before, especially on social media and some holiday sites. Consumers pay more attention to OCRs, especially on reliable websites and social media accounts. As Luo and Ye (2019) revealed, reliable OCRs can be a significant factor in shaping the perception levels of consumers. Nowadays, it can be alleged that online platforms may have a greater influence on the shaping of perceptions about destinations, especially since the younger generation spends more time in the virtual world than other generations. In line with all these inferences, the following hypothesis was developed and tested within the scope of the research.

H1: OCRs affect PV significantly and positively.

There are many studies investigating whether PV significantly and positively affects customer loyalty, customer's repurchase intention, destination loyalty or DBL, or whether there is a relationship between the two variables in the literature (Jeong & Kim, 2009; Ramseook-Munhurrun et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2016; Kim & Park, 2017; Sato et al.,

2018; Kim & Thapa, 2018; Wahyono et al., 2020; Suttikin & Meeprom, 2021; Li, 2021). Based on the research on the subject, the following hypothesis has been developed.

H2: PV affects DBL significantly and positively.

Online environments are used by destinations as an effective marketing tool today. All kinds of positive or negative reviews made by consumers about the destination reach and affect a wide audience. Destinations communicate with their potential customers through virtual communication channels and create awareness about their products. The reviews made by other consumers about their experiences at the destination can increase the loyalty of the current customers of the relevant destination by improving their perception of the destination. As a matter of fact, it is argued that if online platforms are used as an effective marketing tool by brand products, it can increase brand loyalty in the some studies (Balakrishnan et al., 2014; Cleff et al., 2018; Almohaimmeed, 2019; Willis, 2021; Ibrahim, 2021). It can be said that OCRs have two types: electronic word of mouth (eWOM) and online consumer satisfaction. eWOM communication can be considered as an indicator of consumer loyalty. Some resources are needed to improve repurchase behavior, which are the main indicators of consumer loyalty, and to ensure positive word of mouth transmission. OCRs are also among the resources that can be used in this sense (Tseng et al., 2021). This situation can be presented as demonstration for the existence of the relationship between OCRs and DBL. Based on all these assumptions, the following hypothesis was developed.

H3: OCRs affect DBL significantly and positively.

It is focused on the assumption that OCRs can affect PV, PV can affect DBL, and OCRs can affect DBL in this research. In addition, it is thought that there is a multi-linked relationship between OCRs, PV and DBL variables in the research. According to the basic assumption of the research, the brand loyalty towards the destination of a consumer whose value perception about the destination develops according to the reviews of other consumers in online environments can also be shaped positively or negatively. In other words, OCRs can primarily affect the PV of the consumer about the destination, and then the brand loyalty according to the consumer's perception of the value about destination. There are no studies in the literature that directly indorse this assumption. However, it is seen that there is a study in the literature that shows similarities with the hypotheses of this research, even though it does not exactly overlap. In Erdinç's (2019) study, the mediating influence of social media reviews in the influence of PV on brand loyalty was examined and positive results were obtained. In this direction, the following hypothesis was developed and tested.

H4: PV has a mediating role in the influence of OCRs on DBL.

Method

Population and Sample

The population of the research is native tourists visiting Istanbul for touristic purposes. Since it is not probable to achieve the entire research population, the sample was chosen according to the convenience sampling method. In the research, data were gathered from 315 attendants detected in reference to the convenience sampling method. In the literature, it is stated that the sample size should be at least 5 times the number of items (Bryman & Cramer, 2001: 263), and if possible, it would be much better if it was 10 times (Tavşancıl, 2018: p.51). The survey used in this study comprises of three scales and a total of 47 items. The 315 surveys collected during the data collection process are

approximately 7 times the total number of items. Therefore, it can be said that 315 surveys are sufficient to implement statistical analyses. According to Yükselen (2003: p.59), convenience sampling, which is one of the non-random sampling methods, is based on the inclusion to sample of people who meet the researcher's sampling criteria and can be easily reached by the researcher. The people included in the sample may consist of the close circle of the researcher or people that he can easily reach through various ways. In this research, too, the sample group mainly consists of the people around the researcher, who can be easily reached, and the third parties with whom the people in this environment share.

Data Collection

The survey was utilised as data gathering instrument in the research. The survey comprises of four parts. Questions are included to detect the demographic information of the attendants' gender, educational status and income and age in the first part. In addition, in this section, questions about the average spending amount of the attendants for the holiday, whether they comment on online platforms, which online platforms they consider when choosing a holiday, and how many times they visit Istanbul are also included. In the second part of the survey, the PV scale developed by Petrick (2002), which aims to measure the PV of the attendants about Istanbul, is given. In the third part, it is found the brand loyalty scale which is developed for service sector and aims to measure DBL by Zeithaml et al. (1996). In the fourth part, there is the OCRs general attitude scale, which aims to measure whether consumers take OCRs into account in their holiday choices, which Erdil (2014) created using various articles. The relevant scales are those that have also been used in previous studies. The answer options of the statements in the survey were created according to the five-point likert rating system (1: strongly disagree; 5: strongly agree). The Turkish version of the survey was directed to the attendants.

Before starting the data gathering process, an application was made to the Gümüşhane University Legal Counseling Ethics Committee for ethics committee approval and the ethics committee approval document was taken on 22 June 2022. After the approval of the ethics committee, the research data started to be collected through the online survey prepared via the google forms application. The survey was shared with the people around the researcher who visited Istanbul for touristic purposes and whatsapp groups to which he was affiliated. People and group members who visited Istanbul were desired to fill out the survey and then share it with people in their close circle who visited Istanbul for touristic purposes. The survey was also shared on social media to reach potential attendants. A total of 285 surveys were gathered using these methods. In addition, during the face-to-face interviews with local tourists visiting Istanbul in various districts of Istanbul, 30 more online surveys were filled out by the tourists. A total of 315 surveys were gathered from the attendants, and the data gathering process was completed. The data related to the research were obtained between 27 June and 25 July 2022. Since there were no deficient or mistake filled surveys, all 315 surveys were incorporated in the statistical analysis process.

Research Model

The basis goal of the research is to assess the mediating role of PV in the influence of OCRs on DBL. For this purpose, in the model in which the effect of OCRs on DBL is examined, OCRs are the independent variable and DBL is the dependent variable. In the influence of OCRs on PV, while OCRs are independent variable, PV is the dependent variable. In the influence of the PV on the DBL, while the PV is the independent variable, the DBL is the dependent variable. In the model showing the mediating role of PV in the influence of OCRs on DBL, OCRs are independent

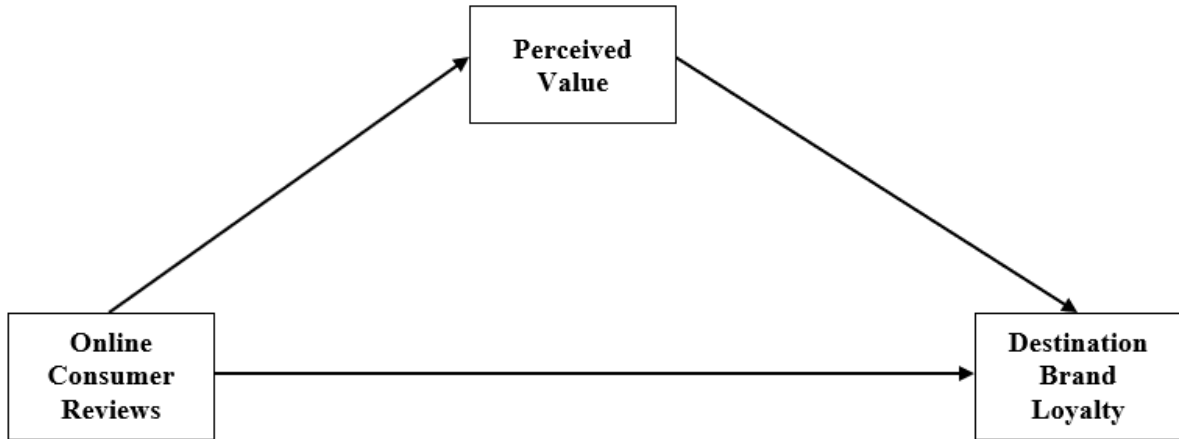variable, DBL is dependent variable, and PV is a mediating variable. Model of research is given in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Research Model

Data Analysis

The data obtained with the survey data collection tool were firstly examined in terms of reliability and validity. The reliability of the research data was appraised by calculating the Cronbach Alpha coefficients of each of the scales of PV, DBL and OCRs. Validity analysis consists of two stages. The factor structure of the data obtained within the extent of the construct validity of the scales was determined by explanatory factor analysis, and then, whether the factors revealed were confirmed or not was tested with confirmatory factor analysis. After the reliability and validity analyzes, whether the data indicated a normal distribution was examined by calculating the skewness and kurtosis coefficients. After the normality tests, Pearson correlation analysis was applied to detect whether there was a relationship between the variables. After the correlation analysis, simple linear and hierarchical multiple linear regression analyzes were fulfilled in order to test the research hypotheses. All analyzes except confirmatory factor analysis were practiced in IBM SPSS Statistics 22 package program, and confirmatory factor analysis was practiced in AMOS 24 package program.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Demographic qualifications of the attendants regarding age, gender, income, average expenditure and educational status were examined and some results were obtained in the study. In addition, in the first part of the survey, there are two questions about whether they commented on their vacation experience and which online commenting platforms they follow. Apart from these questions, the attendants were also inquired how many times they visited Istanbul, and it was tried to determine whether the attendas preferred the Istanbul destination very much and their loyalty level to Istanbul.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for the First Part of the Survey

Questions	Answer Options	Frequency	Percent (%)
Age	18-25	122	38.7
	26-34	75	23.8
	35-44	85	27
	45-54	26	8.3
	55-64	7	2.2
Gender	Female	113	35.9
	Male	202	64.1
Income	4250 TL and below	83	26.3
	4251-6250 TL	53	16.8
	6251-8250 TL	38	12.1
	8251-10.250 TL	30	9.5
	10.251 TL and above	111	35.2
Average Spend	500 TL and below	68	21.6
	501-2000 TL	71	22.5
	2001-3500 TL	38	12.1
	3501-5000 TL	43	13.7
	5001 TL and above	95	30.2
Educational Status	Primary School Graduate	5	1.6
	Secondary School Graduate	9	2.9
	High School Graduate	72	22.9
	Associate Degree Graduate	49	15.6
	Undergraduate Degree	96	30.5
	Post Graduate	30	9.5
	Ph.D. Graduate	9	2.9
Have you ever commented on online review platforms?	Yes	101	32.1
	No	214	67.9
Which online review platforms do you follow reviews? (Attendants were given the opportunity to tick more than one option in this question.)	Facebook	64	20.3
	Instagram	167	53
	Twitter	49	15.6
	YouTube	55	17.5
	Holiday Websites (Trivago, tatilbudur…)	143	45.4
	Tripadvisor	83	26.3
	Booking.com	68	21.6
	Neredekal.com	14	4.4
	Şikayetvar.com	91	28.9
	Other Review Websites	49	15.6
How many times have you visited Istanbul so far?	First Time	36	11.4
	Twice	40	12.7
	Third Time	40	12.7
	Fourth Time	30	9.5
	Fifth Time and More	169	53.7

As seen in Table 1, the general of the attendants are between the ages of 18-25 (122 people, 38.7%). When the distribution of the attendants by gender is analyzed, it is observed that 113 (35.9%) of the attendants are females and 202 (64.1%) are men. It can be said that the income levels of the attendants in the research have a balanced distribution. For example, 35.2% of the attendants have an income of 10.251 TL and above, and 26.3% of them have an income of less than 4250 TL and below. This result is important in that the opinions of people from different income groups on the subject are reflected in the results of the research. A significant part of the attendants (95 people, 30.2%) stated that the average holiday expenditures in Istanbul are 5001 TL and above. This result shows that the cost of taking a vacation in Istanbul is high. On the other side, the majority of the attendants expressed that they had a bachelor's degree (96 people, 30.5%). The number of attendants stating that they are primary school graduates is only 5, and the least number of attendants in terms of education level belongs to this group.

When the results regarding the other questions asked to the attendants at the beginning of the survey are examined, 101 (32.1%) people say that they comment on their holiday experiences on online platforms, while 214 people (67.9%) say that they do not. According to this result, it can be said that the majority of the attendants do not prefer online platforms in terms of sharing their holiday experiences. The first four online comment platforms that the attendants take into accounted are instagram (167 people), holiday websites (such as trivago, Tatilbudur) (143 people), şikayetvar.com (91 people) and tripadvisor (83 people). According to the findings on how many times the attendants visited Istanbul, it was revealed that the majority of the attendants (169 people) visited Istanbul 5 times or more. According to this result, it can be said that Istanbul is too much preferred by the attendants as a holiday destination and the attendants' loyalty levels towards Istanbul in general are high.

Reliability and Validity Analysis

After the demographic findings and other information about the attendants were evaluated in the study, the PV12 item in the PV scale and the items OCR15 and OCR16 in the OCRs scale were reversed because they were the opposite (negative) of the other items in the scale. Thus, it was ensured that these items were in the same direction as the other items. Afterwards, the skewness and kurtosis coefficients of the existing data were assessed and it was examined whether they exhibited a normal distribution. In this sense, the skewness and kurtosis coefficients of 42 items in the variables of OCRs, PV and DBL were calculated. When the outcomes of the normality analysis are investigated, it is observed that the skewness and kurtosis coefficients of the related items are in the range of -3 to +3 values. According to these outcomes, it can be said that the data related to the research exhibit a normal distribution (Eroğlu, 2017: p.209).

The reliability of all data obtained after the analysis of normality was investigated by calculating the Cronbach Alpha coefficients of the variables. As a consequence of the analysis, the reliability coefficient of the OCRs variable was 0.927, the reliability coefficient of the PV variable was 0.933, and the reliability coefficient of the DBL variable was 0.887. These results show that the variables have high reliability (Kayış, 2017: p.405). The reliability of the variables was reviewed again, as there were items removed from the scale during confirmatory factor analysis, which is the last stage of construct validity. The final reliability of the variables is presented in Table 5.

After the reliability test, explanatory factor analysis was fulfilled in the first stage of construct validity in order to detect whether the factor constructions of the variables were compatible with the predetermined factor structures. Varimax method was used in explanatory factor analysis. In the second stage of construct validity, confirmatory factor analysis was performed and construct validity analyzes were completed.

Table 2. Explanatory Factor Analysis Results Regarding The OCR Variable

Items	Confidence	Benefit
OCR12: Online reviews allow me to compare prices for different destination brands.	0.803	
OCR11: The online consumer reviews I read save me time in my destination choice.	0.768	
OCR17: Online consumer reviews are effective in my choice of destination.	0.768	
OCR13: Reviews allow me to have information about the destination.	0.753	
OCR14: When choosing a destination, I research online consumer reviews.	0.753	
OCR10: If there are multiple reviews about destinations, my confidence in the reviews increases.	0.734	
OCR18: Online consumer reviews affect whether or not I buy a vacation through the website.	0.706	
OCR9: If the reviews made are not biased, I think the reviews are reliable.	0.657	

Table 2. Explanatory Factor Analysis Results Regarding The OCR Variable (Cont.)

OCR8: If I see similar reviews on different sites, my confidence in the review will increase even more.	0.642	
OCR7: If the identity of the person who wrote the comment is known, I trust the review.	0.572	
OCR3: If the reviews are comprehensive, I consider them useful.		0.785
OCR4: I find online consumer reviews directly related to the destination helpful.		0.765
OCR2: Online consumer reviews reflect reality.		0.733
OCR5: I think it is useful if online consumer reviews have been written recently.		0.733
OCR6: Online consumer reviews are a reliable way of obtaining information when making a purchase decision.		0.658

KMO=0.946
Bartlett's Test of Spherecity= p<0.01, **Approximate chi-square value (χ2):** 3428.186

Explained Variance (%)	38.983	26.913
Total Variance (%)	65.896	

Detailed explanations about exploratory factor analysis are given in Table 2. The explanatory factor analysis on the OCRs variable consists of two stages. In the first stage, the item OCR1, which is the taking part item under two different factors, was removed from the scale (Büyüköztürk, 2015: p.315). In addition, since a factor was not met the condition of having at least three items (Anderson & Rubin, 1956; MacCallum et al., 1999), the third factor consisting of two items (OCR15_Reverse and OCR16_Reverse items) was subtracted from the scale and then the analysis was recapped. In the second stage, as a consequence of repeating the analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was determined as 0.946, and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Test result was significant (p<0.01). These results are considered sufficient for the evaluation of other results related to factor analysis. As a matter of fact, according to Sharma (1996), a KMO value above 0.80 is sufficient for examining other results of explanatory factor analysis. As a consequence of the explanatory factor analysis, two sub-dimensions of the OCRs variable emerged, and the findings regarding these dimensions are given in Table 2. The resulting dimensions were named as "confidence" and "benefit". Since there is no predetermined factor structure for the OCRs variable, these tests are considered important in terms of testing the construct validity of the variable.

Table 3. Explanatory Factor Analysis Results Regarding the PV Variable

Items	Emotional Response	Reputation	Quality	Behavioral Price	Monetary Price
PV8: I am happy to be in Istanbul.	0.896				
PV7: Being in Istanbul gives me joy.	0.895				
PV6: I enjoy being in Istanbul.	0.876				
PV9: I feel relieved in Istanbul.	0.820				
PV5: I feel good in Istanbul.	0.820				
PV23: Istanbul is a destination with a high status.		0.880			
PV21: Istanbul is a respected destination.		0.855			
PV22: Istanbul is considered to be better than other destinations.		0.813			
PV24: Istanbul is a well-known destination.		0.805			
PV20: Istanbul has a good title.		0.767			
PV3: Local people, businesses and employees in Istanbul are reliable.			0.836		
PV4: The services provided in Istanbul are consistent with the promised services.			0.817		
PV2: Istanbul is quite reliable.			0.807		
PV1: Generally, quality service is provided in Istanbul.			0.672		
PV10: The services I purchased from Istanbul are good.			0.604		

Table 3. Explanatory Factor Analysis Results Regarding the PV Variable (Cont.)

PV16: Purchasing is easy.		0.814			
PV18: Shopping to visit Istanbul is easy.		0.797			
PV19: I made little effort for purchases.		0.761			
PV17: It is not essential to spend a lot of energy for purchases.		0.702			
PV13: The prices of services in Istanbul are reasonable.			0.832		
PV14: The price of services in Istanbul is economical.			0.798		
PV12_Reverse: Services in Istanbul are expensive.			0.588		
PV15: Thanks to the holiday I bought, I made a profitable purchase.			0.585		
KMO=0.920					
Bartlett's Test of Spherecity= p<0.01, **Approximate chi-square value (χ2):** 5814.795					
Explained Variance (%)	19.419	17.156	15.340	13.41	9.582
Total Variance (%)	74.538				

The PV variable was also examined within the scope of explanatory factor analysis. The outcomes regarding the PV variable are indicated in Table 3. Explanatory factor analysis for the PV variable was implemented in two stages. In the first stage, the PV11 expression, which is collected item under two different dimensions, was substracted from the variable and the analysis was recapped. In the second stage of the analysis, while the KMO value was 0.920, the p value of the Bartlett Test was found to be significant (p<0.01). When the relevant data are investigated, it is seen that the PV variable is divided into five sub-dimensions. It is seen that these dimensions are significantly similar to the previous factor structure of the PV variable revealed by Petrick (2002). Since the resulting dimensions were similar to the dimensions in Petrick's (2002) study, the names of the dimensions determined in this study were used. Accordingly, the names of the dimensions were determined as "emotional response", "reputation", "quality", "behavioral price" and "monetary price".

Table 4. Explanatory Factor Analysis Results Regarding the DBL Variable

Items	
DBL1: I tell positive things about Istanbul to my surroundings.	
DBL2: I would advice Istanbul to my friends.	
DBL3: I promote my friends and relatives to take a vacation in Istanbul.	
DBL4: My first choice for a holiday will be Istanbul.	
DBL5: I will visit Istanbul again in the coming years.	
KMO=0.842	
Bartlett's Test of Spherecity= p<0.01, **Approximate chi-square value (χ2):** 1008,153	
Explained Variance (%)	70,238
Total Variance (%)	70,238

Finally, as a consequence of the explanatory factor analysis on the DBL variable; it was detected that the KMO value was 0.842, and the p value of the Bartlett Test was significant (p<0.01). When the total explained variance (70.238%) and rotated component tables are investigated, it is seen that the variable has one dimension and this result coincides with the predetermined factor structure of the scale (Table 4).

Table 5. Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results of the Proposed Model

Variables	Factor and Substance	Factor Load	Skewness	Kurtosis	Reliability (Cronbach Alpha) Coefficient
OCRs	**Confidence**				0.949
	OCR2	0.626	-0.423	-0.135	
	OCR3	0.765	-0.706	0.103	
	OCR4	0.856	-0.745	0.475	
	OCR5	0.816	-0.862	0.498	
	OCR6	0.785	-0.592	-0.081	
	Benefit				
	OCR7	0.711	-0.814	0.299	
	OCR8	0.766	-0.863	0.355	
	OCR9	0.762	-0.843	0.590	
	OCR10	0.831	-0.671	0.357	
	OCR11	0.843	-0.755	0.395	
	OCR12	0.812	-0.771	0.685	
	OCR13	0.819	-0.822	0.472	
	OCR14	0.771	-0.917	0.641	
	OCR17	0.723	-0.608	0.044	
	OCR18	0.692	-0.655	-0.121	
OCR Compliance Indexes:	x^2/df=2.911, RMSEA=0.78, GFI=0.905, CFI=0.950, NFI=0.927				
PV	**Emotional Response**				0.934
	PV5	0.850	-0.664	-0.461	
	PV6	0.921	-0.869	-0.169	
	PV7	0.956	-0.752	-0.423	
	PV8	0.982	-0.825	-0.194	
	PV9	0.844	-0.478	-0.837	
	Reputation				
	PV20	0.795	-1.149	0.898	
	PV21	0.887	-1.396	1.651	
	PV22	0.883	-0.910	0.212	
	PV23	0.910	-1.170	0.890	
	PV24	0.753	-1.745	2.863	
	Quality				
	PV1	0.720	-0.577	0.378	
	PV2	0.752	0.334	-0.574	
	PV3	0.725	0.177	-0.674	
	PV4	0.811	-0.024	-0.387	
	PV10	0.863	-0.410	-0.136	
	Behavioral Price				
	PV16	0.767	-0.595	-0.280	
	PV17	0.603	-0.498	-0.576	
	PV18	0.869	-0.582	-0.210	
	PV19	0.790	-0.533	-0.384	
	Monetary Price				
	PV13	0.867	0.356	-0.911	
	PV14	0.860	0.480	-0.518	
	PV15	0.655	0.195	-0.593	
PV Compliance Indexes:	x^2/df=1.931, RMSEA=0.54, GFI=0.903, CFI=0.968, NFI=0.936				
DBL	**Factor 1**				0.887
	DBL1	0.894	-0.721	-0.150	
	DBL2	0.940	-0.794	-0.109	
	DBL3	0.805	-0.469	-0.826	
	DBL4	0.621	0.188	-1.158	
	DBL5	0.647	0.984	0.230	
DBL Compliance Indexes:	x^2/df=1.779, RMSEA=0.50, GFI=0.992, CFI=0.997, NFI=0.993				

The construct validity of the scale was also tested with confirmatory factor analysis after explanatory factor analysis. In order for the model tested in confirmatory factor analysis to meet the validity conditions, it must have good or admissible fit values. In reference to Schermelleh-Engel et al. (2003), the ranges of values indicating that the model has good or admissible fit are as follows:

Fit Indices:	Good Fit:	Admissible Fit:
$\chi2/df$	$0 \leq \chi2/df \leq 2$	$2 < \chi2/df \leq 3$
RMSEA	$0 \leq RMSEA \leq 0.05$	$0.05 < RMSEA \leq 0.08$
NFI	$0.95 \leq NFI \leq 1.00$	$0.90 \leq NFI < 0.95$
CFI	$0.97 \leq CFI \leq 1.00$	$0.95 \leq CFI < 0.97$
GFI	$0.95 \leq GFI \leq 1.00$	$0.90 \leq GFI < 0.95$

Table 5 shows the results related to confirmatory factor analysis. In reference to the confirmatory factor analysis outcomes of the OCRs variable model, it is observed that the fit indices are not at an admissible level. For this reason, a modification was made between the error terms of OCR17 and OCR18, which are under the "confidence" factor and which there is a theoretical relationship between them. The model was validated as the resulting fit indices (x2/df=2.911, RMSEA=0.78, GFI=0.905, CFI=0.950, NFI=0.927) were within admissible limits.

The proposed model for the PV variable was also tested with confirmatory factor analysis. As a consequence of the test, because the factor load of the PV12_Reverse item was below 0.50 (0.258) (Hair et al., 2010), this item was subtracted from the scale. After repeated analysis, it was seen that the GFI fit index did not have sufficient fit. In order to ameliorate the GFI fit index, modifications were made between the error terms of the items with a theoretical relationship between them (respectively, between the error terms of PV2 and PV3 items that located under the "quality" factor, between the error terms of PV5 and PV6 items with PV5 and PV9 items that located under the "emotional response" factor, and finally between the error terms of PV3 and PV4 items that located under the "quality" factor) until the GFI model fit index improved. After the last modification, the fit indices of the model reached the expected level (x2/df=1.931, RMSEA=0.54, GFI=0.903, CFI=0.968, NFI=0.936) and the proposed model was confirmed.

Finally, the DBL scale was also evaluated with confirmatory factor analysis. As a consequence of testing the one-dimensional DBL model, it is observed that the regression coefficients of the items belonging to the variable are above 0.50. However, since the model fit indices were not at the expected level, the analysis was repeated after modification was made between the error terms of the DBL3 and DBL4 items, which had a theoretical relationship between them. As a consequence of the analysis, it is sighted that the proposed model was confirmed because it had good fit indices (x2/df=1.779, RMSEA=0.50, GFI=0.992, CFI=0.997, NFI=0.993).

Correlation Analysis

Before testing the hypotheses, whether there is a relationship between OCRs, PV and DBL variables was tested with Pearson correlation analysis and the details of the outcomes are attributed in Table 6.

Table 6. Correlation Analysis

Variables	Average	Standard deviation (SD)	1	2	3
1 Online consumer reviews	3.8347	0.74894	1		
2 Destination brand loyalty	3.5663	0.99950	0.377**	1	
3 Perceived value	3.4808	0.72634	0.428**	0.721**	1
N=315	**p$<$0.01 (two sided)				

When the averages of the variables given in Table 6 are investigated, it can be said that the averages of OCRs, DBL and PV variables are high. When the Pearson correlation coefficients were reviewed, it was detected that there was a medium-level and positive relationship between OCR and DBL (r=0.377, p<.01), a medium-level and positive relationship between OCR and PV (r=0.428, p<.01), and a high level of positive relationship (r=0.721, p<.01) between PV and DBL (Büyüköztürk, 2015: p.32).

Hypotheses Testing

After the normality, reliability and construct validity analyzes were completed, the phase of testing the hypotheses regarding the research was started. In this context, hypotheses H1 and H2 were analyzed by simple linear regression analysis, and hypotheses H3 and H4 were examined by hierarchical multiple linear regression analysis.

Table 7. Test Results of H1 and H2 Hypotheses

Effect of OCR on PV					
Variable	**B**	**Standard Error**	**Beta (β)**	**t**	**p**
Constant	1.889	0.194		9.761	0.000
OCR	0.415	0.050	0.428	8.377	0.000
R=0.428		R^2=0.183			
F$_{(1, 313)}$=70.166		p=0.000			
Effect of PV on DBL					
Variable	**B**	**Standard Error**	**Beta (β)**	**t**	**p**
Constant	0.114	0.192		0.597	0.551
PV	0.992	0.054	0.721	18.391	0.000
R=0.721		R^2=0.519			
F$_{(1, 313)}$=338.211		p=0.000			

As seen in Table 7, with respect to the outcomes of simple linear regression analysis, it was determined that the OCR variable affected PV significantly and positively (R=0.428, R2=0.183, F(1, 313)=70.166, p<0.01). It can be said that 18% of the total variance in PV is explained by OCR. According to these results, the H1 hypothesis was accepted. In addition, when the results regarding the effect of PV on DBL are evaluated, it is seen that PV has a significant and positive effect on DBL (R=0.721, R2=0.183, F(1, 313)=338.211, p<0.01). It is possible to say that 52% of the total variance regarding DBL is explicated by PV. According to this result, the H2 hypothesis was also accepted.

Table 8. Test Results of H3 and H4 Hypotheses

Model 1 Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	R	R²	F	Beta (β)	t	p
OCR	DBL	0.377	0.142	51.995	0.377	7.211	0.000*
Model 2 Independent Variable	**Dependent Variable**	**R**	**R²**	**F**	**Beta (β)**	**t**	**p**
OCR PV	DBL	0.725	0.525	172.553	0.085 0.684	1.958 15.859	0.051 0.000*
*p<0.01; **p<0.05							

It is given the outcomes regarding the influence of OCR on DBL and the mediating role of PV in the influence of OCR on DBL in Table 8. According to the data in Model 1, 14% of the DBL variable (R^2=0.142) is explicated by the OCR variable. It is seen that the significance level of the model is at $p<0.01$ level. According to this result, hypothesis H3 was accepted.

Since H1, H2 and H3 hypotheses were accepted in the research, "H4=PV has a mediating role in the influence of OCRs on DBL" hypothesis can also be examined. In Model 2, the effects of OCR and PV on DBL were evaluated together. It was tried to detect the mediating role of the PV between the two variables by examining whether the significance and beta (β) value of OCR changed during this effect and whether the effect of PV on DBL continued. Accordingly, as seen in Model 2, it was determined that 52% (R^2=0.525) of DBL was explained by OCR and PV, and it was significant at the $p<0.01$ level. In addition, the regression coefficient (β=0.377) of OCR in Model 1 decreased (β=0.085) with the inclusion of the PV mediator variable in Model 2, but it did not absolutely dissapear. It is seen that the significance related to the effect of OCR on DBL disappears when evaluated according to the significance level of $p<0.01$ (p=0.051). On the other side, the significant and positive influence of the PV variable on DBL continues ($p<0.01$). According to these results, "H4=PV has a mediating role in the influence of OCRs on DBL" hypothesis was acknowledged with full mediation influence.

Discussion and Conclusion

The mediating role of the PV of the destination in the influence of OCRs on the brand loyalty of tourists towards Istanbul destination was examined in this research. With reference to the results of the research, it is observed that all hypotheses (H1, H2, H3 and H4) regarding the research are indorsed. In the literature, there is a study directly related to the subject and overlapping in terms of results. In Erdinç's (2019) study, the mediating role of reviews in social media in the relationship between PV and brand loyalty was examined, and it was determined that the reviews made by consumers on social media mediated to the relationship between PV and brand loyalty. In this research, OCR platforms were not just kept a limited to social media, attendants were also expected to take into account the reviews made on review sites such as holiday sites, tripadvisor, booking.com, and neredekal.com. In addition, in this research, it was focused on the assumption that OCRs can affect the PV related to Istanbul of consumers, and that PV may be a mediating role in the influence of OCRs on DBL. According to this assumption, the reviews made on online consumer platforms by tourists who have previously visited Istanbul can shape the value perception of other touristic consumers about Istanbul and the DBL according to this value perception. The results obtained in the study supported this assumption with full mediation effect.

It has been determined that OCRs affect the PV of tourists in the research. In parallel with the outcomes of this

research, there are findings that the PV of tourists significantly affects DBL in some researches (Jeong & Kim, 2009; Wang et al., 2016; Kim & Park, 2017; Sato et al., 2018; Wahyono et al., 2020; Li, 2021). On the other side, the outcomes of some resrarches in the literature are indirectly similar to the outcomes of this research. Accordingly, in related researches, it has been determined that social media marketing or other online platforms have a significant influence on brand loyalty or that there is a relationship between the two concepts. The results of these researches are similar to the hypothesis that OCRs accepted in our research have an effect on DBL (Balakrishnan et al., 2014; Cleff et al., 2018; Almohaimmeed, 2019; Willis, 2021; Ibrahim, 2021). In the literature, apart from the studies that overlap with the hypotheses of the research, it is observed that there are some researches that indirectly overlap with the subject and results of this research. In a significant part of the researches conducted in this direction, it has been determined that OCRs affect the purchasing behavior of touristic consumers or the performance of tourism enterprises in a meaningful and positive way, or there is a relationship between related variables. Therefore, the outcomes obtained in researches indirectly related to this research are in parallel with the outcomes of this research (Torres et al., 2015; Zhao et al., 2015; Kim et al., 2016; Xie et al., 2016; Chan et al., 2017; Philips et al., 2017; Brzozowska-Wos & Schivinski, 2019; Danish et al., 2019; Bsheer et al., 2020; Dhahak & Huseynov, 2020; Zeng et al., 2020; Güler & Huseynov, 2021).

Theoretical Implications

It can be said that the results acquired in this research will promote to the literature. This research is among the first to investigate the mediating role of PV in the effect of OCRs on DBL in the context of the tourism industry. In this sense, the research is anticipated to fill the gap in the literature. In addition, it is observed that the number of studies on the impacts of information technologies on consumer preferences and the tourism industry has been increasing in recent years in the literature. However, it can be said that the number of studies performed in this context is still insufficient. The limited number of studies on the subject within the extent of the tourism industry reveals the importance of this research in terms of literature.

It is seen that the perception levels of consumers regarding OCRs are generally investigated in researches (For example, Cheng & Ho, 2015; Fang et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2017; Bevan-Dye, 2019). In this research, OCRs and PV are considered as two independent concepts. In the research, the perceived value of the consumers about the Istanbul destination, not the perceived value of OCRs, was examined. Thus, the primary goal of research is to examine how OCRs shape consumers' perceived value about Istanbul. In this respect, the research differs from other studies in terms of the proposed model.

Practical Implications

Today, information technologies, which have turned into a strategic marketing instrument in the tourism industry, as in other industries, are frequently utilised by tourism enterprises and destinations to achieve multifaceted purposes such as product promotion and sales, improving consumer perception, and determining consumer needs and desires. OCR platforms are also among the latest information technologies that have strategic importance in analyzing the expectations of consumers about the product and designing a marketing strategy accordingly. As it can be understood from the outcomes of this research, OCRs significantly affect and shape consumers' perception of value and loyalty level about the destination. Due to the fact that especially the young population frequently uses online environments today, it is inevitable that the information they acquire about the products in these environments is an important factor

in their purchasing decisions and perception levels. For this reason, tourism businesses and destinations should be able to understand the requirements and wishes of especially young customers in the best way, by carefully examining OCRs, and use as a source to implement the most appropriate marketing strategies the information they obtain from OCRs. It can be said that destinations and businesses that correctly interpret and effectively evaluate OCRs have more opportunities to gain competitive advantage than those who are inadequate in making sense and evaluating.

Istanbul is among Turkey's most well-known destinations in the world and the most preferred destinations for domestic and foreign tourism. In addition, Istanbul is one of the most upgraded destinations in terms of infrastructure and superstructure and the richest destinations in terms of tourism potential in Turkey. Especially on social media and other online platforms, it is seen that many shares are made by tourists visiting this destination about Istanbul. The high number of online content sharing and reviews about Istanbul in the virtual world made Istanbul a suitable sample for this research. For this reason, it can be said that the results obtained in the research have high guiding quality for destinations and tourism businesses. The results obtained from this research show that tourism businesses and destinations should give due importance to OCRs, since OCRs are a significant determinant in shaping the PV of tourists and ultimately the brand loyalty of the destination. In this research, it has been determined that instagram and holiday sites, which are OCR platforms, are frequently used and followed by touristic consumers. This result gives clues to tourism businesses and destinations about online platforms that they should primarily consider and manage effectively. Especially today, the increasing number of users of social media shows that these platforms will gain more prominence in consumer preferences in the future. In this context, in the research, it is recommended that tourism authorities and businesses in Istanbul and other destinations make effective use of OCRs and information technologies, especially for the aim of protecting their existing customers and gaining new customers. It is thought that the necessary information source on the subject is provided to businesses and destinations in this research carried out for Istanbul.

Limitations and Future Research

This research was implemented on domestic tourists visiting the destination of Istanbul, and the outcomes of the research are limited to the views and thoughts of this sample group. In this context, it can be recommended that future research should be implemented both in different destinations and also on foreign tourists. Testing the same research hypotheses on different sample groups is important to see whether similar results are achieved with the outcomes of this research. In addition, the convenience sampling method was utilised in the selection of the sample in the research. Convenience sampling method is among the non-random sampling methods. The results obtained from the sample of the research may contain disadvantages that may arise from the adoption of the non-random sampling method. Therefore, the sampling method adopted can be cited among the limitations of the research.

The methods applied in the research are limited to quantitative research methods. In future studies on the subject, the number of studies in which OCR platforms are analyzed by content analysis can be increased by making use of qualitative research methods. Thus, much more detailed information about the expectations of touristic consumers from destinations can be obtained. In addition, in future research, comparative researches can be conducted to determine whether traditional methods or online consumer platforms are effective in the purchasing decisions, value perceptions or brand loyalty of touristic consumers.

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Annex-1: Ethics Committee Permission

T.C.
GÜMÜŞHANE ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
BİLİMSEL ARAŞTIRMA VE YAYIN ETİĞİ KURULU

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Sayın Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Murat ÖDEMİŞ

"ALGILANAN DEĞERİN DESTİNASYON MARKA SADAKATİNE ETKİSİNDE ONLİNE TÜKETİCİ YORUMLARININ ARACILIK ETKİSİ"
konulu etik kurul başvurunuz, Üniversitemiz Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Kurulunun **22/06/2022 tarih 2022/4 sayılı** toplantısında görüşülmüş olup; projenin yürürlükteki mevzuata uygun olduğuna oy birliği ile karar verilmiştir.
Bilgilerinize rica ederim.

Prof. Dr. Günay ÇAKIR
Kurul Başkanı

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