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What is This?

Social Distance

The Missing Link in the Loop of Movies, Destination Image, and Tourist Behavior?

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Visual information, especially delivered through movies, is believed to have an influence on destination image and consumer behavior. Based on the theory that knowledge about an object might cause feelings toward the object, visual information through movies can be assumed to affect not only destination image but also social distance between groups and, thus, to affect tourist behavior regarding the destination. With a quasi-experimental design, this study investigates if there is a relationship between visual information from movies and consumer-behavior variables, including destination image, destination desirability, visit intention, and social distance, taking Turkey as a case in point and a promotional movie as the stimuli. Results provide partial support for potential impact of movies on the consumer-behavior variables included in this study. Implications and future research suggestions are provided.

Keywords: destination image; visual information; social distance; stereotypical image; Turkey

Among the several factors that impact destination image, the influential role of information provided by the visual media, such as movies, has been empirically supported not only on destination-image formation but also on subsequent consumer behavior (Tooke and Baker 1996; Hanefors and Mossberg 2002; Morgan, Pritchard, and Piggott 2003; Riley, Baker, and Doren 1998). However, one potential link in the circle of impact of visual media, destination-image formation, and behavioral intentions seems to be still missing. Social distance can be one underlying sociocultural phenomenon mediating the impact of visual media on destination image. Visual information through movies can bridge social distances by providing visual cues about common, usual, everyday life features of inhabitants of a place, about how they look and behave, which normally serve as a basis of the need for developing social defense mechanisms. If the reflections in movies are negative, social defense mechanisms might develop (e.g., judging, stereotyping, developing social distance); when the reflections are positive, on the other hand, such defense mechanisms might not be needed. Thus, positive reflections in the visual media might help reduce the perceived cultural and social differences and distances, stereotypes, and biases in images. This positive impact on perception eventually can lead to positive impact on pretravel and posttravel behaviors such as intention to visit, revisit, enjoyment, and satisfaction.

Prejudices and stereotypes are more likely to exist in lack of familiarity, dictating perceptions about, and the

level of social distance felt toward, "others" (Bochner 1982). In lack of familiarity, prejudices and stereotypes can be instrumental in increasing social distance, distorting destination image and reducing the likelihood of subsequent tourist behavior such as visitation, satisfaction, and recommendation. In other words, in lack of familiarity, people might not only have less favorable images of the place but also feel more social distance and less desire to visit or revisit. Visual information through movies can increase familiarity, thus reducing negative consequences of lack of familiarity, namely, prejudices, stereotypes, and high social distance. The correlation between knowledge about an object and feelings toward the object is proposed to be positive. Anand, Holbrook, and Stephens (1988) postulate that an increase in cognition causes an increase in affect; in other words, a known object receives better affective evaluations than an unknown object.

Thus, increased familiarity through movies about a place and its inhabitants might serve as the basis for developing more positive sociocultural perceptions, thus

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leading to positive behavior regarding the place. This is especially relevant to destinations as tourism products. Consumption of a destination as a tourism product involves the interface of the consumers and the inhabitants; therefore, it would be logical to assume that social distance can also be instrumental in consumer behavior regarding the destination product. Destination image is found to be instrumental in consumer behavior (Chen and Kerstetter 1999; Court and Lupton 1997; Leisen 2001; Rittichainuwat, Qu, and Brown 2001; Sonmez and Sirakaya 2002); however, social distance in relation to destination image and tourist behavior has not been researched. Thus, the aim of this study is to investigate the potential influence of visual information on destination image, destination desirability, visit intention, and the missing link, namely, social distance.

Using a study destination with a relatively negative image is necessary to reveal the magnitude of the impact of visual information. One such destination is Turkey; despite its improving position in international tourism, Turkey is still behind her competitors, namely, Italy and Spain, in international tourist arrivals and receipts (United Nations World Trade Organization 2007, pp. 8-9), which is attributed to her relatively negative image, reducing her competitive strength despite her ample tourism resource base and fast developing infrastructure and superstructure (Baloglu and McCleary 1999; Kotler and Gertner 2002; Sonmez, Apostolopoulos, and Tarlow 1999; Sonmez and Sirakaya 2002; Tasci, Gartner, and Cavusgil 2007). This relatively negative image of Turkey is believed to be mostly due to negative historical events, highlighted by the sociocultural differences between the Western world and Turkey; negative news in the mass media concerning Turkey and her neighbors; and the *Midnight Express* movie (Sonmez and Sirakaya 2002; Tasci, Gartner, and Cavusgil 2007). If Anand, Holbrook, and Stephens's (1988) theory holds true, visual information about Turkey would improve her image and desirability in the minds of exposed participants and would decrease participants' social distance toward Turkish people and, thus, improve participants' behavioral intentions regarding Turkey as a travel destination. Hence, this study investigates the potential relationships among familiarity about Turkey provided by visual information, image of Turkey, desirability of Turkey, visit intention toward Turkey, and social distance toward Turkish people. The following four propositions guide this study:

Proposition 1: Familiarity through visual information affects the image of Turkey; there is a positive relationship between exposure to movies and destination image—the more exposure to movies, the

more favorable image (assuming the movie content is not negative or undesirable).

Proposition 2: Familiarity through visual information affects the desirability of Turkey; there is a positive relationship between exposure to movies and desirability of a destination—the more exposure to movies, the more desirable the destination (assuming the movie content is not negative or undesirable).

Proposition 3: Familiarity through visual information affects people's intention to visit Turkey; there is a positive relationship between exposure to movies and intention to visit—the more exposure to movies, the more the intention to visit (assuming the movie content is not negative or undesirable).

Proposition 4: Familiarity through visual information affects social distance toward Turkish people; there is a negative relationship between exposure to movies and social distance—the more exposure to movies, the less the social distance (assuming the movie content is not negative or undesirable).

Literature Review

Several factors play a role in destination-image formation (Gartner 1993). In general, however, two categories of information are commonly identified: the promotional materials from the destination and the various types of independent media (Gartner 1993; Gunn 1972). Information from both of these sources can have verbal, visual, audio, or combination messages. Due to the intangible nature of travel products, visual information is particularly important since it represents the actuality of the destination and illustrates the destination dimensions, thus acting as a pretaste of the product until actual usage, namely, visitation (MacKay and Fesenmaier 1997; Fakeye and Crompton 1991; Sirakaya and Sonmez 2000). Visual information is also widely used in promotional materials for establishing, reinforcing, or changing the image of a destination (Ahmed 1996; Bojanic 1991; Gartner 1993; Goodrich 1978; Gunn 1972; Hunt 1975; MacKay and Fesenmaier 1997, 2000; Murphy 1999; Reilly 1990). Such information plays a role in creating awareness, generating interest, stimulating desire, and ultimately, resulting in action (Court and Lupton 1997; Fakeye and Crompton 1991; MacKay and Fesenmaier 1997; Selby and Morgan 1996). Hence, the content and amount of the visuals are of paramount importance; the inclusion or exclusion of certain dimensions determines the kinds of images that a destination will have in the minds of potential markets (MacKay and Fesenmaier 1997). Visuals have to be not only attractive enough to

create interest and draw attention but also realistic enough to avoid visitor dissatisfaction. Fakeye and Crompton (1991) found that the expectations of nonvisitors on some destination dimensions exceeded the actual performances reported by the visitors; therefore, they concluded that there must be problems with promotion and communication.

Using various promotional tools, including visuals, destination marketers try to project desirable images to attract tourists. Among these promotional tools, the role of advertising in improving the image of a destination has been the most studied (Ahmed 1996; Bojanic 1991; MacKay and Fesenmaier 1997). Bojanic (1991) found a positive relationship between exposure to advertising and favorable attitudes toward and likelihood of visiting the study destination. However, this result is not always guaranteed, due to the interference of independent information sources, which modify the projected image by enhancing or diminishing the meaning and impact of information cues being transmitted. These sources are what Gartner (1993) calls autonomous and organic image-formation agents such as news articles, educational materials, movies, popular culture, and word of mouth. Some of these information sources can be more influential on destination-image formation than the destination-originated information because they sometimes have higher credibility and the ability to reach the mass audience through mass media (Crompton 1979; Gartner 1993). These independent information sources create a general knowledge about the destination and are usually out of the destination's control unless destination marketers are well equipped to use these sources strategically for their own benefit. One such strategic act of destination-marketing organizations is maintaining a movie desk, which actively seeks to attract moviemakers and TV travel-show makers into their destinations to reach mass markets without much advertising effort.

A few destination-image studies have focused on the impact of movies in destination-image formation (Gartner 1993; Hanefors and Mossberg 2002; Kim and Richardson 2003; MacKay and Fesenmaier 1997; Riley, Baker, and Doren 1998; Tooke and Baker 1996). Movies receive special attention from destination marketers due to the belief that they "generate and sustain interest in a destination in a way which destination marketers cannot afford to do" (Tooke and Baker 1996, p. 88). The reasons for the impacts of movies are explained with different theories. Tooke and Baker (1996) propose that "as people read less, what is shown in movies, videos and television [is] even more important" (p. 88). Hanefors and Mossberg (2002) suggest that it may be because they portray images representing what people want to be,

have, experience, or achieve. Movies are superior in increasing "awareness, appeal, and profitability" because they can provide (1) enhanced images through "special effects, movie stars, and picture perfect camera angles"; (2) "in-home access to the locations shown in the movies" (Riley, Baker, and Doren 1998, p. 922); (3) "longer exposure periods than traditional travel promotion efforts"; (4) "longer period of 'vicarious interaction'"; (5) a context that "tourist experiences can be grounded"; and (6) rereleasing opportunities (Tooke and Baker 1996, p. 88) without extra promotional costs to destination-marketing organizations.

Realizing the impact of movies and TV travel shows on destination-image formation, some researchers have investigated the relationship between movie-induced images and visitation to filmed locations (Riley, Baker, and Doren 1998; Tooke and Baker 1996), the effect of TV travel shows on destination images (Hanefors and Mossberg 2002), and the effect of motion pictures on destination images (Kim and Richardson 2003). Tooke and Baker (1996) investigated the effect of TV films on the popularity of film destinations, manifested by visitor numbers. They analyzed the literature in academic research, journals, and newspapers regarding four U.K. destinations depicted in four dramas. They claim that the data provide firm evidence that "film causes an increase in visitor numbers at the film location" (p. 87).

In a more comprehensive study with quantitative data, Riley, Baker, and Doren (1998) investigated visitation to 12 U.S. cities depicted in movies, by compiling visitation data 10 years before and 5 years after movie releases for each location. The results of their study showed that movies increased visitation to study locations for at least 4 years after their releases. In a more recent study, Kim and Richardson (2003) investigated the extent of alterations in cognitive and affective aspects of image and familiarity with and interest in visiting the study destination, Vienna, by applying an experimental design with a posttest-only control group. The effects of the movie were significant for some components of Vienna's image as well as for interest in visiting Vienna, but the movie did not increase the level of familiarity with Vienna. Morgan, Pritchard, and Piggott (2003) partially attribute the success of the 100% pure New Zealand Brand to the release of *The Lord of The Rings* film trilogy, which, they purport, generated a basis for promotional campaigns and a worldwide interest for the destination.

The results of the above-mentioned studies confirm that movies affect destination image and subsequent consumer behavior; however, the underlying sociocultural phenomena that may mediate this effect have not been researched. Several researchers imply the role of sociocultural phenomena in destination-image formation.

Young (1999) proposes that places are sociocultural inventions with sociocultural meanings. Tourist places gain symbolic meanings produced by place producers (destination promoters) and by place consumers (visitors). For destination promoters, these symbolic meanings are embedded in marketing representations used in branding strategies, "inextricably intertwined with historical, political and cultural processes" (Pritchard and Morgan 2001, p. 2). For place consumers, the received symbolic meanings are filtered through the sociocultural stereotypes about the perceived group. Weiermair (2000) suggests that sociocultural stereotypes or cultural "halos" about the people of a destination may be the source of the strongest biases in the image of the destination, while physical attributes of the place may constitute the least biased images. Cultural differences between different national origins are the usual suspects of these stereotypes (Crotts and Erdmann 2000). Therefore, Reisinger and Turner (2002) suggest that "cultural differences are very useful constructs for international tourism promotion, and they can provide very accurate criteria for targeting and positioning" a destination (p. 311). However, the relationships among sociocultural phenomena such as cultural and social differences or distances, destination-image formation, and related tourist behavior have not been researched.

Destination-image dimensions include both the physical and the sociocultural attributes of a place. These attributes could be cognitive (called "descriptive" by Crompton 1979; Crompton, Fakeye, and Lue 1992; Ross 1993) or affective (called "evaluative" by Walmsley and Young 1998; Embacher and Buttle 1989). Cognitive attributes comprise factual and intellectual evaluation of the destination based on the information received about the destination, while affective attributes comprise attitude and feelings toward the destination based on its intellectual evaluation (Gartner 1993; Joppe, Martin, and Waalen 2001; Leisen 2001; O'Leary and Deegan 2003; Rittichainuwat, Qu, and Brown 2001; Rezende-Parker, Morrison, and Ismail 2003; Sonmez and Sirakaya 2002). Hence, studies measuring destination images contain both physical and sociocultural dimensions that are cognitive or affective in nature. A few examples include "host-population characteristics" (Hunt 1975), "social factors" (Var, Beck, and Loftus 1977), "in-group social/out-group social" (Gartner 1989), "friendly people" (Fakeye and Crompton 1991), "cultural distance" and "lack of language barrier" (Echtner and Ritchie 1993), "hospitality" (Schroeder 1996), "sociocultural amenities" (Court and Lupton 1997), "culture/language" (Murphy 1999), "socioeconomic and cultural distance" (Sonmez and Sirakaya 2002), "cultural comparisons" (Rezende-Parker, Morrison, and Ismail 2003), and "people characteristics" (Hankinson 2005). In light of these commonly accepted sociocultural attributes (both cognitive and affective) as destination-image dimensions, it would be logical to assume that not only destination-image formation but also subsequent behaviors might be related to sociocultural phenomena such as cultural and social differences or distances between the perceiver and the perceived groups.

Both physical and sociocultural images of a destination (cognitive and affective) may be biased or distorted with the sociocultural stereotypes fueled by cultural and social differences and distances, especially in cases of physical distance between the perceiver group and the perceived group (Baloglu and McCleary 1999; Kotler and Gertner 2002; Sonmez, Apostolopoulos, and Tarlow 1999; Sonmez and Sirakaya 2002; Tasci, Gartner, and Cavusgil 2007). However, image biases created by sociocultural differences or distances can be eliminated by increasing the familiarity about a destination. According to Anand, Holbrook, and Stephens (1988), an increase in knowledge about an object might cause an increase in feelings toward the object. Thus, the visual aspects of information about sociocultural dimensions of a destination reflected in movies can reduce the amount of bias and distortion by representing the actuality of the destination, resulting in improved image and reduced social distance.

Defined as "the grades and degrees of understanding and intimacy which characterize personal and social relations generally" (Park 1924, p. 339), *social distance* is proposed as a sociocultural phenomenon potentially relevant to destination image, especially after visitation (Tasci 2006). Based on Park's (1924) concept, Bogardus (1933, 1936) developed the Social Distance Scale to measure participants' acceptance of the members of certain "other" groups to relationships ranging between exclusion from one's country and allowing marriage. This phenomenon is usually used when explaining prejudice, stereotypes, and racial attitudes, which are also relevant to destination-image construct (Tasci, Gartner, and Cavusgil 2007). Stereotypes are "the images which persons or groups have of each other"; the more distant that groups feel from one another, the more prejudices and stereotypes they hold about one another (Bochner 1982, p. 18). Stereotypes could be based on historical, social (religious, ethnic, and nationalistic), political, and economic antecedents (Klineberg 1982).

In lack of familiarity, prejudices and stereotypes can not only increase social distance but also reduce the likelihood of subsequent tourist behavior. Tourism consumption includes "tourist-host contact" (Anastasopoulos 1992; Bochner 1982; Pearce 1988; Pizam, Milman, and

Jafari 1991; Pizam, Uriely, and Reichel 2000). The higher the social distance, the lower the desire to experience contact or the likelihood of enjoyment and satisfaction from the contact. As was conceptualized by Cohen (1972, p. 166), tourists need an "environmental bubble" to balance the aspects of strangeness versus familiarity in a destination by using familiar food, means of transportation, and accommodation as "protective walls" against the "strangeness" of the new environment. The strangeness of the place can be in accordance with the social distance felt toward the inhabitants of the place. It is logical to conclude that the more social distance felt toward the inhabitants, the stranger the environment will be perceived. Higher social distances felt toward the inhabitants, just as the strangeness in the destination, can be correlated with feelings of threats, thereby reducing the likelihood of positive behavioral consequences regarding the destination. The social distance, just as the strangeness in the environment, can be a function of the level of familiarity, which can be increased by the visual information through movies. The proposed impact of familiarity on subsequent tourist behavior—namely, destination image, destination desirability, visit intention, and social distance—will be empirically tested in the current study, using a promotional movie as a familiarity agent.

Method

A quasi-experimental design was used for the objectives of this study. Three experimental treatments used in this study were (1) providing familiarity with visual information but without providing the country name, (2) providing familiarity with visual information and providing the country name, and (3) not providing familiarity but only providing the country name. These three treatments were termed "movie-only group," "movie-and-Turkey group," and "Turkey-only group." A promotional video compact disc made by the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism was used as the stimuli, by censoring the verbal cues for the movie-only group. A promotional movie was appropriate since the purpose of the study was to determine if the familiarity gained through visual information has a significant impact on destination image.

A convenience sample of three mutually exclusive classes of business school students enrolled at a North American University was used with the classroom setting as a laboratory. A class of 64 hospitality business students was used in the movie-only treatment, a class of 49 marketing students was used in the Turkey-only treatment, and a class of 49 marketing students was used in the movie-and-Turkey treatment. Since the purpose was

to measure the impact of familiarity through visual information on destination image, social distance, and pertinent consumer behavior in a laboratory setting, the choice of a convenience sample of students did not pose a great threat of bias on the study. Although an ideal research design for this subject matter might seem to be a representative sample of international travelers in their normal settings, this causal study had to be done by controlling some potentially confounding factors, which is usually achieved by using homogenous groups, such as student groups with similar characteristics, in controlled laboratory settings. It is accepted that students' "donor or voluntary behaviours are likely to be future oriented rather than current"; however, since "students are considered to be reliable surrogates for adult consumer groups when measures are attitudinal rather than behavioural" (Dickinson 2007, p. 86), as in the current study, use of students as participants should not pose a great limitation for the study.

Moreover, on the use of student participants and laboratory settings, Calder, Phillips, and Tybout (1981) provide justification by differentiating between research conducted for effects and theory application. Research design depends on the researcher's priorities in terms of whether "to apply the specific effects observed or to apply a more generalized theoretical understanding" (p. 197). In effects-application research, "the specific effects obtained are expected to mirror findings that would be observed if data were collected for other populations and settings in the real world" (p. 197); this is not the purpose of the current study. The present research is designed to be a theory-application study; in other words, the purpose is to see if social distance is affected by visual information and if it affects destination image in return, rather than to describe the magnitude of the mentioned effects for specific groups and how generalizable these effects are for different populations. As such, Calder, Phillips, and Tybout (1981) recommend that research procedures should include participants who are homogeneous on nontheoretical variables, as in student samples, and a research setting isolated from extraneous factors, as in a laboratory setting. Cook and Campbell (1975) agree that these procedures maximize the potential for the strongest tests of causality and minimize threats to internal validity.

The movie-and-Turkey group watched the movie clip and knew that it was Turkey before completing the questionnaire. The Turkey-only group was informed only that the study was about Turkey, and then, they completed the questionnaire without viewing the movie. Both of these groups received the two-page questionnaire all at once. The movie-only group watched the movie clip without

actually knowing which country it was depicting and then completed the image-battery part of the questionnaire. They received the second page of the questionnaire, which mentioned Turkey, after the image-battery part of the questionnaire was collected by the researchers. Since the second part had explicit references to Turkey in the past travel-related questions, this part was delivered separately not to contaminate the image-item ratings of the respondents. Participants were screened for prior visitation to avoid inclusion of "complex images" (Fakeye and Crompton 1991) formed through visitation. This was done using a question on whether respondents had been to Turkey before, which was placed after the image-measurement scale. In the movie-and-Turkey group, five students were dropped from further analyses since they had previously visited Turkey. Also, two students came to class late and thus saw only some part of the movie; they were also dropped from the analyses.

The survey instrument included a 7-point, Likert-type, image-measurement scale of 22 image items (21 individual attributes, 1 holistic), which were developed through reviewing image literature and consulting experts, taking the unique features of Turkey into consideration as well. Most of the scale items are cognitive in nature, except for three affective dimensions: "safety and security," "people's friendliness/hospitality," and "exciting features." A modified version of Bogardus's Social Distance Scale was used, with six levels of distance, ranging from accepting Turkish people (or members of "this country" in the movie-only group) as tourists to accepting them as married to a family member. Also, questions were included about destination-desirability perception and visitation intention, as well as selected sociodemographics (age, gender, income, level of education, major, and origin of ancestors), psychographics (religious orientation and self-reported personality type), and travel experience (previous travel to Turkey). The origin of ancestors and religious orientation are included due to their relevance to the image of Turkey, which is predicted to be different in different societies with different sociocultural backgrounds. A self-reported personality-type variable was also included to check for differences in participants' self-images in relation to their ratings on destination image. The questionnaire was tailored into two different versions: (1) without mentioning Turkey in the image battery, using a generic reference of "this country" for the movie-only group, and (2) with mentioning Turkey in the image battery for the other two groups.

Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 10.0. Descriptive statistics for sociodemographic variables and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with principal components analysis on image dimensions were applied. Factors with eigenvalues exceeding 1 were kept, and the initial factors were rotated using the varimax method. Variables with loadings of $\geq +0.5$ and ≤ -0.5 are considered as practically significant to represent the factors (Hair et al. 1998). Cronbach's alpha values were used to confirm the results of the factor analysis. The factor scores for each case were calculated using regression analysis and saved to be used in further analyses. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) with a post hoc Scheffe test was conducted to investigate the differences in destination image, destination desirability, and visitation intention of the three treatment groups. Chi-square tests were used to investigate the differences in sociodemographics, psychographics, and social distance. The test of differences in image and desirability perception and visitation intention of the six groups with different levels of social distance by using ANOVA tests was desirable but not possible due to very different group sizes, ranging from 9 to 57 in each social-distance category, rendering the results to high level of Type 1 error. Although it is desirable to include multiple classes to have enough students in each social-distance category for comparison tests, it was not possible at the time of this study. Also, due to time limitation of the study, quantitative results could not be followed up by qualitative interviews with the students to gain insight into their actual images about Turkey and how their images have been shaped.

Results

The sociodemographic and psychographic characteristics, which are potentially confounding factors included in this study for control purposes, are age, gender, level of education, study major, family's annual income, origin of ancestors, religious orientation, and self-reported personality type. Distributions of these sociodemographic and psychographic variables are displayed in Table 1. As can be seen from Table 1, all groups were made up of students with a mean age of 21, primarily senior students, with families earning over US$50,000 annually and were mostly Christians of European descent with a self-image of realist personality. Chi-square tests revealed that differences in these sociodemographic and psychographic variables were not statistically significant except for their study major, which is natural since three different classes were chosen for the three treatments. One can argue that hospitality

Table 1
Tests of Differences in Sociodemographics and Psycographics of the Three Groups

Sociodemographics and Psycographics	Movie-Only Group ($n = 64$)	Movie-and-Turkey Group ($n = 42$)	Turkey-Only Group ($n = 49$)	Chi-Square
Age (years, x)	21.87	21.38	21.16	
Gender (%)				.445
Female	45.0	61.9	59.2	
Male	55.0	38.1	40.8	
Family's annual income above median (%)				.490
Less than $10,000	1.7	0.0	4.3	
$10,000-$29,000	5.0	2.4	4.3	
$30,000-$49,000	5.0	4.8	14.8	
$50,000 and over	88.3	92.8	76.6	
Level of education (%)				.290
Junior	0.0	4.8	4.1	
Senior	100.0	95.2	95.9	
Major (%)				.000
Finance	0.0	0.0	0.0	
General business management	1.6	11.9	6.1	
Marketing	0.0	73.8	83.7	
Marketing+	0.0	14.3	8.2	
Hospitality business	98.4	0.0	0.0	
Personality type (%)				.246
Pragmatic	5.2	7.1	4.1	
Idealist	19.0	31.0	24.5	
Realist	72.4	61.9	71.4	
Existentialist	3.4	0	0	
Origin of ancestors (%)				.664
European	72.9	76.2	79.6	
North American	6.8	9.5	12.2	
Middle Eastern	0.0	4.8	0.0	
Asian	10.2	2.4	6.2	
Native American	1.7	2.4	0.0	
Pacific Islander	0.0	2.4	0.0	
African	3.4	0.0	2.0	
Other	5.0	2.3	0.0	
Religious orientation (%)				.696
Christian	73.3	85.1	66.7	
Jewish	5.0	4.3	6.3	
Buddhist	1.7	2.1	2.1	
Other	20.0	8.5	25.0	

business students might be more open-minded toward others due to the nature of their area of study. However, both marketing and hospitality students receive classes geared toward orienting students to catering to the needs of different types of consumers. Also, the similarities in the self-reported personality type among the three groups signal similar worldview among these undergraduate students. Therefore, the differences in destination image, destination desirability, visit intention, and social distance can be attributed to different treatments in the experiment rather than the different sociodemographic profiles of the groups.

Mean ratings of image dimensions for the different groups are provided in Table 2. Except for a few anomalies, the movie-only group reported the highest mean ratings, while the Turkey-only group reported the lowest ratings. The 21 image items were subjected to EFA to extract fewer and more meaningful factors to be used in the one-way ANOVA comparing the images of the three groups. The results of the EFA revealed four factors with "availability of tourist information" having a loading smaller than 0.5, and "value for money" and "local transportation" were loading onto separate factors. Thus, EFA was repeated by dropping these items. As

Table 2
Mean Ratings of Turkey's Image Dimensions by the Three Groups

Image Dimensions	Movie-Only Group (*n* = 57-61)	Movie-and-Turkey Group (*n* = 38-42)	Turkey-Only Group (*n* = 48-49)
Variety of natural resources	1.72[a]	2.61	3.40[b]
Scenic beauty	1.34[a]	1.74	2.90[b]
Beaches/water resources	1.42[a]	1.93	3.49[b]
Availability of tourist information	3.10[a]	3.45	3.90[b]
Quality of restaurants	3.42	3.36[a]	3.63[b]
Amount of cultural/heritage attractions	1.50[a]	1.76	2.65[b]
Variety of outdoor activities	1.56[a]	2.17	3.04[b]
Quality of services	3.17[a]	3.41	3.73[b]
Value for money	3.28[a]	3.50	3.78[b]
Local transportation	3.18[a]	3.70	3.88[b]
Cuisine	3.12[a]	3.33[b]	3.24
Cleanliness	2.66[a]	3.46	4.02[b]
Safety and security	3.17[a]	3.95	4.43[b]
Quality of infrastructure	2.74[a]	3.43	4.13[b]
Quality of accommodation facilities	3.07[a]	3.15	3.96[b]
Peoples' ability to speak English	3.76[a]	4.03[b]	3.90
Peoples' friendliness/hospitality	2.83[a]	3.20	3.29[b]
Unique culture/customs	1.69[a]	1.83	2.44[b]
Exciting features	1.67[a]	2.27	3.25[b]
Nightlife opportunities	2.90[a]	3.10	3.71[b]
Modernity of lifestyle	2.81[a]	3.30	4.02[b]
Overall impressions of Turkey	2.07[a]	2.60	3.55[b]

Note: 1 = *excellent*; 2 = *very good*; 3 = *good*; 4 = *fair*; 5 = *poor*; 6 = *very poor*; 7 = *extremely poor*.
a. The highest rating among the three groups.
b. The lowest rating among the three groups.

can be seen from the results of the EFA in Table 3, three factors explained 65.24% of the variance with Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.85 and over. Factor I was named "Attractions" since it included attractions at a tourist destinations. Factor II, "Service Encounter," was made up of dimensions such as food, entertainment, and people factors. Factor III contained dimensions related to basic needs, thus named "Basics." All factors are mixes of cognitive and affective attributes of a tourist destination image. Mean ratings of all factors were the highest for the group that did not know the country name, while they were the lowest for the group without any visual help.

As can be seen in Table 4, the one-way ANOVA results showed significant differences ($p < .05$) in Attractions and Basics factors among the three groups, while the differences in the scores of the Service Encounter factor were not significant. Scheffe test results in Table 5 show that for the Attractions factor, the ratings of the two groups seeing the movie were the same but significantly more positive than were the ratings of the group with no visual help, while for the Basics factor, the two groups that knew it was Turkey were the same regardless of the visual help in one group; however, they were significantly less positive

than the group that did not know the country name. Thus, the statistically significant results show that Proposition 1 of this study was partially supported. Visual information helped destination image; however, the help was not significant when biases associated with a destination name were overwhelming.

Descriptives in Table 6 display desirability ranking and visitation intentions of the three groups. In both variables, the group that viewed the movie without the country name rated the highest (3.85 for desirability, 5.43 for intention), and the group without the movie rated the lowest (6.59 for desirability, 7.76 for intention). The intention question included the name *Turkey* in it for the movie-only group as well because it was placed after the image and social-distance questions. This group's rating of destination desirability, which they did before knowing it was Turkey, was much higher than their intention to visit, which they did after knowing it was Turkey. In fact, the difference between the desirability rating and the intention rating of the movie-only group was 1.58, which is greater than that of the Turkey-only group (1.17). The movie-only group's intention is similar to that of the movie-and-Turkey group. The differences among the three groups are significant as revealed by the one-way

Table 3
Summary of Exploratory Factor Analysis Results

Image Dimensions and Factors	Factor Loadings	% of Variance Explained	Cumulative % of Variance Explained	Factor Grand Mean[a]	Cronbach's Alpha
Factor I: Attractions		27.11	27.11	2.14	.91
Scenic beauty	.867			Movie only = 1.56	
Variety of outdoor activities	.818			Movie and Turkey = 2.05	
Exciting features	.798			Turkey only = 3.02	
Beaches/water resources	.797				
Amount of cultural/heritage attractions	.731				
Variety of natural resources	.656				
Unique culture/customs	.656				
Factor II: Service Encounter		21.78	48.89	3.40	.86
Cuisine	.806			Movie only = 3.11	
Quality of restaurants	.769			Movie and Turkey = 3.38	
Peoples' ability to speak English	.730			Turkey only = 3.65	
Nightlife opportunities	.697				
Peoples' friendliness/hospitality	.670				
Quality of services	.656				
Modernity of lifestyle	.536				
Factor III: Basics		16.35	65.24	3.47	.85
Quality of infrastructure	.870			Movie only = 2.91	
Safety and security	.742			Movie and Turkey = 3.48	
Cleanliness	.688			Turkey only = 4.14	
Quality of accommodation facilities	.622				

Note: The extraction method was principal components analysis. The rotation method was varimax with Kaiser normalization. Rotation converged in five iterations. Items are ordered by the size of loadings.
a. 1 = *excellent*; 2 = *very good*; 3 = *good*; 4 = *fair*; 5 = *poor*; 6 = *very poor*; 7 = *extremely poor*.

ANOVA results (see Table 7). Scheffe test results in Table 8 show that similar to the case for the Attractions factor, the ratings of the two groups seeing the movie were the same but significantly more positive than were the ratings of the group with no visual information. Thus, the statistically significant results show that Propositions 2 and 3 of this study were also partially supported. Visual information improved the desirability of a destination and increased people's visitation intention; however, this impact was not significant when biases associated with a destination name were overwhelming.

As can be seen from the Chi-square test results in Table 9, the three groups with different treatments felt significantly different social distances toward the people of the study destination. Of the three groups, the one that did not know the country name was the most likely to have the people of this country as "married to a close family member," while the group that rated the image of Turkey without any visual information was the least likely to have the people of Turkey as "married to a close family member." The visual information from a movie obviously provides a baseline for establishing closer social feelings, which cannot be expected to coexist with stereotypes, prejudices, and biases. However, the closest social distance in the movie-and-Turkey group is "a

close friend attending the same club," which is the same as in the group with no visual information. This leads one to suspect that the name *Turkey* must be invoking several biases reducing the positive impact of the visual information on eliminating social distances. Thus, statistically significant results partially support Proposition 4 of this study. Visual information decreased social distance between groups of people; however, the impact was not significant when biases associated with a destination name were overwhelming.

Conclusions

Results of this study show that the presence of visual information, as in promotional movies, can improve the image of a destination's attractions, increase its desirability, increase the intention to visit, and bridge social distances between people. Visual information about Turkey without knowing that it is Turkey revealed the best results, while Turkey's image without any visual help revealed the worst. However, results also show that the mere presence of visual information does not cause significant impact when the biases associated with a destination name are too strong to eliminate by a movie, at least when the movie is

Table 4
Results of ANOVA Comparing the Three Groups on the Three Image Factors

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Factor I: Attractions					
Between groups	54.865	2	27.433	46.994	.000
Within groups	74.135	127	.584		
Total	129.000	129			
Factor II: Service Encounter					
Between groups	0.360	2	0.180	0.177	.838
Within groups	128.640	127	1.013		
Total	129.000	129			
Factor III: Basics					
Between groups	17.051	2	8.526	9.672	.000
Within groups	111.949	127	0.881		
Total	129.000	129			

Table 5
Results of Scheffe Test—Multiple Comparisons of the Three Groups on the Image Factors

Dependent Variable	(I) Group Name	(J) Group Name	Mean Difference (I-J)	SE	Sig.
Factor I: Attractions	Movie and Turkey	Movie only	0.277	.169	.267
		Turkey only	−1.183	.176	.000*
	Movie only	Movie and Turkey	−0.277	.169	.267
		Turkey only	−1.459	.156	.000*
	Turkey only	Movie and Turkey	1.183	.176	.000*
		Movie only	1.459	.156	.000*
Factor II: Service Encounter	Movie and Turkey	Movie only	−0.130	.223	.844
		Turkey only	−0.102	.232	.907
	Movie only	Movie and Turkey	0.130	.223	.844
		Turkey only	0.028	.205	.991
	Turkey only	Movie and Turkey	0.102	.232	.907
		Movie only	−0.028	.205	.991
Factor III: Basics	Movie and Turkey	Movie only	0.599	.208	.018*
		Turkey only	−0.209	.216	.627
	Movie only	Movie and Turkey	−0.599	.208	.018*
		Turkey only	−0.809	.191	.000*
	Turkey only	Movie and Turkey	0.209	.216	.627
		Movie only	0.809	.191	.000*

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

a promotional one without cues of everyday normal life. The name of a place, especially when it is a distant country with low levels of familiarity, can bring associated stereotypes, prejudices, and biases and, thus, negatively impact its image, its desirability, people's intention to visit, and people's feeling social distance toward the inhabitants. In any case, however, familiarity gained by information, especially from visual cues, seems to have an impact on destination image, destination desirability, visit intention, and social distance. Thus, "knowledge" is the key factor in consumer behavior: on one hand, knowledge gained through visual aids help people develop improved perceptions; on

the other hand, knowledge of the name of the country set the associated stereotypes, prejudices, and biases as well. This could lead one to conclude that cognition comes before affect; thus, cognitive image precedes affective image of a destination.

Based on the one-way ANOVA with Scheffe and Chi-square test results in this study, the impact of the promotional movie on consumer behavior regarding Turkey can be explained in two scenarios: (1) *improvement scenario* and (2) *persistent-bias scenario*. The improvement scenario is where the important factor is knowledge through visual information. As explained above, the image ratings, desirability ratings, visit intention,

Table 6
Descriptives of Destination Desirability and Visitation Intention of the Three Groups

	Treatment Group	*n*	Min.	Max.	*M*	*SD*	*SE*
The desirability of Turkey as a vacation destination							
("this country" for the movie-only group)[a]	Movie and Turkey	42	1	10	5.02	2.444	.377
	Movie only	61	1	10	3.85	2.713	.347
	Turkey only	49	2	10	6.59	2.281	.326
	Total	152	1	10	5.06	2.748	.223
The level of intention to visit Turkey for vacation							
purposes (same for all groups)[b]	Movie and Turkey	42	1	10	5.86	2.504	.386
	Movie only	60	1	10	5.43	2.739	.354
	Turkey only	49	1	10	7.76	2.681	.383
	Total	151	1	10	6.30	2.831	.230

a. Rated from 1 (*extremely desirable*) to 10 (*not desirable at all*).
b. Rated from 1 (*intend very much*) to 10 (*do not intend at all*).

Table 7
Results of ANOVA Comparing the Three Groups on Destination Desirability and Intention to Visit

	Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
The desirability of Turkey as a vacation destination ("this country" for the movie-only group)					
Between groups	203.982	2	101.991	16.227	.000
Within groups	936.485	149	6.285		
Total	1140.467	151			
The level of intention to visit Turkey for vacation purposes (same for all groups)					
Between groups	157.049	2	78.525	11.122	.000
Within groups	1044.937	148	7.060		
Total	1201.987	150			

Table 8
Results of Scheffe Test—Multiple Comparisons of the Three Groups on Destination Desirability and Intention to Visit

Dependent Variable	(I) Group Name	(J) Group Name	Mean Difference (I-J)	*SE*	Sig.
The desirability of Turkey as a vacation destination ("this country" for the movie-only group)	Movie and Turkey	Movie only	1.17	.503	.069
		Turkey only	−1.57	.527	.014*
	Movie only	Movie and Turkey	−1.17	.503	.069
		Turkey only	−2.74	.481	.000*
	Turkey only	Movie and Turkey	1.57	.527	.014*
		Movie only	2.74	.481	.000*
The level of intention to visit Turkey for vacation purposes (same for all groups)	Movie and Turkey	Movie only	0.42	.535	.731
		Turkey only	−1.90	.559	.004*
	Movie only	Movie and Turkey	−0.42	.535	.731
		Turkey only	−2.32	.512	.000*
	Turkey only	Movie and Turkey	1.90	.559	.004*
		Movie only	2.32	.512	.000*

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 9
Results of Chi-Square Test on Differences among the Three Groups' Social Distances
Toward Turkish People ("People of this Country" for the Movie-Only Group)

	Social-Distance Category					
Treatment Group	Married to a Close Family Member	Close Friend Attending the Same Club	Neighbor in Your Neighborhood	Colleague at Your Work Place	Citizen in Your Country	Visitor to Your Country
Movie only						
Count	20	15	11	1	6	7
Expected count	14.3	22.6	11.1	3.6	4.8	3.6
% within the group	33.3	25.0	18.3	1.7	10.0	11.7
% within social distance	55.6	26.3	39.3	11.1	50.0	77.8
Movie and Turkey						
Count	10	18	7	4	2	1
Expected count	10.0	15.9	7.8	2.5	3.3	2.5
% within the group	23.8	42.9	16.7	9.5	4.8	2.4
% within social distance	27.8	31.6	25.0	44.4	16.7	11.1
Turkey only						
Count	6	24	10	4	4	1
Expected count	11.7	18.5	9.1	2.9	3.9	2.9
% within the group	12.2	49.0	20.4	8.2	8.2	2.0
% within social distance	16.7	42.1	35.7	44.4	33.3	11.1
Chi-Square	Value	df	Sig. (2-sided)			
Pearson's chi-square	19.166	10	.038			
Likelihood ratio	20.331	10	.026			
Linear-by-linear association	0.455	1	.500			
n of valid cases	151					

and social distance of the two groups seeing the movie were similar to each other but significantly more positive than were the ratings of the group with no visual information (Turkey-only group). Persistent-bias scenario is where the important factor is knowledge again, but this time, it is knowing the country name, Turkey. The image ratings, desirability ratings, visit intention, and social distance of the two groups that knew the country name were similar to each other but significantly less positive than the group that did not know the country name (movie-only group).

The Service Encounter factor, which emphasizes the qualities of "human touch," neither gained significant improvement in the presence of visual information nor lost significantly in the presence of country name. Being developed for promotional purposes with more focus on tourist sites and attractions, the movie might have failed in providing references to the human-touch qualities, resulting in no influence of the movie in improving this image factor of Turkey. In other words, a lack of the information needed to make judgments about sociocultural qualities may have predisposed participants to provide middle-of-the-road ratings. However, despite

inadequate sociocultural reflections, the movie seemed to bridge social distance, potentially leading to more positive behavioral intentions regarding the destination.

Based on the results of this study, one can conclude that visual information through movies, promotional or thematic, can affect destination image and desirability, visit intentions, and social distance; however, the directional relationships between some of these behavioral variables are not obvious. The relationship between social distance and destination image and desirability can be argued to be a "chicken and egg" situation or a case of concurrently existing human phenomena; however, they all can be predictors of other behavior including information search, intention to visit and revisit, enjoyment and satisfaction with the destination, word of mouth, and recommendation. Thus, the visual information through movies can be used to influence not only those predictor variables but also the subsequent consumer-behavior variables. However, for a strong impact on social distance, more visual cues on sociocultural dimensions of a destination should be reflected in the movie. Reflections on the contemporary sociocultural dimensions, including more of the ordinary,

common, usual, and everyday life features of a destination, can allow intended viewers to indulge in vicarious interaction and to ground their experiences in a sociocultural context. In addition, since the name of the destination could hinder improvement in relevant concepts, it can be suggested not to reveal the destination name upfront, thus allowing (or tricking) perceivers to make more objective judgments about the destination without consulting their previously held prejudices and stereotypes. When the name is known from the very beginning, the viewers may not give the destination a fair chance but instead selectively perceive the cues confirming their previously held beliefs, opinions, and feelings about the destination, which are usually shaded by shallow stereotypes and prejudices. However, it should be noted that this result can be different for a destination brand with positive initial images; a destination brand with a positive image can benefit more from early statement of the brand name.

All study propositions were partially supported with statistical significance. Therefore, the subject merits more investigation by using a movie with more ordinary common, usual, and everyday life features of modern Turkey, including verbal information. In addition, as suggested by Tasci (2006), more solid results regarding the effect of objective reality (i.e., increasing consumer knowledge and familiarity) on tourist behavior can be achieved by using previsit and postvisit measurement or visitor and nonvisitor segments separately. With the use of such research designs, Calder, Phillips, and Tybout's (1981) suggestion about application of specific effects can be achieved as well. In other words, by using a representative sample of potential international tourists of Turkey, it can be investigated if the effect of movies (i.e., increasing consumer knowledge and familiarity) on tourist-behavior variables obtained in this study mirrors findings from other populations and settings in the real world. In addition, the test of differences in image perceptions for groups of different levels of social distance was not possible due to very different sizes of groups revealed in this study. Future studies can further investigate this matter by using multiple classes to achieve large enough groups in each level of social distance and to avoid Type 1 error in comparison tests. Also, future studies can replicate this study with qualitative interviews with students to follow up on the quantitative results to gain better insight into students' actual images about Turkey and how their images have been shaped.

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