



Research Article

**THE MEDIATING ROLE OF TOURIST SATISFACTION IN THE IMPACT OF LOCAL FOOD CONSUMPTION MOTIVATION ON TOURISTS' INTENTION TO REVISIT**

Yunus DOĞAN<sup>1\*</sup> (orcid.org/ 0000-0003-3145-8404)

<sup>1</sup>Mersin Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Meslek Yüksekokulu, Otel, Lokanta ve İkram Hizmetleri Bölümü, Mersin, Türkiye

**Abstract**

This study aims to examine the mediating role of tourist satisfaction in the relationship between tourists' motivation to consume local food and their intention to revisit. The research was conducted using a survey technique and convenience sampling method, resulting in the collection of 405 questionnaires. The data obtained were analyzed using appropriate statistical software. Structural equation modeling revealed that local food consumption motivation positively affects both tourist satisfaction and their intention to revisit. Additionally, it was found that tourist satisfaction positively influences the intention to revisit. Finally, bootstrap test results indicated that tourist satisfaction has a significant mediating effect on the relationship between local food consumption motivation and the intention to revisit. The findings were discussed in light of theoretical and practical contributions, and various recommendations were made for accommodation businesses and future research.

**Keywords:** Local Food Consumption, Tourist Satisfaction, Intention to Revisit, Gastronomy Tourism, Motivational Factors

**Introduction**

Gastronomy holds a significant place in modern tourism and plays a critical role in the development of niche travel experiences (Kivela and Crotts, 2006). However, the existing literature provides limited insight into gastronomic tourists. Local food experiences serve as a substantial source of motivation, influencing tourists' intention to revisit a destination beyond mere culinary exploration. In this context, the contribution of gastronomic experiences to the overall quality of tourists' experiences has become an essential research topic. A study conducted in Hong Kong emphasizes the validity of gastronomic motivation, demonstrating that some travelers are inclined to return to the same destination (Kivela and Crotts, 2006). Research on the factors influencing local food and beverage consumption provides a crucial foundation for understanding tourists' motivational factors. Kim et al. (2009) developed an in-depth understanding by examining the motivational, demographic, and physiological factors associated with local food consumption. Furthermore, motivational dimensions identified by Kim and Eves (2012) -cultural experience, interpersonal relationship, excitement, sensory appeal, and health concerns are pivotal in understanding the impact of local food consumption on tourists' intention to revisit.

This study aims to uncover the mediating role of tourist satisfaction in the impact of local food consumption motivation on tourists' intention to revisit. Although the relationship between gastronomy and tourism has been widely explored, most studies focus on the general impact of gastronomic experiences on tourism dynamics, leaving a gap in understanding how local food consumption motivations relate to visitor loyalty. From this perspective, the study addresses the research problem of identifying the relationship between tourists' local food consumption motivations and their intention to revisit, while also exploring the underlying dynamics, such as tourist satisfaction.

Gastronomic experiences are considered not only as a sensory activity but also as opportunities for cultural interaction and building social bonds. Crompton (1979) and Crompton and McKay (1997) explored motivations influencing destination choice, identifying push and pull factors. However, most of these studies fall short of revealing how these motivations operate specifically in gastronomy and how they affect revisit intentions. Bayrakçı and Akdağ (2016) examined the effect of tourists' motivations for consuming local food

\*Corresponding Author: [yunus.dogan23@hotmail.com](mailto:yunus.dogan23@hotmail.com)

DOI: 10.33083/joghat.2025.486

on their intention to revisit. Using data collected from domestic tourists visiting Gaziantep, explanatory factor analysis and multiple regression analyses were conducted. The results showed that motivations for consuming local food could be categorized into sub-dimensions such as the quest for excitement, cultural experience, sensory appeal, and health expectations, all of which positively influence tourists' intention to revisit. The motivational dimensions identified by Kim and Eves (2012) provide valuable insights into the role of local food consumption in tourism. However, studies exploring the effects of these dimensions on revisit intentions are limited. Therefore, this research aims to fill this gap by investigating how gastronomic experiences and local food consumption influence tourists' intentions.

This study focuses on several key points. First, by systematically examining the motivational dimensions of local food consumption, it seeks to enhance our understanding of the role of gastronomic experiences in tourism. Studies such as those by Orea-Giner and Fusté-Forné (2023) and Brozović et al. (2024) highlight the connection between gastronomic experiences and sustainability, while this study emphasizes the significance of social and cultural factors in local food consumption. Second, by underscoring the impact of local food consumption on revisit intentions, this study emphasizes its importance not only for economic sustainability but also for social and cultural sustainability, offering new perspectives for tourism strategies. Considering the social, cultural, economic, and psychological dimensions of travel and tourism as discussed by McIntosh et al. (1995), this study highlights that local food consumption is not merely an individual experience but also a means of social interaction. Lastly, this research aims to address gaps in the literature and provide practical recommendations on how tourism destinations can position local gastronomy, offering a guiding resource for industry stakeholders. By doing so, the study seeks to fill gaps in the existing literature, deepen the understanding of the field, and provide a new framework for the development of tourism strategies and the promotion of local food consumption.

### **Theoretical Background**

Local food consumption refers to the process in which tourists experience the local cuisine of the destinations they visit and consume traditional dishes offered there. This practice allows tourists not only to satisfy their food needs but also to explore the culture, traditions, and lifestyle of a region more profoundly. Gastronomy tourism, a significant component of such experiences, enhances tourists' interest in destinations and enriches the cultural and sensory dimensions of travel (Kivela and Crofts, 2006; Kim et al., 2009).

Revisit intention, defined as the likelihood of tourists visiting the same destination again after an initial visit, is closely tied to their post-travel satisfaction. If tourists are satisfied with their experiences at a destination, their propensity to revisit increases. Cultural experiences, such as consuming local food, are key factors reinforcing this intention. In particular, gastronomic experiences serve as powerful motivators that strengthen the desire to return to the same destination (Bayrakçı and Akdağ, 2016).

Tourist satisfaction refers to the feeling of fulfillment that tourists derive from the services, activities, and local features they experience during their trips. It is directly related to the level of satisfaction they gain from the services received, local culture witnessed, and local foods consumed. Tourist satisfaction acts as a significant mediating factor influencing revisit intention. If tourists are satisfied with local culinary and gastronomic experiences, they are more likely to revisit the same destination (Crompton and McKay, 1997).

Studies by Daşdemir and Madenci (2021) and Erol and Ünalsoy (2022) have comprehensively demonstrated the positive effects of local food on tourists' experiences and revisit intentions. These studies highlight that local gastronomy plays a crucial role in enhancing overall tourist satisfaction and enriching travel experiences. Specifically, tasting local foods strengthens tourists' perceptions of and connections to the destination, positively influencing their future visit decisions. Similarly, research by Apuhan and Kement (2022) and Hasançebi and Keskin (2024) underscores the significant role of local food in shaping tourist satisfaction and behavioral intentions. These studies suggest that local culinary experiences offer creative elements that exceed tourists' expectations, thereby enhancing their overall experience. Through experiencing local flavors, tourists not only engage in a sensory exchange but also gain deeper insights into the cultural and social fabric of the region. To better understand how local gastronomy experiences influence tourists' destination choices, the following hypothesis was developed:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** *Motivation to consume local food positively affects tourists' revisit intentions.*

Khoshkam et al. (2023) and Valverde-Roda et al. (2023) highlighted that the revitalization of local foods and gastronomic experiences significantly enhance visitor satisfaction. These studies emphasize that local cuisine is not merely a source of sustenance but also incorporates cultural and emotional elements that enrich tourists'

travel experiences. Similarly, Sutiadiningsih et al. (2023) found that attitudes toward consuming traditional foods influence tourists' intentions to prefer gastronomic experiences. This finding suggests that local food consumption can positively impact tourists' overall satisfaction levels, thereby fostering their intention to revisit. Moreover, Angelakis et al. (2023) demonstrated a positive relationship between the perceived quality and value of local food products and tourist satisfaction. Their research concluded that the motivation to consume local food plays a crucial role in shaping tourists' overall travel experiences. Considering these findings, it is evident that the motivation to consume local food has the potential to enhance tourist satisfaction. Therefore, the following hypothesis was proposed:

**H<sub>2</sub>:** *Motivation to consume local food positively affects tourist satisfaction.*

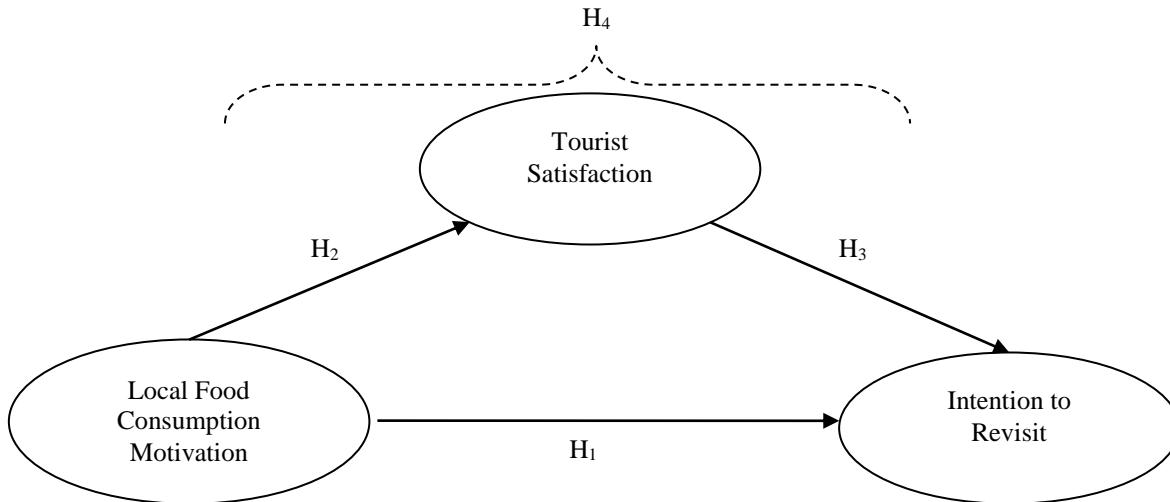
The existing literature underscores the significant influence of tourist satisfaction on their intentions and motivations to revisit destinations. For instance, Keskin et al. (2020) found that tourists who had memorable experiences in the Cappadocia region were more likely to develop a positive intention to revisit, driven by their satisfaction. This study highlights how tourist satisfaction helps maintain interest in the destination and fosters future visits. Similarly, Öktem and Akdu (2022), in their research on Istanbul's Historic Peninsula, demonstrated that satisfying and unforgettable experiences not only enhance customer satisfaction but also strengthen tourists' intentions to return. Özdemir (2019) examined the positive impacts of destination image on tourist satisfaction and revisit intentions in Mardin, emphasizing the decisive role of satisfaction in these intentions. Yazıt and Bayram (2022) identified a significant positive relationship between tourist satisfaction, revisit intentions, and destination loyalty among visitors to Istanbul's Sultanahmet district. Their findings affirm that satisfaction boosts tourists' destination preferences and loyalty. Metin and Kalay (2021), focusing on Iranian tourists in Van, analyzed the effects of perceived destination image on satisfaction and revisit intentions, finding that specific subdimensions play a crucial role in this relationship. These findings collectively indicate that tourist satisfaction is not merely an emotional state but a critical factor shaping tourists' revisit motivations. Satisfying experiences enhance tourists' attachment to the destination and solidify their intentions to return. Based on this evidence, the following hypothesis was proposed:

**H<sub>3</sub>:** *Tourist satisfaction positively influences their motivation to revisit.*

Khoshkam et al. (2023) highlight the critical role of revitalizing local foods in attracting visitors, emphasizing the value of events like food festivals in enhancing visitor satisfaction. The study notes that local cuisine has the potential to boost tourists' interest in a destination and their overall satisfaction. Satisfied culinary experiences can strengthen tourists' intentions to revisit. Similarly, Zhu et al. (2024) show that food experiences are a vital component of the tourism experience, directly influencing destination perception and revisit intentions. Their study reveals that the functional, social, emotional, cultural, and health-related values of local foods positively impact tourists' destination perceptions and revisit intentions, with the perceived destination image mediating these effects.

According to the Satisfaction Theory, consumer satisfaction results from experiences that align with or exceed expectations (Busacca and Padula, 2005). For tourists, consuming local foods as part of an authentic experience helps create unique memories of the destination. When these experiences meet or surpass expected satisfaction levels, tourist satisfaction increases. This satisfaction can foster a positive connection with the destination, thereby enhancing revisit intentions. Consistent with these findings, previous studies suggest that tourist satisfaction may mediate the relationship between local food consumption motivation and revisit intention. Therefore, the following hypothesis was developed:

**H<sub>4</sub>:** *Tourist satisfaction mediates the relationship between local food consumption motivation and revisit intention.*

**Figure 1. Research Model****Method****Purpose of the Research**

The aim of this study is to identify the mediating role of tourist satisfaction in the effect of local food consumption motivation on the intention to revisit. In this regard, the research model developed was tested using quantitative methods, and the study is of an explanatory research nature.

**Population and Sample**

To test the hypotheses formed within the scope of the research objectives, a field study was initially conducted. The sample of the research consists of domestic tourists visiting the cities of Adana and Mersin. The selection of Adana and Mersin as the study's sample is due to the fact that both cities offer attractive destinations for both domestic and international tourists, with their local flavors, historical structures, and natural beauties, and hold an important place on Türkiye's tourism and gastronomy map. Adana is famous for Adana kebab, one of Türkiye's most well-known dishes. In addition to kebab, Adana, with its meat-heavy cuisine, offers unique flavors such as "şırdan dolması, içli köfte, mumar, and bici bici." The fame of Adana kebab has made the city an important center of attraction for gastronomic tourism. Additionally, Adana is a rich representative of the Çukurova cuisine, known for its meat dishes and spicy appetizers (Adana İl Kültür ve Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2024). Mersin cuisine stands out with its seafood and olive oil-based dishes. Tantuni, batırık, kerebiç, hummus, kaytaz böreği, and cezerye are among Mersin's regional specialties. In particular, tantuni has become a symbol of Mersin. Being a coastal city, Mersin offers a wide variety of fish and seafood in its cuisine. Mersin cuisine holds great potential for gastronomic tourism for visitors wanting to taste local flavors (Mersin İl Kültür ve Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2024). In this study, the sample consists of 405 questionnaires collected from visitors to Mersin and Adana between 04/12/2024 and 13/12/2024, representing the research sample.

**Data Collection and Scales**

In this study, data were collected through a survey method. The data collection process was carried out using a questionnaire consisting of four main sections. The first section of the questionnaire included demographic and descriptive information about the participants. In the second section, the "Local Food Consumption Motivation Scale," developed by Kim and Eves (2012), was used to measure tourists' motivations for consuming local food. The third section applied the "Intention to Revisit Scale," developed by Bayrakçı and Akdağ (2016), to determine tourists' intention to revisit. Finally, in the fourth section, the "Tourist Satisfaction Scale," included in the study by Çilesiz and Selçuk (2018), was used to assess tourist satisfaction.

In this study, tourists' motivations for consuming local food were evaluated under four main dimensions: the thrill-seeking dimension (4 items), the cultural experience dimension (3 items), the sensory appeal dimension (3 items), and the health expectation dimension (3 items). Accordingly, the survey included a total of 13 items to determine tourists' motivations for consuming local food. For the research purpose, local food consumption motivation was examined as a single dimension. The "Local Food Consumption Motivation Scale," developed by Kim and Eves (2012), was initially translated from English to Turkish by an academic staff member from the School of Foreign Languages. Then, the back-translation method was applied, where the Turkish version

was translated back into English and compared with the original text. Since no errors were found in the Turkish translation, it was concluded that the scale was usable. Thus, a total of 13 items were used in the questionnaire to determine participants' motivations for consuming local food.

On the other hand, the intention to revisit and tourist satisfaction were each evaluated as a single dimension with 3 items, and the questionnaire consisted of a total of 24 items. To assess the applicability and comprehensibility of the items in the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted with 10 academics from Mersin University's Faculty of Tourism and the Vocational School of Social Sciences. As a result of this pilot study, any unclear or incomplete items in the scales were corrected.

Participants were asked to rate each item in the questionnaire on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire was shared with participants through social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and email. The responses from 47 participants who had not previously visited Adana and Mersin were excluded from the analysis, resulting in a total of 405 questionnaires included in the analysis. The convenience sampling method was preferred as the sampling technique, ensuring that every individual visiting Adana and Mersin participated in the survey. *The necessary ethics committee approval for data collection in this research was obtained from the Mersin University Ethics Committee on 04/12/2024 with decision number 345.*

### Data Analysis

The research data were analyzed using the SPSS and AMOS statistical analysis programs. First, descriptive statistical tests were applied to the collected data in line with the research objectives. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed to assess the validity of the "Local Food Consumption Motivation Scale" developed by Kim and Eves (2012), the "Intention to Revisit Scale" by Bayrakçı and Akdağ (2016), and the "Tourist Satisfaction Scale" by Çilesiz and Selçuk (2018). To determine the reliability of the scales, Cronbach's alpha test was applied. Furthermore, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis was used to test the effects of local food consumption motivation on intention to revisit and tourist satisfaction, as well as the effect of tourist satisfaction on the intention to revisit. Finally, a bootstrap test was conducted to identify the mediating role of tourist satisfaction in the effect of local food consumption motivation on the intention to revisit.

### Findings

#### Demographic Findings

According to the responses to the descriptive questions posed in the research, the number of female participants was determined to be 208, and the number of male participants was 197. Based on this data, female participants constitute 51.4% of the total sample, while male participants make up 48.6%. When examining the distribution of participants by age group, 24.7% (100 individuals) are in the 18-25 age range, 26.4% (107 individuals) are in the 26-35 age range, 22.7% (92 individuals) are in the 36-45 age range, 21.3% (86 individuals) are in the 46-55 age range, and 4.9% (20 individuals) are 56 years or older. In terms of educational background, 11.2% (45 individuals) have completed primary education, 19.7% (80 individuals) have completed high school, 20.5% (83 individuals) have completed an associate degree, 31.3% (127 individuals) have completed a bachelor's degree, and 17.3% (70 individuals) have completed postgraduate education.

#### Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results for the Local Food Consumption Motivation Scale

In order to determine the local food consumption motivations of domestic tourists visiting Adana and Mersin provinces, the structural validity of the "Local Food Consumption Motivation Scale" developed by Kim and Eves (2012) was analyzed. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was applied to the collected data. The first-level CFA fit indices related to the scale are presented in detail in Table 1. The CFA results revealed that the model's fit indices largely indicated good fit. This finding shows that the model developed within the scope of the research is consistent with the collected data and possesses an acceptable level of validity.

**Table 1. First-Level CFA Fit Indices for the Local Food Consumption Motivation Scale**

Measurement (Concordance Statistics)	Good fit	Acceptable fit	Values	Conclusion
CFI	$\geq 0,95$	0,94-0,90	<b>0,97</b>	<b>Good fit</b>
IFI	$\geq 0,95$	0,94-0,90	<b>0,97</b>	<b>Good fit</b>
RMSEA	$\leq 0,05$	0,06-0,08	<b>0,06</b>	<b>Acceptable fit</b>
NFI	$\geq 0,95$	0,94-0,90	<b>0,95</b>	<b>Good fit</b>
NNFI (TLI)	$\geq 0,95$	0,94-0,90	<b>0,95</b>	<b>Good fit</b>

( $\chi^2/df$ )	$\leq 3$	$\leq 4-5$	<b>2,81</b>	<b>Good fit</b>
AGFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,89-0,80	<b>0,91</b>	<b>Good fit</b>
GFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,89-0,85	<b>0,95</b>	<b>Good fit</b>

The factor loadings, CR (composite reliability), AVE (average variance extracted), and reliability values for the Local Food Consumption Motivation Scale are presented in Table 2. According to Hair et al. (2017), factor loadings must be above 0.708. The results in Table 2 indicate that all the items included in the analysis meet this criterion. The Cronbach Alpha value for the scale was determined to be 0.915, and the CR coefficient was calculated as 0.856. These values demonstrate that the internal consistency validity of the scale is ensured. Additionally, the factor loadings ranging from 0.709 to 0.831 and the AVE coefficient calculated as 0.674 confirm the establishment of convergent validity (Hair et al., 2017).

**Table 2. Factor Loadings, CR, AVE, and Reliability Values for the Local Food Consumption Motivation Scale**

Statements	Factor Loadings	<i>t-value</i>
1. Local food tasting is exciting.	,749	
2. The local food experience gives me pleasure.	,741	17,59
3. An authentic local food experience at its origin excites me.	,800	14,08
4. Eating local food on vacation relaxes me.	,778	13,51
5. I am happy to tell everyone about my local food experiences.	,709	11,08
6. The local food experience allows me to understand how others live.	,709	11,42
7. The local food experience enables me to understand things I would normally not see.	,703	10,39
8. The local food experience allows me to discover new things about the local culture.	,831	15,28
9. The local food experience is privileged with its traditional presentation.	,734	12,75
10. The local food experience allows me to increase my knowledge about different cultures.	,743	12,98
11. The taste of the local food I eat on vacation is important to me.	,714	11,57
12. The smell of the local food I eat on vacation is important to me.	,716	11,38
13. The taste of authentic local food eaten at its origin differs from the food eaten elsewhere.	,706	10,92
CR	,856	
AVE	,674	
Cronbach Alpha	,915	

### Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results for the Revisit Intention Scale

In order to determine the revisit intentions of domestic tourists visiting the cities of Adana and Mersin, the structural validity of the "Revisit Intention Scale" used by Bayrakçı and Akdağ (2016) was analyzed. In this context, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was applied to the collected data. The first-level CFA fit indices for the scale are presented in detail in Table 3. According to the CFA analysis results, it was determined that all the fit indices of the model demonstrated a good level of fit. This finding shows that the model developed within the scope of the research is consistent with the collected data and has acceptable structural validity.

**Table 3. First-Level CFA Fit Indices for the Revisit Intention Scale**

Measurement (Concordance Statistics)	Good fit	Acceptable fit	Values	Conclusion
CFI	$\geq 0,95$	0,94-0,90	<b>0,96</b>	<b>Good fit</b>
IFI	$\geq 0,95$	0,94-0,90	<b>0,95</b>	<b>Good fit</b>
RMSEA	$\leq 0,05$	0,06-0,08	<b>0,49</b>	<b>Good fit</b>
NFI	$\geq 0,95$	0,94-0,90	<b>0,95</b>	<b>Good fit</b>
NNFI (TLI)	$\geq 0,95$	0,94-0,90	<b>0,9</b>	<b>Good fit</b>
( $\chi^2/df$ )	$\leq 3$	$\leq 4-5$	<b>2,96</b>	<b>Good fit</b>
AGFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,89-0,80	<b>0,90</b>	<b>Good fit</b>
GFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,89-0,85	<b>0,91</b>	<b>Good fit</b>

The factor loadings, CR (composite reliability), AVE (average variance extracted), and reliability values for the Return Visit Intention Scale are presented in Table 4. According to the recommendations of Hair et al. (2017), the factor loadings should be above 0.708. Upon reviewing Table 4, it is evident that all items included in the analysis meet this criterion. The Cronbach Alpha value for the items related to return visit intention was calculated as 0.944, and the CR coefficient was calculated as 0.849. These values indicate that the scale has internal consistency validity. Additionally, the factor loadings of the constructs range from 0.857 to 0.956, and the AVE coefficient is 0.784, confirming the convergent validity of the scale (Hair et al., 2017).

**Table 4. Factor Loadings, CR, AVE, and Reliability Values for the Return Visit Intention Scale**

Statements	Factor Loadings	<i>t-value</i>
1. I am likely to revisit Adana and Mersin within the next year.	,956	
2. I plan to revisit Adana and Mersin within the next year.	,954	39,16
3. I am interested in revisiting Adana and Mersin within the next year.	,857	28,35
CR	,849	
AVE	,784	
Cronbach Alpha	,944	

### Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis for the Tourist Satisfaction Scale

In order to determine the satisfaction levels of domestic tourists visiting the provinces of Adana and Mersin, the structural validity of the "Tourist Satisfaction Scale" developed by Çilesiz and Selçuk (2018) was analyzed. In this context, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was applied to the collected data. The first-level CFA fit indices for the Tourist Satisfaction Scale are presented in detail in Table 5. According to the results of the CFA analysis, it was found that the majority of the model fit indices demonstrated good fit. These findings indicate that the model developed within the research is consistent with the collected data and possesses acceptable structural validity.

**Table 5. First-Level CFA Fit Indices for the Tourist Satisfaction Scale**

Measurement (Concordance Statistics)	Good fit	Acceptable fit	Values	Conclusion
CFI	$\geq 0,95$	0,94-0,90	<b>0,97</b>	<b>Good fit</b>
IFI	$\geq 0,95$	0,94-0,90	<b>0,95</b>	<b>Good fit</b>
RMSEA	$\leq 0,05$	0,06-0,08	<b>0,48</b>	<b>Acceptable fit</b>
NFI	$\geq 0,95$	0,94-0,90	<b>0,96</b>	<b>Good fit</b>
NNFI (TLI)	$\geq 0,95$	0,94-0,90	<b>0,97</b>	<b>Good fit</b>
( $\chi^2/df$ )	$\leq 3$	$\leq 4-5$	<b>2,82</b>	<b>Good fit</b>
AGFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,89-0,80	<b>0,91</b>	<b>Good fit</b>
GFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,89-0,85	<b>0,93</b>	<b>Good fit</b>

The factor loadings, CR (composite reliability), AVE (average variance extracted), and reliability values for the Tourist Satisfaction Scale are presented in Table 6. According to the recommendations of Hair et al. (2017), factor loadings should be above 0.708. The results in Table 6 show that all the items included in the analysis meet this criterion. The Cronbach Alpha value for the items of the Tourist Satisfaction Scale is calculated as 0.918, and the CR coefficient is 0.845. These values indicate that the scale has internal consistency validity. Moreover, the factor loadings of the constructs range from 0.855 to 0.947, and the AVE coefficient is calculated as 0.761, confirming the convergent validity (Hair et al., 2017).

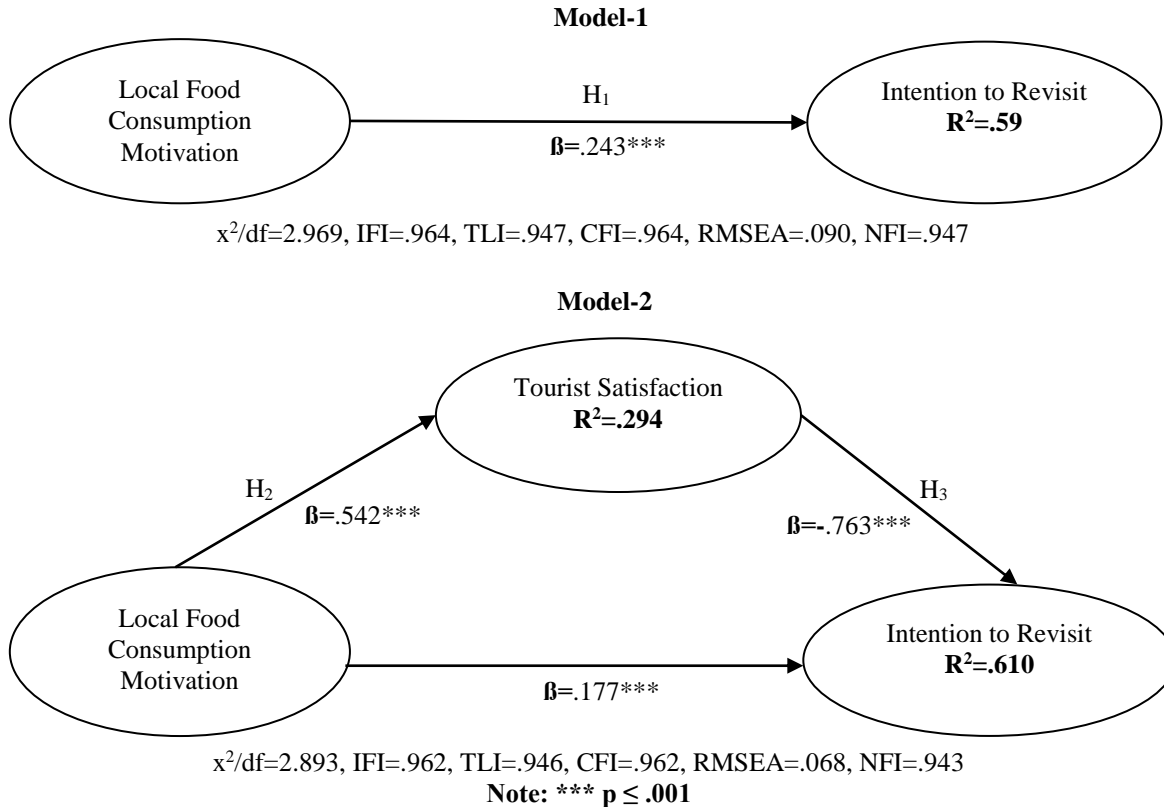
**Table 6. Factor Loadings, CR, AVE, and Reliability Values for the Tourist Satisfaction Scale**

Statements	Factor Loadings	<i>t-value</i>
1. Tasting the local food and beverages in Adana and Mersin was enjoyable.	,855	
2. Overall, I was satisfied with the local food and beverages in Adana and Mersin.	,947	25,03
3. The experience I had with the local food and beverages in Adana and Mersin exceeded my expectations.	,865	22,69
CR	,845	
AVE	,761	
Cronbach Alpha	,918	

### Hypothesis Testing

The goodness of fit indices for the first model, which was developed to test direct effects, revealed that the proposed model is consistent with the data ( $\chi^2/df = 2.969$ , IFI = .964, TLI = .947, CFI = .964, RMSEA = .090, NFI = .947) (Hair et al., 2017). After confirming the model fit, direct effects were tested. In this context, it was found that local food consumption motivation has a significant positive effect of .243 ( $p < .001$ ) on the intention to revisit. Additionally, it was determined that local food consumption motivation explains 59% of the intention to revisit (Figure 2). Based on these findings,  $H_1$  hypothesis was accepted.

**Figure 2. Models Created to Test the Mediating Effect**



The goodness of fit indices for the second model, developed for indirect effects, showed that the proposed model is consistent with the data ( $\chi^2/df = 2.893$ ,  $IFI = .962$ ,  $TLI = .946$ ,  $CFI = .962$ ,  $RMSEA = .068$ ,  $NFI = .943$ ). After confirming the model fit, the significance of the relationships between variables and the Beta coefficients were examined. In this context, it was found that local food consumption motivation has a significant positive effect of .542 ( $p < .001$ ) on tourist satisfaction and explains 29.4% of tourist satisfaction (Figure 2). Based on these findings, H<sub>2</sub> hypothesis was accepted. Furthermore, it was determined that tourist satisfaction has a significant positive effect of .763 ( $p < .001$ ) on the intention to revisit. Additionally, tourist satisfaction explains 61% of the intention to revisit (Figure 2). Based on these results, H<sub>3</sub> hypothesis was accepted. On the other hand, with the inclusion of tourist satisfaction as a mediating variable in the model, the effect of local food consumption motivation on the intention to revisit remains significant ( $\beta = .171^{***}$ ;  $p < .001$ ).

To determine whether tourist satisfaction mediates the effect of local food consumption motivation on the intention to revisit, a Bootstrap Analysis recommended by Hayes (2013) was conducted. The results of the Bootstrap test are presented in Table 7 below. The Bootstrap analysis was performed with a 95% confidence interval and 5000 resamples. Hayes (2018) emphasized that for the presence of a mediation effect, the confidence interval values should not include zero. As the confidence interval did not include zero in this analysis, the mediation effect was found to be significant ( $\beta = .177$ ;  $CI = 95\%$ ; [Lower Bound = .344, Upper Bound = .523]). Therefore, the H<sub>4</sub> hypothesis regarding the mediating effect was accepted. In other words, it was found that tourist satisfaction mediates the effect of local food consumption motivation on the intention to revisit. Based on these results, it can be concluded that all hypotheses developed in this study have been accepted.

**Table 7. Results of Bootstrapping Analysis**

Mediator Variable	Total Effect	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Bootstrapping-Lower Bounds	Bootstrapping-Upper Bounds
Tourist Satisfaction	.243	.177	.066	.344	.523

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

This study aimed to examine the relationship between tourists' motivation to consume local food and their intention to revisit, while identifying the mediating role of tourist satisfaction in this interaction. The findings



of the research indicate that the motivation to consume local foods has a positive impact on the intention to revisit. Specifically, factors such as cultural experience, sensory appeal, and health concerns were found to strengthen tourists' intention to revisit. This result highlights the importance of local food consumption in tourism experiences and shows that the connection tourists establish with local culture drives them to revisit the destination. Furthermore, it was observed that tourist satisfaction plays a significant mediating role in the effect of local food consumption motivation on the intention to revisit. This suggests that the satisfaction tourists derive from the destination strengthens their tendency to revisit. The acceptance of all the hypotheses in the study contributes to filling the gap in the literature regarding the relationships between local food consumption, satisfaction, and revisit intention, offering a more detailed perspective. In this context, enhancing local food experiences in tourism destinations could increase the likelihood of repeat visits.

### **Contributions to the Literature**

The acceptance of “H<sub>1</sub>: Motivation to consume local food positively affects tourists' revisit intentions” hypothesis strengthens the evidence in the literature that local gastronomy experiences increase tourists' intention to revisit. This study specifically highlights that local foods strengthen tourists' connections to destinations, and more clearly demonstrates the impact of these connections on behavioral intentions. By contributing to studies such as Daşdemir and Madenci (2021), Erol and Ünalsoy (2022), Apuhan and Kement (2022), and Hasançebi and Keskin (2024), this research emphasizes the importance of local gastronomy in enhancing tourist satisfaction and positive perceptions of destinations, while supporting the sustainable impact of these experiences on revisit intentions. Furthermore, the results highlight the potential for destination managers and tourism strategists to use local gastronomy as a magnet to attract tourists back, contributing to the development of sustainable tourism strategies.

The acceptance of “H<sub>2</sub>: Motivation to consume local food positively affects tourist satisfaction” hypothesis provides evidence that the motivation for local food consumption has a positive impact on tourist satisfaction. This result strengthens existing studies in the literature, emphasizing that local food plays a significant role in shaping tourists' overall experiences. Specifically, research by Khoshkam et al. (2023) and Valverde-Roda et al. (2023) demonstrates that local foods go beyond being a mere food source, enriching visitors' travel experiences culturally and emotionally. These findings indicate that local food is a factor that enhances tourist satisfaction and adds value to travel experiences. Similarly, Sutiadiningsih et al. (2023) suggest that traditional foods play an important role in tourists' gastronomic preferences, and therefore, local food consumption can increase satisfaction and influence revisit intentions. Angelakis et al. (2023) found that the quality and value of local food products are strongly correlated with tourist satisfaction. Consistent with the literature, the findings of this study strengthen the contribution of H<sub>2</sub> hypothesis, showing that local food consumption positively shapes tourists' travel experiences and increases their satisfaction, thus providing a foundational contribution for future research.

The acceptance of “H<sub>3</sub>: Tourist satisfaction positively influences their motivation to revisit” hypothesis makes an important contribution to the literature. Previous studies have confirmed the strong relationship between tourist satisfaction and revisit intention, revealing that this relationship reinforces tourists' loyalty to destinations. However, while these studies generally focus on overall satisfaction levels, this study specifically addresses how certain experiences, such as local food, affect satisfaction levels and the role of satisfaction in influencing revisit intentions. Additionally, by showing that tourist satisfaction shapes future behaviors as a motivational factor rather than just an emotional state, this study fills a gap in the literature. The findings highlight that satisfaction is a powerful tool in reinforcing tourists' future visit decisions, suggesting that destination managers should develop strategies to improve tourists' experiences. Therefore, the acceptance of H<sub>3</sub> hypothesis contributes both academically to the literature and practically to tourism destination management.

The acceptance of “H<sub>4</sub>: Tourist satisfaction mediates the relationship between local food consumption motivation and revisit intention” hypothesis offers a significant contribution to the literature by highlighting the mediating role of tourist satisfaction in the relationship between local food consumption motivation and revisit intention. This finding enables a deeper understanding of the interaction between local food consumption and tourist satisfaction. While the direct relationship between local food and revisit intention has been frequently studied, the impact of tourist satisfaction on this relationship has not been adequately explored. In studies by Khoshkam et al. (2023) and Zhu et al. (2024), the effects of local food experiences on tourists' destination perceptions and satisfaction are discussed, but there is no detailed explanation of how this satisfaction plays a mediating role in tourists' revisit intentions. The acceptance of H<sub>4</sub> hypothesis fills this gap

by demonstrating how local food consumption, through tourist satisfaction, transforms into a stronger intention to revisit. Additionally, within the framework of Satisfaction Theory, it is emphasized that tourists strengthen their connection to a destination through unique experiences, such as local food consumption, and that their satisfaction increases their intention to revisit. This finding offers a new perspective to the literature, demonstrating that tourist satisfaction plays a crucial mediating role. It not only enhances local food consumption motivation but also facilitates its transformation into revisit intentions, thus contributing to existing theories.

### **Recommendations for Businesses**

- Tourism businesses should offer menus and experiences that highlight the uniqueness and cultural value of local foods. Presenting local cuisine not just as food but as a cultural experience enables tourists to form a deeper connection. In this context, organizing activities such as gastronomic tours, cooking workshops, and local food festivals can attract tourists' interest.
- The health, environmental, and sustainability benefits of local food consumption should also be emphasized. Businesses can cater to tourists' conscious consumption preferences by offering healthy and environmentally friendly menus made from organic and locally sourced ingredients. Healthy meals and organic products can be especially appealing to tourists with health concerns.
- Tourists who are satisfied with their local food experiences will generally have higher levels of overall satisfaction. Businesses should regularly collect customer feedback and continuously improve the options, presentations, and quality of dishes on their menus. In particular, it is essential for restaurants to correctly present local dishes and respect the cultural differences of tourists.
- Social media and digital platforms are powerful tools for promoting local food experiences. Businesses can enhance the impact of gastronomic experiences by creating authentic and engaging content on social media. Particularly on visually driven platforms such as Instagram, encouraging tourists to share their experiences with local dishes can both increase customer loyalty and attract new tourists.
- Local food consumption is not just a culinary experience but also a cultural learning process. Businesses can deepen visitors' cultural experiences by offering educational sessions about local cuisine, sharing the history of dishes, and providing opportunities for interaction with local chefs. Such interactions can increase tourists' attachment to the destination and their intention to revisit.
- Local food businesses, by collaborating with sustainable agriculture and local producers, can both protect the environment and support the community. This not only provides tourists with delicious meals but also gives them the feeling that they are contributing to the destination they are visiting. Partnerships with local farmers and producers can foster social responsibility awareness among tourists.
- Businesses can appeal to a wide customer base by offering options that cater to tourists' different dietary habits and nutritional needs. By adding alternatives such as vegan, vegetarian, or gluten-free menus, businesses can offer choices that align with tourists' dietary preferences.
- For the local food experience to be meaningful and memorable for tourists, training of business staff is crucial. Staff members should be knowledgeable about the history, ingredients, and cultural context of local cuisine, enabling them to provide a deeper experience for tourists. A warm and friendly approach from staff will directly enhance customer satisfaction.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Comparative studies can be conducted to examine how the impact of local food consumption on tourists' intention to revisit is shaped in different tourist destinations. Different geographic regions and cultural contexts may influence the effect of local food experiences on tourist satisfaction and intention to revisit in various ways. Such studies could help in obtaining generalizable results. Moreover, this study is limited to domestic tourists visiting the provinces of Adana and Mersin due to temporal and spatial constraints. Future research could include other cities with significant appeal for gastronomic tourism, allowing for a more comprehensive evaluation.

In addition to the mediating role of satisfaction on the intention to revisit, other psychological and socio-diplomatic factors may come into play. Future studies could develop a broader mediating model by considering factors such as tourists' perceptions of local food experiences, service quality, and environmental factors. Furthermore, research could be conducted on how social media and digital marketing influence tourists'

perceptions of local food experiences and how these perceptions impact their visit intentions. Specifically, the impact of local food content shared on Instagram and other social media platforms on tourists' destination choices could be explored.

## References

- Adana İl Kültür ve Turizm Müdürlüğü. (2024). Retrieved November 26, 2024, from <https://adana.ktb.gov.tr/>.
- Angelakis, G., Vecchio, Y., Lemonakis, C., Atsalakis, G., Zopounidis, C., and Mattas, K. (2023). Exploring the behavioral intentions of food tourists who visit crete. *Sustainability*, 15(11), 8961.
- Apuhan, A. K., and Kement, Ü. (2022). Gastro-turistlerin yerellik ve yiyecek kişilik özelliklerinin yerel yiyecek satın alma niyetine etkisi: Gaziantep ili örneği. *Hitit Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 15(1), 211-236.
- Bayrakçı, S., and Akdağ, G. (2016). Yerel yemek tüketim motivasyonlarının turistlerin tekrar ziyaret eğilimlerine etkisi: Gaziantep'i ziyaret eden yerli turistler üzerine bir araştırma. *Anatolia: Turizm Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 27(1), 96-110.
- Brozović, D., D'Auria, A., Tregua, M., and Camilleri, M. A. (2024). The sustainability of food tourism for small enterprises: Conditions, challenges, and opportunities. *Tourism Planning and Destination Marketing, 2nd Edition*, 93-114.
- Busacca, B., and Padula, G. (2005). Understanding the relationship between attribute performance and overall satisfaction: Theory, measurement and implications. *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*, 23(6), 543-561.
- Crompton, J. L. (1979). Motivations for pleasure vacation. *Annals of tourism research*, 6(4), 408-424.
- Crompton, J. L., and McKay, S. L. (1997). Motives of visitors attending festival events. *Annals of tourism research*, 24(2), 425-439.
- Çilesiz, E. and Selçuk, G. N. (2018). Hizmet adaleti, fiyat adaleti ve güven algılarının müşteri memnuniyeti üzerindeki etkisi kış koridorunda konaklayan yabancı turistler üzerine bir araştırma. *Güncel Turizm Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 2(1), 42-78.
- Daşdemir, A., and Madenci, A. B. (2021). Gastronomi turizmi kapsamında yerel yiyecek tüketim motivasyonlarının yerli turistlerin tekrar ziyaret etme niyetlerine etkisinin belirlenmesi: Van kahvaltısı örneği. *Gastroia: Journal of Gastronomy and Travel Research*, 5(2), 155-176.
- Erol, E., and Ünalsoy, S. (2022). Gıda özgünlüğü, gıda kalitesi, hizmet kalitesi ve fiziksel çevrenin yöresel gıda deneyimlerinde tekrar ziyaret etme niyetine etkisi. *Journal of Gastronomy, Hospitality and Travel*, 5(4), 1783-1794.
- Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., Sarstedt, M., and Thiele, K. O. (2017). Mirror, mirror on the wall: a comparative evaluation of composite-based structural equation modeling methods. *Journal of the academy of marketing science*, 45, 616-632.
- Hasançebi, B., and Keskin, E. (2024). *Yöresel yiyecek ve içeceklerin davranışsal niyet üzerine etkisi: Trabzon'u ziyaret eden turistlere yönelik araştırma* (Yüksek Lisans Tezi), Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Nevşehir.
- Hayes, A. F. (2013). *Introduction to Mediation, Moderation, and Conditional Process Analysis: A Regression-Based Approach*. Guilford Press.
- Hayes, A. F. (2018). Partial, Conditional, and Moderated Moderated Mediation: Quantification, Inference, and Interpretation. *Communication Monographs*, 85(1), 4-40.
- Keskin, E., Sezen, N., and Dağ, T. (2020). Unutulmaz turizm deneyimi, müşteri memnuniyeti, tekrar ziyaret ve tavsiye etme niyeti arasındaki ilişkiler: Kapadokya bölgesini ziyaret eden turistlere yönelik araştırma. *Journal of Recreation and Tourism Research /JRTR*, 7 (2), 239-264.
- Khoshkam, M., Marzuki, A., Nunkoo, R., Pirmohammadzadeh, A., and Kiumarsi, S. (2023). The impact of food culture on patronage intention of visitors: the mediating role of satisfaction. *British Food Journal*, 125(2), 469-499.
- Kim, Y. G., and Eves, A. (2012). Construction and validation of a scale to measure tourist motivation to consume local food. *Tourism management*, 33(6), 1458-1467.

- Kim, Y. G., Eves, A., and Scarles, C. (2009). Building a model of local food consumption on trips and holidays: A grounded theory approach. *International journal of hospitality management*, 28(3), 423-431.
- Kivela, J., and Crofts, J. C. (2006). Tourism and gastronomy: Gastronomy's influence on how tourists experience a destination. *Journal of hospitality and tourism research*, 30(3), 354-377.
- McIntosh, R.W., Goeldner, C. R., and Ritchie, J. R. B. (1995). *Tourism principles, practices, philosophies* (7th ed.). New York: Wiley.
- Mersin İl Kültür ve Turizm Müdürlüğü. (2024). Retrieved November 8, 2024, from <https://mersin.ktb.gov.tr/>.
- Metin, D., and Kalay, H. A. (2021). Algılanan destinasyon imajının turist memnuniyeti ve tekrar ziyaret etme niyetine etkisi: Van'ı ziyaret eden İranlı turistler üzerine bir araştırma. *Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, (54), 325-352.
- Orea-Giner, A., and Fusté-Forné, F. (2023). The way we live, the way we travel: generation Z and sustainable consumption in food tourism experiences. *British Food Journal*, 125(13), 330-351.
- Öktem, E., and Akdu, S. (2022). Unutulmaz turizm deneyiminin müşteri memnuniyetine ve tekrar ziyaret etme niyetine etkisi. *Erciyes Akademi*, 36(2), 964-981.
- Özdemir, O. (2019). Destinasyon imajının turistlerin memnuniyetine ve tekrar ziyaret etme niyetine etkisi: Mardin ili üzerine bir araştırma. *İktisadi ve İdari Yaklaşımlar Dergisi*, 1(1), 65-77.
- Sutiadiningsih, A., Purwidiani, N., Dewi, I. H. P., Hamdani, A. T., and Tho Le, H. (2023). Gastronomic experience as a motivation for tourists to choose tourist destinations in Indonesia and Vietnam. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 47(2), 424-431.
- Valverde-Roda, J., Medina Viruel, M. J., Castano Prieto, L., and Solano Sanchez, M. A. (2023). Interests, motivations and gastronomic experiences in the world heritage site destination of Granada (Spain): satisfaction analysis. *British Food Journal*, 125(13), 61-80.
- Yazıt, H., and Bayram, G. E. (2022). Ziyaretçilerin seyahat motivasyonu, memnuniyeti, tekrar ziyaret niyeti ve sadakat algısı ilişkisi üzerine bir araştırma. *Turizm ve İşletme Bilimleri Dergisi*, 2(2), 104-121.
- Zhu, Y., Zhu, L., and Weng, L. (2024). How do tourists' value perceptions of food experiences influence their perceived destination image and revisit intention? a moderated mediation model. *Foods*, 13(3), 412.