

DISCOVERING THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN EVENT IDENTITY, SATISFACTION, IMAGE, WoM, AND RE-PARTICIPATION INTENTION: THE CASE OF A REPEATED SMALL-SCALE DANCE EVENT

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ABSTRACT Although small-scale dance events are popular as a postmodern socialization tool for modern people, little is known about participants' behavioral intentions in active small-scale dance events. This research examined the hierarchical relationship between event image, event satisfaction, event identity, and behavioral intentions, including re-participation intention and positive word-of-mouth (WoM) behavior, in a repeated small-scale dance event. A total of 412 participants of the Eskisehir Dance Festival (EDF), a repeated small-scale dance event, were reached by the convenience sampling method. Research data were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM). First, the model's compatibility with the data was evaluated by applying confirmatory factor analysis to the model, which includes all research structures. AVE, Cronbach alpha, and CR values were analyzed for all constructs. The conceptual model of the research was analyzed using the AMOS v22. Event image is an important predictor of both event satisfaction ($\beta = 0.88$; $p < 0.01$) and event identity ($\beta = 0.46$; $p < 0.01$). In addition, event satisfaction significantly impacted event identity ($\beta = 0.76$; $p < 0.01$). Event identity is the predictor of re-participation intention ($\beta = 0.24$; $p < 0.01$) and positive WoM behavior ($\beta = 0.88$; $p < 0.01$). Finally, WoM behavior positively affected re-participation intention ($\beta = 0.88$; $p < 0.01$). Research results made significant empirical contributions to the literature on repeated small-scale dance events. In addition, based on the research results, suggestions were presented to managers of small-scale dance events that they could use in their marketing strategies.

KEYWORDS: *event identity, event image, re-participation intention, satisfaction*

1. INTRODUCTION

Events make significant economic (Chalip, 2014) and social (Zhou & Kaplanidou, 2018) contributions to the

destinations where they are held. Tourist visits and spending in the regions where events occur contribute significantly to regional socio-economic development (Davies, 2012; Kwiatkowski et al., 2018; Zhou &

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Kaplanidou, 2018). Therefore, events are crucial for income and job creation (Page & Connell, 2020). Moreover, events are one of the most important tools that can be used for cultural promotion and social interaction (Balduck et al., 2011).

Small-scale events are events in which active participants are outnumbered by the spectators (passive participants). Unlike active event participants, spectator (passive) event participants are described as people who only watch the event (Hayes & Karamichas, 2012). Previous research has found that repeated small-scale events provide more benefits than mega-events across multiple dimensions (economic, social, and sustainability) (e.g., Csobàn & Serra, 2014; Gibson et al., 2012), which has increased academic and industry interest in repeated small-scale events. Kaplanidou and Gibson (2010) revealed that past event attendance is not a factor that predicts the behavioral intentions of active event participants. Therefore, event managers need to identify the key factors that influence the behavioral intentions of the active event participants (Kaplanidou & Gibson, 2010; Kaplanidou et al., 2013). Therefore, it is important to determine the factors that influence the re-participation intention, considering the unique characteristics of the event (type of event and type of participants, etc.).

Nowadays, small-scale dance events have become one of the most important postmodern socialization tools of modern communities. Active participation in dance events takes an important place in these events (McCleary et al., 2006). Previous research on dance events investigated addictive substance use (Riley et al., 2001) and the culture of dance festivals (Dankworth & David, 2014). The number and type of special themed events, whose main purpose is to make the event organization profitable by providing entertainment among repeated small-scale events, are increasing daily (Ko et al., 2014), which means that event participants have many different alternatives. The success of an event depends on the number of participants (Conway, 2009; Kupets, 2011). Therefore, one of the most important responsibilities of repeated small-scale dance event managers is to organize the best events for the participants, among other alternatives (Kaplanidou et al., 2013). Therefore, identifying the factors that influence the behavioral intentions of active participants in repeat small dance events is critical to the economic sustainability of these events. Identifying the factors that influence active event participation is possible by evaluating behavioral intention as the main dependent variable, as in consumer research (Kaplanidou and Gibson, 2010).

Many studies have found that identity significantly affects behavioral intention (e.g., Lee et al.,

2013; Rather, 2018). Despite the growing awareness, researchers argue that there is much more to learn about the role of identity in consumer behavior. Identity is central to consumer behavior research (Mittal, 2015). However, there is no research in the literature examining the event identity of active participants in repeated small-scale dance events. This is an important shortcoming of the event literature. Understanding the relationships among event image, event satisfaction, event identity, and behavioral intentions can provide a more comprehensive framework for defining the aspects that influence behavioral intentions at small-scale dance events. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to investigate the hierarchical relationship between event image, event satisfaction, event identity, and behavioral intentions (re-participation intention and positive WoM behavior) in the context of a repeated small-scale active dance event participants of the Eskisehir Dance Festival (EDF), which is held regularly every year in Turkey.

1.1. Eskisehir dance festival (EDF)

Repeated small-scale events (events where active participants outnumber passive participants) have increased in number due to the social and economic benefits they provide (Hayes & Karamichas, 2012; Halpenny et al., 2016). While some repeated small-scale events attract more spectators, others attract more active participants (Kaplanidou, 2010). Thus, it is possible to divide dance event participants into spectators (those who only passively watch the event) and active dance event participants (people who actively participate in the event) (Banio & Malchrowicz-Moško, 2019). Consequently, the behavioral intentions of event participants are influenced by various factors, such as the type of event, its characteristics, and the types of participants (Gwinner, 1997; Hayes & Karamichas, 2012). Therefore, diversifying studies on small-scale events based on these factors will provide a more comprehensive framework on this topic (Hallmann et al., 2010). Therefore, explaining EDF in the context of the event literature is important.

Dance events may differ in terms of various criteria (purpose, target audience, size, etc.). Dance events can be evaluated according to their nature in the performing arts and entertainment industries (Kupets, 2011). They are organized in Turkey, and most are repeated in different periods (annual, monthly, etc.). EDF has been held regularly in February in Eskisehir since 2013. Thousands of dance enthusiasts participate in EDF, where different types of dances are performed. In this sense, EDF is a recurring small-scale event with active participants.

Event managers can organize events for various

purposes. These may be social benefits or simply economic profitability. However, regardless of the event's purpose, its success depends largely on the number of event participants. Among the repeated small-scale events, there are special themed events whose main purpose is to provide profits to the event organization by providing entertainment services (Allen et al., 2022; Conway, 2009). EDF is such an event. Although previous studies in the literature have focused on the important role of festivals in acquiring cultural heritage, EDF is not an event with a rich cultural background but a festival created by a special event management organization whose main purpose is economic revenue. Therefore, unlike previous studies, EDF is a repeated small-scale event that aims at economic profitability and attracts active participants.

1.2. Key contributions of research

Repeated small-scale events have benefits in socio-cultural, economic, and sustainability contexts (Taks, 2013; Csobàn & Serra, 2014; Gibson et al., 2012). This has increased the number of participants in repeated small-scale events. Research shows the importance of determining the factors that influence the behavioral intentions of active event participants (e.g., Hyun & Jordan, 2020; Kaplanidou & Gibson, 2010; Kaplanidou et al., 2012; Koo et al., 2014). However, we still have much to learn about repeated small-scale events participants' behavioral intentions, as they are influenced by various factors such as the type of event, its characteristics, and participant types (Gwinner 1997; Hayes & Karamichas, 2012). Therefore, diversifying studies on small-scale events based on these factors will provide a more comprehensive framework for this topic (Hallmann et al., 2010).

The most important factor in organizing any event is the financial basis of the event (Maguire & Hanrahan, 2017). The number of participants and their behavioral intentions should be determined for the economic sustainability of repeated small-scale events. Repeated small-scale dance events, important to postmodern socialization, have become a major player in today's event tourism industry (McCleary et al., 2006; Papageorgiou & Poulaki, 2022). Despite the growing popularity of small-scale dance events, they have been the subject of limited research. Previous research has investigated the socio-cultural context of dance events (Riley et al., 2001) and the behavior of event participants regarding addictive substance use (Dankworth & David, 2014). Participating in small-scale dance events means experiential tourism consumption (Rust, 2020). As a result of the experience, participants' evaluations of the event express several phenomena (image, satisfaction, identi-

ty) (Nogueira & Carvalho, 2022). These phenomena are important antecedents of behavioral intentions (WoM, loyalty) (Girish & Lee, 2019).

There is no research on the behavioral intentions of active participants in repeated small-scale dance events. Furthermore, many studies have found that identity significantly impacts behavioral intentions (Lee et al., 2013; Rather, 2018). Despite the growing awareness, researchers argue that there is still much more to learn about the role of identity in consumer behavior. Identity plays a central role in research examining consumer behavior (Mittal, 2015). However, there is a lack of research investigating the event identification among active participants in repeated small-scale dance events. This is an important deficiency in the literature examining event participants' behavior. Therefore, this research examined the hierarchical relationship between event image, event satisfaction, event identity, and behavioral intentions (re-participation intention and positive WoM behavior) in a repeated small-scale active dance event. The current research results provide the theoretical foundation for the ongoing research in the event literature related to repeated small-scale dance events. In addition, the research findings will shed light on the strategies that small-scale dance event managers can use in practice.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND THE RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Although the destination is considered a very important event factor (Kaplanidou, 2010), other dimensions may play a much more important role than the destination, especially for active event participants (Newland & Aicher, 2018). The main purpose of active event participants is to actively participate in the event (Hallmann & Breuer, 2010). Therefore, the event itself is more important than the destination where the event takes place (Kaplanidou, 2007; Kaplanidou & Gibson, 2010). In summary, the image of the event, rather than the image of the destination, must be considered to predict participants' behavioral intentions in small active dance events.

Cognitive and emotional perceptions of the event provide the general framework for the image (Kaplanidou, 2010; Kim et al., 2018). Active participants of small-scale events attend events to satisfy their various expectations (Kaplanidou & Gibson, 2010; Koo et al., 2014). After participating in an event, the degree to which one's expectations of the event are met expresses event satisfaction (Oliver, 1980). Therefore, event satisfaction or dissatisfaction depends on participants' evaluation of some expecta-

tions about the event (Koo et al., 2014). Kaplanidou and Vogt (2007) found that the perceived event image influences satisfaction with the event among participants of smaller cycling events. Koo et al. (2014) also found that the event image of participants in a small marathon event directly affected satisfaction with the event. The mediation effect of satisfaction with the event influenced the relationship between event image and intention to participate in the event again. Participants' perceptions of the event image are influenced by the event's type, characteristics, and individual factors (Gwinner, 1997; Hayes & Karachias, 2012). Therefore, diversifying event image research based on these factors will provide a more comprehensive theoretical framework (Hallmann et al., 2010). Based on this information and the results of previous research, the first hypothesis of this research was formulated as follows:

H1. Event image has a positive effect on event satisfaction.

Kaplanidou and Gibson (2010) found that destination image did not influence active participants' intention to attend repeated small-scale events. Accordingly, it is the event itself that matters to active event participants. Therefore, the effect of image on re-participation intention is based on other factors, such as attitude toward the event (Kaplanidou & Gibson, 2010) and interest in the event (Kim & Chalip, 2004). Active participation in an event is an important tool for building social identity (Goulding & Shankar, 2004). Therefore, active event participation provides participants excellent opportunities to develop identity (Lee et al., 2016). The positive and strong event image perceived by participants is a very important phenomenon to distinguish an event from others (Koo et al., 2014) because a positive event image is an important dimension that occupies a positive and unique place in consumers' minds (Wu & Chen, 2019; Roy & Banerjee, 2014). Therefore, image is an intangible and inimitable corporate resource for events (Huang & Chen, 2017). The harmony between event image and identity is important for events (Parent & Foreman, 2007; Kashyap & Chaudhary, 2019; Van Rekom et al., 2008).

Event identity is a special social identity in which individuals define themselves regarding their membership to a particular group (Snelgrove, 2008). Many studies demonstrate the effects of the image on identity (Karaosmanoglu & Melewar, 2006; Roy & Banerjee, 2014). However, the relationship between event identity and event image remains unclear for active participants in small-scale repetitive dance events. Based on the above information, the present

study hypothesizes that event images may impact event identity. In this context, the second hypothesis of this research was formulated as follows:

H2. Event image has a positive impact on event identity.

Event satisfaction is an important predictor of participants' future behaviors (re-participation intention, WoM) after attending the event (Koo et al., 2014; Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2007). Moreover, many studies have used event satisfaction among the research models that examine behavioral intentions (e.g., Koo et al., 2014; Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2007). Therefore, from an event management perspective, the success of an event depends on the level of participant satisfaction (Ko et al., 2010).

Events allow participants to move away from their daily routines and assume different identities for a while (Ourahmoune, 2016). The individual needs an agency to express this individual transformation in their identity (Botti & McGill, 2011). Event identity is very important in this process (Davis, 2017). Therefore, these agencies set expectations based on the experience participants will gain from the event. The degree to which participants' event expectations are met explains their satisfaction (Koo et al., 2014). Through theoretical reasoning, it can be assumed that event participants' identification with the event, i.e., the degree to which their expectations are met, affects their event identities by providing them with the agency they seek. Thus, the third hypothesis of this research was formulated as follows:

H3. Event satisfaction has a positive effect on event identity.

2.1. Revised intention and positive WoM behavior

Ticket sales are the main source of income for repeated small-scale events. Therefore, re-participation intention is one of the most important issues that the managers of repeated small-scale events should focus on (Halpenny et al., 2016). Event loyalty is essential to re-participation intention (Bigné et al., 2005; Chen & Gusoy, 2001; Do Valle et al., 2006). Therefore, it is imperative to determine the factors that influence the event loyalty for repeated small-scale events.

Understanding participant-event relationships is the primary interest of event management researchers. Repeated small-scale dance events have unique rituals (Bladen et al., 2012), which means that events have several unique features that distinguish them from other events. Such features may lead event participants to identify their identities with

the events (Ourahmoune, 2016; Snelgrove, 2008). Kaplanidou and Gibson (2010) found that destination image did not influence active participants' intention to re-participate at repeated small-scale events. Consequently, it is the event itself that matters to active event participants. Therefore, the effect of image and satisfaction on re-participation intention is based on other factors, such as attitude towards the event (Kaplanidou & Gibson, 2010) and interest in the event (Kim & Chalip, 2004). Previous studies (Girish & Lee, 2019(b); Prayag et al., 2020; Phillips et al., 2013) have revealed a relationship between re-attendance, identity, and WoM behavior. Participants only make this activity a part of their identity when they adapt to the rituals of the activities to which they feel they belong. Therefore, identity should be the most important factor explaining behavioral intentions (re-participation intention, positive WoM behaviour) in events with active participation (Lee et al., 2016; Lee & Jan 2022). In this context, it may be reasonable to hypothesize similar relationships for repeated small-scale dance events, which we investigated in our research. Therefore, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- H4. *Event identity has a positive effect on WoM behavior.*
- H5. *Event identity has a positive effect on event loyalty.*
- H6. *WoM has a positive effect on event loyalty.*

3. METHODS

3.1. Sampling

The questionnaires were distributed to 427 participants by the researchers during the EDF (Eskisehir Dance Festival), which was held in Eskisehir between February 21 and 23, 2020, using the random selection method. A total of 15 questionnaires were not included in the analysis for various reasons (incomplete coding, undisciplined coding). Most participants were women (58.2%) between 18-25 years old (52.1%), while 70.9% had a university degree. It was also found that 54.3% of the participants attended the event for the first time, while 11.1% attended it more than four times.

3.2. Data collection tools

To evaluate the opinion of EDF participants, researchers created a questionnaire with scale items and demographic variables. Event participants' responses to the scale questions were rated using a five-point Likert scale (5 - strongly agree; 1 - strongly disagree). Girish and Lee's (2019) measurement instrument

used statements to determine event image, WoM behavior, and participants' intention to attend again. The items from Trail et al.'s (2005) measurement instrument were used for event satisfaction. Finally, the items used by Kim et al. (2001) were revised and used to measure the event identity. Hambleton and Kanjee (1995) stated that it is essential to perform back-translation to determine measurement equivalence. Therefore, two experts translated all statements into Turkish, and then possible language problems were avoided by back-translating the statements into English. As a result, the translated statements are considered representative of the original items.

Babbie (2010) suggested that participants in the study sample should review the items included in the questionnaire forms to ensure clarity control. Accordingly, a pilot study was conducted with 15 event participants. Various adjustments were made based on the participants' feedback, and the questionnaire was finalized.

3.3. Data analysis

SEM (Structural Equation Modeling) is a useful method that reveals complex relationships between different constructs through a single model (Hair et al., 2012). The structural model, which enables the measurement of hypotheses and measurements that reveal the compatibility of research data with the model, consists of two stages. The current study aims to discover causality relationships among many different constructs. The purpose is to propose and test the model for the relationship between event image, event identity, satisfaction, positive WoM, and re-participation intention. SEM was used to discover complex relationships among the research constructs using the AMOS V20 program.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Measurement model

The data obtained from the active EDF participants were analyzed in two stages as a measurement and structural model according to the recommendations of Anderson & Gerbing (1988). To evaluate the measurement model, the hypothesized fit between latent and observed variables was tested using CFA (Hair et al., 2012). It was found that the results of the analyses ($\chi^2 = 527.858$ $p = 0.000$. $\chi^2/SD = 2.707$. $GFI = 0.90$. $AGFI = 0.86$. $CFI = 0.95$. $TLI = 0.95$. $IFI = 0.95$. $RMSEA = 0.069$) are above the threshold values specified in the literature and the model is within acceptable

limits. Some analyses reported in the literature were used to determine the validity and reliability of the constructs. To determine the convergent validity, factor loadings of all the observed variables and AVE and CR values of the latent variables were obtained (Table 1). The fact that the obtained results are above the limits reported in the literature (AVE values > 0.5, CR values > 0.60, and factor loadings > 0.60) indicates that convergent validity is present (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2012). For the reliability of the latent variables, Cronbach's alpha and CR were calculated, and all were found to be above 0.7 (Nunnally, 1994). All results are shown in Table 1.

To ensure the model's external validity, all constructs' correlation coefficients were calculated. As a result of the analysis, it was found that all correlation coefficients were statistically significant and not greater than 0.85 (Table 2), demonstrating the external validity of the measurement model (Breckenridge, 1989).

124 **TABLE 1.** Factor loadings of the observed variables, CR, AVE, and Cronbach's alpha values of the latent variables related to the measurement model for the EDF participation

Constructs	Factor Loading
Event image (CR: 0.891). (Cronbach's alpha: 0.87). (AVE: 0.578)	
EDF is not supportive – supportive.	0.78
EDF is worthless – valuable.	0.84
EDF is boring – fun.	0.83
EDF is uninspiring – fascinating.	0.78
EDF is unhealthy – healthy.	0.68
I have an emotional bond with the EDF brand.	0.63
WoM (CR: 0.935). (Cronbach's alpha: 0.93). (AVE: 0.828)	
I will recommend it to anyone who asks me to participate in the EDF.	0.92
I will encourage people around me to participate in the EDF.	0.90
I will say positive things about the EDF to others.	0.91
Event loyalty (CR: 0.939). (Cronbach's alpha: 0.934). (AVE: 0.795)	
I will participate in the EDF next year.	0.94
I will do my best to come back to the EDF again.	0.93
Next year, I will think about participating in the EDF.	0.97
I will participate in the events like the EDF.	0.70
Satisfaction (CR: 0.930). (Cronbach's alpha: 0.929). (AVE: 0.692)	
I am satisfied with my experience at the EDF.	0.88
I am satisfied with the behavior of the EDF staff.	0.87
I am happy to participate in the EDF.	0.83
I am satisfied with the EDF event performance.	0.60
I am satisfied with the quality of the EDF.	0.83
I am satisfied with my experience in the EDF.	0.94
Brand ID (CR: 0.881). (Cronbach's alpha: 0.908). (AVE: 0.712)	
The EDF brand reflects my personality.	0.83
The EDF brand helps me to express myself.	0.87
The EDF brand helps me to improve myself.	0.83

TABLE 2. Correlation matrix of constructs

	1	2	3	4	5
Event image (1)	1.000				
Wom (2)	0.815**	1.000			
Event loyalty (3)	0.722**	0.773*	1.000		
Satisfaction (4)	0.769**	0.828**	0.738**	1.000	
Brand identity (5)	0.728**	0.728**	0.690**	0.765**	1.000
Mean	4.02	4.06	3.99	4.16	3.70
SD	0.77	0.97	1.07	0.85	1.14

NOTE. ** p<0.01

4.2. Structural model

The conceptual model of the research and the proposed hypotheses about the model are shown in Figure 1. The goodness of fit values of the structural model was above the limits. (X2= 586.183 p=0.000. X2/SD =2.187. GFI=0.88. AGFI=0.829. CFI = 0.925. TLI = 0.923. IFI =0.914. RMSEA =0.069). These results demonstrate that the empirical data obtained in the research are consistent with the model.

As can be seen in Table 3, all hypotheses are accepted. The image of the event is an important predictor of both event satisfaction ($\beta =0.88$; $p <0.01$) and brand identity ($\beta =0.46$; $p <0.01$). In addition, satisfaction with the event was found to impact brand identity significantly ($\beta =0.76$; $p < 0.01$). It was also found that brand identity is the predictor of event image ($\beta =. 88$; $p < 0.01$) and WoM behavior ($\beta =0.88$; $p < 0.01$). It was proved that positive WoM behavior positively affects event loyalty ($\beta =0.88$; $p <0.01$), and the sixth hypothesis was accepted.

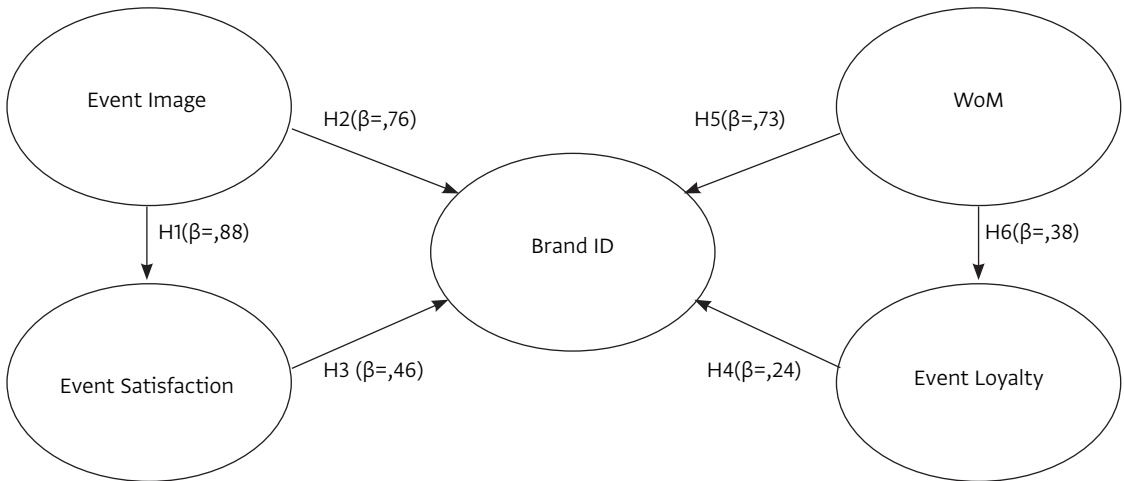


FIGURE 1. Conceptual Model

TABLE 3. Results of the path analysis

Analysis	Coefficient	T-value	Result
H1 Event image → Event satisfaction	0.88	12.78	Accepted**
H2 Event image → Brand identity	0.46	5.43	Accepted **
H3 Event satisfaction → Brand identity	0.76	10.38	Accepted **
H4 Brand identity → WoM	0.73	18.91	Accepted **
H5 Brand identity → Event loyalty	0.24	3.75	Accepted **
H6 WoM → Event loyalty	0.38	4.85	Accepted **

NOTE. **p<0.01

5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Repeated small-scale events generate services that create unique experiences for participants outside their daily routines and generate economic revenue. As a postmodern socialization tool for modern people, such events have become the most important player in the event industry. Active event participants collectively create value based on their experiences (Zhou & Kaplanidou, 2018). Therefore, among the social benefits of these events, the most important factor of industrial growth is the social experience based on the connection and integration between the participants (Malchrowicz-Moško and Poczta, 2018). As a result of the experience, participants’ evaluations of the event express several phenomena (image, satisfaction, identity) (Nogueira & Carvalho, 2022). Re-participation intention as the main dependent variable in consumer behavior research related to a service product based on a social experience is accepted as the most important indicator (Kaplanidou & Gibson 2010). These phenomena are important antecedents of individual behavior (WoM, loyalty) (Girish & Lee, 2019a). Despite the growing popularity of small-scale dance events, they have been the subject of limited research. Previous research has investigated the socio-cultural context of dance events (Riley et al., 2001) and event attendees’ behaviors related to the use of addictive substances (Dankworth & David, 2014).

The purpose of this research was to examine the hierarchical relationship between event image, event satisfaction, event identity, and behavioral intention (intention to re-participate and positive WoM behavior) in the context of a repeated small-scale active dance event participants of the EDF (Eskisehir Dance Festival), which is held regularly every year in Turkey. All hypotheses we developed based on the literature were accepted. The direct or indirect effects of event satisfaction, event image, event identity, and posi-

tive WoM behavior on event loyalty were empirically demonstrated. Thus, our research findings have provided some theoretical contributions to the research streams in the literature related to repeated small-scale dance events. In addition, the research findings offer practical implications that managers of repeated small-scale dance events can use in their marketing strategies.

5.1. Theoretical implications

Active event participants pay attention to the event’s physical, social, and organizational dimensions (Koo et al., 2014). Therefore, event image and satisfaction are important phenomena for event research models (Kaplanidou and Vogt, 2007). Previous research (Kaplanidou and Vogt, 2007; Koo et al., 2014) has empirically proven that event image positively affects satisfaction for different types of events (e.g., marathon runners, cyclists). Participants’ perception of the event image is influenced by the type of event, its characteristics, and individual factors (Gwinner, 1997; Hayes & Karamichas, 2012). Therefore, diversifying event image research based on these factors will provide a more comprehensive framework (Hallmann et al., 2010). In the current research, event image influenced event satisfaction positively (H1; 0.88; p < 0.01). This result is consistent with previous research results and provides empirical evidence for further research in the literature related to small-scale dance events.

Active event participation is an important tool for building social identity. As a type of tourism, events can be considered important fields in which individual and social identities are negotiated (Bond & Falk, 2013). Participants at small-scale active dance events attend these events to expand their knowledge and skills and to gain new experiences. As a result of participating in these events, the individual acquires knowledge, skills, and social relationships

that contribute to their social identity (Green & Jones, 2005). Therefore, this participation can be considered a serious leisure activity. When participating in such events, creating and sharing the desired identity and showing commitment to the group (Davis, 2017; Grappi & Montinari, 2011; Green & Jones, 2005). In addition, participation in serious leisure activities provides individuals with opportunities to interact with others. Therefore, serious leisure activities contribute to developing a social identity (Lee et al., 2016). Participants adapt to the rituals of the events they feel they belong to and make these events a part of their identity.

Consequently, the most important factor for active event participation should be event identity (Lee et al., 2016). The effect of event image on event identity was empirically demonstrated under the second research hypothesis (H2; 0.46; $p < 0.01$). This is the first study in the literature to prove the effect of event image on event identity. Therefore, the current research results highlight the power of event images in forming event identity. New research on other event types will provide a more comprehensive framework.

Event participants tend to look for agencies to identify themselves with the event before attending an event (Davis, 2017), which creates an expectation about the individual's experience before the event. Event satisfaction can be shown as the degree to which expectations about the individual experience are met (Koo et al., 2014). Therefore, the degree of participants' satisfaction with their self-identity agencies before the event affects their event identities. In this study, satisfaction with the event satisfaction was shown to have a significant positive effect on the event identity (H3; 0.76; $p < 0.01$). No research in the literature examines similar relationships for repeated small-scale dance events. Thus, this result suggests a relationship between event identity formation and event satisfaction in a small-scale dance event context. However, this result needs to be supported by other studies.

The current research found that the effect of event image and event satisfaction on behavioral intentions (WoM and re-participation intention) is realized through event identity. Thus, event identity is a central construct of our research model. Previous research results (e.g., Bigné et al., 2005; Girish & Lee, 2019) confirm that event image significantly affects positive WoM behavior. Kaplanidou and Gibson (2010) found that destination image did not influence active participants' intention to re-participate at a repeated small-scale event. Thus, it is the event itself that matters to active event participants. Previous studies have shown a mediating factor, such as attitude toward the event (Kaplanidou & Gibson, 2010), interest

in the event (Kim & Chalip, 2004), and a relationship between event image and event satisfaction. In the current research, event image and satisfaction directly affected event identity. In addition, event identity directly affects the intention to re-participate. These are important findings for new studies that will analyze the mediation effect of event identity in the relationship between the event image and the intention to re-participate.

Many previous studies with different subjects and sample groups (e.g., Rather, 2018; Lee et al., 2013) have found that identity significantly positively affects loyalty. The results of this research showed that for the EDF, which is a repeated small-scale dance event with active participants, event identity significantly affects both positive WoM behavior (H4; 0.73; $p < 0.01$) and re-participation intention (H5; 0.24; $p < 0.01$). To date, no research has examined the effects of event identity on positive WoM and event loyalty in small-scale dance events. Therefore, our empirical results made a unique theoretical contribution to the literature. Although these results are important, especially for repeated small-scale dance events, analyzing models that examine similar relationships for different events will enhance our understanding of the subject.

Practical implications

Apart from the fact that events can be classified according to different characteristics, the only common feature is that they have a manager. Starting with the planning of the event, continuing with the execution, and ending with the successful completion, the responsibility lies with the event manager (Conway, 2009). The success of an event depends on the number of participants (Conway, 2009; Kupets, 2011). Therefore, among other alternatives, one of the most important tasks of managers of repeated small-scale dance events is to organize the best events for the participants (Kaplanidou et al., 2013). The current study showed that a strong event image, event satisfaction, and event identity are important factors for the success of small-scale dance events.

First, event managers should aim to create and maintain a positive event image (Koo et al., 2014). Therefore, it is necessary to create positive experiences related to some aspects (emotional, social, environmental) of the event (Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2006). Experiences that cannot be replicated or imitated can be a competitive advantage of the event (Aaker, 1996). In addition, event managers should aim to develop a positive and powerful image that influences the choice of the event in the participants' minds.

Consistent with previous research results (Kapla-

nidou & Gibson, 2010; Koo et al., 2014), this study found that event image significantly impacts event satisfaction. Therefore, a positive event image can be used to increase participant satisfaction. Participant satisfaction is a strategic investment for repeated small-scale events because it influences customers' behavioral intentions (Kaplanidou & Gibson, 2010; Koo et al., 2014). Therefore, participants' expectations should be properly determined, and event managers should provide the services that meet those expectations before and during the event.

Recent research findings have revealed that event identity plays a central role among models investigating dance event participation behavioral intentions (re-participation intention, WoM). Therefore, event managers must develop strategies to create event identity for participants. The growth of event tourism has transformed the unique features of events into sellable meta-elements. Although entertainment- and excitement-oriented event marketing communication messages achieve significant success, the unique features of events are lost (Lee et al., 2016). This is far from highlighting the distinctive features of events and results in sending ordinary marketing communication messages for all events. Suppose the unique characteristics of the event can be communicated in the marketing messages. In that case, the participants will become aware of the values of the event, which ensures that cognitive, emotional, and behavioral bonds develop between the participants and the event.

In addition, highlighting the unique values associated with the event's real identity will make it

easier for the participants to identify with the event. Through today's modern marketing communication tools, especially social media, the unique values of the event can be communicated to participants with rich content. This content must align the event's characteristics with the participants' beliefs and values. In this way, it can help ensure that the connection between the participant and the event is lasting. Our research results show that implementing these strategies will positively influence participants' post-event decisions. Otherwise, it can be said that ordinary event marketing communication messages cannot effectively convey the event's unique values and create a connection between the event and participants.

5.2. Research limitations

The research is an important contribution to knowledge in the literature, but it has some limitations. The data obtained in this study were analyzed using quantitative research methods. Therefore, new studies that use qualitative research techniques can be designed to provide a deeper insight into the subject. This research was conducted with data collected from EDF participants, a small-scale repetitive dance event. Different results can be obtained when similar models are tested with different types of event participants. In addition, new models on this topic can be tested in light of the different variables in the literature. Finally, this study used data from EDF participants attending this small-scale dance event. Testing similar relationships with data collected at different events provides a more comprehensive framework.

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OTKRIVANJE ODNOSA IZMEĐU IDENTITETA DOGAĐANJA, ZADOVOLJSTVA,
IMIDŽA, USMENIH PREPORUKA I NAMJERE PONOVRNOG SUDJELOVANJA:
SLUČAJ PONAVLJANOG DOGAĐANJA MALIH RAZMJERA PLESNE PRIREDBE

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SAŽETAK

Iako su događanja malih razmjera popularna kao postmoderan alat socijalizacije, malo se zna o ponašajnim namjerama sudionika u aktivnim događanjima malih razmjera. Ovo istraživanje je ispitalo hijerarhijski odnos između imidža događanja, zadovoljstva događanjem, identiteta događanja i ponašajnih namjera, uključujući namjeru ponovnog sudjelovanja i pozitivnih usmenih preporuka na malim, ponavljajućim posebnim događanjima. Ukupno 412 sudionika Eskisehir Dance Festivala (EDF), malog, ponavljajućeg posebnog događanja, izabrano je za istraživanje metodom prigodnog uzorkovanja. Podaci istraživanja analizirani su korištenjem jednadžbi strukturnog modeliranja (SEM). Prvo je ocijenjena kompatibilnost modela s podacima primjenom potvrdne faktorske analize. Indikatori AVE, Cronbach alfa i CR vrijednosti analizirane su za sve konstrukte. Konceptualni model istraživanja analiziran je korištenjem softverskog paketa AMOS v22. Imidž događanja je važan prediktor i zadovoljstva događanjem ($\beta = 0.88$; $p < 0.01$) i identiteta događanja ($\beta = 0.46$; $p < 0.01$). Osim toga, zadovoljstvo događanjem značajno je utjecalo na identitet događanja ($\beta = 0.76$; $p < 0.01$). Identitet događanja je prediktor namjere ponovnog sudjelovanja ($\beta = 0.24$; $p < 0.01$) i pozitivnih usmenih preporuke ($\beta = 0.88$; $p < 0.01$). Konačno, pozitivne usmene preporuke su utjecale na namjeru ponovnog sudjelovanja ($\beta = 0.88$; $p < 0,01$). Rezultati istraživanja predstavljaju značajan empirijski doprinos literaturi o malim, ponavljajućim posebnim događanjima. Osim toga, na temelju rezultata istraživanja, upućuju se prijedlozi menadžerima malih posebnih događanja, koje se mogu koristiti u odgovarajućim marketinškim strategijama.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: *identitet događanja, imidž događanja, namjera ponovnog sudjelovanja, zadovoljstvo*