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Impact of TV dramas on consumers' travel, shopping and purchase intentions

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Abstract

Countries are increasingly competing with each other to attract tourists. However, little is known about how consumers' tourism-related behaviors respond to country image endeavors, such as TV dramas. We propose that as an important image source TV dramas from a country contribute to crafting the country's brand image and thereby influence viewers' tourism related intentions. Considering the case of Turkish TV dramas and drawing on the Hierarchical Decision Model (HDM), a survey of 400 Arab viewers revealed that exposure to Turkish TV dramas results in increased intentions to visit and shop in Turkey as well as to purchase products made in Turkey. Furthermore, while increase in purchase intentions results primarily from enhanced experiential associations related to the country, increase in visit or shopping intentions results from improved status associations related to the country.

1 | INTRODUCTION

Travel and tourism is among the world's largest industries with an economic contribution of $8.8 trillion in 2018, representing 10.4% of the global GDP. Tourism has become a key driver for socio-economic advancement and is thus closely linked with development. Newly emerging tourism destinations have brought diversification as well as greater competition in the industry while underscoring the necessity to offer unique and differentiated products. Effective product differentiation in tourism might be achievable via diffusion of a compelling country image. This paper explores this prospect in the case of Turkey, considering its image as gleaned from Turkish TV dramas. Specifically, we study associations between the country image and consumers' intentions for travel, shopping, and purchase.

Turkey is the world's fastest and second highest TV drama exporter after the United States (Alankuş & Yanardagoglu, 2016), and Turkish has become the most watched foreign language in the world (Bhutto, 2020). Turkish dramas have been exported to 105 countries to reach over 400 million people abroad (Deloitte, 2014). With more than 90 different Turkish drama series produced annually and each episode lasting about 150 min, the Turkish drama industry is one of the most productive and dynamic industries in the world. Narrating family dramas and love stories set in mansions on the Bosphorus, Turkish dramas immerse viewers to the everyday urban rhythms of Istanbul as they bridge Eastern and Western values, and blend traditional Islamic values with Western modernity. There is extensive anecdotal evidence suggesting that the portrayal of beautiful locations and cities in Turkish dramas has boosted tourism (Alankuş & Yanardagoglu, 2016; Bhutto, 2019; Deloitte, 2014). However, there is no systematic documentation of the association between consumers' exposure to Turkish TV dramas and their intentions to travel, shop, and purchase. The current study addresses this gap.

Past research has demonstrated how TV serials, just like movies, have the potential to influence the audience views, attitudes or purchase behaviors (Chan, 2007; Pervan & Martin, 2002). However, little is known about how TV serials could be used as a tool to craft and promote country image and thereby influence consumer evaluations and tourism intentions. This is quite remarkable considering the strategic importance of country image for tourism and trade. The current study addresses this deficiency.

Surprisingly, there is also depth of research on how images shape tourism intentions. Yet, images are essential. According to Boulding (1956), images influence cognition (what we know or think we know about something), affect (how we feel about what we know) and conation (actions taken based on what we know and how we feel about it). Simply put, images shape how people perceive and feel

about something. The current study demonstrates that, as a stock of powerful images about a destination, TV serials influence the cognitive, affective, and conative components to craft a destination image and brand, and delineates the process through which this effect manifests itself.

Past literature has essentially focused on either conceptualizing or operationalizing the cognitive, affective, and/or conative components of country image, or developing measurement scales for them (Chekalina, Fuchs, & Lexhagen, 2018; Pike, 2010). Subsequently, not much knowledge has emerged for tourism managers on how a particular aspect of popular culture, namely, TV serials shape the country image and induce tourism-related intentions. We contribute to this under-researched area by demonstrating how TV serials contribute to country image and thereby influence tourism-related intentions and provide significant implications for tourism managers. We explore these mechanisms in the context of a rising TV drama genre, the Turkish TV drama, and answer the following research questions:

1. How does exposure to Turkish TV dramas improve knowledge of Turkey and increase imagery related to Turkey?
2. How does country image increase affect towards Turkey?
3. How does affect increase conative intentions towards Turkey?
4. How does exposure to Turkish TV dramas improve overall tourism related behavioral intentions towards Turkey?

This paper explores these questions on survey data from 400 Arab consumers and analyzes it using structural equation modeling. The results show that exposure to Turkish TV dramas contribute to crafting an image of Turkey and to its branding. It further demonstrates that exposure significantly impacts knowledge about Turkey. Although negatively related to knowledge, awareness of Turkey interacts with exposure to improve knowledge of Turkey (i.e., exposure to TV dramas make up for negative beliefs previously held about Turkey). A refined knowledge of Turkey, as induced by exposure to TV dramas, further improves positive experiential (i.e., quality) associations and status associations with Turkey. In other words, it improves the expectation of pleasant experiences in Turkey and fosters good opinions of the politics, diplomacy, economy, or technology pertaining to Turkey. Both association types further enhance tourism-related preferences for Turkey. Improvements in the affective component (i.e., preferences) will positively reverberate on conative dimensions such as intentions to visit Turkey and purchase "Made in Turkey" products. Intentions to shop in Turkey are an outcome from heightened visit intentions.

This article contributes to past research in meaningful ways. While previous research focused mainly on conceptualizing or measuring country image (Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2009), this study shows how the country image might be shaped by image-laden cues, such as TV serials, of the focal destination and subsequently influence tourism-related intentions. In addition, we demonstrate empirically the significance of salience (i.e., country knowledge), imagery (i.e., experiential and status associations), quality (i.e., preference), and resonance (i.e., intentions) recently proposed in the literature (Frías Jamilena, Polo Pena, & Rodríguez Molina, 2017), via the hierarchical decision model.

2 | THE TURKISH DRAMA GENRE

Turkey ranks as the second-largest exporter of TV serials after the United States. These serials reach more than 400 million viewers worldwide, across the Middle East, North Africa, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Asia Pacific, Latin America and with new markets opening up in Scandinavia (Bhutto, 2019; Özdemir, 2015). The Turkish serials that have been produced since 2004–2005 represent a new genre called « *Turkish dramas* » (Irani, 2007). Notable successes include *Noor* [*Gümüş*], *1,001 Nights* [*Binbir Gece*], *What is Fatmagül's crime?* [*Fatmagül'ün Suçu Ne?*], *The Magnificent Century* [*Muhteşem Yüzyil*], and *Valley of the Wolves* [*Kurtlar Vadisi*]. These types of soap operas share a specific narrative form:

> "Overlapping intrigues that are highlighted by the end of each episode and a community of characters with dynamic and complex interactions. Romantic and social relationships are central among the issues tackled as are family ties. Moreover, the plot usually highlights emotional and moral conflicts" (Buccianti, 2010, p. 3-4).

Turkish dramas come with a contradictory mix of characters juxtaposed against each other: Rich and poor, good and bad, mean and merciful, cunning and naïve. Some characters transcend these dichotomies through multiple reflective layers. The tensions among contradictions are often resolved through the twists of intricate plots and subversive storylines. Like internationally popular Mexican telenovelas or South Korean serials (Kim & Kim, 2018), these dramas carry a "Turkish Touch" and cultural values, such as the patriarchal model through the domination of the wise head of family, the importance of family ties epitomized by family meals, or the Turkish *Kahve* (i.e., coffee) gatherings (Buccianti, 2010, p. 4). In sum, they are a hybrid combining typical characteristics of American soaps and new cultural inputs (Buccianti, 2010, p. 4). As such, they offer an alternative to other foreign shows (Irani, 2007). One key feature of Turkish dramas lies in the richness and variety of onscreen locations. They put a strong emphasis on Turkish landscapes when filming (Buccianti, 2010; Zayed, 2013). Instead of filming in studios, many sequences are filmed outdoors allowing viewers to travel through Turkish cities and attractions (Buccianti, 2010). Shooting on-location and colorful modern scenes create rich imagery and make the serials particularly appealing (Zayed, 2013).

According to the Anatolia News Agency, in 2012 Turkey faced problems caused by foreign attacks in Syria at its southern borders. Nevertheless, Turkey hosted some 32m foreign tourists and earned nearly $25bn in income from tourism, while recognizing that the most effective promotion for Turkey is that of culture and arts (Zayed, 2013). In addition, according to the Turkish Statistics Institute (TÜIK), in 2015, those figures rose to 41.6m and $31.5bn. The entertainment exports have helped augment the economy after Turkey's tourism industry was hit following terrorist attacks, the 2016 attempted coup d'Etat, and the Russian ban on Turkish products.

Increasing interest in Turkish TV-induced tourism, which is part of a broader pop culture tourism, showed that there is a convergence

between tourism, media production, and popcultural consumption (Kim & Reijnders, 2018; Tham & Kim, 2018; Tkalec, Zilic, & Recher, 2017). However, few studies delved into the relationships underlying exposure to TV serials and tourism-as well as purchase-related behavior intentions. We draw on the Hierarchical Decision Model (FutureBrand, 2015), and the Consumer-Based Equity framework (Bigi, Plangger, Bonera, & Campbell, 2011; Keller, 2009; Keller & Lehmann, 2003) to explain how that connection works.

3 | CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF TV-INDUCED TOURISM

3.1 | Hierarchical decision model

The hierarchical decision model (hereafter, HDM) is an adaptation of the brand value chain (Keller & Lehmann, 2003) to the context of destination (FutureBrand, 2015). It consists of seven stages; *awareness*, *familiarity*, *associations*, *preference*, *consideration*, *visitation*, *and advocacy*. The first four stages lead to country-related intentions (i.e., *consideration*) which in turn predict *visitation* and *advocacy* (FutureBrand, 2015). The cognitive components of *awareness*, *familiarity* and *associations* refer to the consumers' belief about a particular country; second, the affective component, *preference*, describes the country's emotional value to the consumer (Papadopoulos, Heslop, & Beracs, 1990). Subsequently, the conative component captures consumers' behavioral intentions of *consideration*, *visitation*, *and advocacy* with regard to the focal country (Laroche, Papadopoulos, Heslop, & Mourali, 2005).

The constitutive dimensions of the HDM overlap with the customer mindset construct (Keller & Lehmann, 2003) and the model of consumer-based destination brand equity (Chekalina et al., 2018; Frías Jamilena et al., 2017). In keeping with this formalization, we posit that country cognitions in the form of *awareness*, *familiarity* (which we shall refer as *knowledge*), and *associations* precede country *preferences*, which in turn influence *consideration*—commonly termed *intentions* in consumer behavior literature—which are thus treated at the end of the model, closer to actual behavior of *visitation* and subsequent *advocacy*. Since most consumer behavior research is limited to the study of the conative component of intentions (Morwitz, 2014), we shall focus on consideration, that is, intentions, and thus exclude actual visitation and advocacy, which are difficult to capture using a cross-sectional design. The following sub-sections introduce each variable in the model as well as exposure to Turkish TV dramas, which induce the subsequent hierarchy of effect posited in the HDM.

3.2 | Exposure

Exposure refers to the time spent watching Turkish TV serials as well as involvement with the serials. Both are thought to be closely related because the longer the time spent on an activity, the higher the level of involvement in that activity (Zinkhan & Fornell, 1989). Besides, the high-involvement hierarchy (Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2009) stipulates that the greater levels of exposure will ultimately lead to higher levels of conations.

3.3 | Awareness

In the HDM, *awareness* refers to "the ability of a buyer to recognize or recall that a brand is a member of a certain product category" (Aaker, 1991, p. 61). Indeed, tourists need to know of a place in some classification of destinations, before they can consider it as a potential destination (Bianchi, Pike, & Lings, 2014; Zavattaro, Daspit, & Adams, 2015). Our conceptualization of awareness is consistent with this.

3.4 | Familiarity as knowledge

The HDM posits that brand *awareness* leads to brand *familiarity* which refers to brand *knowledge* (Keller & Lehmann, 2003). In this paper we use knowledge rather than familiarity, because knowledge corresponds more suitably with that of brand associations in the CBE model, that is, "anything linked in memory to a brand" (Aaker, 1991, p. 109). As such, brand knowledge is different from brand awareness, because knowledge encompasses anything in memory related to a destination (Bianchi et al., 2014; Zavattaro et al., 2015), rather than just the recall and the categorization of a destination in a given group, as presupposed in the awareness context theorized by Aaker (1991). In the TV drama context, individuals may already be aware of Turkey, enabling them to categorize Turkey with similar countries. In addition, they may have a certain level of knowledge about the country. This knowledge may be enhanced by exposure to TV dramas (Busby & Klug, 2001; Kim & Reijnders, 2018; Li, Li, Song, Lundberg, & Shen, 2017; Tham & Kim, 2018). Thus, knowledge corresponds to TV-drama-shaped knowledge about the country which encompasses all memories and mnemones connected to the destination as a result of exposure to Turkish TV dramas (Zavattaro et al., 2015). Thus:

Hypotheses H1 Exposure to Turkish TV dramas positively affects knowledge about the country.

The next hypothesis may be specific to the Turkish context under study but is worth emphasizing. Since awareness is a recall of the destination and its classification in a specific group in relation to other countries, it follows that adverse coverage on Turkey, mostly originating in the media, may lead consumers to develop negative associations, images, and meanings, about the country. For example, Devran (2007), showed how some media tend to portray a negative image of Turkey. Similarly, Paksoy (2015) identified individual-level influences on journalists while reporting on the relationships between Turkey and the European Union. Thus:

Hypotheses H2 Media-shaped awareness of the country has negative impact on knowledge about the country.

The negative press coverage about Turkey contrasts sharply with the romanticized vision depicted in many Turkish serials as reported by Irani (2007), for example. The exposure to Turkish TV dramas may thus lessen negative perceptions about the country. In other words, exposure may interact with a priori negative awareness of the country, to increase knowledge about the country. Thus:

Hypotheses H3 Exposure and awareness interact to positively affect knowledge about the country.

3.5 | Associations

In the HDM, knowledge leads to the creation of brand associations (Keller & Lehmann, 2003), corresponding to brand image (Gallarza, Saura, & Calderón Garcia, 2002; Horng, Liu, Chou, & Tsai, 2012). Brand image refers to the meaning or associations attached to a destination (Bianchi et al., 2014; Zavattaro et al., 2015). Previous research showed that brand image consisted of "dimensions that include attribute-based and holistic images, functional and psychological characteristics as well as common and unique images of a destination" (Chekalina et al., 2018, p. 4). Imagery refers therefore to associations attached to a given destination. Drawing on Anholt and Hildreth's (2004) "multidimensional brand hexagon model," which incorporates elements of (a) tourism, heritage, and culture, and (b) business, quality of life and value system, the HDM comprises two main dimensions that contribute to the imagery of a destination country: "experiential associations" and "status associations" (Bigi et al., 2011; Sevin, 2014).

Past research has shown that knowledge of Turkey, as induced by Turkish TV dramas, positively contribute to the image of Turkey and enhance both types of associations (Brljavac, 2011). First, the experiential aspects are enhanced through knowledge about the aesthetic and stylish features of the serials, from clothing, hairstyle, and make-up (Afra, 2008; Al-Sheikh, 2008; Badr, 2008), to architecture, scenery, modernity (Al-Yazidi, 2009), romanticism and glamour (Buccianti, 2010). Second, the status aspects are similarly enhanced through knowledge of Turkey as induced by the Turkish dramas. While depicting a good quality of life in Turkey, through displays of wealth and luxury (Buccianti, 2010), but also a mixed value system torn between Islamic religiosity and secularism (Kraidy & Al-Ghazzi,-2013; Zayed, 2013), Turkish TV dramas shape a particular imagery of Turkey as a country, which tries to reconcile modernity and religion (Yiğit, 2013). This new Turkish cultural influence among Arabs, in particular, has often been paralleled with an attempt to restore a new cultural Ottoman hegemon: the "neo-Ottoman cool" (Alankuş & Yanardagoglu, 2016; Kraidy & Al-Ghazzi, 2013). The knowledge accumulated about Turkey through Turkish TV dramas contribute therefore to build a specific imagery about Turkey, which leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis H4a Knowledge about the country positively affects experiential associations with the country.

Hypothesis H4b Knowledge about the country positively affects status associations with the country.

4 | PREFERENCE

According to the HDM, positive brand associations favor preferences for the brand (Keller & Lehmann, 2003). As an emotionally-laden concept, preference refers to the positive evaluations of the destination (Frías Jamilena et al., 2017; Pike & Bianchi, 2013). The concept incurs therefore a sense of valence in the form of judgements, feelings and other emotional responses towards a given destination (Chekalina et al., 2018).

Although past research showed that TV serials have a significant role in boosting the image of the places where the serials are shot and turn them into popular tourism destinations (Balli, Balli, & Cebeci, 2013; Busby & Klug, 2001; Kim & Long, 2012), these studies did not investigate the impact of images on affective responses such as preference for the destination. According to the HDM, it is expected that the positive imagery from associations with status and experience (Anholt & Hildreth, 2004) in Turkish TV dramas should positively contribute to the affective responses of viewers towards Turkey. For example, Turkish television serials gained unprecedented positive popularity among some Arabs, especially women because of the experiential aspects such as aesthetics (e.g., actors' looks, fashion, style) displayed in the serials (Salamandra, 2012). Concrete manifestations of such preferences can also be found across many other nationalities. For example, in Chile, children were named *Onur* and *Sherazat*, names of the two central characters of the serials *1,001 Nights*, whereas in Ethiopia, the popularity of Turkish shows increased people's interest in Turkish culture, and their desire to learn the Turkish language (Irani, 2007).

In line with the HDM framework, we posit that exposure does not directly impact product preferences through country image, but rather it affects knowledge and associations, which in turn affect preference. We therefore posit that:

Hypotheses H5a Experiential associations with the country positively affect preferences for the country.

Hypotheses H5b Status associations with the country positively affect preferences for the country.

4.1 | Consideration

The HDM model posits that preference leads to consideration (Keller & Lehmann, 2003). The literature has studied brand consideration through

"intentions" such as likelihood to visit or revisit (Ferns & Walls, 2012; Im, Kim, Elliot, & Han, 2012). As such, intentions correspond to the "considerations" construct in the HDM (Tinne, 2013, p. 34).

Past research showed that preference positively influences several consideration constructs such as travel intentions (Ferns & Walls, 2012; Horng et al., 2012). Furthermore, past research also confirmed a positive relationship between destination judgements and feelings, such as preferences, with visit intentions (Bianchi et al., 2014; Chekalina et al., 2018; Kladou & Kehagias, 2014). Consistently, it was found that increased preference for Turkish TV serials in the Middle East and Balkans led to an increase in Turkey's tourism revenues from the countries located in these regions that imported TV serials from Turkey (Balli et al., 2013). More concretely, the Turkish Statistics Institute (2015), reported an increase in the number of tourists from Arab-speaking countries where the Turkish TV dramas are most successful (Irani, 2007; Kraidy & Al-Ghazzi, 2013; Zayed, 2013). Accordingly, this may indicate that preference for Turkey should have a positive impact on consumers' intentions to visit the country. Consequently:

Hypotheses H6 Preferences for the country positively affect intentions to visit the country.

Balli et al. (2013) found that Turkish TV serials not only increased tourism revenues but also trade revenues within Turkey. This result was gleaned from aggregate secondary data analyzed through econometric modeling, without taking consumers as unit of analysis. At the micro (consumer) level it is then conceivable that people who intend to visit Turkey may also shop and purchase products there. Thus, we hypothesize the following:

Hypotheses H7 Intentions to visit the country positively affect intentions to shop in the country.

Another interesting construct of behavioral intentions resides in intentions to buy "made-in-Turkey" products. Soap operas are successful advertising venues (Pervan & Martin, 2002). They tend to play a significant role in influencing purchasing habits and brand preferences of viewers by boosting the image of the country of origin (O'Connor, Flanagan, & Gilbert, 2008). It was shown that Turkish TV dramas generated positive feelings and preferences among its audiences in Albania, thereby giving a competitive edge to its products in the Albanian market, and influencing purchasing preferences of Albanian consumers towards "made-in-Turkey" products (Köksal & Gjana, 2015). However, this last study found a non-significant relationship between exposure to TV dramas and intentions to consider the country of origin of the drama. We suggest that this occurs because the mediational process of the HDM has been eclipsed. Instead, the affective construct of preferences constitutes a pivotal antecedent to intentions to consider and purchase products from a given country. We propose:

Hypotheses H8 Preferences for the country positively affect intentions to buy products imported from the country.

In line with previous research (Köksal & Gjana, 2015), we posit that exposure to Turkish TV dramas exerts an indirect influence on intention to shop in Turkey and to purchase products made in Turkey. The term "shopping" refers to browsing or just looking at products with or without the intent of purchasing them. It is a leisure activity in itself that befits well a tourism context. It is also widely used in academia, especially in e-commerce research, for example, with the notion of "online shopping" (e.g., Childers, Carr, Peck, & Carson, 2001; Gefen, Karahanna, & Straub, 2003). "Shopping" is also more appropriate than "purchasing" since the latter denotes a goal-directed behavior which is not necessarily in line with the more arbitrary browsing that typically occurs in a tourism context. Secondly, "purchase of products made in Turkey," refers to intentions to purchase products that have Turkey as their country of origin. In other words, they are products imported from Turkey. The indirect influence of exposure on intentions to shop and to purchase products imported from Turkey is mediated by the constructs of the HDM, comprising TV drama shaped knowledge about the country (salience), experiential and status associations (imagery), preference (quality), and visit intentions (resonance). We thus hypothesize the following:

Hypotheses H9 Exposure to Turkish TV dramas positively affects intentions to shop in the country through knowledge about the country, experiential (status) associations, preferences, and visit intentions.

Hypotheses H10 Exposure to Turkish TV dramas positively affects intentions to purchase products imported from Turkey through knowledge about the country, experiential (status) associations, preferences, and visit intentions.

The conceptual model is shown in Figure 1.

5 | METHOD

5.1 | Data collection

Arab respondents constituted the population under study because they are the most important audience of Turkish TV dramas with more than 85 millions viewers (Salamandra, 2012). Data collection was from Arab respondents, primarily Lebanese, but also from other countries, by order of importance, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Tunisia, Sudan, Syria, Palestine, Morocco, and Algeria. Using Arab respondents is reasonable because they share with Turks a similar value system based on Islamic principles and traditions as well as shared history and cultural narratives especially through the Ottoman Empire (Al-Ghazzi & Kraidy, 2013). In fact, Turkish TV dramas cement both peoples around a common theme of "Neo-Otoman Cool" (Al-Ghazzi & Kraidy, 2013; Kraidy & Al-Ghazzi, 2013). Besides, this approach is consistent with past research on film-induced tourism or reality TV-induced tourism which has typically been conducted similarly, between people of close religious and/or cultural proximity (for e.g., Connell, 2005; Connell & Meyer, 2009; Fu, Ye, & Xiang, 2016;

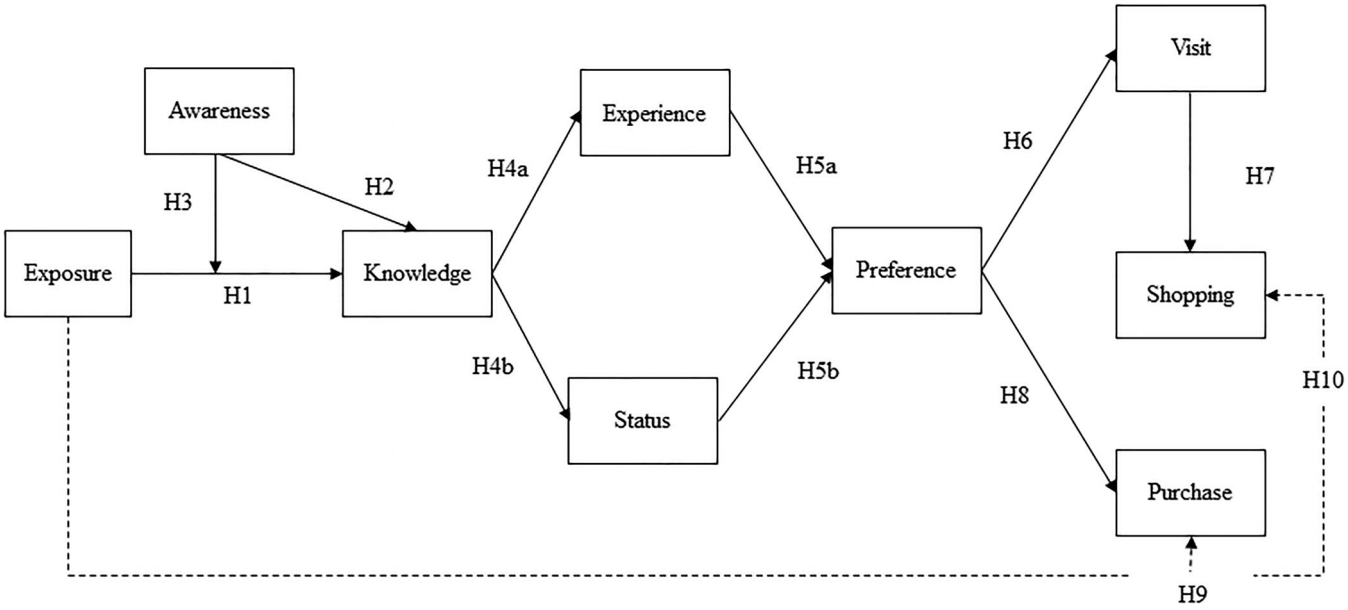

FIGURE 1 Conceptual model

Su, Huang, Brodowsky, & Kim, 2011). Thus, it is appropriate to consider Arabs who share similar characteristics (Mostafa, 2007), while relating culturally and religiously to the Turks, for the purpose of testing the proposed model. Moreover, in keeping with the literature, we suggest that the effects under study are not context-specific and can be generalizable.

This study did not require that respondents had traveled to Turkey, or shopped in Turkey, or even purchased products made in Turkey, since we sought to explore respondents' behavioral intentions rather than their past behavior. The selection of respondents was based on two nonrandom sampling methods: convenience sampling and snowball sampling, as well as two methods of data collection, in-person and online. In each case, the respondents had the choice to fill in the survey either in English or in Arabic.[1] For in-person interviews, under convenience sampling, the surveys were administered to students on the campuses of a major university in Lebanon and a major university in Canada, as well as citizens on the streets of Beirut. Snowball sampling occurred later on, when participants recruited additional respondents, by referring them to the research team. One respondent referred 3 to 4 participants on average (snowball effect). Online data collection occurred via Qualtrics, and both convenience sampling and snowball sampling were used. For online convenience sampling, the survey link was posted on social media platforms such as Facebook.

In total 449 respondents completed the survey. After inspecting the data, we eliminated 49 observations due to incomplete responses on key questions, leaving 400 usable observations. The sample size was close to the level recommended in the literature for structural equation models with similar levels of complexity (Chekalina et al., 2018; So, King, Sparks, & Wang, 2016) thus was deemed appropriate.

The multiplicity of sources used in data collection (i.e., both online and in-person) is consistent with mixed-mode survey which offers several benefits such as "possibilities for improving response rate and reducing nonresponse and coverage errors" (Dillman, 2007, p. 244). Thus, use of more than one mode may improve data quality. To minimize mode differences and to improve the representativeness of the samples or potential generalization of the results to other contexts, we used unimode construction, which consists of making a deliberate effort to assure that respondents to all modes receive an equivalent stimulus regardless of whether it is delivered orally or visually" (Dillman, 2007, p. 244). Both the interview questionnaire and the self-administered questionnaire were built using the same visual representation of questions in order to minimize visual discrepancy that may lead to differential answers.

The questionnaire was implemented in English and in Arabic depending on the respondent's preference. The Arabic translation was done and certified professionally, and subsequently verified by a bilingual person to ensure comparability.

5.2 | Survey instrument

The survey instrument included measurement items consistent with the literature. Knowledge, perceived experience, perceived status, preferences, intentions to visit (Turkey), intentions to buy made-in (Turkey), and intentions to shop (in Turkey), are reflective variables because they represent latent psychological constructs (Diamantopoulos, Riefler, & Roth, 2008). These seven variables are thus assessed using standard psychometric measurement scales. In contrast, awareness and exposure are formative due to their

nonlatent and idiosyncratic nature (Diamantopoulos, 2010). In a formative scale, different items form the variable under study as opposed to the variable being the source of influence on the items as in the case of reflective variables (Diamantopoulos & Winklhofer, 2001). In fact, both awareness and knowledge are cumulative sums of environmental stimuli as perceived and internalized by consumers (i.e., formative), rather than an intra-psychic mechanism that is reflected in observable elements (i.e., reflective). As formative scales, awareness and exposure variables were thus not contrived by psychometric guidelines, and alternative scales based on the literature were used to measure them.

We created an awareness score, adapted from FutureBrand (2015), by summing the answers to five questions pertaining to respondents' level of awareness about Turkey: 1) I can identify Turkey on a map; 2) I am somewhat informed about Turkish politics or politics relating to Turkey; 3) I have visited Turkey; 4) I have friends or family that have visited Turkey; 5) I have seen images of Turkey [outside of a TV drama context]. Respondents could answer by 0 = No or 1 = Yes. Summing the answers produced a total formative score with 0 (5) as the lowest (highest) level of awareness.

The instrument developed by Carveth and Alexander (1985) was adapted to measure exposure to Turkish TV dramas. Two exposure variables were considered: 1) How many different Turkish TV dramas have you seen/do you follow? (0 = none, 4 = four or more). 2) What is your level of dedication to this TV serial(s)? (0 = I have never been exposed to Turkish TV dramas, 5 = extremely dedicated). We collapsed both items into a single-item formative construct ($\alpha = 0.709$) to measure the level of exposure to Turkish TV dramas.

The perception of the status of Turkey was measured with five items adapted from the FutureBrand (2015) study as well as Roth and Diamantopoulos (2009). In addition, the perceived experience of Turkey was also measured with three items adapted from these same sources. Following Drolet and Morrison (2001), who emphasized that using single-item is sufficient to assess affective variables, such as preferences, we used one summary item to measure country preference. Perceived experience and status, as well as preference were measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). We used three items to measure intention to visit Turkey, on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = highly unlikely, 5 = highly likely) adapted from Ng, Lee, and Soutar (2007). Intention to buy made-in-Turkey products and intentions to shop in Turkey was each measured by three-item 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) adapted from FutureBrand (2015). Table 1 provides list of items for each construct.

5.3 | Pretest

Two rounds of pretests with Arab students were conducted in a Canadian University. The first round consisted of 20 students and the second round 40 students, all different from the first 20. The pretests helped finalize the items for each construct, shorten the survey and identify ambiguous and unintelligible wording. Exposure to Turkish TV drama of the pretest respondents varied from "none" to "never miss an episode."

6 | RESULTS

Table 2 shows the demographic information about the final sample comprising 400 respondents. Some respondents did not provide their country of residence, gender, education or social class, thus accounting for lower sample sizes for these variables as displayed in Table 2. The sample has a slightly higher representation of females, consistent with audience of Turkish serials (Al-Sweel, 2008; Irani, 2007; Zayed, 2013). Respondents also tend to be younger, higher educated and have higher income than average which may reflect the demographic characteristics of the online population. The sample also reflects well the Arab population overall which tends to be predominantly Muslim, younger (approximately 60% is less than 30 years old) (Choueiki, 2010; Dhillon & Yousef, 2011; Kavanaugh et al., 2012) and thus more educated and single. Our dataset presents therefore ecological validity since this profile corresponds to the typical TV-induced tourist as defined by Busby and Klug (2001). Furthermore, the potential for confounding effect is avoided since we did not exclusively recruit Turkish TV drama viewers. Twenty-one respondents were not exposed to Turkish TV dramas. A series of ANOVAs revealed that those unexposed to Turkish TV dramas scored significantly lower on all constructs except for awareness. Correlation analyses further confirmed that the exposure score is positively correlated to each of the variables of the model except for awareness. The lack of significance for awareness is reasonable since awareness is not theoretically posited to be impacted by exposure. Rather it is an external variable that mediates the relationship between exposure and knowledge. Collectively, these results provide evidence that there is a control group whose answers have been taken into account in the overall model, and that they score significantly lower than exposed individuals, in line with our proposition. The research data were analyzed through structural equation modeling (SEM) (EQS 6.3).

6.1 | Measurement model

Skewness and kurtosis. A conventional threshold of ±1 was applied for skewness and a ±2 for kurtosis. As shown in Table 1, no skewness or kurtosis issues were identified in the dataset, except for a slight deviation in the awareness score that will be handled with the robust Maximum Likelihood estimation method in EQS. Overall, these results suggest that the data are fairly normally distributed across the great majority of construct items.

Common method bias. In this study, a self-reported dataset was collected using a cross-sectional methodology. Therefore, common method bias is a potential concern. A chi-square difference test ($\Delta\chi^2 = 172.25$, $\Delta df = 11$, $p < .001$) showed that the model fit of the unconstrained model is significantly worse than that of the constrained model, thus ruling out common method bias.

TABLE 1 Descriptive statistics

Constructs [min, max]	Scale items	*N*	Mean	*SD*	Skewness	Kurtosis
Exposure [0–10]	Exposure score (EXPOS)	377	3.01	1.45	−.317	−.787
Awareness [0–5]	Awareness score (AWAR)	400	4.04	1.05	−1.186	1.382
Knowledge [0–5]	For me, Turkish TV dramas are a major source of information on Turkey (KNOW1)	352	2.71	1.06	.062	−.579
	My perceptions of Turkey are largely based on Turkish dramas (KNOW2)	352	2.50	1.11	.291	−.733
	I imagine Turkish TV dramas to be realistic depictions of life in Turkey and Turkish people (KNOW3)	352	2.70	1.04	−.008	−.719
Experience [0–5]	Turkish products are high in quality (EXP1)	398	3.37	0.85	.092	−.171
	Turkish products are authentic (EXP2)	398	3.32	0.84	−.063	.133
	Turkey is known for its expertise in specific/unique products (EXP3)	397	3.53	0.83	−.354	.164
Status [1–5]	I believe Turkey ranks high internationally with regards to political freedom (STAT1)	397	2.65	0.95	.157	−.315
	I believe Turkey is, overall, a good country to live in (STAT2)	396	3.45	0.88	−.286	−.172
	I believe Turkey is advanced in its technology (STAT3)	394	3.33	0.87	−.110	−.100
	I believe Turkey has strong infrastructure to enable business (STAT4)	396	3.64	0.81	−.214	.009
	I believe Turkey, overall, is a good place to do business (STAT5)	294	3.49	0.88	−.375	.355
Preference [1–5]	All things considered, I have a positive country image of Turkey (PREF)	394	3.85	0.84		
Purchase intentions [1–5]	I would purchase clothing and accessories imported from Turkey (BUY1)	388	3.65	1.00	−.571	−.047
	I would purchase electronics or tech products imported from Turkey (BUY2)	388	2.74	1.02	.177	−.401
	I would purchase cosmetics imported from Turkey (BUY3)	388	2.90	1.05	.097	−.413
Visit intentions [1–5]	On a scale of 1 to 5, what is the likelihood that you will visit Turkey? (VISIT1)	297	3.84	1.18	−.717	−.472
	On a scale of 1 to 5, what is the likelihood that you will revisit Turkey? (for those who already visited the country) (VISIT2)	342	3.84	1.19	−.625	−.726
	Watching Turkish TV dramas has influenced my desire to visit Turkey? (VISIT3)	324	3.11	1.36	−.174	−1.160
Shopping intentions [1–5]	On a visit to Turkey, I would purchase furniture and home décor (SHOP1)	388	2.90	1.09	.183	−.682
	On a visit to Turkey, I would purchase electronics and tech products (SHOP2)	387	2.53	1.00	.594	.084
	On a visit to Turkey, I would purchase cosmetics (SHOP3)	388	2.85	1.09	.214	−.626

Confirmatory factor analysis. A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (EQS 6.3) was employed to test the constitutive measurement constructs of the proposed model. In accordance with Homburg and Baumgartner (1995), the evaluation of the overall measurement model fit was performed by reviewing both global and local adaptation measures. First, the results of the analysis indicated a good global fit (χ^2 = 290.21, *df* = 201, χ^2/df = 1.44, $p < .001$, TLI = 0.950, CFI = 0.964, IFI = 0.965, GFI = 0.982, AGFI = 0.973, RMSEA = 0.033). These estimates satisfy Hu and Bentler's (1998) recommendations for an appropriate structural equation model in EQS. Besides, the χ^2/df value is well below the recommended threshold of 3, further suggesting excellent global fit.

Second, regarding local fit, construct validity was evaluated through convergent validity and discriminant validity. As shown in Table 3, the standardized factor loadings for all the items are high and significant, in line with literature using similar datasets (Chekalina et al., 2018). Particularly, all *t* values (Critical Ratios) are well above 2.57 (Netemeyer, Bearden, & Sharma, 2003), varying from 6.69 to 12.96; and all standardized loadings are greater than the suggested threshold of 0.50 (Hair, Anderson, Babin, & Black, 2010), varying between 0.536 and 0.971. Moreover, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) successfully exceeds the threshold of 0.50 for all constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The Squared Multiple Correlation (SMC) represents the extent to which an item's variance is explained by the

TABLE 2 Descriptive summary of the sample

Demographic variable	Total (*n* = 400)	
	n	**%**
Country of residence	(*n* = 362)	
Lebanon	175	48.1
Other. Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, UAE	187	51.7
Age	(*n* = 362)	
Under 20	45	12.4
20–29	185	51.0
30–39	21	5.8
40–49	31	8.8
50–59	64	17.6
60 and over	16	4.4
Gender	(*n* = 359)	
Male	111	30.9
Female	248	69.1
Education	(*n* = 359)	
Primary school	17	4.7
High school	106	29.5
Undergraduate and college degree	178	49.6
Postgraduate degree	58	16.2
Social class according to household income	(*n* = 356)	
Lower/lower-middle class	21	5.9
Middle-class	165	46.3
Upper-middle class	142	39.9
Upper-class	28	7.9
Marital status	(*n* = 362)	
Single	225	62.2
Married	117	32.3
Divorced	12	3.3
Widowed	8	2.2
Religion	(*n* = 352)	
Muslim	304	86.6
Christian	26	7.4
Atheist	10	2.6
Other	12	3.4

latent construct on which it is intended to load. Table 3 shows that most items demonstrate respectable SMC portions. Finally, composite reliability for each construct, exceeds the recommended value of 0.60 for all constructs indicating a good model fit (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Homburg & Baumgartner, 1995). Collectively, these results ensure unidimensionality and convergent validity (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

Next, a formal test of discriminant validity was performed. As shown in Table 4, the square root of the AVE pertaining to any given construct is higher than the variance that the construct may share with any other construct, thus supporting discriminant validity.

6.2 | Structural model

Results of the structural model presented in Table 5, indicate an appropriate model fit (χ^2 = 476.71, *df* = 231, χ^2/df = 2.06, $p < .001$, TLI = 0.880, CFI = 0.900, IFI = 0.901, GFI = 0.951, AGFI = 0.937, RMSEA = 0.052). The findings further suggest that all the paths are supported.

The results demonstrate = that exposure to Turkish TV dramas is a significant predictor of knowledge about Turkey (β = 0.426, t = 7.763, $p < .001$), whereas prior awareness about Turkey influences that knowledge negatively (β = –0.390, t = –4.703, $p < .001$), supporting respectively H1 and H2. More importantly, both exposure and awareness interact to positively and significantly influence knowledge about the country (β = 0.113, t = 6.131, $p < .001$), lending support to H3. These three effects explain collectively 61.3% of the variance in knowledge. In addition, knowledge significantly predicts the associations made with Turkey, namely the perception of the status of Turkey (β = 0.497, t = 4.22, $p < .001$), as well as its experience dimension (β = 0.513, t = 4.91, $p < .001$), by accounting for roughly one quarter of the variance in both constructs. Furthermore, both status (β = 0.690, t = 4.68, $p < .001$) and experience (β = 0.489, t = 5.14, $p < .001$) significantly predict preferences, accounting for 88.7% of its variance. Collectively, these results provide support for H4a-b and H5a-b, respectively. Preferences influence both visit intentions (β = 0.727, t = 5.01, $p < .001$), and shopping intentions (β = 0.871, t = 5.07, $p < .001$), explaining 56.5% and 77.6% of the variance in the two respective constructs. Both H6 and H7 are thus validated. Finally, preferences also exert a significant effect on intentions to purchase products imported from Turkey (β = 0.439, t = 3.79, $p < .001$), explaining 19.3% of its variance and supporting H8. Figure 2 graphically displays the results of hypothesis testing.

6.3 | Mediation analysis

To assess the mediation effect of the intermediary variables knowledge, status/experience, preference and visit intentions in the model, we used the bootstrap-based PROCESS macro in SPSS (23.0). The Indirect effect (IE) reflects the amount by which the total effect of the independent variable is decreased when the mediator is introduced in the analysis (Sperry & Widom, 2013). In other words, the stronger/higher (weaker/lower) the IE, the more (less) the total effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable is decreased, and thus, the more the IE—rather than the independent variable—explains the dependent variable.

There are roughly two indirect routes explaining the effect of exposure to Turkish TV dramas on intention to shop in Turkey: through experience or through status. The findings suggest that experience fully mediates the impact of exposure on purchase intentions

TABLE 3 Measurement model test statistics

Constructs	Scale items	SL	SE	CR[1]	CR[2]	AVE	SMC
Knowledge	KNOW 1	0.721	N/A	N/A	0.817	0.601	0.520
	KNOW 2	0.893	0.146	9.82			0.798
	KNOW 3	0.698	0.126	7.85			0.487
Experience	EXP 1	0.898	N/A	N/A	0.820	0.608	0.806
	EXP 2	0.794	0.068	12.96			0.631
	EXP 3	0.623	0.074	9.20			0.388
Status	STAT 1	0.603	N/A	N/A	0.541	0.853	0.364
	STAT 2	0.686	0.136	7.32			0.471
	STAT 3	0.811	0.166	7.56			0.657
	STAT 4	0.767	0.158	7.00			0.588
	STAT 5	0.789	0.153	7.81			0.623
Purchase intentions	BUY 1	0.536	N/A	N/A	0.638	0.872	0.288
	BUY 2	0.971	0.307	6.69			0.942
	BUY 3	0.837	0.301	6.72			0.701
Visit intentions	VISIT 1	0.709	N/A	N/A	0.622	0.831	0.503
	VISIT 2	0.806	0.120	10.39			0.650
	VISIT 3	0.845	0.133	10.26			0.714
Shopping intentions	SHOP 1	0.710	N/A	N/A	0.664	0.854	0.503
	SHOP 2	0.783	0.105	10.53			0.614
	SHOP 3	0.935	0.130	10.38			0.87

Abbreviations: AVE, average variance extracted; [1]CR, critical ratio (*t*- value); [2]CR, Coefficient of Reliability; R, composite reliability; SE, standard error; SL, standardized loadings; SMC, squared multiple correlation.

TABLE 4 Discriminant validity from confirmatory factor analysis

	KNOW	EXP	STAT	PI	VI	SI
KNOW	**0.775**					
EXP	0.387	**0.780**				
STAT	0.365	0.712	**0.923**			
PI	0.635	0.319	0.360	**0.934**		
VI	0.412	0.721	0.662	0.377	**0.911**	
SI	0.438	0.639	0.598	0.423	0.886	**0.924**

Note: The bold diagonal elements are the square root of the variance shared between the constructs and their measures. Off diagonal elements are the bootstrap correlations between constructs.
Abbreviations: EXP, Experience; KNOW, Knowledge; PI, Purchase Intentions; SI, Shopping Intentions; STAT, Status; VI, Visit Intentions.

because the direct effect is nonsignificant (β = 0.044, t = 1.544, n.s.). More specifically, exposure to Turkish TV dramas on intentions to purchase products imported from Turkey is fully mediated by the "experience" route (β = 0.110, *SE* = 0.021, [0.072, 0.153]), with experience explaining 50.9% of the IE. In contrast, the "status" route does not account for the mediation, since the direct path between preferences and purchase was nonsignificant in the bootstrapping model. These results lend support to H10 inasmuch as although status does not account for the indirect effect, experience does.

In contrast, "status" fully mediates the impact of exposure on shopping intentions because the direct effect is nonsignificant (β = 0.057, t = 1.951, n.s.). Specifically, the impact of exposure to Turkish drama on intentions to shop in Turkey is fully mediated by the status route (β = 0.082, *SE* = 0.022, [0.042, 0.128]). Status contributes the most to that effect (β = 0.045, *SE* = 0.015, [0.019, 0.078]), by explaining 54.9% of the IE, whereas the three other three mediators (i.e., knowledge, preference and visit intentions) are nonsignificant. In contrast, the "experience" route does not account for the mediation since the direct path between visit intentions and shopping intentions is nonsignificant (β = 0.067, t = 1.136, n.s.) in the bootstrapping model. In other words, improvements in the perception of the status of Turkey explain the effect of Turkish TV drama exposure on shopping intentions, whereas improvements in the perception of experiential aspects associated to Turkey does not. These results lend support to H9 inasmuch as although experience does not account for the indirect effect, status does.

In sum, improved status associations with Turkey from TV-shaped knowledge fully explain the effect of exposure to Turkish TV drama on intentions to shop in Turkey, whereas experience associations do not. In contrast, improved experience associations with Turkey only fully explain the effect of exposure to Turkish TV drama on intentions to purchase products imported from Turkey, whereas status associations do not.

TABLE 5 Results for structural model analysis

Independent variables	Dependent variables	Hypotheses	Standardized parameter estimates	*SE*	*t* Values	Results	R^2
Exposure	Knowledge	H1	0.426	0.057	7.763***	Supported	0.613
Awareness		H2	−0.390	0.011	−4.703***	Supported	
Exposure × Awareness		H3	0.113	0.036	6.131***	Supported	
Knowledge	Experience	H4a	0.497	0.096	4.22***	Supported	0.247
	Status	H4b	0.513	0.109	4.91***	Supported	0.263
Experience	Preference	H5a	0.690	0.125	4.68***	Supported	0.887
Status		H5b	0.489	0.063	5.14***	Supported	
Preference	Visit intentions	H6	0.727	0.185	5.01***	Supported	0.565
Visit intentions	Shopping intentions	H7	0.871	0.197	5.07***	Supported	0.776
Preference	Purchase intentions	H8	0.439	0.129	3.79***	Supported	0.193

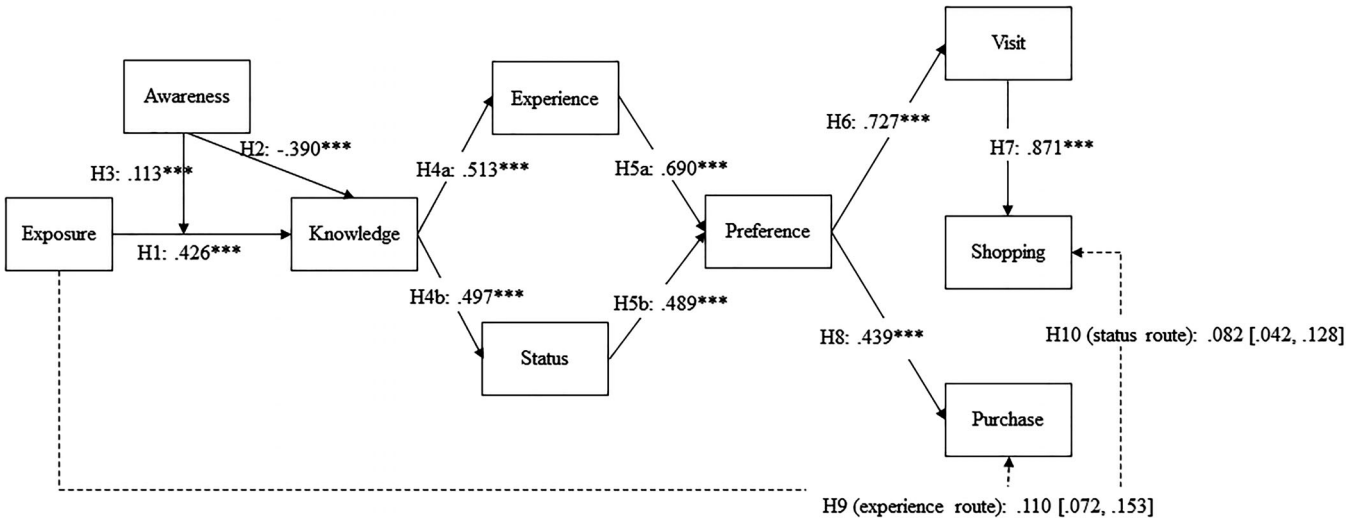

FIGURE 2 Structural model

7 | DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 | Theoretical implications

Literature shows confluences between tourism, media production, and popcultural consumption (Kim & Reijnders, 2018; Tham & Kim, 2018; Tkalec et al., 2017). Although past research in consumer culture has devoted some attention to television sitcoms (Stern & Russell, 2004) and travel (Bardhi, Ostberg, & Bengtsson, 2010), little research explored the relationships underlying exposure to TV serials and tourism related behavioural intentions. This study proposes an original approach to examine these relations. Drawing on the hierarchical decision model (FutureBrand, 2015) derived from the brand equity literature (Bigi et al., 2011; Keller, 2009; Keller & Lehmann, 2003), we explain how that connection works. As such, this research demonstrates how images, and in particular, TV dramas contribute to enhance country image and delineates the process through which this effect manifests itself using the case of Turkish TV dramas. The results yielded a number of interesting insights as summarized in the following sub-sections.

Turkish TV dramas improve knowledge of Turkey and increase imagery related to Turkey. Exposure to TV dramas improves knowledge about the country. Furthermore, knowledge shaped by TV serials enhances the viewers' experiential and status associations with the country. In contrast to past research which showed a direct effect of awareness on attribute-based image (Chen & Myagmarsuren, 2010), we show that this effect is channeled by TV serials shaping knowledge rather than awareness directly impacting images. Importantly, exposure to TV serials does not directly result in improvement in associations with the country, which explains the rather low intensity of the relationships found previously in the literature (Köksal & Gjana, 2015). Instead, the impact occurs through the TV drama-shaped knowledge.

Country image increases affect towards Turkey. In contrast to past findings of inconclusive relationship between cognitive and affective-response dimensions (Chen & Myagmarsuren, 2010; Im et al., 2012; Kladou & Kehagias, 2014), this research empirically validates a

significant and positive relationship between associations (i.e., cognitive dimension) and preferences (affective-response dimension).

Affect increases conative intentions towards Turkey. Previous research linked TV serials viewership to tourism revenues from a macro perspective (e.g., Balli et al., 2013), or focused on the viewer's identification with the characters in the serials (e.g., Su et al., 2011). In contrast, this research provides a mechanism spanning across consumers' cognitive, affective and conative dimensions to explain how exposure to TV serials influences tourism intentions of visit and shopping. More specifically, the effective-conative connection occurs through an improvement in preferences which shapes tourism-related intentions.

Exposure to Turkish TV serials improves overall behavioral intentions towards Turkey. Previous research showed how TV serials influence consumers' preferences for products originating from the country in which the serials was produced (Köksal & Gjana, 2015). We contribute to this research by demonstrating that exposure to TV serials from a given country increases purchase intentions of products originating from that country and clarify the specific process through which TV serials impact purchase intentions for "made in" products. Specifically, exposure impacts product preference through an improved perception of experiential aspects, but not through the status aspects which account for the negative relationship found between country of origin consideration and product preference (as in Köksal & Gjana, 2015). We show that experiences fully explain intentions to purchase products originating from the home country of the TV serials. In contrast, shopping intentions are fully explained by improved images related to the status of the country, and to a lesser extent, by TV serials-shaped knowledge, rather than associations of the experience related to the country.

7.2 | Practical implications

We show that exposure to TV serials originating from a given country (in our case, Turkey) and preconceptions about a given country in the form of awareness, interact and positively influence knowledge about the country. Regardless of the potential discrepancy between what is being shown on-screen and the awareness of the country, exposure to TV serials mitigates any negative effect. Furthermore, increasing positive awareness can improve congruency with on-screen knowledge related to the country. Given the importance of images in destination (Chekalina et al., 2018; Frías Jamilena et al., 2017), tourism promoters should not merely rely on TV serials to generate positive connotations about the country, but complement these with awareness improvement programs such as government-backed efforts to increase cultural influence and recognition so that consumers may recall more easily the country and classify it in groups of similarly well-evaluated countries. Importantly, such programs should be aligned more concretely with what is being shown on-screen. Some TV serials could actually be used in these cultural diffusion endeavors to introduce the public, in general, and learners, in particular, to the culture. According to the results, country image can be enhanced through diverse means, and the study shows the impacts of improving different facets of country image. Improving associations related to the status of the country will generate more tourism visits and shopping. This can be done by communicating, for example, that the country is a good place to do business, that its political situation is stable, that its people enjoy a good quality of life, while emphasizing on the particular value system of the country itself. However, an emphasis on the experiential associations related to the country will promote country of origin products sales. To improve such experience-related images, tourism promoters and suppliers should focus on quality, by modulating images of heritage, refinement, and culture (Anholt & Hildreth, 2004). Either way-status or experience-, working on improving the associations related to the country is crucial to increase preferences, which are important antecedents to behavioral intentions. Given that these experiential aspects actually result from increased exposure to TV serials and that TV serials-shaped knowledge is a secondary element in explaining the effect of exposure on visit/shopping intentions, it may be worthwhile to connect status-related promotional efforts to TV serials content. For example, informational kits on these aspects could feature characters from relevant serials. Some characters from the TV serials may also appear in promotional videos for the country. This may influence visit and shopping intentions effectively.

7.3 | Limitations and future research

This study is limited in several aspects. First, we use a convenience sample which may limit the generalizability of the findings. We nonetheless managed to obtain a sample that is representative of the typical TV-induced tourist, namely a more female, well-educated and well-off respondent profile (Busby & Klug, 2001). Second, exposure was measured using self-reported statements. Although we took great care in explaining that the study was about Turkish TV dramas and provided examples in order to avoid confusion, we cannot fully guarantee that respondents did not mistakenly state that they saw Turkish TV dramas although these shows were not Turkish or the other way around. Future research might seek to replicate the results by using another method than self-reported data to account for exposure to Turkish TV dramas. Furthermore, future research should cross-validate the results obtained in this study by using alternative measurement scales from the literature (e.g., Chekalina et al., 2018; Frías Jamilena et al., 2017; Im et al., 2012). Furthermore, cross-cultural studies could also analyze these effects taking into consideration cultural proximity. Finally, Turkish TV dramas are a new genre and may therefore experience the novelty effect advantage, from which the Turkish tourism industry seems to be benefiting. However, this advantage may gradually decline as new genres emerge or as the Turkish TV drama genre in itself declines. Past research showed that the tourism impacts of TV serials confine both spatially and temporally (Connell, 2005). Future research could therefore longitudinally investigate the effect of TV serials on country branding and specific tourism-related behaviors or behavioral intentions.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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ENDNOTE

[1] We performed means difference tests on each construct between those who responded in Arabic versus English. We found significant differences between the two groups in terms of knowledge, experience, status, and visit intentions but all eta values were either below 0.10 indicating a very weak relation or below 0.20 indicating a weak relation. Only for intentions was the eta value superior to 0.20, but which may be because most respondents who filled in the Arabic survey were aged 40 years or older. These respondents were less familiar with English. They may also hold stronger cultural, traditional and historic ties with Turkey that shares their cultural and traditional values, and thus have higher intentions to visit (the same could apply to knowledge, experience, and status). However, that relation is not strong, but only moderate, suggesting that it does not jeopardize the results.

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