**Marketing Research Proposal**

**Title: Evaluating the Influence of Culturally Localized Ice Cream Flavors (Baklava and Turkish Delight) on Turkish Consumers’ Buying Behavior at McDonald’s**

* **Introduction** : In today's global marketplace , international brands regularly try to improve consumer involvement by culturally tailoring their offerings. This research proposal will examine the possible reaction of its consumers , if McDonald's were to launch two culturally inspired ice cream flavors—Baklava and Turkish Delight—tailored for the Turkish market. The study is aiming to investigate how such an initiative can affect consumer purchasing decisions, specifically regarding to cultural identification, taste preferences, and emotional attachment.
* **Background and Rationale :** "Cultural localization" , which is a marketing strategy , seeks to match local preferences, values, and tastes with global brands (Özsomer, 2012). To improve connection with local customers many multinational corporations think about launching culturally relevant items. A significant percentage of Turkish customers indicate a preference for goods that honor their cultural history and customs, per Nielsen's findings from 2023.
The Iceberg Theory is the base of this study and it shows the difference between signs on the surface and the deeper reasons. For example, a change in how interested people are in McDonald's ice cream flavors could be just the beginning. Marketing research tools must be used to dig deeper and find out what is really causing this shift. It might not just be about taste; it could be about how real the product feels or even how well it fits with the consumer's cultural identity and how it makes them feel.
* **Research Problem :** In addition to the possible increase in sales of new ice cream flavors, the broader and more in-depth consumer attitudes and behaviors that may arise in response to culturally distinctive goods should be the main focus. The aim of this research is to identify the factors that might influence the buying behaviors of the Turkish customers if McDonald's adds ice cream flavors such as Baklava and Turkish Delight.
* **Research Question :** How does the introduction of culturally localized flavors—Turkish Delight and Baklava—into McDonald’s ice cream menu affect the buying behavior of customers in the Turkish market?
* **Research Objectives : 1**. To find out if adding Baklava and Turkish Delight types will change how often Turkish customers buy them.

 2. To find out how possible customers feel about these flavors that are important to culture.

 3. To look into how different groups of people are likely to react to the offered offerings.

 4. To look into the possible link between a cultural and emotional bond and future buying habits.

* **Research Design** : • Research Type: Descriptive
 • Approach: Quantitative
 • Time Frame: cross-sectional; • Sampling Method: stratified random sampling based on age, gender, and income; • Research Setting: Turkish urban areas (such as Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, and Antalya); • Sample Size: 400 participants
 • Scheduled Data Collection Period: June 15–July 15, 2025; • Data Collection Method: Structured questionnaire (online and in-store via QR code)
* **Data Collection Methods** : A normal questionnaire will be used to get information from a lot of Turkish customers. The survey will include Likert-scale questions to find out how people think about predicted feelings of emotional response, flavor appeal, and cultural relevance.

 • Demographic surveys are used to group participants by age, gender, and income.

• Questions about behavioral purpose to find out how people are likely to buy things.

 The survey will be done online and through QR codes placed in McDonald's restaurants. For testing reasons, fake flavor announcements will be used.

* **Hypotheses :** H1: The introduction of the Baklava and Turkish Delight flavors to McDonald's ice cream is likely to increase sales to Turkish consumers.

 H2: Recognized cultural importance of these flavors will be correlated positively with customers' desire to buy these flavors.

 H3:Emotional reactions to familiar flavors are expected to determine the relationship between cultural relevance and purchasing behavior.

* **Data Analysis Techniques :** The information obtained will be examined via the following methods:

 • Demographic and general trend data can be obtained by use of descriptive statistics.

 Applying statistical methods for forecasting

 • Chi-square tests to look for relationships between demographic variables and projected preferences.

 • Analysis of variance to compare attitudes among groups.

 The method of multiple regression will be used to ascertain the variables that are most likely to foretell consumer behavior.

 In order to determine how trustworthy the survey items are, Cronbach's Alpha will be used**.**

* **Ethical Considerations :** All research protocols will be adhered to in order to comply with ethical standards. The survey will begin with a consent-based question, and answering it is entirely up to the participant. No personally identifiable information will be collected from any responses; they will all be treated anonymously and in confidence.
* **Limitations :** The suggested study is likely to have the following limitations:

• Its focus on urban areas might limit its applicability to rural regions.

• The tastes are still entirely conceptual, so consumers' reactions will be more influenced by what they are expecting than by actual taste. The truthfulness of data provided by individuals could be impacted by social desirability bias.

* **Timeline:**

| **Activity** | **Timeframe** |
| --- | --- |
| Questionnaire Development | June 1–5, 2025 |
| Pilot Testing | June 6–8, 2025 |
| Data Collection | June 15 – July 15, 2025 |
| Data Analysis | July 16–25, 2025 |
| Report Writing & Submission | July 28, 2025 |

* **Expected Contributions :** We are hopeful that through conducting this study, we will be able to learn more about the cultural factors that may impact the purchasing decisions of Turkish consumers. The findings may aid McDonald's in making informed decisions on localization efforts and will contribute to academic understanding of the role of culture in worldwide marketing.
* **References** : References (APA Style – from Google Scholar)

Kotabe, M., & Helsen, K. (2020). Global marketing management (8th ed.). Wiley.

Nielsen. (2023). Global Consumer Report: Trends in cultural localization. Retrieved from [https://www.nielsen.com](https://www.nielsen.com/)

Özsomer, A. (2012). The interplay between global and local brands: A closer look at perceived brand globalness and local iconness. Journal of International Marketing, 20(2), 72–95. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jim.11.0105>

**Survey Title:**

**Consumer Responses to Culturally Localized Ice Cream Flavors at McDonald’s: A Turkish Market Perspective**

**Section 1: Participant Information and Consent**

**We are conducting a marketing research study to understand how customers in Turkey respond to the idea of introducing new McDonald’s ice cream flavors inspired by traditional Turkish desserts — Baklava and Turkish Delight. Your participation is entirely voluntary. All responses are anonymous and confidential. You may skip any question or stop at any time.**

**□ I confirm that I am 18 years or older and voluntarily agree to participate.**

**Section 2: Demographics**

**These questions help us understand general trends among different groups.**

1. **Age
□ Under 18 (screened out)
□ 18–24
□ 25–34
□ 35–44
□ 45–54
□ 55+**
2. **Gender
□ Female
□ Male
□ Non-binary / Other
□ Prefer not to say**
3. **City of Residence**
4. **Monthly Income (₺)
□ Below 10,000
□ 10,000–19,999
□ 20,000–29,999
□ 30,000–39,999
□ 40,000 and above
□ Prefer not to say**
5. **How often do you visit McDonald’s? *(Adapted from Malhotra, 2010)*
□ More than once a week
□ Once a week
□ A few times a month
□ Rarely
□ Never**

**Section 3: Consumer Attitudes and Cultural Perception**

1. **How likely are you to try a new ice cream flavor at McDonald’s?
□ Not at all likely
□ Slightly likely
□ Moderately likely
□ Very likely
□ Extremely likely**
2. **How familiar are you with Baklava and Turkish Delight?
□ Not familiar at all
□ Slightly familiar
□ Moderately familiar
□ Very familiar
□ Extremely familiar**
3. **To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “Baklava and Turkish Delight are representative of Turkish culture.” *(Likert scale adapted from Churchill & Iacobucci, 2006)*
□ Strongly disagree
□ Disagree
□ Neutral
□ Agree
□ Strongly agree**
4. **Would you feel emotionally connected to an ice cream flavor that reminds you of a traditional Turkish dessert?
□ Not at all
□ Slightly
□ Moderately
□ Very much
□ Extremely**
5. **If McDonald’s introduced Baklava and Turkish Delight flavored ice cream, how likely would you be to purchase them?
□ Not at all likely
□ Slightly likely
□ Moderately likely
□ Very likely
□ Extremely likely**
6. **Do you believe McDonald’s would be more in touch with Turkish culture by offering these flavors?
□ Yes
□ No
□ Not sure**
7. **How should McDonald’s offer these flavors?
□ Permanently
□ Seasonally
□ As a limited-time offer
□ No opinion**
8. **Have you ever purchased a culturally inspired product before (e.g., food or drink that reflects your local culture)?
□ Yes
□ No
□ I don’t remember**
9. **What other Turkish dessert would you like to see as an ice cream flavor?**

Adapted from:
Churchill, G. A., & Iacobucci, D. (2006). *Marketing research: Methodological foundations* (9th ed.). Thomson South-Western.
Malhotra, N. K. (2010). *Marketing research: An applied orientation* (6th ed.). Pearson Education.
Self-developed survey based on standard consumer behavior research instruments.