

Destination experience image. An exploratory contribution towards the development of a reliable and valid measurement scale

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Abstract

The study reviews the concept of destination image to contribute to the extant framework by developing a valid and reliable measurement scale for the destination experience image, which can be applied to tourism destinations. A two-stage approach was used for the exploratory scale development. Firstly, addressing the theme and item generation identification, followed by scale refinement as the second stage. A proportional stratified sampling procedure was applied, and a total of 800 questionnaires were collected. Afterwards, exploratory factor analysis was employed for the assessment of the internal reliability of the scale. The findings of the exploratory study suggest that experience image can be measured regarding the cognitive component by seven factors (infrastructures, local culture, leisure activities, environmental oriented, entertainment, local gastronomy and landscape) and 24 items. Our results also show that regarding the affective dimension of experience image, four factors (joyful, calm, family safe and glamorous) with 16 items can be employed. Conclusions and implications, theoretical and practical, are discussed. This study was developed within the project SSAICT-ALG/39588/2018.

Keywords: experience image, destination image, scale development, exploratory factor analysis.

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