DETERMINANTS OF DESTINATION IMAGE, IMAGE RECOVERY AND PERFORMANCE OF THE TOURISM SECTOR: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The basis of this paper is a DPhil study on destination image recovery and performance of a tourist destination. The paper looks at the variables which determine the perceived destination image in so far as they also influence image recovery and performance of the tourism sector. Destination image is generally accepted as a key aspect in successful tourism development and destination marketing owing to its impact on both demand and supply aspects of destination marketing. Literature indicates that the tourist's personal factors (socio-demographic and psychological characteristics) and the destination's natural resources, general infrastructure, political and economic factors, culture, history and art and others influence the perceived destination image. However, literature tends to be silent on the strong influence which a good number of these variables have on destination image recovery and performance of the tourism sector. This paper sought to contribute to knowledge on two fronts: through reviewing literature on the determinants of destination image illustrating their relevance for destination image recovery and highlighting the nexus between destination image and destination performance which is less pronounced in literature. Destination image influences both the tourist's destination choice and satisfaction with the destination. It plays a significant role in positioning tourism products, brands, and places. Thus destination image has implications for performance of the tourism sector. However, scholars have analysed determinants of destination image as detached from performance of the tourism sector and giving little regard to the link between the dimensions which determine the perceived destination image and image recovery. This is important because currently destination image recovery and tourism performance are very pertinent subjects across the globe. It is recommended that future research covers an evaluation of models for DI recovery and enhancement of tourism performance.

Keywords: Determinants, destination image, destination image recovery, performance, tourism sector.