Research Note

Cultural attitudes and tourist destination prescription

C. Pardo-García[a], V. Coll-Serrano[a,*], P. Rausell-Köster[b], D. Pérez Bustamante-Yábar[c]

[a] Quantitative Methods for Measuring Culture, Applied Economics, University of Valencia, Avda. Dels Tarongers s/n, 46022 Valencia, Spain
[b] Econcult, Applied Economics, University of Valencia, Avda. Dels Tarongers s/n, 46022 Valencia, Spain
[c] Economía de la Empresa, University Rey Juan Carlos, Paseo artilleros, s/n 28032 Madrid, Spain

A R T I C L E   I N F O

Tourists engage in an intensive use of the cities' services and facilities although they have not been designed specifically for a tourist use (Ashworth & Page, 2011). Because of that, urban tourism often implies a privatization of the public space or a transformation of historical city centers and displacement of more productive and less aggressive economic activities. However, tourism can be an indicator of the attractiveness of territories (investment flows, human capital attraction and production for ICT society).

This research note analyzes the effect of cultural, cognitive and hedonic attitudes of the urban tourist (Brida, Nogare, & Scuderi, 2017; Um & Crompton, 1990) towards the destination on being a prescriber of it. A tourist prescriber of the destination is not only highly satisfied with the destination but also recommends it strongly to others, the type of tourist policy makers are most interested in. Undoubtedly, satisfied tourists are more likely to recommend a destination (Chen & Chen, 2010), or develop loyalty towards a destination (Yuksel, Yuksel, & Bilim, 2010). However, tourist satisfaction can be: (1) a direct consequence of the quality of the services received; or (2) a broader concept based on emotion and pleasure (De Rojas & Camarero, 2008).

Attributes of a destination define its image and influence tourists' purchasing decision. An anticipation of the experience can be created from external sources (Gopalan & Narayan, 2010), but tourists cannot verify their expectations until they visit the destination. Mariano-Artigas, Torres-Moraga, and Chasco-Yrigoren (2014) consider perception of benefits as the antecedent of satisfaction. Echtner and Ritchie (2003) or Millán Campos, Díaz Sánchez, and Esteban Talaya (2010) analyze how tourists' expectations are based on the destination's perceived image. Regarding variables considered to choose the destination, Luque-Martínez, Del Barrio-García, Ibáñez-Zapata, and Rodríguez Molina (2007) highlight social conditionings (residents' self-perception, security and pollution) and architectural attractions, while Zouni and Kouremenos (2008) point out infrastructures and socioeconomic context, the contact with the different services offered (accommodation, restaurants, transport, accessibility, museums, etc.).

Our empirical study case is focused on Valencia city, which has experienced a significant transformation as a tourist destination in the last 15 years. Tourists have increased from 800,000 to 1.6 million, one of the highest growth rates in Europe in 2000–2007. This growth is partly explained by the emergence of urban tourism as a global phenomenon, the low starting point and the orientation of several public policies ("great events" strategy) to enhance urban tourism. Cultural demand grew with the construction of *Arts and Sciences City* and the organization of international sport events like the America's Cup and the F1. Moreover, it has tripled its museum offer. The city has experienced a repositioning itself but with no planning. Decision-making processes respond to short-term expectations related to specific lobbies' interests (political parties, economic agents or sports clubs).

Valencia's tourist policy is structured through a public/private foundation, *Valencia Tourism Convention Bureau*. While the political control is distributed among public and private agents (Chamber of Commerce, the Valencia Fair, firm associations and Valencia City

Council), the costs are almost only supported by public funds. Standardized strategic planning was introduced in 2008 following the exhaustion of events and the economic crisis, with a 5-year strategic plan and annual plans.

A logistic regression model is considered to analyze the effect of tourists' attitudes towards tourism on the probability of being an active prescriber of the destination. A prescriber is defined as a tourist who reports a satisfaction greater than or equal to 4 in a 5-point Likert scale and also recommends the city to others for sure. Sociodemographic characteristics of the tourists, the type of trip or characteristics of the destination have been considered in the model as well. Data used come from 1309 face-to-face interviews to tourists in Valencia in 2014. The results of the goodness-of-fit tests for the logit estimation prove that it is a good model: (1) the likelihood ratio (LR) is very significant ($\chi^2 = 259.1, df = 13, p < .001$); (2) the Hosmer and Lemeshow test ($\chi^2 = 7.3677, df = 8$) has a p-value of .4975; (3) the area under the ROC curve is equal to 0.7503 (Hosmer & Lemeshow, 2000). Marginal effects have been computed at mean values of variables.

A higher *Cultural attitude* (interest in culture and patrimony)*, Hedonic attitude* (entertainment and the *soul* of the city) and *Cognitive attitude* (learning new things and gaining knowledge) increase the probability of being a prescriber tourist by 5.46%, 5.59% and 3.4% respectively. An increase in the knowledge of destination tourist resources implies a 1.63% increase in the probability of being a prescriber tourist. The perception of bad attributes of the destination (residents' hospitality, public transport, noise, security, cleanliness, restaurants' quality or tourism non-professional workers) implies a decrease of 23.76% in the probability of being a prescriber tourist.

Regarding the gender, the probability of being a prescriber tourist is 12.5% lower in men than in women. The type of trip also has an effect, *doing the trip alone* increases the probability of being a prescriber tourist by 22.43%, while the increase in the case of a *trip with friends* is 13.42% and 13.21% in a *family trip and a trip with a partner*, all of them compared to *business or organized group*.

An increase in the number of *Overnights* increases the probability of being a prescriber tourist by 4.59%. However, this variable squared has a negative marginal effect of 0.14%, a high number of nights (> 16.25 nights) in the city decreases the probability of interest. The more time devoted to know the city, the higher the prescriptive satisfaction, because of the sociability and interaction in longer stays (instead of purely tourist resources and direct impacts of patrimony).

On the one hand, urban tourism is a growing phenomenon in Europe, an opportunity for middle destinations recently incorporated as Valencia, due to high investments in events and tourist aimed facilities. Therefore, tourists' satisfaction becomes a strategic variable for prescribing the destination. The visitors' cultural, hedonic and cognitive attitudes are all determining variables; however, public policies face the difficulty of influencing them. Tourist destinations should improve factors that strengthen the *pull motives* (a call for tourists) and make the visit appealing for culture-motivated tourists (Domínguez-Quintero & González-Rodríguez, 2016). Tourist policies can be reformulated from the gender perspective, for urban destinations to become *women friendly* in terms of perceived security, sociability models, use of social networks and cultural or shopping offer.

On the other hand, the relationship between short-term and long-term attractiveness needs to be carefully considered. Valencia used a spectacular strategy of its tourist offer through high investments in large facilities and events in the decade prior to the economic crisis. Although it helps raise awareness about the destination, it has minimal effects on its prescription, which guarantees the destination's sustainability. Similarly, focusing on travellers with high economic expenditure (senior citizens in business or leisure stays) can have negative effects on the destination's sustainability, because their prescription is low.

The competitiveness and hierarchy of urban destinations is more related to their "liveability", evidenced by "less tourist" stays and the visitors' attitude. However, they only affect the short-term destination attractiveness since they are less related to factors depending on more conventional tourist policies. Then, the best tourist policy is a good urban policy, tourism should be a sub product of policies designed to make spaces liveable. Motivated visitors should be considered as actors who improve citizens' quality of life, enriching social interaction and exchange of ideas and also the opportunities for quality professional development in a creative and inspirational context based on knowledge and connected with global networks.

Acknowledgments

References

Ashworth, G., & Page, S. J. (2011). Urban tourism research: Recent progress and current paradoxes. *Tourism Management, 32*(1), 1–15.

Brida, J. G., Nogare, C. D., & Scuderi, R. (2017). Learning at the museum: Factors influencing visit length. *Tourism Economics, 23*(2), 281–294.

Chen, C.-F., & Chen, F.-S. (2010). Experience quality, perceived value, satisfaction and behavioral intentions for heritage tourists. *Tourism Management, 31*(1), 29–35.

De Rojas, C., & Camarero, C. (2008). Visitors' experience, mood and satisfaction in a heritage context: Evidence from an interpretation center. *Tourism Management, 29*(3), 525–537.

Domínguez-Quintero, A. M., & González-Rodríguez, M. R. (2016). Estudio de la Influencia de la Motivación y la Autenticidad sobre la Satisfacción y Fidelidad de los Turistas con Motivación Cultural. Análisis Comparado para las Ciudades de Sevilla y York. *Anales de Economía Aplicada, XXX*, 841–855.

Echtner, C. M., & Ritchie, B. (2003). The meaning and measurement of destination image. *The Journal of Tourism Studies, 14*(1), 37–48.

Gopalan, R., & Narayan, B. (2010). Improving customer experience in tourism: A framework for stakeholder collaboration. *Socio-Economic Planning Sciences, 44*(2), 100–112.

Hosmer, D. W., & Lemeshow, S. (2000). *Applied logistic regression.* New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Luque-Martínez, T., Del Barrio-García, S., Ibáñez-Zapata, J.Á., & Rodríguez Molina, M.Á. (2007). Modeling a city's image: The case of Granada. *Cities, 24*(5), 335–352.

Mariano-Artigas, E., Torres-Moraga, E., & Chasco-Yrigoren, C. (2014). Satisfacción: Determinante de la Familiaridad del Destino Turístico. *RAE – Revista de Administração de Empresas, 54*(4), 393–404.

Millán Campos, A., Díaz Sánchez, E., & Esteban Talaya, A. (2010). Satisfacción de la demanda turística en Castilla-La Mancha. *Revista de análisis turístico, 9*, 42–54.

Um, S., & Crompton, J. L. (1990). Attitude determinants in tourism destination choice. *Annals of Tourism Research, 17*, 432–448.

Yuksel, A., Yuksel, F., & Bilim, Y. (2010). Destination attachment: Effects on customer satisfaction and cognitive, affective and conative loyalty. *Tourism Management, 31*(2), 274–284.

Zouni, G., & Kouremenos, A. (2008). Do tourism providers know their visitors? An investigation of tourism experience at a destination. *Tourism and Hospitality Research, 8*(4), 282–297.