

IMAGE COMPONENTS OF NIGHTLIFE-CLUBBING DESTINATIONS

Irene C. Kamenidou
Kavala Institute of Technology

Spyridon A. Mamalis
Kavala Institute of Technology

George Kokkinis
Alexander Technological Institute of Thessaloniki

Christos Geranis
Kavala Institute of Technology

This study explored 141 British tourists' perception of Kavos' Corfu as a destination. It measured the components of Kavos' destination image. Data was collected with an aided self-completion questionnaire and data analysis included descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages and means), reliability, and factor and cluster analysis. 18 destination components were rated on a 5-point Likert scale and continuously factor analyzed, producing 4 factors and accounting for 80.7% of the total variance. Segmentation based on factors produced 3 segments with N=32; 50 and 59 British tourists respectively and with Final Cluster Centers ranging from 3.03 to 4.60. This research has contributed to the theoretical gap of the tourism industry literature regarding destination image formation in the Mediterranean and specifically Greece. These results can be used as a basis for destination improvement and strategy formation.

Keywords: *Tourism, destination image, Kavos, Corfu*

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INTRODUCTION

Research on destinations image started in the early 1970s with the seminal works of Gunn (1972), Mayo (1973) and Hunt (1975). Since then, destination image has been a very important topic in the tourism literature (Pike, 2004; O'Leary & Deegan, 2005). Destination image is



considered as an important aspect of destination marketing (Tasci et al., 2007). From consumer behaviour point of view, destination image is a leading consideration in interpreting tourists' decision making process since it affects the destination selection and the level of tourists satisfaction (Gallarza et al., 2002; O'Leary & Deegan, 2005; Kamenidou et al., 2009). Studies (i.e., Lee et al., 2005) reveal that destination image is an essential antecedent of tourist satisfaction. Destination image is vital for a destination's survival since destinations are becoming more and more replaceable (Assaker et al., 2011), due to increasing competition from new and emerging destinations worldwide.

Destinations with intense night life and clubbing (i.e., Ibiza, Kavos, Faliraki, Agia Napa) are of a great importance for young tourists. Although, these destinations are very popular, to the authors knowledge there have not been studies regarding the perceived components of the above mentioned and popular destinations and to what extent these components are important for destination image formation. Also, the British tourists comprise a significant market share for Corfu, which for many years it has been considered a very "in" destination for young British people (O' Connor, 2008), especially for the age range of 17-24. Thus, this study aims to investigate international tourists' perceptions of the destination image components from the famous nightlife/clubbing destination Kavos, Corfu. Andriotis (2010) indicates that the majority of the research body has been centered mainly on non-European young tourists, while for British there are a significant number of studies focusing on Ibiza. The principal theme of these studies is young tourists' behaviour in these destinations.

The structure of the paper proceeds as follows. Continuously a brief literature on destination image and night life destination is presented. Thereafter, the methodology and results are unfolded. Lastly, this paper closes with the conclusions, limitations and recommendations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Destination Image

Destination image is a well-researched concept in tourism literature. However, there is not a universally used definition. Jenkins (1999) asserts that defining destination image is rather problematic. The most well-known definition is that by Crompton (1979: 18) "the sum of beliefs,

ideas and impressions that a person has of a destination”, mainly because of its simplicity.

The body of study on destination image has covered many issues. Gallarza et al. (2002) reports that the main research areas on the topic include the conceptualization of the destination image, the destination image formation, the measurement of the destination image destination image change over time, influence of distance on destination image, active and passive role of residents in image study and destination image management policies such as positioning and promotion (e.g. Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Pike & Ryan, 2004; Tasci & Gartner, 2007; Kamenidou et al., 2009; Prayag, 2009; Cheng & Lu, 2013). Also, a number of studies have centred on segmentation based on destination image (i.e., Kamenidou et al., 2009; Assaker & Hallak, 2012).

This body of research indicates that destination image is rather a multifaceted issue and complex system (Agapito et al., 2010) and there are many different approaches to studying destination image (Gallarza et al., 2002). Furthermore, it is quite difficult to recognize the features that construct the tourists' destination image since it consists of tourists' individual explanation of reality (Bigne et al., 2001). Destinations which potential tourists hold strong positive images have a high probability of being chosen (Alhemoud & Armstrong, 1996).

Night Life destinations

Summer vacations at nightlife/clubbing destinations draw the interest of numerous young tourists from many countries (i.e., Andriotis, 2010; Tutenges, 2012). Sönmez et al (2013) describe these destinations as "purposefully packaged and aggressively marketed by transnational tour operators [TO] to that segment of youth travellers seeking hedonistic playgrounds that offer unrestrained drinking and round-the-clock partying with others of their own age, a host of activities that permit behaviors unconstrained by social norms at home, and music and dancing to offer a release from customs of the civilized social spaces of daily life" (p. 40).

For young tourists, the most important motivation factor for tourism is to obtain hedonic and pleasure seeking vacations (Diken & Laustsen, 2004) that are different from those typically encountered in normal everyday life (Andriotis, 2010). This experience plays a significant part in the lives of youth (Tutenges, 2012), since it helps them to create, enhance exciting and "memorable" vacations (Briggs & Turner, 2012). Previous studies (see Andriotis, 2010; Sönmez et al., 2013) indicate that this kind of experiences involves excessive drinking, drug use, risk sex behaviors

and many times the consequences are injuries, accidents, vandalism, fights, assaults, and even deaths. Mewhinney et al., (1995) assert that tourism constitutes the context in which risk behaviours occur especially in cases of young tourists, accompanied only by friends or other peers.

Although nightlife and clubbing focused tourism takes place in many locations around the world (Tutenges, 2012), the primary destinations are considered to be across the Mediterranean, Aegean, and Ionian seas (Sönmez et al., 2013). In particular, the same authors indicate that the most well-known nightlife destinations are in Spain (Ibiza, Mallorca), Greece (Crete, Corfu, Kos, Rhodes, Zakynthos) and Cyprus (Ayia Napa) while emerging destinations are in Bulgaria (Sunny Beach), Slovenia (Izola), Turkey (Alanya, Bodrum, Gümbet, Marmaris), and Egypt (Sharm el Sheikh).

METHODOLOGY

Due to that a destination image is a multifaceted concept; it is significant to investigate the multiple dimensions of it, so as to distinguish the point of importance of each attribute of destination experience. This study's aimed population was international tourists who were staying at Kavos Corfu, which is considered as a popular tourist destination in Corfu. From the international tourists, British tourists were targeted since they consist of the core of international tourism in Corfu, representing more than 50% of international tourists of the area (Skinner, 2013).

Data collection regarding British tourists' perception of components formulating Kavos' destination image was realized with a questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed based on other academic studies (Crompton, 1979; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Diken & Laustsen, 2004; Yoon & Uysal, 2005; Kamenidou et al., 2009; Andriotis, 2010; Briggs & Turner, 2012; Sönmez et al., 2013) after making the proper modifications. A follow up qualitative research via depth interviews was undertaken with 13 British tourists in order to validate the destination image components, before using it in the field research. Eighteen image components were included in the questionnaire while 16 others were dropped since they were not considered at all as a part of Kavos' destination image. The questionnaire is divided into 4 sections: the first section refers to visitation behavior, the second regards Kavos' destination image components, the third destinations competing Kavos, and lastly the fourth refers to British tourists' socioeconomic and demographic characteristics (gender, age, occupation, marital status).

For the quantitative study, convenience sampling was employed to collect the data required. Only term for a tourist to be part of the study was that they had to stay in Kavos at least two days, in order to have a complete and overall judgment.

The sample collection took place in Kavos during the months of July and August, 2011. Totally, two hundred and fifty questionnaires were handed out and 141 were included as considered useful for the research, accounting for a response rate of 56.4%. This sample size can be considered as satisfactory for the purposes of the research as well as the main statistical analysis utilized (Hair et al., 2010). Data analysis included descriptive analysis (frequencies, percentages and means), reliability and factor analysis and cluster analysis.

RESULTS-DISCUSSION

Consumers' profile and visitation to Kavos

As to gender, 62% of the sample was males and 38% were females. Regarding age the largest part of the sample were up to 22 years old (67.6%), single (100%), students (77.9%) and monthly income (82.8%) up to 1000.00€. From the sample, 75.2 % have never visited Kavos and only 14.8% had 1-3 times before.

Main reasons for choosing Kavos as a destination ($MS > 4.00$) was to "experience the wild nightlife and clubbing" ($MS = 4.30$); to "experience pleasure from the 'liberated sex life' " ($MS = 4.27$); to "go off limits" ($MS = 4.09$).

The main sources of information regarding Kavos were 68.2% from tour operators; 66.1% from the internet; and 65.2% friends/ relatives, while the main destination competing to Kavos is Ibiza Spain (68%); Malia, Crete (61%); and Ayia Napa, Cyprus (40%).

Factor analysis

The 18 destination components produced by previous literature and qualitative depth interviews were then tested on a 5-point Likert attitudinal scale. Specifically tourists were asked to point their degree of agreement towards each component which is "reflecting the image of Kavos as a destination". Means Score of each item is presented on Table 1. These items that were rated as destination image were exploratory factor analyzed with Principle Component Analysis and varimax rotation in order to capture the underlying dimensions of Kavos' destination

image. Factors with eigenvalues greater and loadings on the factor >0.50 were retained. In this matter, no item had to be eliminated (Table I). In the factor analysis, the indicators Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling (KMO), Bartlett Test of Sphericity (BTS) and Significance (p) are presented, which are indicators of competence implementation of the model Principal Component Analysis (Hair et al., 2010). Factor analysis produced four factors (K.M.O.= 0.877; B.T.S.=2055.363; df=153; p=0.00) accounting for 80.7% of the Total Variance (T.V.), with total reliability of the scale, $\alpha=0.9286$.

Table 1: Kavos destination image factors

Factors	Satisfaction items	Factor loading	Mean Score	Cronbach a/ factor
<i>Factor 1:</i> Wild destination 33.7% of T.V*. MS**=4.15 (0.66)	Good - exciting nightlife	0.816	4.42	0.9250
	Sexually wild place/ Liberation of ethics/ free relations	0.892	4.58	
	Liberate alcohol consumption	0.886	4.75	
	Having fun, being entertained, doing exciting things	0.754	4.01	
	Finding thrills and excitement	0.821	4.13	
	Adventurous place	0.569	4.00	
	Beach parties	0.656	4.07	
<i>Factor 2:</i> Money for value destination 24.0% of T.V. MS=4.55 (0.72)	Festivals and events	0.679	3.25	0.9286
	Special deals	0.890	4.80	
	Good prices	0.883	4.66	
	Coupons for bars etc	0.876	4.72	
<i>Factor 3:</i> Infrastructure quality and safe destination 15.2% of T.V. MS=3.62 (0.91)	Value for money	0.848	4.00	0.8042
	Hygiene and Cleanliness	0.767	3.80	
	Safe destination/Personal Safety Quality of Infrastructure (e.g. Efficient transportation, suitable accommodation, quality and variety of restaurants, shopping facilities, swimming pools)	0.791 0.797	3.98 3.37	
<i>Factor 4:</i> Sea and Sun destination 7.6% of T.V. MS=3.27 (0.81)	Good climate/ pleasure weather	8.71	3.80	0.7560
	Nice and clean beaches	8.60	3.01	
	Sandy beaches	7.31	3.27	

The “Wild destination” factor was the first factor derived over factor analysis and includes 8 items, all associated with the “wild life” that tourists would live in Kavos. This factor accounts for 33.7% of the total variance and has item loadings on factor ranging from 0.569-0.892. These items have Mean Scores (MS) ranging from 3.25 up to 4.75, on a 5-point Likert Scale. The highest MS is granted to the item “Liberated alcohol consumption”, followed by “Sexually wild place/ Liberation of ethics/ free relations” (MS=4.58). These two items seem to cover the destination image that British tourists held regarding Kavos, and regarding the first factor derived.

The “Money for value destination” factor was the second factor identified via factor analysis and includes 4 items, all associated with the “money for value” aspect, i.e., good prices, deals, coupons, etc. that tourists get in Kavos. This factor accounts for 24.0% of the total variance and has item loadings on factor ranging from 0.848-0.890. These items have Mean Scores (MS) ranging from 4.00 up to 4.80, on a 5-point Likert Scale. The highest MS is granted to the item “special deals” (MS=4.80), and it seems to cover the destination image that British tourists held regarding Kavos in this factor. In general, British tourists believe that they get what they pay for.

Factor 3 was named “Infrastructure quality and safe destination” since it included the items associated with both infrastructure such as suitable accommodations, transportation, etc., and to personal safety, and with factor loadings ranging from 0.767-0.797. The MS of the items that consist of this factor range from 3.37-4.05, with the least MS referring to quality of infrastructure, meaning that Kavos cannot be regarded as a destination of good quality infrastructure.

Lastly, factor 4 was named “Sea and sun destination” since it included the items associated with sea and sun components of a destination, and with factor loadings ranging from 0.731-0.871, and MS ranging from 3.01-3.80. This destination does not seem to have a sea and sun destination according to British tourists.

Tourist segments based on destination image perception

In order to segment the sample based on the four factors dimensions of Kavos’ destination image, cluster analysis was employed. At first hierarchical cluster analysis was performed and secondly K-means cluster analysis, in order to define if clusters had physical interpretation. The analysis resulted in a three cluster solution. Each segment’s Final Cluster Centers (FCC), as well as the sample size is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Cluster analysis based on destination image factors

Satisfaction Factors	st 1 cluster n=32	nd 2 cluster n=50	rd 3 cluster n=59
F1: Wild destination	3.33	4.60	3.66
F2: Money for value	3.03	4.18	4.09
F3: Infrastructure quality and safe destination	3.09	4.24	3.20
F4: Sea and sun destination	4.05	4.01	3.30

Sample: 141

The three segments obtained via K-means cluster analysis were: Cluster I: Tourists in this cluster have FCC>4.00 only in one case, and thus consider that Kavos is a “sea and sun destination”, while they neither agree nor disagree about the other destination components regarding Kavos. Cluster II: Tourists in this cluster have FCC>4.00 in all cases, and thus consider that Kavos is a wild destination with good value for money, with qualitative infrastructure and safe destination and also a sea and sun destination. Cluster III: Tourists that perceive that Kavos’ destination image is of: “value for money destination”. It is a cluster that composes of 59 tourists that believe that Kavos’ has good value for money (FCC>4.00) and a tendency to be a wild destination place (FCC=3.66).

CONCLUSIONS

This research covers the gap in literature of the destination image measurement, since it deals with the destination image components of nightlife/ clubbing destinations that are visited in a large percentage by young British tourists. Results revealed that for British young tourists, Kavos image as a tourist destination is “a wild destination with a good value for money”, since the two before mentioning factors interpret almost 60% of the total variance. Previous research show that British youngsters when going on vacation are interested and for so chose destination where they can drink and use different kinds of substances (Plant & Plant, 2006, in Tutenges & Hesse, 2008; Bellis et al., 2007; Bell, 2008; Downing, et al., 2011; Briggs and Turner, 2012)

However, destinations have certain carrying capacities beyond which, both the wellbeing of local residents and the satisfaction of tourists can be jeopardised. Therefore, these destinations can no longer be positioned as irreplaceable unique products, due to their overdevelopment (Buhalis, 2001), negative image and local populations reactions to tourists' misbehaviours (Bell, 2008) and the local authorities and government's priorities (Priporas & Kamenidou, 2003). For example, regarding the negative destination image extracted from tourists' misbehaviour, Calafat et al., (2011: 38) stated "... The case of Malia (Crete) is even more extreme: the vast majority of holiday references concern solely its nightlife, with very little mention of other features. It is noteworthy that those links related to press and radio news items tend to give a negative image of this tourist resort, providing little or no support to its promotion as a healthy and attractive destination".

Hence, even though nightlife/clubbing destination deliver high profits to the local community, local stakeholders (authorities, residents, storeowners, etc), should rethink if they desire this kind of destination image positioning and its consequences in the long run, or should change it.

LIMITATIONS-RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Even though there was an attempt to minimize limitations when designing this research, still some exist and need to be mentioned. First of all, the outcomes of this study may not have represented all tourists in Greece, neither all British tourists. This research was limited to British young tourists aged from 17-27 years old and only in one nightlife/ clubbing destination, Kavos, Corfu. Moreover, this study used only 18 items to measure the image of Kavos as a destination. Further research should be undertaken to other nightlife/ clubbing destinations of Greece that has a high percentage of English young tourists in order to validate the findings of this research, and to investigate if other items should be included in the destination image scale. Such studies could be conducted in Ibiza (Spain), Malia (Crete), Faliraki (Rhodes) and Ayia Napa (Cyprus), which were considered by tourists' as main competitive destinations. Future studies should also include local residents' opinions' towards this particular form of tourism provided by their area of residence.

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REFEREED ANONYMOUSLY

Irene C. Kamenidou (rkam@teikav.edu.gr) is a Professor of Marketing at Kavala Institute of Technology, School of Management and Economics, Department of Business Administration, Ag. Loukas, Kavala, 654 04, Kavala Greece.

Spyridon A. Mamalis (mamalis@econ.auth.gr) is an Assistant Professor, Kavala Institute of Technology, School of Management and Economics, Department of Business Administration, Ag. Loukas, Kavala, 654 04, Kavala Greece.

George Kokkinis (kokkinis@mkt.teithe.gr) is an Assistant Professor, Alexander Technological Educational Institute of Thessaloniki, P.O BOX 141, 57400, Thessaloniki, Greece.

Christos Geranis (cgeranes@yahoo.com) Kavala Institute of Technology, School of Management and Economics, Department of Business Administration, Ag. Loukas, Kavala, 654 04, Kavala Greece.