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This SYMPOSIUM is part of the IV GRAN CANARIA INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF TIDES under the theme “GRAN CANARIA Spring Symposium on Challenges in Tourism Development: Digital Nomads, Lifestyle Migration and Residential Tourism” in order to provide an international forum for academics, researchers, professionals and students to discuss aspects of sustainability, competitiveness and economic prospects in tourism and transport. Communications relate to any of the issues of the Congress.

This CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS, has been the result of two days of knowledge and experiences exchange, related to Sustainable Tourism Development.

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Abstract 10

HOW DO SECONDARY SOURCES OF INFORMATION AFFECT THE IMAGE OF TOURIST DESTINATIONS?

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KEYWORDS: Tourism marketing; Destination image; Sources of information; Image information.

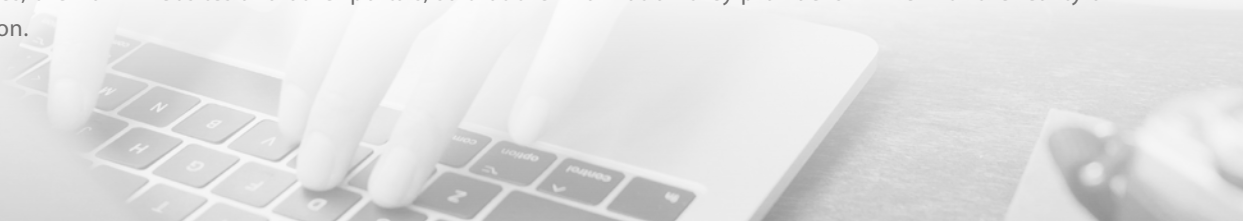
ABSTRACT: The purpose of the study is to develop and empirically validate an explanatory model that determines how different sources of secondary information influence the gap between the pre- and post- visit image. Based on the literature, a new classification of information sources is proposed: (1) sources of high information and active search (2) sources of low information and active search, (3) sources of high information and passive exposure, and (4) sources of low information and passive exposure. So with this new classification, the following hypotheses are considered: (H1) The greater the range or number of secondary information sources with high information and an active search, the smaller the gap in the cognitive image compared to the other types of sources of information and (H2) the greater the range or number of secondary information sources with low information content and passive exposure, the greater the gap in the cognitive image compared to the other types of sources of information.

This research has been carried out using a sample of 411 tourists in Tenerife (Spain). So the findings show that the greater the number of high-content, information sources used during an active search, the smaller the gap in the cognitive image. In contrast, the greater the number of low-content sources used during an active search, the greater the gap between the pre- and post-visit images. These results confirm that the use of sources of high information combined with an active search generates a perceived image of the destination before the visit, which is very close to reality.

This research presents an original conclusion from two points of view. Firstly, a conceptual framework has been attempted that would allow the continued advancement in the development of the topic of destination image, in order to better understand how they are influenced by sources of information in terms of the evolution of image. Secondly, the understanding of the influence of different sources of information on the formation of the image gap will help operators in the sector and the public institutions to project an image as close as possible to reality.

This research is limited to the context of its own objectives and also there are other factors that influence the change in the perceived image of a destination that may also affect the image change. From a methodological perspective, this work presents limitations that affect the generalisation of its results, since the scope of the investigation only permits the results of the analysis to be generalised to the population and the destination from which the sample was taken.

The main practical implication of this research is that the institutions responsible for the promotion of destinations should promote the use of official websites for the destinations, as well as the dissemination of information in tourist guides and specialised magazines. Also that institutions should exercise tight control over the information provided by travel agencies, their own websites and other portals, so that the information they provide is in line with the reality of the destination.



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