

Personal influence on the **image of a tourism destination**: Mediating effect of familiarity

A influência pessoal na **imagem de um destino turístico**:
O efeito mediador da familiaridade

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Abstract | The study of the behaviour of tourist consumers and its modeling have been the aim of research during years, cause its knowledge helps to satisfy the consumers, guide the decision by public and private managers and achieve strong positioning as compared to other competing destinations. It is important in the current situation where apart from changes in the economic situation which affect the progress of the tourism activities, changes in demand occur in terms of new wants and needs.

The image of a destination is a determinant factor by consumers when they choose the destination, therefore it is a relevant variable for studying of behaviour of tourist consumers as a key factor for destinations' competitiveness. Before the image influences the behaviour, it has to be formed, so it is important to analyse what influences the image.

The aim of this paper is to analyse the background or determinants of image of visitors; between these determinants are the individual characteristics, like motivation (personal factor), and the previous experience with the destination (stimulative factor). This paper analyse the effect of these variables in the image of a destination, focused on the town of Cuenca, with the final aim of getting increase the attractive and the competitiveness of tourist destinations.

Keywords | Image, motivation, familiarity, tourism destination, competitiveness.

Resumo | O estudo do comportamento dos consumidores turísticos e sua modelação têm sido alvo de investigação durante anos, porque o seu conhecimento ajuda a satisfazer os consumidores, orientar a decisão dos gestores públicos e privados e alcançar uma posição forte, em comparação com outros destinos concorrentes. É importante também na atual situação, onde, além de mudanças económicas que afetam a atividade turística, se verificam constantes mudanças na procura ocorrem em termos de novas necessidades.

A imagem de um destino é um fator determinante para os consumidores no momento da escolha do destino, portanto, é uma variável relevante para o estudo do comportamento dos consumidores turísticos e um fator chave para a

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competitividade dos destinos. Antes de a imagem influenciar o comportamento, ela tem de ser formado na mente do consumidor, pelo que é fundamental analisar o que a influencia.

O objetivo deste trabalho é analisar o contexto e os determinantes da imagem dos visitantes, entre esses determinantes estão as características individuais, como a motivação (fator pessoal) e a experiência anterior com o destino (fator de estímulo).

Este trabalho analisa o efeito dessas variáveis na imagem de um destino, focado na cidade de Cuenca, com o objetivo final de conseguir aumentar o atrativo e a competitividade.

Palavras-chave | Imagem, motivação, familiaridade, destino, competitividade.

1. Introduction

Nowadays, cities and tourist destinations in general face new management challenges arising from the intense competition found in the tourism sector to be able to develop successfully. For this reason, as well as having the necessary resources and infrastructure for development, destinations need to identify and promote their advantages, define the city's image and create a marketing plan based on it (Friedman, 2003).

In addition Ruiz, Olarte and Iglesias (1999) consider that, given a situation of concern about the competitiveness of tourist destinations, the study of the destination's image is a research approaches used in the literature.

Before any effort by public and private institutions is made, cities already have their created image (Fakeye and Crompton, 1991), achieved without any promotion; when this image is known, what then needs to be done is to try to make it as positive as possible and in this direction the institutions involved in the tourist sector need to work. So for an image repositioning strategy to be developed, the city's present image needs to be known.

The different activities carried out within city marketing seek to identify the competitive advantages of each place and establish strategies to communicate and publicise those advantages through the creation, reinforcement or modification of the image (Martínez, 2005), with the final aim of

positioning the city on the market with a positive, attractive image.

The external image of a city perceived by the public is what is of interest to this study, because it can affect the social and economic development of a tourist area (Domínguez, Valdés and Morfín, 2004), sector in which the economy relies to generate employment, economic activity and revenue in adverse conditions.

Many studies point out that study of the image of a tourist destination is important because of the meaning and relevance this image has when it comes to analyse its influence on tourist behaviour. And it is precisely in consumers' behaviour that study of the image is most relevant, for it performs two relevant functions (Jenkins, 1999):

- It influences the process of destination choice, by its power of persuasion and attraction.
- It conditions their behaviour in terms of evaluation of their satisfaction with the tourist experience and in future repurchase (new visits) or recommendations of the destination.

So the purpose of this study is to analyse the background or determinants of image of visitors; between these determinants are the influence the individual characteristics of each visitor have on the image, through their motivation (as a personal factor) and familiarity with or previous experience of the destination (as a stimulative factor), in order to find out the effect they have on the image perceived by tourists, which will influence visitors' decisions.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Consumer behaviour

The study of consumer behaviour takes on great significance in the sense that it is necessary to find out about their desires, their purchasing-decision process and their response to certain stimuli, in order to meet their needs (Devesa and Palacios, 2005). And consumer behaviour theories concentrate on identifying the factors which determine decision making.

The position perceived by tourism consumers from the information received will allow them to position a city in the market in comparison with the position occupied by its competitors, and will affect the destination's selection or buying process (Engel, Kollat and Miniard, 1993).

The choice of a holiday destination is a rational decision process influenced by different factors; traditionally it is accepted the classification into two types: internal and external factors.

Then marketing factors, included as an external factor, gain strength and consolidate the idea that consumer behaviour is determined by three types of different factors (De Borja, Casanovas and Bosch, 2002) in the choice of a holiday destination:

- Internal or personal factors: the basic structures of perception where there are motives, character, perception, learning and attitude.
- External or environmental factors: economic, demographic, cultural and social characteristics.
- Marketing factors: creation of image, building consumer loyalty, public relations and the positioning of products and services, among others, i.e. the marketing actions that companies make in the market using the price, product, distribution and communication policies.

So the choice of destination depends on a mixture of different factors. In this decision-making process, the tourist destination's image is a determinant factor by consumers when they choose the

destination, in the different models proposed for the tourist destination choice. So the image-forming process will influence tourism consumers' preference for one destination over others of similar characteristics, but before this influence is produced, the image needs to be formed. This study contributes towards better knowledge of the image formation process and on the variables affecting it, considering that there is a little academic effort about this in the literature (Beerli and Martín, 2004) and specially about familiarity, despite its interest (Gázquez, Jiménez and Marín, 2012).

2.2. Image

Different authors have been proposed a definition of tourism destination's image. One of the most used defines the image like the set of beliefs and opinions people have about a destination and is formed as a result of associations about information for a place (Martínez, 2005; Kotler, Gertner, Rein and Haider, 2006), from different sources of information (Beerli, Martín and Moreno, 2003).

The knowledge of the image perceived of a destination provides useful information for the design of marketing policies (Nicolau, 2002), especially in product and communication policies, in the sense that it allows the destination's weaknesses with regard to the products and services it offers to be corrected, while allowing promotion campaigns to be corrected or redesigned, because analysis of the image allows the best perceived attributes to be detected.

The most widely model used as a framework for the destination image's formation is proposed by Baloglu and McCleary (1999), where the image of a destination before visiting it, i.e., the external image, is the result of the influence of two kinds of factor, stimulative and personal factors:

- Personal factors: refer to psychological characteristics (values, motivations, beliefs and personality) and social ones (age, education, marital status and status, among others) of the receptor.

- Stimulative factors: are based on external stimulus to the individual, such as information sources, previous experience and intermediaries.

These two factors (personal and stimulative) define three levels of evaluation in the structure of the image: cognitive (knowledge of the place, through evaluation of the destination's attributes), emotional (the feelings the destination arouses) and global (consisting of both the foregoing dimensions); the role one or another dimension of the image (cognitive and emotional) has on the tourist's behaviour may vary depending on the characteristics of the tourism consumers (Beerli, Martín and Moreno, 2003).

Among the multiple factors that influence the process of image formation, this study is focused on motivation and familiarity with the destination. Although these are variables that cannot be controlled by tourism managers, knowledge of them gives valuable information, enabling their stimulation or redirection in an appropriate manner. And the purpose is to orient to tourism managers to take decisions about the way to improve the image of a destination.

2.3.Motivation

Motivation is a personal factor in image formation, which seeks to satisfy the needs related with the wish to travel; therefore it is an element which affects the image.

Motive is accepted as a central element in tourism consumers' behaviour and as the force driving the tourist to travel (Mediano, 2002; Carrillo, Frías and Rodríguez, 2009); so this variable has an effect from the first stage of the decision process, given that the recognition of a need constitutes the basis of motives; and also in the final stage, which involves evaluation after the buying experience and will decisively affect the tourist's future repurchase decisions (Bigné, Font and Andreu, 2000). But motivation is also accepted as a central element in the process of destination choice and in the forming of tourist images (Stabler, 1990; Um, 1993).

The effect of motivation on the destination image is considered a relationship difficult to explain but relevant in order to understand the image forming process, as well as the different opinions expressed by tourists on visiting the same tourist destination.

The initial hypothesis is that people who visit a particular tourist destination for different motives use different criteria to evaluate the same reality which is the destination, for this reason attributing greater importance to certain aspects to the detriment of that given to others, so that each visitor comes to build a different image of the destination. In this sense, some studies consider that evaluation criteria arising from motivation act as filters through which the individual builds the image of the city (Castaño, Moreno and Crego, 2006).

Numerous studies show a significant effect of motivation in forming the image of a tourist destination (Mill and Morrison, 1992; Dann, 1996; Baloglu, 1997; Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; San Martín, 2005; Harahsheh, 2009; Alegre and Garau, 2010). So that the effect will be positive when there is coherence between the benefits individuals seek and the nature of the destination (Beerli and Martín, 2004), and they propose that individuals perceived more positively the destinations for the attributes which coincide with their motivations or benefits sought.

On the basis of these arguments it is formulated the first hypothesis of the research:

H1: Motivation has a direct influence on the perceived image of the destination.

2.4.Familiarity

Familiarity or previous experience is a stimulative factor in the image forming process, because it is considered a basic component of knowledge consumer and it is defined as previous knowledge of something (Rao and Monroe, 1988; Cordell, 1997). Study of human behaviour shows that individuals learn from the consequences of their actions, both positive and negative, and their subsequent behaviour is governed by those consequences; this is an in-

dividual's experience (Pérez, Guerrero and González, 2010) or familiarity with the destination (Bulnes, 2008) which reduces uncertainty and increases security in the choice of destination.

So previous experience of the tourist destination is a relevant variable in formation of its perceived image, such as a stimulative variable that represents the individual's familiarity with the tourism product (Chon, 1991; Fakeye and Crompton, 1991; Milman and Pizam, 1995; Dann, 1996).

Familiarity with a tourist destination has a significant effect on the intention to visit subsequently or recommend it, as the experience felt may lead to modification of the initial image perceived by the tourist, which will only increase his loyalty to the destination if it is positive (Sánchez and Sanz, 2003); loyalty building being a key strategy for repositioning of a tourist destination, a necessary strategy in the current globalized environment and strong competitiveness between tourist destinations.

The literature has traditionally maintained that the individual's familiarity or experience has a direct influence on the perceived image of the destination, so that the greater the individual's familiarity or experience of the tourist destination, the more favourable its perception is (Hunt, 1975; Pearce, 1982; Phelps, 1986; Chon, 1991; Fakeye and Crompton, 1991; Ahmed, 1994; Samiee, 1994; Milman and Pizam, 1995; Dann, 1996; Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Baloglu, 2001; Litvin and Ling, 2001; Rittichainuwat, Qu and Brown, 2001; Andsager and Drzewiecka, 2002; Vogt and Andereck, 2003; Beerli and Martín, 2004; Hsu, Wolfe and Kang, 2004; Marinao, 2010). Because successive exposures and repeated experiences in a destination, improve the attitude towards it and its perception.

However, other authors (MacKay and Fesenmaier, 1997; Hsu, Wolfe and Kang, 2004) consider that this direct effect is maintained up to a certain point, beyond which it becomes negative or inverse, as the novelty effect prevails over experience.

Facing the duality effect observed in the literature of familiarity over the image, this study argues for a direct effect, and makes the following hypothesis:

H2: The familiarity with the destination has a direct effect on its perceived image.

In spite of the direct effect between familiarity and image, this study proposed the existence of an indirect effect through the mediation of motivation. Because previous studies have demonstrated the motivation of people who repeat the visit is different from those who visit a destination for the first time (Yiannaki and Gibson, 1992; Ryan, 1995; Morgan and Xsu, 2009; Morais and Lin, 2010; Wang *et al.*, 2011). So this study proposed the following hypothesis:

H3: There is an indirect effect of familiarity on the image, through the mediation of motivation.

Although familiarity, knowledge and experience are similar terms (Gázquez, Jiménez and Martín, 2012), there are two approaches to measuring the familiarity: like direct experience with the product (Alba and Hutchinson, 1987) and like knowledge about it (Johnson and Russo, 1984; Park and Lesig, 1981; Sabbe *et al.*, 2008), while others authors defend its bidimensionality (Baloglu, 2001).

3. Methodology

3.1. Description of the sample

This paper analyse the effect of these variables in the image of a cultural and inland tourist destination, focused on the town of Cuenca, declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO on December 7, 1996, with the final aim of getting increase the attractive and the competitiveness of tourist destinations.

The data used were obtained by a questionnaire of visitors who went to Cuenca's tourist information offices to ask for information in 2006. The visitors were selected by convenience sampling.

The technical record (Table 1) contains the most significant data from the sample used.

Table 1 | Technical record of the study

Universe	Tourists aged above 18
Sample unit	Individuals asking for information in tourist offices
Geographic scope	Cuenca, a town declared a World Heritage Site
Methodology	Face-to-face interview with a structured questionnaire
Sample size	656 valid questionnaires
Sampling error	± 3,90%
Significance level	95% (p = q = 0,5)
Field work date	2006

Source: Own elaboration.

3.2.Measuring variables

In spite of image is an intangible element, this study uses a combination of structured and non structured techniques to measure this concept in two stages: first the qualitative stage where a group of tourism experts (professional and academics who work in tourism) choose the most relevant attributes, considering those which meet the characteristics of the target under study, the town of Cuenca, from a huge series of attributes frequently used in different studies about image as a result of the review of the literature (Appendix I). In addition these experts can include other specific and differentiating attributes of the town of Cuenca according their opinion. On the other hand the quantitative stage using structured technique allows to evaluate the selected attributes using a Likert scale with eleven positions (0-10).

Finally, 24 attributes were chosen for measurement the image in this work, including both tangible characteristics of the destination’s tourism resources and intangible ones, and references to both functional and psychological attributes, which contain both common and unique component of the destination. In this context, it was decided that a destination’s image should be measured through a series of dimensions resulting from the grouping of these 24 attributes into factors, which are stable semantics and conceptually, used in previous studies and adapted to the town of Cuenca, such as cultural tourism destination. Finally five dimensions are identified to the destination’s image of Cuenca, by a

series of attributes, which measure global aspects:

- Natural resources: natural areas and green areas.
- Cultural resources: cultural and leisure; historic heritage and artisans.
- General and leisure tourist infrastructures: tourist information; travel agencies; car rental; tourist guides services; touristic sites to visit; business of sports and leisure; and trade.
- Social conditions: public safety; professionalism of security officers; cleanliness of the city; preserving the environment; maintenance of street furniture; facilities for disabled; and friendliness of people.
- Accessibility: tourist signage; accessibility; parking; public transport; and taxis.

The image is a second order formative construct composed of first-order dimensions which capture a single aspect of the overall dimension of the destination’s image. And each dimension is a reflective construct because all its items represent a single aspect.

This study uses eight motives (Table 2) which are frequently used in tourism research to build the motivation construct (Appendix II), which cover both push factors (related to socio-psychological reasons) and pull factors (related to cultural reasons).

Table 2 | Motivation indicators

Visit historic monuments and sites	Enjoy nature
Discover the local cuisine	Relax and do nothing
Visit typical villages and markets	Enjoy the nightlife
Play sport	Study Spanish

Source: Own elaboration.

The motivation is a formative construct because each motivation represents an independent aspect, and the combination of them builds the whole construct.

For this study familiarity is measured as the number of previous encounters the tourist has had with the resources of the tourist destination (Prentice, 2004); so it is only used the dimension of experience and none the knowledge one, which proceeds from the exposure of individuals to different sources of information. This represents one of the limitations of the study, although previous studies have recommended (San Martín, 2005) to examine separately both effects in order to find out if one of them affects the forming process more than the other one.

3.3. Information analysis techniques

To achieve the objectives proposed, the data obtained were analysed using a model of structural equations following the pattern shown in the figure 1. For this purpose, the structural analysis was carried out with PLS Graph, using version 3.0, a beta or trial version.

The reasons to use Partial Least Squares (PLS) technique, which employs the focus of minimum weighted squares for the verification of the structural relationship between the constructs of the model, are:

- There are variables of a formative nature.
- This technique does not require normally distributed and known data.

As has been said before, the image construct is built by grouping its indicators in a series of factors or dimensions representing general features of the destination's image. So this is a second order formative construct. The stage prior to estimate the final model described in figure 1 was estimation of the second degree construct, "image". For this purpose, the method used was that of stepped approach by calculation of the latent variable scores of each of the five factors or dimensions of the image, which were then used in the following stage as (formative) indicators of the image variable to estimate the final model shown in figure 1.

4. Results

4.1. Descriptive analysis

Regarding the experience in the destination (Figure 2), the 67.76% of visitors surveyed have not visited the town of Cuenca. And the main motivation for the visit is 'visit historic monuments and sites', followed by 'enjoy nature' (Figure 3).

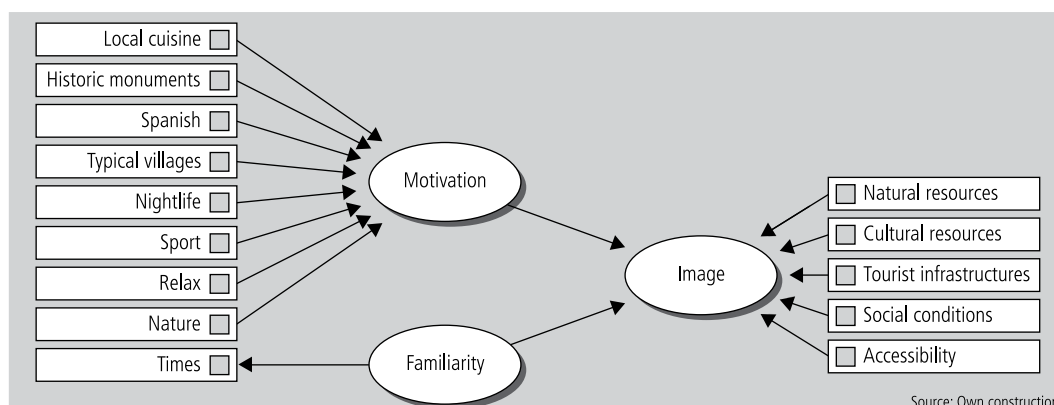


Figure 1 | Proposed structural model.

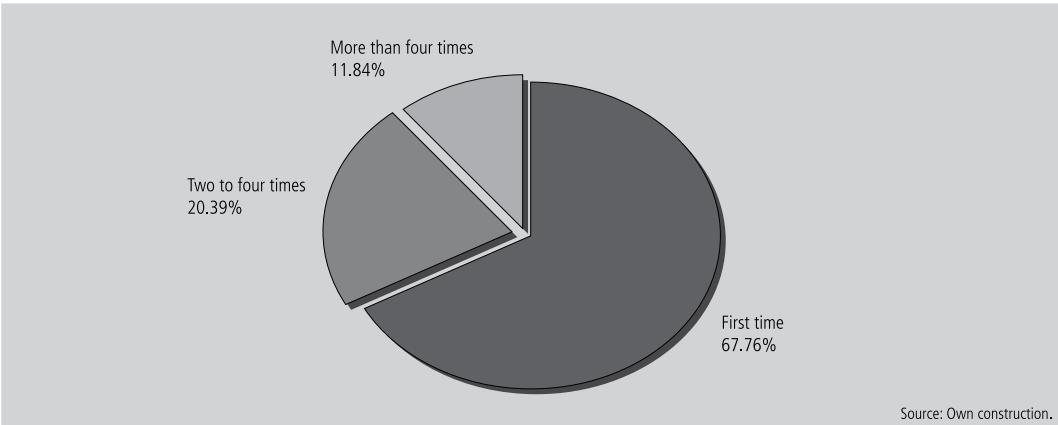


Figure 2 | Experience in the destinations.

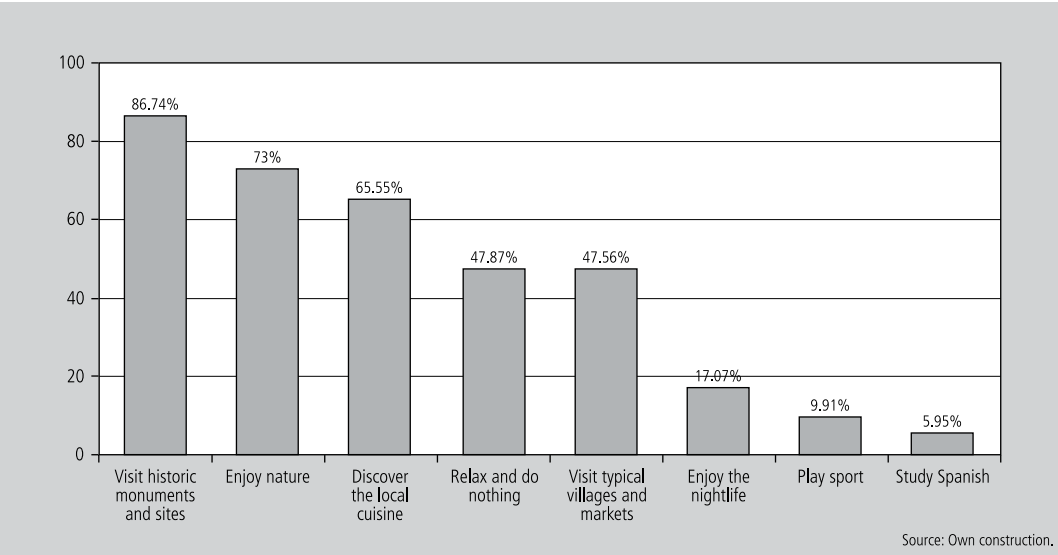


Figure 3 | Motivations for the visit.

4.2.Measurement model

Before study the structural part of the model, it was studied the reliability and validity of the measurement model, one side for reflective variables and on the other side for formative ones.

For validation of reflective measures four aspects are addressed: reliability of individual items, con-

struct reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity (Table 3 and 4); this process causes the removal of five items individually unreliable. And it was studied the multicollinearity of the indicators in the case of the formative construct (Table 5).

The next table (Table 6) shows the weights and significance of formative indicators of each construct:

Table 3 | Construct reliability and convergent validity

Dimension	Items	Standar coefficient (t value)	AVE	Cronbach's alpha	IFC
Natural resources	Green areas Natural areas	0.9142 (26.7587***) 0.7449 (10.1605***)	0.695	0.678	0.819
Cultural resources	Cultural and leisure Historic heritage Artisans	0.7150 (14.6843***) 0.6818 (12.5107***) 0.7447 (15.3371***)	0.510	0.695	0.757
General and leisure tourist infrastructures	Travel agencies Car rental Tourist guides services Business of sports and leisure Trade	0.8336 (29.5487***) 0.7928 (22.4827***) 0.6874 (20.2150***) 0.7909 (29.9894***) 0.6095 (15.2028***)	0.559	0.785	0.862
Social conditions	Public safety Professionalism of security officers Preserving the environment Maintenance of street furniture Facilities for disabled	0.7538 (28.4686***) 0.7319 (21.4282***) 0.6320 (15.3356***) 0.7133 (21.9665***) 0.5957 (12.6925***)	0.509	0.806	0.817
Accessibility	Accessibility Parking Public transport Taxis	0.6895 (14.7581***) 0.6022 (9.2820***) 0.7463 (17.2212***) 0.7140 (13.5020***)	0.502	0.779	0.783

Notes: *** $p < 0.001$ ($t_{(0,001;499)} = 3.1066$); ** $p < 0.01$ ($t_{(0,01;499)} = 2.3334$); * $p < 0.05$ ($t_{(0,05;499)} = 1.6479$).

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 4 | Discriminant validity

	Natural resources	Cultural resources	General and leisure tourist infrastructures	Social conditions	Accessibility
Natural resources	0.8337				
Cultural resources	0.467	0.7141			
General and leisure tourist infrastructures	0.242	0.418	0.7477		
Social conditions	0.358	0.476	0.590	0.7134	
Accessibility	0.261	0.374	0.654	0.632	0.7085

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 5 | Multicollinearity of formative construct

Construct	Attribute	Tolerance	VIF
Motivation	Visit historic monuments and sites	0.801	1.249
	Enjoy nature	0.713	1.403
	Discover the local cuisine	0.775	1.290
	Relax and do nothing	0.777	1.287
	Visit typical villages and markets	0.761	1.314
	Enjoy the nightlife	0.860	1.163
	Play sport	0.895	1.117
	Study Spanish	0.882	1.134
Image	Natural resources	0.999	1.001
	Cultural resources	0.997	1.003
	General and leisure tourist infrastructures	0.761	1.314
	Social conditions	0.754	1.326
	Accessibility	0.770	1.299

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 6 | Weights and significance

Construct	Attribute	
Motivation	Visit historic monuments and sites	0.4682 (2.7058**)
	Enjoy nature	0.3804 (2.4584**)
	Discover the local cuisine	0.2816 (3.4198***)
	Relax and do nothing	0.1545 (2.5454**)
	Visit typical villages and markets	0.0801 (1.6594*)
	Enjoy the nightlife	0.1631 (2.4934**)
	Play sport	0.1537 (4.2937***)
	Study Spanish	0.0242 (1.7852*)
Image	Natural resources	0.3708 (3.4437***)
	Cultural resources	0.3026 (2.6977**)
	General and leisure tourist infrastructures	0.2102 (2.7057**)
	Social conditions	0.2930 (1.9060*)
	Accessibility	0.2456 (2.8302**)

Notes: *** $p < 0.001$ ($t_{(0,001,499)} = 3.1066$); ** $p < 0.01$ ($t_{(0,01,499)} = 2.3334$); * $p < 0.05$ ($t_{(0,05,499)} = 1.6479$).
Source: Own elaboration.

4.3. Structural model

After evaluation of the measurement model, in which the reliability and validity of the dimensions used was confirmed, and absence of the multicollinearity of the indicators in the case of the formative construct, we concentrated on assessment of the structural part of the model finally estimated, focusing on the strength of relationships and their significance (Figure 4).

The final model estimate explains (R^2) 18.30% of the variance of the image from the exogenous variables motivation and familiarity. This is an acceptable value, according to Falk and Miller’s criterion (1992), which recommends that values equal to or greater than 10% be obtained. In addition, this model has predictive relevance, since it obtained a positive value for the coefficient Q^2 of Stone-Geiser.

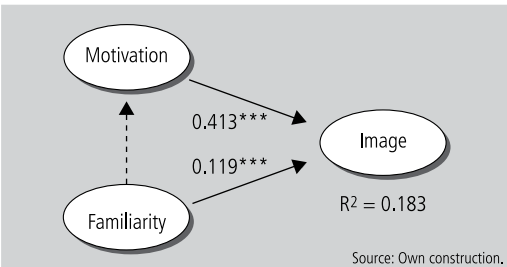


Figure 4 | Estimated structural equation model.

With regard to interpretation of the parameters estimated, the result shows the existence of positive structural relationships, so that:

- The greater the familiarity with the destination, the more positive its image.
- The greater the motivation for the visit to the destination, the more positive its image.

However, while the relationship between motivation and image is strong ($\beta=0.413$), this is not so in the case of the relationship between familiarity and image ($\beta=0.119$). And it is desirable that the β coefficient measuring the relationship between constructs obtained should have values greater than 0.3, its minimum limit always being 0.2 (Chin, 1998).

Looking at the significance of the relationships examined, they are both significant.

The weak influence between familiarity and image, get us to introduce an indirect effect through the motivation, which is consider like a mediating variable. The idea is justified by the familiarity with a destination can change the main motivation to visit it. The results do not confirm the existence of the indirect effect of familiarity on the image through the motivation, because not all the criteria (Baron and Kenny, 1986) are satisfy (Table 7):

- Increasing in the explained variance (R^2) when the mediating relationship is included.

Table 7 | Structural relationships and mediating effect

	Familiarity → Motivation	Motivation → Image	Familiarity → Image	R ²
Without mediation	—	0.413***	0.119***	0.183
With mediation	-0.028 n.s.	0.414***	0.124**	0.184

Notes: * p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001; n.s. - not significant.

Source: Own elaboration.

- No reducing the direct effect between familiarity and image when the mediating relationship is included.
- The relationships between motivation and image and between familiarity and motivation are not significant in all cases.

5. Conclusions

The creation, reinforcement and maintenance of the image of a tourist destination is a complex task because of the wide variety of elements comprising it, and the variety of elements affecting the image. In spite of this, its study is especially important in order to be able to improve the competitiveness of the destination with suitable marketing.

The study carried out gives us an overall view of how consumers' individual characteristics, through their motivation towards the destination and familiarity with it, affect the image they perceive of it. It also examines stimulative and personal factors which affect the image forming process. The results obtained provide sufficient empirical evidence to confirm the existence of the significant positive or direct influence of consumers' familiarity with and motivation towards a destination on its image.

Of these two relationships, the strongest established is between motivation and image, showing tourism managers that previous experience of a destination is not the key factor in its image, but motivation is. These results give sufficient room for

manoeuvre and allow institutions to use different tools to improve their destination's image, as it is not necessary to have previous experience of the destination to have a good image of it.

So public and private institutions should work on promotion of the town of Cuenca as destination, communicating all its advantages and generating information making it highly attractive to the recipients of messages.

One fact showing how well the promotion carried out so far has worked is the low number of visitors in 2006 who had visited Cuenca before, only 32.23% of those surveyed. So two thirds of the visitors the town received in 2006 did so because of the motivation generated by the promotion of the destination carried out, which also shows the existence of a large public at which messages attracting them to the destination can be aimed.

With regard to the dimensions analysed of the image, the one with greatest weight in the overall image of the destination is the natural resources, followed by the cultural resources, social conditions, accessibility and in last place general and leisure tourist infrastructures.

These results give tourism managers very valuable information, as it shows them which elements of Cuenca are most important to visitors, so orienting them towards where their actions to improve infrastructure and services should be aimed, and where they should make the greatest effort in maintenance or improvement, in order to improve the appeal and competitiveness of Cuenca as a tourist destination.

The limitations of this study that should be pointed out include its exclusive attention to study

of the cognitive component of image, ignoring its emotional dimension, which would give the study a more complete view. And secondly, measurement of the "familiarity" construct with a single indicator – for this reason, it is planned to increase the number of indicators as a future line of research in order to obtain better measurement of this construct.

Another limitation is the absence of indirect effect using the motivation like a mediating variable, so it is planned to study the potential of moderating effect of the motivation, in such a way that its inclusion can contribute to enhancing the relationship between familiarity and the image.

In a further research, it would be interesting to apply the same model to others tourist destination in order to check the robustness of our results, and to compare the competitiveness of different destinations.

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APPENDIX I

Table 8 | Measuring attributes of destination's image

Attributes		Authors
Friendliness of people		Goodrich (1980); Stemquist (1985); Haahti (1986); Gartner and Hunt (1987); Calantone et al. (1989); Gartner (1989); Guthrie and Gale (1991); Chon (1991); Fakeye and Crompton (1991); review Echtner and Ritchie (1991); Crompton, Fakeye and Lue (1992); Carmichael (1992); Chon (1992); Echtner and Ritchie (1993); Driscoll, Lawson and Niven (1994); Eizaguirre and Laka (1996); Schroeder (1996); Ahmed (1996); Baloglu (1997); Baloglu and McCleary (1999a); review Jenkins (1999); Beerli and Martín (2004); Royo (2006); review Royo (2006); review Harahsheh (2009); Medina, Rey and Rufin (2010); Femenía (2011)
Cultural and leisure		Review Echtner and Ritchie (1991); review Jenkins (1999); Beerli and Martín (2004); San Martín (2005); review Harahsheh (2009); Medina, Rey and Rufin (2010); Femenia (2011)
Historic heritage		Review Echtner and Ritchie (1991); review Jenkins (1999); Beerli and Martín (2004); Royo (2006); review Harahsheh (2009); Medina, Rey and Rufin (2010)
Cleanliness of the city		Review Echtner and Ritchie (1991); review Jenkins (1999); Beerli and Martín (2004); Royo (2006); review Royo (2006); Del Moral (2007); review Harahsheh (2009); Medina, Rey and Rufin (2010)
Preserving the environment		Royo (2006)
Maintenance of Street furniture		Royo (2006)
Natural areas	Environment, landscapes and nature	Goodrich (1980); Bernstein (1984); Stemquist (1985); Haahti (1986); Gartner and Hunt (1987); Calantone et al. (1989); Gartner (1989); Embacher and Buttle (1989); Ahmed (1991); Chon (1991); Fakeye and Crompton (1991); review Echtner and Ritchie (1991); Chon (1992); Crompton, Fakeye and Lue (1992); Echtner and Ritchie (1993); Driscoll, Lawson and Niven (1994); Dadgostar and Isotalo (1995); Muller (1995); Schroeder (1996); Ahmed (1996); Oppermann (1996); Baloglu (1997); Baloglu and McCleary (1999); review Jenkins (1999); Beerli and Martín (2004); Royo (2006); review Harahsheh (2009); Medina, Rey and Rufin (2010)
Green areas		
Trade		Goodrich (1980); Stemquist (1985); Calantone et al. (1989); Ahmed (1991); Chon (1991); Fakeye and Crompton (1991); review Echtner and Ritchie (1991); Chon (1992); Echtner and Ritchie (1993); Driscoll, Lawson and Niven (1994); Dadgostar and Isotalo (1995); Muller (1995); Eizaguirre and Laka (1996); Schroeder (1996); Ahmed (1996); Baloglu (1997); review Jenkins (1999); Beerli and Martín (2004); San Martín (2005); review Royo (2006); review Harahsheh (2009); Medina, Rey and Rufin (2010)
Artisans		Review Jenkins (1999); Royo (2006); review Harahsheh (2009)
Tourist information		Bernstein (1984); Guthrie and Gale (1991); Fakeye and Crompton (1991); review Echtner and Ritchie (1991); Echtner and Ritchie (1993); review Jenkins (1999); Beerli and Martín (2004); Galí (2004); Royo (2006); review Royo (2006); review Harahsheh (2009)
Tourist signage		Bernstein (1984); Galí (2004); Royo (2006)
Tourist guides services		Galí (2004); review Royo (2006)
Touristic sites to visit		Review Echtner and Ritchie (1991); review Jenkins (1999); review Harahsheh (2009)
Business of sports and leisure		Review Echtner and Ritchie (1991); review Jenkins (1999); Beerli and Martín (2004); review Harahsheh (2009)
Accessibility		Bernstein (1984); Haahti (1986); Embacher and Buttle (1989); Chon (1991); Fakeye and Crompton (1991); Guthrie and Gale (1991); Crompton, Fakeye and Lue (1992); Carmichael (1992); Chon (1992); Echtner and Ritchie (1993); Driscoll, Lawson and Niven (1994); Muller (1995); Eizaguirre and Laka (1996); Baloglu (1997); review Jenkins (1999); Beerli and Martín (2004); Galí (2004); San Martín (2005); Royo (2006); review Royo (2006); review Harahsheh (2009)
Public transport	Transport	Crompton (1979); Calantone et al. (1989); Chon (1991); Fakeye and Crompton (1991); review Echtner and Ritchie (1991); Echtner and Ritchie (1993); Muller (1995); Eizaguirre and Laka (1996); Oppermann (1996); Baloglu (1997); review Jenkins (1999); review Harahsheh (2009)
Taxis		
Public safety		Crompton (1979); Bernstein (1984); Calantone et al. (1989); Chon (1991); review Echtner and Ritchie (1991); Echtner and Ritchie (1993); Driscoll, Lawson and Niven (1994); Eizaguirre and Laka (1996); Oppermann (1996); Baloglu and McCleary (1999); review Jenkins (1999); Beerli and Martín (2004); García, Saura, García and Gallarza, 2004; review Harahsheh (2009); Medina, Rey and Rufin (2010)
Car rental		Review Jenkins (1999); review Harahsheh (2009)

Source: Own elaboration.

APPENDIX II

Table 9 | Measuring attributes of motivation

Motivation	Authors
Visit historic monuments and sites	Beard and Raghed (1983); San Martín (2005); Royo (2006); Del Moral (2007); Devesa, Laguna and Palacios (2010); Mohammad and Som (2010), Femenía (2011)
Enjoy nature	Sirikaya, Uysal and Yoshioka (2003); San Martín (2005); Royo (2006); Beh and Bruyer (2007); Del Moral (2007); Devesa, Laguna and Palacios (2010); Mohammad and Som (2010); Karvonen (2011)
Discover the local cuisine	Royo (2006); Del Moral (2007); Devesa, Laguna and Palacios (2010); Mohammad and Som (2010), Femenía (2011)
Relax and do nothing	Beard and Raghed (1983); Kozak (2002); Beerli and Martín (2004); San Martín (2005); Royo (2006); Del Moral (2007); Park and Yoon (2009); Devesa, Laguna and Palacios (2010); Mohammad and Som (2010); Femenía (2011); Karvonen (2011)
Visit typical villages and markets	
Enjoy the nightlife	Del Moral (2007); Mohammad and Som (2010)
Play sport	San Martín (2005); Royo (2006); Del Moral (2007); Devesa, Laguna and Palacios (2010); Mohammad and Som (2010)
Study Spanish	Femenía (2011)

Source: Own elaboration.