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## **The Hospitality's Contribution for the Destination's Image Developments and Implications'**

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### ***Abstract:***

*The hospitality understood as the kindness in welcoming guests or strangers, has a very broad definition, encompassing not only the business sector and the market, but also individuals and the relationships that they establish among themselves. Involves exchange relations in the economic, sociocultural and environmental areas. The cities to be competitive must be alert to human exchanges and the ways in which they are established in order to use them in their own favor, by supplying quality services to tourists, having in mind the current demand requirements. Having said this, one must also say that human relationships that are established in destinations, or be, between those who receive and those who are welcomed are extremely important to the creation of a unique and differentiated brand image. This study seeks to understand the importance of hospitality to the creation of a positive and differentiated image among the tourists that the destination hosts.*

**Keywords:** *Hospitality, differentiation, destination image, positioning, quality.*

### **1. Introductory Considerations**

In this paper there is an interest in the interrelations of the target audience with the space and with the residents in the visited destination. One will focus mainly in the traveller, that is engaged in some way in the personal growth possibilities in the middle of which will use; this growth shall be made both through the contact with the support services and infrastructure, as through of aspects of the owns' equipment valorisation, services and of the landscape characteristics of which appropriates itself.

On a more theoretical level, it was deepened the concept of hospitality, since the hospitality defines if a place is or is not hospitable in many different ways. Since the basis of this paper also is the target image, one considered important to make the link between tourism, hospitality and destination image, since these are concepts that are intrinsically linked, since they involve the relationship between two or more players: the one that visits and the one that receives the visitors in the destination. One talk also about quality, because the hospitality will always have repercussions in what regards to the quality perceived by the tourist, as a result of the experience accrued in the destination.

### **2. The Hospitality**

The hospitality can be seen as «a way of living together, governed by rules, rituals and laws» (Montandon, 2004). It is therefore an interpersonal relationship of hosting the «other». It is also understood as a broad sector directed to the hosting having as central feature the receiving of the public and making it live and experience (Hemmington, 2008).

According to Quadros (2011), «The hospitality is not only a sociocultural phenomenon; it is an aggregate of various elements. However, to portray this phenomenon as a product ready to be commercialized would be to disregard something that cannot be sold, only exchanged: the symbolisms involved in human interaction». Thus, the hospitality cannot be seen only and exclusively as a product/service that is «purchased» by the tourist. The Hospitality is therefore, to welcome others in our space (home, place, etc.) giving to them the best of us as hosts.

Alain Montandon (2004) stated that«offering hospitality is to become aware, it is to discover and to enjoy its own wealth's; it is a discover of the «self» and of a new look into its own resources». In short, the place needs to give what is best in it. In a certain sense, it is not the «other» which is stated and imposes its presence in the place, but, the host who shows its own «place», its culture and all its history, being in this way the hospitality conditioned by the existent use standards in the place. One concludes that the hospitality is based on viewing/ treating the other like one would like to be seen/treated in the most diverse spheres(dimensions), being these according to Camargo (2004)four: the domestic, the public, the commercial and the virtual ones. The domestic, which is the act of receiving at home; the public, which detaches that the host is the place and that these are normally desired and consumed even before

of the services of hospitality, food and transportation; the commercial which occurs in the commercial facilities created in function of the modern tourism emergence and more adequate to the usual designation of hospitality and restauration; finally the virtual one, which is related with the online world where occur virtual relations increasingly present and important to the tourism sector through websites, messages and e-commerce.

### 3. Hospitality and Tourism

Tourism points out to the temporary movement of people out of their residential area; therefore, there is a close relationship between tourism and the hospitality due to the fact that when arriving to a destination gives up a need to coexist with the territory and with the people that are in it. So and according to Dias (2002) what differentiates the experience of one or another tourist in what regards to hospitality is the way as each one of those was hosted in the destination. Dias (2002) also argues that tourism «lives» of the space, being this its «consumption object», then it is of extreme importance «the quality of the space or of the environments in general» as something fundamental to the tourist hospitality of the place. Tourism can also be seen as a «special phenomenon of human communication», once it gets to turn a strange place for the tourist into a «non-threatening and likely to enjoy» product, converting for that the unknown place in a hospitable one (Wainberg, 2003).

Plentz (2005) states that tourists like to be well received in the places they visit, so hospitality is the key to this process because it involves the act of receiving. Points out that the problem is that in the end an «oblivion» that those who receives the tourists are people happens and if a tourist does not feel valued in every way, will not be only the well-formed attendance that will make him to feel welcome. The most important are the exchanges, the encounter with the «other», which will determinate the perception that one will have of the place, if this is hospitable or not. For more infrastructures than a site has, are the people who play the main role when it comes to become a more welcoming place or not (Plentz, 2005). The visual communication and pollution influences the hospitality or hostility of a place. A well-signalled territory for instance, welcomes tourists, the inverse can cause aversion. A tourist destination shall provide the tourist a sense of welcoming due to a good reception on the place, transforming like so, it in a more hospitable and pleasant place.

### 4. The Hospitality, Destination Image and Positioning

Destinations compete global today in attracting the tourist demand; also this one growing each year, however, the supply is becoming more and more standard, which implies that today the challenge lies in the ability that destinations have to differentiate themselves from other. It is of extreme importance for the success of the tourist marketing strategies that one knows the influence that image has regarding the tourist behaviour. Kotler and Gertner (2002) define the destination image as «the sum of beliefs and impressions people hold about place. Images represent a simplification of a larger number of associations and pieces of information connected to a place. They are a product of the mind trying to process and pick out essential information from huge amounts of data about a place».

Kotler (2005) defends that differentiation «is the act of designing a set of meaningful differences to distinguish the company's offering from competitor's offerings». Although this statement is related to the business sector, with places happens more or less the same phenomenon, or be, every one of those tries to possess and develop something different which gives to them value, that increases its attractiveness' and allows them therefore to differentiate through the creation of a singular image.

Chi and Qu (2008) say to us, that loyalty to a given destination can be explained from the relationship between the constructs satisfaction and the destination's attributes; these can be: shopping, events, accommodations, accessibility, general environment, attractions and food. These authors also reported that overall satisfaction infers with the perception that tourists have regarding the destination image and it's positioning. By the observation of the factors here present in the destination attributes, one sees that many are intrinsically connected to hospitality, or be, the accommodations, accessibility, the environment in general and food, among other. Already Zabkar, Brencic and Dmitrovic (2009), confirm in their study that the quality of services affects the construct perceived quality, or be the accessibility affects the destination quality perception, as well as the attractions, the «packages» and the available activities. They verified yet, that the quality of services provided affects directly the levels of satisfaction, being that this construct possesses a direct relation with the construct loyalty and then with the construct perceived differentiation.

When one analyses the result of these studies, one sees that elements like accessibility, quality of services, food, shopping, accommodations, general environment (including interpersonal relationships) and attractions are extremely important to explain the perceived differentiation, the satisfaction and the perceived quality towards a given destination and so, these constructs influence directly the construct perceived image of the destination and lately its positioning. Thus, one concludes that the hospitality influences greatly the perceived differentiation regarding a destination and its image.

Destination image has the power to influence the decision making process of the tourist. If the tourist constructs a favourable destination image on their mind then it is probable that they will visit the desired tourist place (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Bonn et al, 2005).

As refer Pike and Ryan (2004) there was an exponential growth of studies regarding to the destination image, however, there are still very few studies that approach the destination positioning and the role played by affective perceptions. Being the hospitality here understood as the kindness in welcoming guests or strangers and so, mainly an affective construct and then it would be important to this subject the existence of more studies on perceptions. Important also because the positioning requires more than the understanding of the product image in the consumer's (tourist) mind.

## 5. Final Considerations

The hospitality plays today an extremely important role in the image creation, in the positioning and in which regards to the competitive differentiation of destinations, since human relations that are established also (re)create an image of the place. Thus being, it's important that a place is hospitable in way to give to tourists the best experience as possible and in doing so the hospitality could be a differentiator element given the specificities of each receptive community leading to loyalty.

One observed in the studies here reported that public and private hospitality are extremely important to the formation of the destination's image, when talking about the attractions, accommodations, food, shopping, among other. In what concerns to the so-called domestic hospitality one sees the importance of the element – general environment (including interpersonal relations) – in the destination's image formation.

So, one agrees with Quadros (2011) when this author states that «The hospitality is not only a sociocultural phenomenon; it is an aggregate of various elements. However, to portray this phenomenon as a product ready to be commercialized would be to disregard something that cannot be sold, only exchanged: the symbolisms involved in human interaction».

One concludes then, that the hospitality thematic understood as the kindness that one receives tourists must continue to be subject to investigation, given the lack of studies at this level, further more being such an important theme to the tourist industry. It is necessary for instance, to study at the level of the provided services as a more personalized customization will infer in the destination's image in opposition to an increasingly standardization.

From the ideas here expressed one can also suppose that the ways as tourists are received in the destination (hospitality) will play a key role in the destination's image construction and consequently in its positioning; as more hospitable is a destination in its different dimensions, more differentiated it will be regarding its competition.

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