

## The Mediating Role of Destination Image in the Relationship Between Event Image and Tourists' Behavioural Intentions Towards the Destination: The Case of Music Festivals in Morocco

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### Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to provide a theoretical understanding and empirical examination of the mediating role of destination image in the relationship between event image and tourists' behavioural intentions towards the destination. A conceptual model was developed based on an extensive literature review. The survey was conducted among 514 tourists who attended music festivals in Morocco and structural equation modelling based on the PLS method was used to validate the research model. The results show that the image of the event has a direct and positive impact on the image of the destination, providing empirical support for the theory of image transfer. Destination image is a significant predictor of behavioural intention, and destination image mediates between event image and behavioural intention towards the host city. These results can help destination marketers to make more proactive use of events in destination management. The study developed a distinct model and focused on music festivals, which is new because most of the other studies on the subject have concentrated on a single event, usually a sporting event.

**Keywords:** Event image; destination image; image transfer; behavioral intention; tourism

### Introduction

In an international, globalized and digitalized context, territories all ambition to reinforce their competitiveness, their visibility and their territorial attractiveness. In this context, the adoption of territorial marketing represents the key to success and the art of positioning and making a city, a region or a country visible and attractive on the world market. Territorial marketing is still a young field, open and under construction, which feeds on several disciplines to be able to bring affective tools adapted to the problems of territorial authorities. Among the tools of territorial marketing, events have become an essential strategic lever for destinations. Indeed, events play an important role in the offer of a destination and reflect its social, cultural and tourist dynamism. They help to extend the tourist season, improve the infrastructure of host destinations, increase their market share, strengthen their appeal, improve their image, preserve and enhance their cultural heritage, and improve their reputation and competitiveness (Chalip et al., 2003; Getz & Page, 2016).

Among all these objectives, the major challenge for destination marketers is to build, change, improve or reinforce the image of their destination to attract investors and tourists. Indeed, communities are attracted to hosting events to draw marketing benefits that will

contribute to the success of the destination in the long run by creating awareness, improve their image with visitors and attracting more national and international tourists (Dimanche, 2003). As such, the event and the attributes associated with this event can influence destination image and the behavioral intentions of tourists. The purpose of the current study is therefore to find out whether tourists develop favourable images of the destination to which they have travelled to attend the event. And if so, are these favourable images likely to influence behavioural intentions towards this destination? Therefore, our problem focused on the following central question: To what extent can the image of an event influence the behavioural intentions of tourists towards the destination?

## **Literature review**

### ***Associative network memory model and image transfer theory***

In branding literature, there are three ways to create or develop brand associations (Keller, 1993): (1) direct experience with the product or service; (2) sources of information (advertising, word of mouth etc.) and (3) association with other entities. The latter is particularly relevant to sponsorship activities. Keller (1993) has shown that when a brand becomes associated with an event, some of the associations related to the event (e.g. young, relaxing, pleasant, disappointing, sophisticated, clean, safe etc.) can become related to the brand through secondary associations. This is what Keller calls the "ANMM" model of associative memory.

This model supposes that human memory is conceived as a network of nodes (concepts) connected to each other by links. The nodes represent the information or concepts stored (attributes) and the links represent the strength of the associations between these concepts. So, the memory remembers information when a node is activated (Deng & Li, 2013: 70). In the case when a destination hosts an event, the event is in the consumer's mind as an independent information node containing unique images. When the event and destination are linked, the image of the event can impact the image of the destination mainly through "secondary associations". This mechanism of secondary associations has been theorized as "image transfer" in the event-sponsorship literature (Gwinner 1997, as cited in Deng & Li, 2013: 70).

The theory of image transfer has been adopted widely in marketing activities. Image transfer can occur in three cases, namely brand extension, co-branding and meaning transfer. The latter refers to the assignment of event associations to the sponsoring brand (Pracejus 2004). This has been widely applied and validated in event sponsorship, particularly in research into the sponsorship of sports events (Deng & Li, 2013). In the case where destinations host an event, certain associations of the event can be transferred to the destination image (Deng & Li, 2013). In this perspective, the hosting of an event is considered a stimulus. The results of Li et al. (2020) and Kaplanidou and Vogt (2007) corroborate these conclusions. Therefore, in our study, the adoption of the image transfer theory concerns meaningful transfer in which image transfer is unidirectional.

### ***The mediating role of the image of the destination***

The image of the destination has an important mediating role in the relationship between the image of the event and the behavioural intention towards the destination. The study of Kaplanidou and Vogt (2007) examining the interrelationship between Sport event and destination image and Sport tourists' behaviours, reveals that destination image can directly influence tourists' behavioral intentions, while event image influences indirectly behavioral intentions via destination image. Similarly, Li et al. (2020) show that the destination's image mediates the relationship between the event's image and the intention to revisit the host city. This can be explained by the idea that even if an event has a favourable image but is organised

in a politically unstable or not safe country, it may not be able to attract tourists to that destination.

### ***Event image and destination image***

Image is a perceptual phenomenon formed by a consumer's reasoned and emotional interpretation (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990). This study defines event image as the sum of rational and affective representations that an individual or a group of individuals associates with an event (Ferrand & Pages, 1996), and destination image as the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that tourists hold of a city (Crompton, 1979). Event image is generally considered to share the same theoretical foundation as brand image and destination image (Hallmann et al., 2010; Kaplanidou, 2006). Hallmann et al. (2010) affirm that event image has similarities with the concept of the destination image. Indeed, many researchers conceptualized destination and event images as cognitive and/or affective components (Deng & li 2013; Hallmann & Breuer, 2010; Hallmann et al., 2010; Kaplanidou, 2006; Kaplanidou 2009; Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2007; Lai, 2016). The cognitive component of the image is an evaluation of the known attributes or characteristics of the destination/event, whereas the affective component refers to feelings toward the destination/event. Therefore, we will use the cognitive-affective model to evaluate the image of the event and the destination

In tourism marketing, events can enhance the attractiveness of the destination, revitalize its local culture, contribute to its economic development and improve its image, reputation and competitiveness (Chalip et al., 2003; Getz & Page, 2016). Indeed, event marketing is an affective way to enhance destination image. Positive evaluation of an event can be transferred to the tourists' evaluation of the destination, which will improve their perceived destination image (Li et al., 2020: 216). In sport tourism, Chalip et al., (2003) found that event image influences destination image.

Kaplanidou and Vogt (2007) found that the affective image of the event impacts positively the cognitive and affective image of the host destination. Deng & Li's (2013) study of the Expo 2010 Shanghai China reveals that the cognitive image of the Expo impacts positively the cognitive image of Shanghai. Similarly, Kaplanidou (2009) shows that the cognitive image of the Olympic Games impacts the cognitive image of Athens. Lai's (2016) result indicates that the cognitive image of the 2008 Olympic Games influences the cognitive, affective and global image of Beijing, while the affective image of the event influences only the cognitive and affective image of this destination. Consequently, the following hypotheses are tested:

*H1: Cognitive image of the event impact cognitive image of the destination*

*H2: Cognitive image of the event impact affective image of the destination*

*H3: Affective image of the event impact cognitive image of the destination*

*H4: Affective image of the event impact affective image of the destination*

### ***Destination image and behavioral intention***

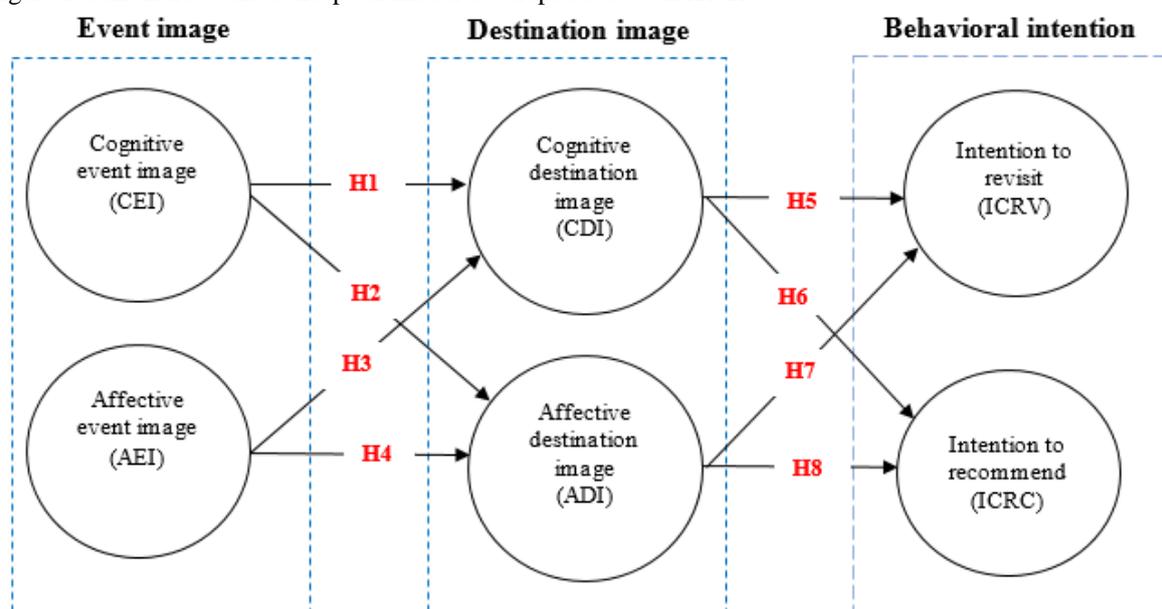
Behavioral intention is defined as an individual's tendency to behave according to his or her feelings, knowledge, or evaluations of previous experiences (Spears & Singh, 2004). Zeithaml et al. (1996) state that favorable behavioral intention leads to buying in the future, paying a premium price, spending more money, remaining loyal, and spreading positive word-of-mouth. Behavioral intention includes intentions to revisit and intentions to recommend to others (Başarangil, 2016; Wu et al., 2016).

In tourism literature, destination image has been a strong predictor of behavioural intentions (Alcaniz et al., 2009; Chen & Tsai, 2007; Gibson et al., 2008; Lee, 2009). It is a very

important factor in the decision-making process of current and potential tourists (Baloglu, 2001; Echtner & Ritchie, 2003). Bigné et al. (2001) found that the more favourable the image of a destination is, the higher the probability that the tourist will return in the future and recommend it to others. Chen and Tsai (2007) and Alcaniz et al. (2009) confirm these findings. Papadimitriou et al. (2015) and Pektaş et al. (2019) found that cognitive and affective image of the destination has a direct and positive impact on the intention to recommend the destination to others. In addition, several studies reveal that cognitive and affective images of the destination influence tourists' intention to revisit (Chuchu et al., 2019; Girma & Singh, 2019; Tan & Wu, 2016). Therefore, the following hypotheses are tested:

- H5: Cognitive image of the destination impact tourists revisit intention.*
- H6: Cognitive images of the destination impact tourists recommendation intention.*
- H7: Affective image of the destination impact tourists revisit intention.*
- H8: Affective image of the destination impact tourists recommendation intention*

Figure 1 demonstrates the conceptual model developed based on H1-H8.



### Research methodology

This study examines the impact of the festival's image on tourists' behavioral intentions toward the destination hosting the festival. The study population concerns the tourists who already attended music festivals in Morocco. By definition, a tourist is any person who visits a territory other than that in which he or she has lived for a period of at least twenty-four hours (Leiper, 1979). The choice of music festivals is explained by the fact that there are not many studies on these events, although, over the last two decades, music festivals in Morocco have grown exponentially.

For data collection, we conducted a survey between December 4th, 2020 and May 10th, 2021 by sharing the link of our online questionnaire in various groups and pages on social networks. We also sent the survey link with a personalized message to subscribers of Instagram accounts and Facebook groups dedicated to Moroccan music festivals and to people who commented on posts about Moroccan music festivals on these various accounts, groups and pages. This choice was justified by the cancellation of festivals due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In total, we collected 702 responses, among which, only 514 were usable.

Therefore, the realised sample exceeds the minimum required size calculated according to the Cochran formula ( $n = z^2 pq / e^2 = \frac{1,96^2 * 0,5 (1-0,5)}{0,05^2} = 385 \text{ person}$ ).

The constructs for the study were measured using a seven-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). The operationalization of cognitive event image was drawn from the scales of Deng and Li (2013); Hallmann and Breuer (2010); Kaplanidou (2009), and Slabbert and Martin (2017) and adapted to the context of the study. In total, 15 items were identified.

The measurement of cognitive destination image was based on the scales of Artuger and Cetinsoz (2017); Byon and Zhang (2010); Kaplanidou et al. (2012) and Ragavan et al. (2014) and included 18 items. Affective images of the event and the destination were each measured with four items using the Hallmann and Breuer (2010) scale. While the intention to revisit and intention to recommend to others were operationalized by Li et al. (2020) and Papadimitriou et al. (2015) scales respectively. The data were analyzed in three steps. First, descriptive statistics were conducted to determine the profile of festival visitors. Second, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) through principal component factor analysis to examine the dimensional structure of our measurement scales and reliability analysis (Cronbach's Alpha), and finally confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) through Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) under the PLS approach to evaluate the quality of the model and test of our research hypotheses.

## Results

### *Demographic profiles of respondents*

Our sample is composed of 65.6% of men and 34.4% of women. 80% of them are single and more than half are between 21 and 30 years old. About a third of the respondents (32.7%) have a master's degree, 27% have a bachelor's degree while 14.2% have a doctorate or professional degree. Our sample is therefore made up of individuals who are able to understand the statements in our questionnaire. The data obtained also indicate that 31% of respondents are employees and 30.5% are students. Moreover, 86% of the respondents are Moroccans and only 14% are foreigners, mainly from Europe.

### *Behavioral profiles of respondents*

The survey data shows that 81.3% of the respondents travelled to the destination primarily to attend the festival and almost 90% attended the festival accompanied by their friends and/or families. The results also show that 40.3% of respondents stayed with family or friends. This result is not surprising given that 86% of our respondents are Moroccans and according to their customs and traditions, most of them prefer to stay with a relative rather than in a hotel which is often too expensive for them. Regarding the duration of the stay, the large majority of the festival-goers stayed for the whole duration of the festival, thus 46.7% stayed from 2 to 4 days and 20.2% stayed from 5 to 7 days. Furthermore, the data reveals that the festivals most frequented by our festival-goers are Gnaoua World Music Festival (20%), Oasis Festival (16.7%) and Mawazine (15.2%). These three festivals alone account for more than fifty percent. For the rest of the festivals, we find Moga festival (7%), Taragalte festival (6.6%), Fes Festival of World Sacred Music (5.3%), Timitar (4.3%), Jazzablanca (4.3%), Atlas Electronic festival (3.9%), Tanjazz (3.1%) and many others such as Chellah Jazz festival, L'boulevard, Origins Festival which only represent small percentages.

### *Factor analysis of destination and event cognitive images*

In order to detect the factorial structure of cognitive destination and event images, principal components extraction with varimax rotation was used that retained factors with eigenvalues



greater than one. The 15 event cognitive image items yielded a two factor structure. The first two factors explained 63% of the variance in the cognitive event image concept. These factors were titled Organization & Reputation and Attractions & Environment. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for Organization and Reputation was  $\alpha = 0.93$  and for Attractions and Environment was  $\alpha = 0.94$ . Both were deemed very good. For cognitive destination image, the principal components extraction with varimax rotation yielded a two-factor structure. The two factors were each composed of nine items and had a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.94. These two factors were titled Quality of experience and Attractions and Price.

**Assessment of the measurement model**

Evaluation of the measurement model includes (1) composite reliability to assess internal consistency (2) individual indicator reliability (loadings) and average variance extracted (AVE) to assess convergent validity, and (3) cross-loadings and the Fornell-Larcker criterion to assess discriminant validity. The results pertaining to the reliability and convergent validity of the constructs are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Reliability and convergent validity of constructs

Construct, factor, item	Factor loadings	AVE	Composite reliability
<b>Cognitive Event image (CEI)</b>			
Attractions and Environment (ATT&ENV)			
Good atmosphere	0,857	0,714	0,952
The festival promotes cultural exchange	0,761		
People at the festival are warm and friendly	0,881		
The festival staff are friendly and helpful	0,868		
The festival ensures your personal safety	0,838		
The festival has quality equipment	0,879		
The festival has a good standard of hygiene and cleanliness	0,853		
The festival offers good value for money	0,818		
Organization and Reputation (ORG&RE)			
Information regarding the festival is fairly available	0,842	0,724	0,948
Suitable arrangements of the festival sites	0,842		
Festival has a good reputation	0,881		
The festival offers a variety of activities	0,795		
The festival offers a variety of excellent music	0,811		
The shows in the festival are special, interesting and entertaining	0,898		
The festival has a good projection	0,884		
<b>Affective event image (AEI)</b>			
The festival is Exciting	0,922	0,820	0,948
The festival is Pleasant	0,954		
The festival is Cheerful	0,943		
The festival is Relaxing	0,794		
<b>Cognitive destination image (CDI)</b>			
Quality of experience (QE)			
City has good quality infrastructure (roads, transport..)	0,821	0,680	0,950
City has suitable accommodations	0,863		
City has a good commercial infrastructure (stores for shopping)	0,803		
City has a good network of tourist information (tourist centers)	0,816		
City has a good standard of hygiene and cleanliness	0,854		
City is safe	0,783		
City has a good nightlife	0,828		
City has a rich and varied cuisine	0,815		
Local community is friendly and hospitable	0,836		
Attractions and Price (ATT&PR)			
City has beautiful natural attractions (beautiful scenery, parks, forests...)	0,776	0,689	0,952
City has pleasant weather	0,761		
City offers interesting cultural events (festival and/ or concerts)	0,824		
City offers interesting historical attractions (museums and/or art centers)	0,812		
City provides opportunities for learning ethnic customs	0,829		
Prices for hotel accommodation are reasonable	0,869		
Prices for commodities are reasonable	0,876		
Prices for food are reasonable	0,884		
Prices for transportation are reasonable	0,828		
<b>Affective destination image (ADI)</b>			
The city is Exciting	0,930	0,879	0,967
The city is Pleasant	0,960		
The city is Cheerful	0,954		



The city is Relaxing	0,904		
<b>Intention to recommend the destination to others (ICRC)</b>			
I am likely to say positive things about the city to other people	0,940	0,920	0,972
I am likely to recommend the city to those who want advice on travel	0,970		
I am likely to encourage friends or relatives to visit the city	0,967		
<b>Intention to revisit the destination (ICRV)</b>			
I am likely to visit the city in the near future for vacation	0,942	0,891	0,942
I am likely to attend a festival in the future in this city	0,945		

According to the results provided by the SmartPLS® software and presented in Table 1, we notice that the items related to each of the latent variables all have a loading greater than 0.7, which indicates that these items contribute significantly to the measurement of their respective construct. Furthermore, the average variance extracted from the variables is greater than 0.5. We also find that the composite reliability of each of the variables studied is greater than 0.7 which means that there is an internal consistency between the questions asked of each variable. Since the internal consistency reliability and the convergent validity are verified, we test the discriminant validity of the constructs.

Discriminant validity is the extent to which measures of a construct are truly distinct from measures of other constructs. This implies that a construct is unique and represents phenomena that are not represented by other constructs in the model. (Hair et al., 2017). Discriminant validity is measured by two tests, namely cross-correlations and the Fornell-Larcker criterion.

The Tables 2 and 3 below confirm the discriminant validity of our measures.

Table 2: Cross Loading

	<b>ATT&amp;ENV</b>	<b>ATT&amp;PR</b>	<b>ADI</b>	<b>AEI</b>	<b>ICRC</b>	<b>ICRV</b>	<b>ORG&amp;RE</b>	<b>QE</b>
ATT&ENV1	<b>0,857</b>	0,591	0,519	0,724	0,550	0,579	0,737	0,544
ATT&ENV2	<b>0,761</b>	0,494	0,458	0,610	0,460	0,488	0,634	0,463
ATT&ENV3	<b>0,881</b>	0,576	0,505	0,650	0,540	0,552	0,658	0,533
ATT&ENV4	<b>0,868</b>	0,522	0,428	0,594	0,452	0,480	0,639	0,485
ATT&ENV5	<b>0,838</b>	0,475	0,348	0,564	0,384	0,428	0,593	0,495
ATT&ENV6	<b>0,879</b>	0,560	0,432	0,617	0,466	0,519	0,682	0,586
ATT&ENV7	<b>0,853</b>	0,499	0,371	0,576	0,394	0,450	0,608	0,537
ATT&ENV8	<b>0,818</b>	0,508	0,413	0,584	0,460	0,486	0,596	0,468
ATT&PR1	0,540	<b>0,776</b>	0,535	0,581	0,535	0,491	0,482	0,651
ATT&PR2	0,479	<b>0,761</b>	0,569	0,491	0,512	0,489	0,445	0,628
ATT&PR3	0,496	<b>0,824</b>	0,535	0,487	0,499	0,459	0,444	0,600
ATT&PR4	0,465	<b>0,812</b>	0,512	0,484	0,532	0,473	0,467	0,576
ATT&PR5	0,565	<b>0,829</b>	0,562	0,543	0,546	0,508	0,533	0,563
ATT&PR6	0,512	<b>0,869</b>	0,532	0,502	0,502	0,464	0,427	0,576
ATT&PR7	0,539	<b>0,876</b>	0,517	0,533	0,501	0,466	0,494	0,567
ATT&PR8	0,543	<b>0,884</b>	0,563	0,568	0,551	0,532	0,492	0,575
ATT&PR9	0,538	<b>0,828</b>	0,551	0,535	0,563	0,510	0,477	0,576
ADI 1	0,510	0,623	<b>0,930</b>	0,586	0,644	0,565	0,473	0,600
ADI 2	0,504	0,625	<b>0,960</b>	0,577	0,658	0,607	0,486	0,597
ADI 3	0,457	0,612	<b>0,954</b>	0,538	0,652	0,561	0,440	0,577
ADI 4	0,458	0,587	<b>0,904</b>	0,539	0,615	0,529	0,420	0,545
AEI 1	0,660	0,573	0,548	<b>0,922</b>	0,526	0,510	0,585	0,585
AEI 2	0,697	0,616	0,586	<b>0,954</b>	0,575	0,559	0,631	0,617
AEI 3	0,702	0,617	0,569	<b>0,943</b>	0,584	0,577	0,624	0,610
AEI 4	0,573	0,474	0,450	<b>0,794</b>	0,434	0,424	0,484	0,438
ICRC1	0,555	0,607	0,643	0,581	<b>0,940</b>	0,857	0,522	0,583
ICRC2	0,525	0,629	0,668	0,565	<b>0,970</b>	0,779	0,508	0,584
ICRC3	0,503	0,591	0,661	0,548	<b>0,967</b>	0,762	0,495	0,570
ICRV1	0,522	0,541	0,564	0,504	0,787	<b>0,942</b>	0,479	0,551
ICRV2	0,592	0,569	0,576	0,582	0,785	<b>0,945</b>	0,553	0,560
ORG&RE1	0,614	0,470	0,421	0,519	0,436	0,440	<b>0,842</b>	0,442
ORG&RE2	0,657	0,467	0,413	0,538	0,455	0,488	<b>0,842</b>	0,448
ORG&RE3	0,675	0,480	0,441	0,583	0,496	0,498	<b>0,881</b>	0,441

ORG&RE4	0,609	0,463	0,386	0,504	0,409	0,383	<b>0,795</b>	0,418
ORG&RE5	0,596	0,455	0,355	0,520	0,432	0,431	<b>0,811</b>	0,433
ORG&RE6	0,694	0,535	0,466	0,604	0,498	0,505	<b>0,898</b>	0,472
ORG&RE7	0,692	0,525	0,405	0,569	0,485	0,506	<b>0,884</b>	0,466
QE1	0,422	0,517	0,424	0,432	0,400	0,394	0,368	<b>0,821</b>
QE2	0,530	0,635	0,541	0,518	0,541	0,534	0,449	<b>0,863</b>
QE3	0,489	0,530	0,406	0,463	0,410	0,442	0,419	<b>0,803</b>
QE4	0,468	0,561	0,454	0,485	0,412	0,438	0,408	<b>0,816</b>
QE5	0,495	0,560	0,485	0,479	0,475	0,424	0,392	<b>0,854</b>
QE6	0,473	0,535	0,486	0,459	0,474	0,421	0,403	<b>0,783</b>
QE7	0,508	0,624	0,585	0,570	0,590	0,535	0,443	<b>0,828</b>
QE8	0,542	0,648	0,609	0,590	0,581	0,568	0,482	<b>0,815</b>
QE9	0,584	0,650	0,579	0,635	0,577	0,588	0,511	<b>0,836</b>

From Table 2, it appears that the "cross-loadings" of the set of indicators in the model have a higher correlation with the latent constructs to which they belong than with the other latent constructs.

Table 3: Correlations between latent variables and the square root of the AVE

Fornell-Larcker criterion	ATT&ENV	ATT&PR	ADI	AEI	ICRC	ICRV	ORG&RE	QE
ATT&ENV	<b>0,845</b>							
ATT&PR	0,627	<b>0,830</b>						
ADI	0,515	0,653	<b>0,937</b>					
AEI	0,729	0,633	0,598	<b>0,905</b>				
ICRC	0,550	0,635	0,685	0,589	<b>0,959</b>			
ICRV	0,591	0,588	0,604	0,575	0,833	<b>0,944</b>		
ORG&RE	0,763	0,571	0,486	0,645	0,540	0,547	<b>0,851</b>	
QE	0,610	0,711	0,619	0,627	0,604	0,589	0,524	<b>0,825</b>

As shown in Table 3, the Fornell-Larcker criterion is verified since the square root of the AVE is greater than the correlations between constructs. Indeed, the latent constructs have a very high variance with the measures that form them than with the other constructs. Thus, measurement scales are confirmed. Since the validity and reliability of the construct measures are verified, we now evaluate the results of the structural model.

### *Evaluation of the structural model*

The main criteria for evaluating a structural model in the PLS approach are: coefficients of determination  $R^2$ , Cohen's  $f$ -effect size index or ( $f^2$ ), Stone-Geisser coefficient ( $q^2$ ), GoF index and path coefficients ( $\beta$ ) (Chin, 1998 [In Hair et al., 2017]).

#### *Coefficients of determination ( $R^2$ )*

The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) measures the predictive power of the model (Hair et al., 2017). It is the portion of the variance explained for an endogenous variable by the exogenous variables related to it. In other words, the  $R^2$  allows us to understand the contribution of the explanatory variables to the prediction of the variable to be explained. Thus the  $R^2$  concerns only the endogenous constructs of the model.

Table 4 : R-Square of the endogenous latent constructs of our model

Constructs Relation	$R^2$	Interpretation of values
Cognitive destination image	0,531	Moderate
Affective destination image	0,377	Moderate
Intention to recommend the destination	0,545	Moderate
Intention to revisit the destination	0,458	Moderate



Table 4 shows that the coefficients of determination "R<sup>2</sup>" obtained are between 0.33 and 0.67. According to Chin (1998) this indicates that the explanatory power of the independent variables is moderate.

*Effect size f<sup>2</sup>*

The effect size assesses the impact of each exogenous latent variable on the endogenous latent variable(s) in relation to the change in R<sup>2</sup> (Chin, 1998). According to Cohen (1988) [In Hair et al., 2017], values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 successively signify effect sizes: small, medium, and large, while a value below 0.02 signifies no effect size.

Table 5: The size of the f<sup>2</sup> effect

	ADI	CDI	ICRC	ICRV
AEI	0,147	0,161		
CEI	0,031	0,139		
ADI			0,208	0,095
CDI			0,166	0,172

Table 5 shows small effects of the contribution of the explanatory variable "cognitive event image" on the mediating variables "affective destination image" and "cognitive destination image". The values obtained are 0.031 and 0.139 respectively. Similarly, the contributions of the explanatory variable "Affective event image" on the mediating variable "Affective destination image" and of the mediating variable "Affective destination image" on the variable to be explained "Intention to revisit the destination" are small. On the other hand, the effect sizes are average for "cognitive destination image" on "Intention to revisit the destination" and "Intention to recommend the destination to others", "affective event image" on "cognitive destination image" and, "affective destination image" on "Intention to recommend the destination."

*The Stone-Geisser coefficient (Q<sup>2</sup>)*

The Stone-Geisser coefficient (Q<sup>2</sup>) is the test of cross-validation between the manifest variables of an endogenous latent variable and the set of manifest variables of the latent variables explaining said endogenous latent variable using the estimated structural model (Hair et al., 2017). Calculated by the blindfolding procedure, if this coefficient is positive, the model has predictive validity (Hair et al., 2017). In Table 6, all Q<sup>2</sup> coefficients are positive, which shows that our model present predictive validity.

Table 6: The predictive relevance Q<sup>2</sup>

Construits	Q <sup>2</sup>
Affective destination image	0,329
Cognitive destination image	0,308
Intention to recommend the destination	0,494
Intention to revisit the destination	0,402

*Global quality of the model: Goodness of Fit (GoF)*

In the PLS approach, there is no global index of model validation. This is why Tenenhaus et al (2005) have developed a Goodness-of-fit (GoF) index as an operational solution to this problem. This index takes into account the measurement model and the structural model.

The calculation formula is:  $GoF = \sqrt{R^2 * AVE}$

Applying the above formula, we obtain ( $GoF = \sqrt{0,47775 * 0,789} = 0,614$ ) a value of 0.614 (greater than 0.36). Thus referring to Wetzels et al. (2009), we can infer that the estimated model is highly valid.

*Testing the research hypotheses: the path coefficients*

The hypotheses were tested using the PLS approach to structural equations. We used a Bootstrap procedure with N= 500 resampling to assess whether the structural model coefficients are significant or not.

Table 7: Results of the structural model hypothesis test

Hypothesis	Std.Beta coefficient	standard error	T-value	P-value	Type of influence	Decision
H1 : Cognitive Event image → Cognitive destination image	0,377	0,065	5,761	0,000**	Positive	<b>Supported</b>
H2 : Cognitive Event image → Affective destination image	0,207	0,065	3,176	0,002*	Positive	<b>Supported</b>
H3 : Affective event image → Cognitive destination image	0,405	0,063	6,427	0,000**	Positive	<b>Supported</b>
H4 : Affective event image → Affective destination image	0,446	0,068	6,545	0,000**	Positive	<b>Supported</b>
H5 : Cognitive destination image → Intention to revisit the destination	0,422	0,054	7,778	0,000**	Positive	<b>Supported</b>
H6 : Cognitive destination image → Intention to recommend the destination	0,379	0,051	7,463	0,000**	Positive	<b>Supported</b>
H7 : Affective destination image → Intention to revisit the destination	0,313	0,054	5,777	0,000**	Positive	<b>Supported</b>
H8 : Affective destination image → Intention to recommend the destination	0,424	0,050	8,531	0,000**	Positive	<b>Supported</b>

The results of the analysis confirmed all our hypotheses (Table 7). The first hypothesis (H1), indicating that the cognitive image of the festival influences positively and significantly the cognitive image of the destination hosting the event was supported ( $\beta=0.377, p <0.05$ ). The second hypothesis (H2), stating that cognitive image of the festival impacts positively and significantly the affective image of destination was supported ( $\beta=0.207, p <0.05$ ). The third hypothesis (H3), stating that the affective image of the festival impacts the cognitive image of the destination was supported ( $\beta=0.405, p <0.05$ ). The impact of affective event image on affective destination image was positive and significant ( $\beta=0.446, p <0.05$ ). As a result, the fourth hypothesis (H4) was supported. Intention to return to the destination was predicted by cognitive destination image ( $\beta=0.422, p <0.05$ ) supporting H5. Intention to recommend the destination to others was significantly influenced by cognitive destination image ( $\beta=0.379, p <0.05$ ) supporting H6. The Seventh hypothesis (H7) related to the impact of affective destination image on intention to revisit the destination was supported ( $\beta=0.313, p <0.05$ ). Finally, affective destination image influences positively and significantly intention to recommend the destination to others ( $\beta= 0.424, p <0.05$ ) supporting H8.

*Evaluation of the mediating role of the cognitive and affective image of the destination*

According to Preacher and Hayes (2008), mediation occurs when the indirect effect of endogenous variables on exogenous variables is significant (p-value <0.05) and the confidence interval is strictly greater than zero. It is tested by the bootstrap method.



Table 8: Results of indirect effects

	Std.Beta coefficient	standard error	T-value	P-value	Relationship
CEI → CDI → ICRV	0,159	0,038	4,194	<b>0,000</b>	Significant
CEI → CDI → ICRC	0,143	0,035	4,042	<b>0,000</b>	Significant
AEI → CDI → ICRV	0,171	0,033	5,184	<b>0,000</b>	Significant
AEI → CDI → ICRC	0,154	0,030	5,045	<b>0,000</b>	Significant
CEI → ADI → ICRV	0,065	0,028	2,301	<b>0,022</b>	Significant
CEI → ADI → ICRC	0,088	0,034	2,596	<b>0,010</b>	Significant
AEI → ADI → ICRV	0,140	0,029	4,834	<b>0,000</b>	Significant
AEI → ADI → ICRC	0,189	0,034	5,593	<b>0,000</b>	Significant

Table 9: Results of the confidence interval

	Path a *	Path b **	Indirect Effect	SE	T-value	Bootstrapped Confidence Interval		Decision
						95% LL ***	95% UL ****	
CEI → CDI → ICRV	0,377	0,422	0,159	0,038	4,194	0,085	0,234	<b>Mediation</b>
CEI → CDI → ICRC	0,377	0,379	0,143	0,035	4,042	0,074	0,211	<b>Mediation</b>
AEI → CDI → ICRV	0,405	0,422	0,171	0,033	5,184	0,106	0,236	<b>Mediation</b>
AEI → CDI → ICRC	0,405	0,379	0,154	0,030	5,045	0,095	0,212	<b>Mediation</b>
CEI → ADI → ICRV	0,207	0,313	0,065	0,028	2,301	0,010	0,120	<b>Mediation</b>
CEI → ADI → ICRC	0,207	0,424	0,088	0,034	2,596	0,021	0,154	<b>Mediation</b>
AEI → ADI → ICRV	0,446	0,313	0,140	0,029	4,834	0,083	0,196	<b>Mediation</b>
AEI → ADI → ICRC	0,446	0,424	0,189	0,034	5,593	0,122	0,256	<b>Mediation</b>

\*Beta coefficient of direct effects between the explanatory variable and the mediator variable

\*\*Beta coefficient of direct effects between the mediator variable and the variable to be explained

\*\*\*Lower level

\*\*\*\*Upper level

Tables 8 and 9 confirm the mediating role of destination image in the relationship between event image and behavioral intentions toward the destination given that the indirect effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables via the mediating variables are all significant and the confidence intervals are all strictly greater than zero.

## Discussion

The purpose of the study is to provide a theoretical understanding and empirical examination of the impact of event image (music festivals) on behavioral intentions towards the destination hosting the event. To fulfil this purpose, image transfer theory and the cognitive-affective model acted as theoretical guides. The results of this study confirm the mediating role of the destination's image in the relationship between the event's image and behavioural intentions towards the destination. This implies that it is very important to care about the image of the destination hosting the event in order to encourage visitors' intentions and behaviours towards the destination. In fact, although the event may have a positive image, visitors may not travel to the destination if they don't develop a positive image of it.

The results of this study also affirm the idea that the event can generate more positive perceptions of the destination's image. Indeed, the results reveal the positive impact of the event's image on the destination's image. Specifically, the cognitive image of the festival impacts positively and significantly the cognitive and affective image of the destination, and the affective image of the festival impacts positively and significantly the cognitive and affective image of the destination (all  $\beta$  coefficients are positive and  $p < 0.05$ ). These results are concordant with previous research (Deng & Li, 2013; Kaplanidou, 2009; Kaplanidou & Vogt,

2007; Lai, 2016; li et al., 2020) which significantly enriches our understanding of the phenomenon of organizing events by tourist destinations.

From the results, we also notice a certain dimensional match, that is, cognitive event image has the strongest correlation with cognitive destination image ( $\beta=0.377$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and the affective event image has the strongest correlation with affective destination image ( $\beta=0.446$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). In other words, event image's cognitive and affective dimensions best predicted the corresponding dimensions of destination image. This indicates that tourists tend to have similar images of the festival and city. For example, when tourists perceive the festival as pleasant, cheerful, relaxing, safe and clean, they are inclined to have the same feelings and perception about the host city. This confirms the image transfer from the event to the destination and provides empirical support for the image transfer theory.

This direct impact of the festival's image on the image of the destination can be explained according to the three perspectives. Firstly, "Family resemblance" that exists between the two concepts. The event image and the destination image are mental images with a similar conceptualization, internal structure, and formation process (see Hallmann et al., 2010; Kaplanidou, 2006). Secondly, Halo effect (see Thorndike, 1920), which states that when tourists have a positive perception of event image, they are likely to perceive destination image positively, and vice versa [Lai, 2016]. Thirdly, Cognitive dissonance theory (see Festinger, 1957), which states that even when tourists have divergent perceptions of the event image and the destination image, they may reduce or eliminate these divergences to maintain internal consistency.

Regarding the impact of destination image on behavioural intentions, the results show that cognitive destination image has a significant and positive impact on the intention to revisit and recommend the destination, and affective destination image has a significant and positive impact on the intention to revisit and recommend the destination. This confirms the findings of previous studies (Alcaniz et al., 2009; Chuchu et al., 2019; Girma & Singh, 2019; Papadimitriou et al., 2015; Pektaş et al., 2019; Tan & Wu, 2016).

Furthermore, according to the results, the cognitive image of the destination has the strongest impact on the intention to revisit ( $\beta= 0.422$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and the affective image of the destination has the strongest impact on the willingness to recommend ( $\beta= 0.424$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). In other words, the results founds, suggest that the intention to revisit is best explained by tourist attractions, quality of infrastructure, safety, hospitality of the local population and value for money. While the intention to recommend is more influenced by the tourists' feelings about the destination.

The possible explanations for the impact of destination image on behavioural intentions are: (1) the tourist's realistic and direct understanding of the destination's components since he has had a direct experience. (2) The geographical distance which indicates that individuals living far from the destination tend to hold more positive images about it, which leads to a favourable behavioural intention (Crompton, 1979). (3) The destination's ability to develop and promote its own identity. Indeed, each of the Moroccan cities, such as Marrakech, Essaouira, Fez, Tangier, Agadir and Rabat, is distinguished by their natural, historical and cultural assets which contribute to increasing their impact on the behavioural intention of the visitors. (4) Since tourists perceive the destination as pleasant, exciting, cheerful and relaxing. Therefore, they will think of the destination whenever they feel the need for pleasure, joy, entertainment and relaxation and will be more likely to return to the destination and recommend it.

### **Conclusion, limitations, and areas for future research**

The results from this study have both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, this study developed a distinct model mobilizing the image transfer theory and cognitive-affective

model. Another theoretical consideration is that the study will contribute significantly to the progress of research relating to event image and tourists' behavioural intentions towards the destination since previous research on event image is limited in number and deals only with one of the components of an image, either cognitive or affective. Moreover, most of these studies have focused on sports events and almost all theoretical models on this subject are developed and validated in the Western world. Therefore, this study can serve as an important cross-cultural validation because it takes place in a different context and focuses on a variety of music festivals held throughout the kingdom, compared to other studies that have focused only on a single event.

On the operational level, the results of the study can be used by other cities and regions to promote their image by organising festivals or other events and will help practitioners to anticipate and maximise the possible effects of hosting such events on the host destination. These results are particularly precious for destination marketers who are, therefore, called upon to promote the image of events in order to benefit from the impact they can have on the image of destinations and on the behavioural intentions. Therefore, long-term synergies should be developed through strategic alliances between tour operators, travel agencies, tourist establishments, airlines, tourist offices, regional tourism centres and event organisers to improve organisational, environmental, emotional and social aspects.

The results obtained support the use of events as tourism stimulators. Indeed, music festivals can be considered viable solutions for destinations that want to promote their image internationally and attract more tourists. Therefore, destination managers should capitalize on our results by designing appropriate marketing policies to promote the image of their city and increase behavioural intentions. Finally, our study has developed a scale for measuring the cognitive image of the music festival adapted to our Moroccan context, which remains very little developed until now. This measurement scale could eventually be used by organizers to evaluate the attributes of such an event.

Nevertheless, as with any research, our work has several limitations that need to be taken into account. Firstly, the cancellation of festivals due to the Covid pandemic19 constrained us to administer the questionnaire online via Instagram® accounts, Groups and Facebook® pages dedicated to music festivals in Morocco. However, as these accounts, groups and pages were nearly inactive, the response rate was low compared to the number of music festivals organised in Morocco. In addition, the percentage of foreign tourists in the sample was small.

Therefore, future research should be conducted on a larger number of foreign tourists via a survey of music festival venues. In addition, they can focus on comparisons between the images of different music festivals, as well as on similarities and differences in perceptions between domestic and foreign tourists, or between tourists from different countries, given that such comparisons can generate new and interesting information. Moreover, this study was only focused on tourists who had already attended a music festival in Morocco and therefore had direct experience. Future research can also be carried out on other groups such as potential tourists and local residents, since they may have different perceptions due to their different levels of knowledge.

Furthermore, it seems possible that variables such as the frequency of the event and the degree of similarity between the event and the destination will moderate the relationship between the event image and the destination image (Gwinner, 1997). Therefore, future research could examine the moderating role of these variables in the causal relationship between event image and destination image. On the other hand, future research could also examine several other factors such as perceived value, perceived quality, past behaviour and satisfaction that may influence a tourist's intention to revisit and recommend a destination (Allameh et al., 2015;

Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2007; Pratminingsih et al., 2014). Finally, it should be noted that the image of the event is a situational factor which has a varying effect over time and according to the context. This means that the success of an event or type of event in a city during a given period is not always guaranteed. Therefore, future research could use our conceptual model in another context or with other types of festivals or events while integrating control variables (socio-demographic, psychological and cultural factors) to examine whether similar results will be obtained.

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