Cognitive Image of a Tourism Destination: the Case of Sarajevo

Dr. Amra Čaušević*
University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Science
Department of Geography
Zmaja od Bosne 33-35, 71000 Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
E-mail: amric.causevic@yahoo.com or amra.causevic@pmf.unsa.ba
ORCID iD: 0000-0001-9657-4049

Dr. Ranko Mirić
Vice-dean for teaching and scientific research
University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Science
Department of Geography
Zmaja od Bosne 33-35, 71000 Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Dr. Nusret Drešković
University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Science
Department of Geography
Zmaja od Bosne 33-35, 71000 Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Dr. Edin Hrelja
University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Science
Department of Geography
Zmaja od Bosne 33-35, 71000 Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Corresponding author*

Abstract

The purpose of this paper was to analyze the impact of the cognitive image on the general image of the city of Sarajevo as a destination. The purpose is also to discover the elements of destination which tourists might consider when choosing any tourist destination and how tourists evaluated those elements for Sarajevo as a tourist destination. The paper used a quantitative approach to research, which included data collection through the use of surveys. This study used a convenience sample of 250 foreign tourists - tourists who visited Sarajevo during the winter (from December 10, 2018 to January 31, 2019). To achieve scientific relevance, during the analysis and interpretation of the obtained data, descriptive statistics and tests of statistical significance were used. In this way, the validity of the hypothesis was verified. Results showed that cognitive destination image positively influences the general image of Sarajevo. It has also been shown that the importance of the elements of tourist destination, which tourists consider when choosing any destination, has a statistically significant positive influence on the evaluation of these elements for Sarajevo as a tourist destination. This paper reveals which elements of a tourist destination are important to tourists when choosing any destination, and the research can hopefully be applied to all tourist destinations.

Keywords: tourism, image, cognitive image, destination, Sarajevo.

Introduction

Destination image research, despite the much empirical validation in various studies, is still very roughly defined. Defining of the term destination image has been the dominant area of tourism research for more than four decades now. The evaluation and analysis of destination image has thus been the subject of much attention in related academic literature, and has

made a significant contribution to a greater understanding of tourist behavior (Beerli & Martin, 2004). It holds an important place in tourism literature since the seventies of the twentieth century, when it was noted that the positive image of the destination resulted in an increased number of visits and since it has been realized that the destination image plays an important role in the process of deciding to visit a particular destination or not (Puh, 2014). Destination image is commonly accepted as an important aspect in successful tourism development and destination marketing due to its impact on both supply- and demand side aspects of marketing (Tasci & Gartner, 2007).

Destination image includes beliefs, emotions, understandings, and knowledge of a destination, such as direct information obtained by traveling to the destination, as well as indirect information from reference groups, tourism channels, social media or Internet. The importance of creating destination images for managers lies in the fact that they play a vital role in the decisions and behaviours of tourists (Shafiee, Tabaeeian & Tavakoli, 2016). It is important that a tourism destination image is grounded in a true destination identity. An unrealistic and overinflated image can damage the future of a destination (Kesić & Pavlić, 2011).

Despite the great number of studies that have been conducted so far (Chen & Tsai, 2007; Jeong & Holland, 2012), the interest in this area does not subside. The reason for this can be found in the increasing number of tourist destinations, as well as the last involvement of a growing number of tourists in international travel. As the demand for tourism grows, more and more places, cities and states are included in tourist traffic. The emergence of new destinations on the tourist market forces the existing ones to find new ways of attracting tourists in order to remain competitive on the international tourism market. Since the tourist product is specific, the destination image becomes one of the key sources of competitive advantage (Echtner & Ritchie, 2003), the inescapability of tourist products makes the image the only means which a potential tourist has in comparing and choosing a potential destination (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a; Kesić & Jakeljić, 2012; O'Leary & Deegan, 2005).

Destination image research is the most explored topic in the tourism research. Still, there is no unanimity in the classification and the measurement (Madden, Rashid & Zainol, 2016). The existing literature most often attempts to conceptualize the image and define the components of which it consists. Many authors point out three components of a destination image: cognitive, affective and conative, and emphasizes that the mutual relationships of these components ultimately determines the predisposition to visit the destination (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Cooper & Hall, 2008; Crompton & Ankomah, 1993; Gartner & Shen, 1992; Stern & Krakover, 1993). Most authors agree that the overall image of the tourist destination contains three elements: cognitive, affective and conative (Stylos & Andronikidis, 2013: 78).

Almost all of the previous research investigated the cognitive component of image as such (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Chaudhary, 2000; Grosspietsch, 2006). The cognitive component reflects the evaluations of the perceived attributes of the destination (Stylos & Andronikidis, 2013, p. 79). Cognition is a sum of everything that is known about the destination (Gunn, 1988). The cognitive destination image refers to the beliefs, impressions and knowledge about the attributes of destination (Madden, Rashid & Zainol, 2016). The cognition is based on the rational thinking (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999b; Walmsley and Young, 1998). Cognitive knowledge is acquired through an assessment of the physical characteristics of the object. The cognitive component represents the sum of different beliefs and attitudes towards a tourist destination, based on facts or something believed to represent the factual state of the contemplating destination (Kesić & Jakeljić, 2012). However, one should bear in mind that facts adopted at some time interval from different information do not necessarily have to form a realistic concept of destination (Grgona, 2003). From the point of view that the cognitive components to the destination image are viewed as a set of attributes the destination has, these attributes represent the elements of the destination that attract tourists (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Chen & Phou, 2013).

The other component is an affective component in which personal feelings and motives, related to a particular tourist destination, are observed, showing that people with different motives can equally evaluate the destination if they perceive that it provides the benefits they seek (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997). This component of the image appears when the tourist starts the evaluation phase in the selection process of the destination. The affective component of the image is largely dependent on cognitive evaluation (Chen & Phou, 2013) because it is generated in response to the cognitive estimate of the destination attribute (Pike & Ryan, 2004). Thus, tourists can create a positive attitude towards the destination when they have enough positive attributes of destinations; otherwise they develop a negative attitude toward the destination (Puh, 2014). Therefore, affective component represents individual feelings towards the destination, which can be favorable, neutral or unfavorable (Grgona, 2003).

The conative component is the third component, which represents the intent or action component (Pike, 2004). The conative component can be understood as a probability of visiting a tourist destination within a specified period (Pike, 2010). The conative component may be considered as the likelihood of visiting a destination, a decision to postpone a visit, or a decision not to visit a destination (Vaughan, 2007). Several conducted studies were based only on the cognitive elements of the image of the destination (Hosany, Ekinci & Uysal, 2007; Pike, 2010). Research conducted in Dubrovnik has shown that the cognitive evaluations significantly influence the overall image of Dubrovnik as a tourist destination (Kesić & Pavlić, 2011). Shafiee, Tabaeeian and Tavakoli (2016) indicated in their study that cognitive destination image positively influences overall image on Foursquare. Previous research has shown that cognitive image affects the overall image of the destination (Alcaniz, Sanchez & Blas, 2009; Lin, Morais, Kerstetter & Hou 2007; Pike & Ryan, 2004; Stylos & Andronikidis, 2013). Based on a research study "Percepcija i zadovoljstvo turista turističkim sadržajima u Kantonu Sarajevo", this research begins with the evaluation of the destination elements that are otherwise important for tourists when choosing any destination, followed by the evaluation of the same elements in Sarajevo by tourists. The greatest contribution of the paper is that the results of the research can to an extent be generalized for all destinations.

In this paper, the cognitive image was analyzed. The image of the city of Sarajevo is quite unexplored and this paper provides a good basis to close this gap. The way people see and experience Sarajevo is very important for its economic and tourist development and ultimately sustainability as destination of choice. Despite the fact that the image of the city, until a few years back, was based on the latest events of war and political instability of the country, the number of tourists visiting Sarajevo is growing. This points to the fact that the image of Sarajevo is getting more positive and more favorable for tourists (Čaušević, 2017).

Methodology

The topic of this paper is the cognitive image of a tourism destination, using the case of Sarajevo. The questions raised in the research include the elements which are important for tourists when they choose any destination, and how these elements are evaluated by tourists in the case of Sarajevo as a tourism destination. The paper also analyses how cognitive destination image influences the general image of Sarajevo.

The aim of the research was to find out which elements are the most important for tourists when deciding on a trip to any destination and how these elements are rated for Sarajevo as a tourist destination. One of the goals is certainly to discover how the evaluation of these elements influences the general image of the city of Sarajevo. The paper used a quantitative approach to conduct the research, which included data collection through surveys (face to face), as well as a questionnaire specifically created for the purposes of this study. The survey instrument, the questionnaire, was adapted from similar, previously conducted studies, where it showed a proven record of reliability. Generally speaking, all questions of the questionnaire

were crafted using a Likert scale from one (1) to five (5). The study used the questionnaire in the English language because of the English speaking foreign tourists who do not understand the Bosnian language.

This study used a convenience sample of 250 foreign tourists – including foreign tourists who visited Sarajevo during the winter (from December 10, 2018 to January 31, 2019). During the winter, a large number of tourists visit Sarajevo for the holidays. For this reason, it was decided that the survey should be conducted during that period. The selection of respondents was conducted through the classical method of interception. Two points of interception of tourists were selected; first by the Cathedral and the second on the Baščaršija square. Both points are in the centre of the city. Upon collecting and entering data in the SPSS base and the preparation for processing, the test of internal consistency of each item was carried out by calculating Cronbach's Alpha coefficients. The calculated coefficients are shown in the table 1.

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha coefficients

	Cronbach's alpha
General image	,848
The importance of the elements for tourists when choosing any destination	,847
At this destination, this element is exceptional/at exceptionally high level	,847

Source: Research results, 2019.

As it can be observed, all Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were above 0.8, which confirms the high reliability of the measuring instrument.

Results

To achieve scientific relevance, during the analysis and interpretation of the obtained data, descriptive statistics and tests of statistical significance were used. In this way, the validity of the hypothesis was verified.

General image of this tourist destination

Tourists evaluated the general image of Sarajevo by using a Likert scale from one (1) to five (5), that 1 means completely disagree, 2 - near completely disagree, 3 - between agree and disagree, 4 - near completely agree and 5 - completely agree. Table 2 shows the answers of the respondents.

Table 2: General image of this tourist destination

General image of this tourist destination	Grade Average
I think most people have a positive opinion about this tourist destination.	4,09
The staff at this tourist destination is friendly towards the guests.	4,36
This tourist destination has a unique image.	4,33
I think this tourist destination is popular.	3,69
The staff at this tourist destination always puts guest first.	4,13
This tourist destination respects the natural environment.	3,65

Source: Research results, 2019.

Tourists evaluated the general image with six statements. The top-rated statements about the general image are: "The staff at this tourist destination is friendly towards the guests" (grade

average 4,36), "This tourist destination has a unique image" (grade average 4,33) and "The staff at this tourist destination always puts guest first" (grade average 4,13). All statements relating to the general image of the tourist destination are rated with a score higher than 3,5. It can be concluded that, in most cases, tourists agree with them. The average grade of the general image of this tourist destination is 4,04.

Elements of tourist destination

The next question referred to elements which tourists might consider when choosing any tourist destination. Tourists were required indicate how important each of these elements is when they chose any tourist destination (in general). Tourists evaluated this question by using a Likert scale from one (1) to five (5), where 1 means completely unimportant, 2 - near completely unimportant, 3 - between important and unimportant, 4 - near very important and 5 - very important. After evaluating the elements of any tourist destination, tourists were required to indicate on a scale 1 - 5 (where 1 means – I completely disagree, 5 - I completely agree) to what extent do they agree with the statement that these elements are exceptional or are at exceptionally high level at this tourist destination. The aim of these two questions was to analyse the elements of tourist destination, the element which is important for tourist in selecting any destination, how this element is evaluated in Sarajevo and the element which needs improvement. In this way, the cognitive image of the Sarajevo was analysed in more detail.

In Table 3 are the answers of the respondents. For easier and more comprehensive analysis, the answers of both questions are summarized in the table.

Table 3: Elements of tourist destination

The importance of the elements by tourists when choosing any destination.		At this destination, this element is exceptional/at exceptionally high level	
	Grade Average		Grade Average
Personal safety and security.	4,65	Personal safety and security.	3,97
The destination can be easily reached.	4,39	The destination can be easily reached.	3,82
Overall cleanliness of the destination.	4,28	Overall cleanliness of the destination.	3,60
Unspoiled nature.	4,22	Unspoiled nature.	3,75
Climate conditions.	4,16	Climate conditions.	3,92
Diversity of cultural/historical attractions (architecture, tradition and customs…)	4,45	Diversity of cultural/historical attractions (architecture, tradition and customs…)	4,37
The quality of the accommodation (hotel, motel, apartment…)	4,38	The quality of the accommodation (hotel, motel, apartment…)	4,16
Friendliness of the local people.	4,44	Friendliness of the local people.	4,45
Organization of the local transportation services.	4,33	Organization of the local transportation services.	3,62
The offer of local cuisine.	4,25	The offer of local cuisine.	4,34
Possibilities for shopping.	3,85	Possibilities for shopping.	3,87
Night life and entertainment.	3,98	Night life and entertainment.	3,81
Opportunity for rest.	4,17	Opportunity for rest.	4,10
Availability of sport facilities and recreational activities.	3,70	Availability of sport facilities and recreational activities.	3,71
Offer of cultural and other events.	4,16	Offer of cultural and other events.	3,80

Thermal spa offer.	3,31	Thermal spa offer.	3,58
Wellness offer.	3,20	Wellness offer.	3,57
Casino and gambling offer.	2,56	Casino and gambling offer.	3,21
Conference offer.	3,04	Conference offer.	3.21

Source: Research results, 2019.

The following elements are most important to tourists when choosing any destination for their trip: personal safety and security (average grade 4,65), diversity of cultural/historical attractions (architecture, tradition and customs…) - (average grade 4,45), friendliness of the local people (average grade 4,44) and the destination can be easily reached (average grade 4,39).

These elements received the following ratings for Sarajevo as a tourist destination: personal safety and security (average grade 3,97), diversity of cultural/historical attractions (architecture, tradition and customs…) - (average grade 4,37), friendliness of the local people (average grade 4,45) and the destination can be easily reached (average grade 3,82).

As it can be seen in Table 3, the elements that need improvement in Sarajevo are: in the first place, personal safety and security, followed by the overall cleanliness of the destination, unspoiled nature, the quality of the accommodation (hotel, motel, apartment…), organization of the local transportation services and offer of cultural and other events. It's interesting that the lowest rating for elements for Sarajevo is 3,21.

This means that all the elements in Sarajevo are at quite a high level. Elements that are least important to tourists when choosing any destination are: casino and gambling offer, conference offer, wellness offer and thermal spa offer.

The hypotheses and results of the tests are presented below. Descriptive statistics are already shown in the previous section. For the purposes of this research, two hypotheses have been defined. For the hypothesis testing, the statistical method of ANOVA and Pearson correlation coefficient were used. Below given is the research model.
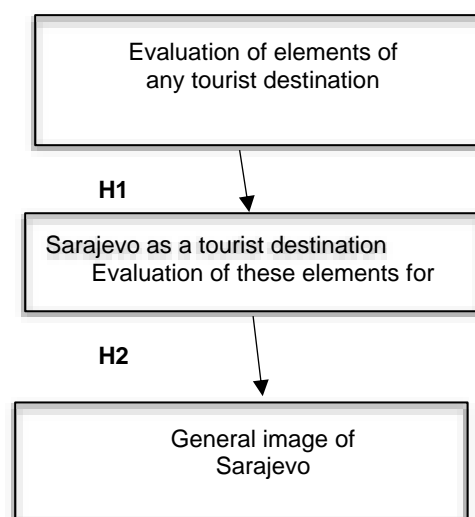
Figure 1.0: Research model

The elements of the tourist destination are analysed in the research model, i.e. importance of the elements of tourist destination that tourists consider when choosing any destination (in general), are these elements in Sarajevo as a tourist destination at exceptionally high level and what their influence on the general image of Sarajevo is. Research study "Percepcija i zadovoljstvo turista turističkim sadržajima u Kantonu Sarajevo" analyzed and compared the

ratings of destination elements that are important to tourists when choosing any destination and the ratings of those elements in Sarajevo (Domazet, 2007).

A hypothesis is defined accordingly: *H1: Evaluation of elements of any tourist destination has a positive effect on the evaluation of these elements for Sarajevo as a tourist destination.*

This hypothesis seeks to determine whether there is a correlation between the evaluation of the elements of any destination and the rating of these elements by tourists for Sarajevo as a tourist destination. The aim was to discover whether there is a statistically significant difference between the evaluation of the elements of any destination and the evaluation of these elements for Sarajevo.

Table 4: Pearson correlation coefficient

Correlations		IMPORTANCE OF THE ELEMENTS	ELEMENTS AT EXCEPTIONALLY HIGH LEVEL
IMPORTANCE OF THE ELEMENTS	Pearson Correlation	1	**,465****
	Sig. (2-tailed)		**,000**
	N	250	250
ELEMENTS AT EXCEPTIONALLY HIGH LEVEL	Pearson Correlation	,465**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	
	N	250	250

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Research results, 2019.

There is a statistically significant difference and the first hypothesis is accepted. It can be concluded that the importance of the elements of tourist destination, which tourists consider when choosing any destination, have a statistically significant positive influence on the evaluation of these elements for Sarajevo as a desired tourist destination.

The study "The effect of destination image on tourist satisfaction, intention to revisit and WOM: An empirical research in Foursquare social media" by Majid Mohammad Shafiee et al. shows that cognitive destination image positively influences overall image on Foursquare (Shafiee, Tabaeeian & Tavakoli, 2016). Another study "Tourism destination image formation – The case of Dubrovnik, Croatia" also analyzed cognitive image. The hypothesis in this study "Cognitive evaluations significantly influence the overall image of Dubrovnik as a tourism destination" is accepted (Kesić & Pavlić, 2011). From the above mentioned the second hypothesis is defined: *H2: Cognitive destination image positively influences the general image of Sarajevo.*

The second hypothesis was set to find out whether the evaluation of the elements of Sarajevo as a tourist destination have an influence on the general image of the city of Sarajevo. The goal was to find out if the cognitive image of the Sarajevo has a statistically significant positive influence on the general image of Sarajevo.

Table 5: ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Personal safety and security	Between Groups	54,790	17	3,223	4,640	,000
	Within Groups	161,146	232	,695		

	Total	215,936	249			
The destination can be easily reached.	Between Groups	50,388	17	2,964	4,016	,000
	Within Groups	171,212	232	,738		
	Total	221,600	249			
Overall cleanliness of the destination	Between Groups	67,698	17	3,982	5,531	,000
	Within Groups	167,026	232	,720		
	Total	234,724	249			
Unspoiled nature.	Between Groups	68,662	17	4,039	5,174	,000
	Within Groups	181,102	232	,781		
	Total	249,764	249			
Climate conditions.	Between Groups	33,703	17	1,983	2,624	,001
	Within Groups	175,273	232	,755		
	Total	208,976	249			
Diversity of cultural/historical attractions (architecture, tradition and customs…)	Between Groups	20,299	17	1,194	1,961	,014
	Within Groups	141,285	232	,609		
	Total	161,584	249			
The quality of the accommodation (hotel, motel, apartment…)	Between Groups	31,984	17	1,881	3,777	,000
	Within Groups	115,552	232	,498		
	Total	147,536	249			
Friendliness of the local people.	Between Groups	25,377	17	1,493	3,301	,000
	Within Groups	104,927	232	,452		
	Total	130,304	249			
Organization of the local transportation services	Between Groups	70,855	17	4,168	3,386	,000
	Within Groups	285,545	232	1,231		
	Total	356,400	249			
The offer of local cuisine.	Between Groups	25,966	17	1,527	2,420	,002
	Within Groups	146,438	232	,631		
	Total	172,404	249			
Possibilities for shopping.	Between Groups	40,899	17	2,406	2,775	,000
	Within Groups	201,165	232	,867		
	Total	242,064	249			
Night life and entertainment.	Between Groups	37,144	17	2,185	2,271	,004
	Within Groups	223,256	232	,962		
	Total	260,400	249			
Opportunity for rest.	Between Groups	30,112	17	1,771	2,436	,002
	Within Groups	168,704	232	,727		
	Total	198,816	249			
Availability of sport facilities and recreational activities.	Between Groups	54,334	17	3,196	2,892	,000
	Within Groups	256,370	232	1,105		
	Total	310,704	249			
Offer of cultural and other events.	Between Groups	37,607	17	2,212	2,537	,001
	Within Groups	202,297	232	,872		
	Total	239,904	249			
Thermal spa offer.	Between Groups	65,952	17	3,880	2,579	,001
	Within Groups	348,964	232	1,504		
	Total	414,916	249			
Wellness offer.	Between Groups	86,963	17	5,115	3,237	,000
	Within Groups	366,673	232	1,580		
	Total	453,636	249			
Casino and gambling offer.	Between Groups	84,467	17	4,969	2,340	,003
	Within Groups	492,557	232	2,123		
	Total	577,024	249			
Conference offer.	Between Groups	101,140	17	5,949	2,507	,001
	Within Groups	550,496	232	2,373		
	Total	651,636	249			

Source: Research results, 2019.

The second hypothesis is accepted because p<0,05 (Sig. 0,000; 0,000; 0,000; 0,000; 0,001; 0,014; 0,000; 0,000; 0,000; 0,002; 0,000; 0,004; 0,002; 0,000; 0,001; 0,001; 0,000; 0,003; 0,001), which means that evaluation of the elements of Sarajevo as a tourist destination has a statistically significant positive influence on the general image of Sarajevo.

Discussion and conclusion

The results of the research showed that the general image of Sarajevo is positive. This study examined the importance of the elements of tourist destination that tourists consider when choosing any destination (in general), tourist evaluation of these elements of Sarajevo as a tourist destination, i.e. which elements are at an exceptionally high level, as well as the general image of Sarajevo. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse data, while ANOVA and Pearson correlation coefficient were used to test the hypotheses. Two hypotheses have been defined for the purpose of this paper and both have been confirmed. It has been shown that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between elements of the tourist destination and evaluations of these elements by tourists in Sarajevo. There is also a statistically significant positive effect between the evaluation of elements of Sarajevo as tourist destination and the general image of Sarajevo.

When choosing any destination, the most important element for the tourists is "personal safety and security". This element is also well-rated for Sarajevo as a tourist destination, but further work on this element in Sarajevo is urgently needed, because it is the most important element for tourists when choosing a destination for any trip. Although this element is quite well evaluated, it is certainly necessary to work on safety in Sarajevo. Sarajevo is a rather insecure city for both the domiciled population and tourists and, in the future, this can cause tourists not to decide on a trip, negatively affecting the cognitive image, as well as the overall image. The next important elements for tourists in deciding to visit a specific tourist destination are: diversity of cultural/historical attractions (architecture, tradition and customs…), friendliness of the local people, the destination can be easily reached, the quality of the accommodation (hotel, motel, apartment…), unspoiled nature, overall cleanliness of the destination, organization of the local transportation services and the offer of local cuisine. Tourists agree that these elements are at exceptionally high level in Sarajevo.

Tourists consider that the elements „friendliness of the local people "and „diversity of cultural/historical attractions (architecture, tradition and customs…) "are particularly at exceptionally high level in Sarajevo. The general image of Sarajevo is also positive. This is critical because the general image of the city of Sarajevo has long been damaged due to the war and the unstable political situation. ourists positively evaluated statements related to the general image of Sarajevo. The results also show a positive link between the most important elements of the tourist destination and the evaluation of these elements for Sarajevo as a tourist destination.

The results of the study are in line with the results of similar, previously conducted research. Research results are consistent with the research given in "The effect of destination image on tourist satisfaction, intention to revisit and WOM: An empirical research in Foursquare social media" by Majid Mohammad Shafiee et al. This study shows that cognitive destination image positively influences overall image on Foursquare. The path coefficients from cognitive image constructs to the overall image were positive and significant ($\beta = 0.47$, T= 10.85). The cognitive dimension has the largest impact on overall image (Shafiee, Tabaeeian & Tavakoli, 2016). Results are also in accordance with the results of research "Tourism destination image formation – The case of Dubrovnik, Croatia". The hypothesis "Cognitive evaluations significantly influence the overall image of Dubrovnik as a tourism destination" is accepted (Kesić & Pavlić, 2011).

Previous papers analysed only the destination elements and their ratings by tourists for the destination they visit. Besides natural environment dimension which affect tourist choices, in this paper are the selected elements that most influence tourists when choosing tourist destinations.This paper offers a significant scientific contribution because it distinguishes elements of the destination that are most important to tourists when choosing any destination.

This research therefore contributes scientifically to the better understanding of the cognitive image of the destination. The results of the research support and deepen the existing scientific and research findings related to elements of the destination and cognitive image of the destination in the existing sources of literature.

This paper has carried out a general identification of the most important elements of a destination that tourists are considering when choosing a destination for a trip, namely: personal safety and security, diversity of cultural/historical attractions (architecture, tradition and customs…), friendliness of the local people, the destination can be easily reached, the quality of the accommodation (hotel, motel, apartment…), organization of the local transportation services, overall cleanliness of the destination, the offer of local cuisine and unspoiled nature.

The practical contribution of the paper has been effctively achieved through the delivery of important conclusions to the destination managers. he empirical findings provide destination managers and policy makers with valuable information about the elements of the destination that tourists are considering when choosing a travel destination. The research provided a list of the most important elements of the tourist destination and the results can be applied to any destination. Destination managers should work to improve the following elements in Sarajevo: personal safety and security, overall cleanliness of the destination, the quality of the accommodation (hotel, motel, apartment…), organization of the local transportation services and offer of cultural and other events.

The basic elements that are important for tourists to consider Sarajevo as their future tourist destination are: friendliness of the local people, diversity of cultural/historical attractions (architecture, tradition and customs…), the offer of local cuisine, the quality of the accommodation (hotel, motel, apartment…), opportunity for rest and climate conditions. This research can be a good basis for further research. It can contribute to the development of Sarajevo as a tourist destination, as well as help in building a more positive image. Although this research provided extensive information and a set of recommendations, the study has certain limitations that mainly relate to the fact that it has only explored the cognitive approach of tourism image formation, which restricts the significance of the "destination image". It is certainly necessary to investigate the affective and conative component of the image of Sarajevo. Cognitive, affective and conative component of the image make the overall image of the destination. Recommendations for further research would include the other two components of the image, affective and conative.

References

Alcaniz, E., Sanchez, I. & Blas, S. (2009). The functional psychological continuum in the cognitive image of a destination: a confirmatory analysis. *Tourism Management*, 30, 715-723.

Baloglu, S. & Brinberg, D. (1997). Affective images of tourism destinations. *Journal of Travel Research*, 35(4), 11-15. doi: 10.1177/004728759703500416

Baloglu, S. & McCleary, K. W. (1999a). U.S. international pleasure travelers images of four mediterranean destinations: a comparation of visitors and nonvisitors. *Journal of Travel Research*, 38(2), 144-152.

Baloglu, S. & McCleary, K.W. (1999). A model of destination image formation. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26(4), 868-897. doi: 10.1016/S0160-7383(99)00030-4

Beerli, A. & Martin, J. D. (2004). Factors influencing destination image. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 31(3), 657-681. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2004.01.010

Chaudhary, M. (2000). India's image as a tourist destination – a perspective of foreign tourists. *Tourism Management*, 21(3), 293-297.

Chen, C.F. & Phou, S. (2013). A closer look at destination: Image, personality, relationship and loyalty. *Tourism Management*, 36, 269-278.

Chen, C.F. & Tsai D. C. (2007). How Destination Image and Evaluative Factors Affect Behavioral Intentions? *Tourism Management*, 28 (4), 1115-1122.

Cooper, C. & Hall, C.M. (2008). *Contemporary tourism: An international approach*. Elsevier Ltd., Oxford.

Crompton, J. L & Ankomah, P. K. (1993). Choice set propositions in destination decisions. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 20(3), 461-476.

Čaušević, A. (2017). *Utjecaj menadžmenta događaja na percepciju turističke destinacije: Primjer Sarajevo Film Festivala*. Doktorska disertacija. Sarajevo: Ekonomski fakultet.

Domazet, A. (2007). *Percepcija i zadovoljstvo turista turističkim sadržajima u Kantonu Sarajevo – istraživačka studija*. Sarajevo: Ekonomski institut.

Echtner, C.M. & Ritchie, J.R.B. (2003). The meaning and measurement of destination image. *The Journal of Tourism Studies*, 14(1), 37-48.

Gunn, C.A. (1988). *Vacationscape: Designing tourist regions*. Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York.

Gartner, W. C. & Shen, J. (1992). The impact of Tiananmen square on China's tourism image. *Journal of Travel Research*, 30(4), 47-52.

Grgona, J. (2003). Imidž turističke destinacije – prilog znanstvenoj raspravi. *Acta turistica*, 15(1), 38-60.

Grosspietsch, M. (2006). Perceived and projected images of Rwanda: visitor and international tour operator perspectives. *Tourism Management*, 27(2), 225-234.

Hosany, S., Ekinci, Y. & Uysal, M. (2007). Destination Image and Destination Personality. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 1(1), 62-81.

Jeong, C. & Holland, S. (2012). Destination Image Saturation. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 29(6), 501-519

Kesić, T. & Pavlić, I. (2011). Tourism destination image formation – The case of Dubrovnik, Croatia. *Tržište*, 23(1), 7-25.

Kesić, T. & Jakeljić, M. (2012). Utjecaj determinirajućih čimbenika na imidž turističke destinacije. *EKONOMSKI PREGLED*, 63(9-10), 486-517.

Lin, C.H., Morais, D.B., Kerstetter, D.L. & Hou, J.S. (2007). Examining the role of cognitive and affective image in predicting choice across natural, developed, and theme-park destinations. *Journal of Travel Research*, 46, 183-94.

Madden, K., Rashid, B. & Zainol, N.A. (2016). Beyond the motivation theory of destination. *Tourism and Hospitality Management*, 22(2), 247-264.

O' Leary S. & Deegan J. (2005). Ireland's image as a tourism destination in France: attribute importance and performance. *Journal of Travel Research*, 43(3), 247-256.

Pike, S. & Ryan, C. (2004). Destination positioning trough a comparation of cognitive, affective and conative perceptions. *Journal of Travel Research*, 42(4), 333-342.

Pike, S. (2004). *Destination Marketing Organisations: Bridging Theory and Practice.* Elsevier, Abingdon.

Pike, S. (2010). *Marketing turističkog odredišta: Pristup integriranih marketinških komunikacija*. M plus d.o.o., Zagreb.

Puh, B. (2014). Čimbenici percipiranog imidža turističke destinacije. *Ekonomska misao i praksa*, 23(2), 483-506.

Shafiee, M.M., Tabaeeian, R.A. & Tavakoli, H. (2016). The Effect of Destination Image on Tourist Satisfaction, Intention to Revisit and WOM: An Empirical Research in Foursquare Social Media. *2016 10th International Conference on e-Commerce in Developing Countries: with focus on e-Tourism* (ECDC), 1-8. doi: 10.1109/ECDC.2016.7492964

Stern, E. & Krakover, S. (1993). The Formation of a Composite Urban Image. *Geographical Analysis*, 25(2), 130-146.

Stylos, N. & Andronikidis, A. (2013). Exploring the cognitive image of a tourism destination. *TOURISMOS: An International Multidisciplinary Journal of Tourism*, 8(3), 77-97.

Tasci, A.D.A. & Gartner, W.C. (2007). Destination Image and Its Functional Relationships. *Journal of Travel Research*, 45(4), 413-425, doi: 10.1177/0047287507299569

Vaughan, R. D. (2007). Images of Romania as a potential holiday destination. *International Journal of Tourism Policy*, 1(1), 1-16.

Walmsley, D.J. & Young, M. (1998). Evaluative images and tourism: the use of perceptual constructs to describe the structure of destination images. *Journal of Travel Research*, 36(3), 65-69. doi: 10.1177/004728759803600307