

**The Influence of Tourism Experience on Place-Image Perceptions and Post-Visit Attitudes toward Local Products.
Implications for a Public-Private Integrated Marketing Approach**

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Purpose – The main purpose of the paper is to analyse the influence of international tourism experience on cognitive and affective place image and to assess how each of these constructs - and the interaction between them - affect post-visit attitudes toward products “made-in” the tourism destination.

Methodology/approach – The proposed research model is tested through an empirical survey conducted at the Capodichino Airport (Naples, Italy) on a sample of 300 international tourists. Confirmatory factor analysis has been conducted in order to assess reliability of multi-item scales. The overall model and constructs relationships are tested through a Structural Equation Model (SEM) with Lisrel.

Findings – Statistical analysis is still in progress.

Research implications – For researchers, the proposed study aims to clarify the link between the tourism experience and the so called “made in” effect; as consequence, the model developed in this study arises from the main literature on tourist experience, place image/branding and product-country image. It represents one of the first attempts to connect constructs and relationships developed in different research streams and to underline possible implications for public-private collaboration.

Practical implications – Results from our study may underline significant implications for international marketing of both tourism destinations and local firms; on one hand the former can understand how general perception of tourist experience influence post-visit attitudes and the role of local products in place-image formation and perception. On the other hand the latter - especially the small and medium firms with a strong linkage to the place of origin - can use tourism destination features as leverage in their international branding strategies, in order to enhance export performances in the foreign markets. Thus, our results could support the identification of innovative collaboration area between national/regional governments and local companies by stimulating a more integrated approach in international promotion. The advantages of such approach can be considered from various different viewpoints such as for example international positioning, development of “integrated brands”, facilitation of entry into foreign markets.

Originality/value – In several countries the link between the influence of tourism on the general attitudes towards products “made in” a certain destination is emerging as a relevant marketing tool with significant implications for international marketing strategies carried by both companies and the governments. However, although both tourist satisfaction and “product-country image” are well developed research streams so far in the academic literature there is a lacking of research aiming to investigate the link between them.

Key words: tourism experience, place image, product-country image, integrated marketing

Paper type – Research paper