Academic Weekly Digest

School of Hospitality & Tourism Management

Determinants of Tourist Destination Loyalty Post-COVID-19

Understanding visitor intention to travel to overcrowded tourism destinations after the Covid-19 pandemic is important for destination management. Drawing on the expectancy-disconfirmation theory (EDT), stimulus-overload theory (S-OT), and social interference theory (SIT), Dr Alector Ribeiro and colleagues proposed and tested a model that extends our understanding of destination loyalty formation by providing empirical evidence on several (over)crowding-related psychological antecedents of loyalty to tourist hotspot destinations post Covid-19.

The effects of Over tourism on Destination loyalty Post-COVID-19

Dr Alector Ribeiro

The study highlights the role of perceived destination adaptation and psychological reactive behaviours in determining tourist satisfaction and loyalty to overcrowded tourist hotspots. The model was tested using data collected from respondents who had recently visited one of the "overcrowded" Mediterranean coastal tourism destinations. Findings suggest that perceived destination adaptation negatively influences tourist satisfaction and positively influences reactive behaviours of approach, avoidance, and tolerance. Approach and avoidance behaviours predict assessed crowding levels and tourist satisfaction with the destination. However, the findings revealed that tourists' tolerance levels have no effect on their assessment of destination crowding. Assessed crowding levels of the destination negatively affect tourist satisfaction and their intentions to revisit and recommend the destination while positively influencing their objections to revisit and recommend a crowded destination post-COVID-19. Concomitantly, the findings demonstrated that visitors' overtourism awareness moderated the effect of assessed crowding levels on tourist satisfaction and intentions to revisit and recommend the destination.

> **"**
> Tourism authorities need to (re)estimate the maximum number of daily visitors, understand carrying capacity of the destination and develop soft or hard policies to manage overtourism
> **"**

The findings confirm the centrality of tourists' perceptions of a destination's adaptation to change as the trigger for both approach and avoidance behaviours that are not necessarily detrimental to how tourists assess overcrowding. As such, the study contributes to the tourism literature by offering a destination loyalty model that considers the phenomenon of overtourism in hotspot destinations.

Further Reading:

Papadopoulou, N. M., Ribeiro, M. A., & Prayag, G. (2022). Psychological Determinants of Tourist Satisfaction and Destination Loyalty. *Journal of Travel Research*

Link: bit.ly/38ocL4S