

The Impact of Cognitive and Affective Dimensions on Tourist destination Choice -A Case Study of Skikda-

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Abstract :

The study aimed to explore the impact of cognitive and affective dimensions on destination choice, focusing on Skikda as a case study. It sought to evaluate the extent to which the destination image influences the tourists' behavior by testing a main hypothesis suggesting a statistically significant effect of cognitive and affective dimensions on tourists' decisions to choose Skikda as a travelling destination.

Data were collected using a questionnaire distributed to 235 participants between January 10 and February 25, 2024. The questionnaire consisted of two sections: the first gathered personal information, and the second measured the three dimensions (cognitive, affective, and behavioral) related to the destination image. The findings revealed a strong positive relationship between prior knowledge of the destination and behavioral intention, with the affective dimension having a more significant impact than the cognitive one.

The study concluded that enhancing and disseminating information about tourist destinations and strengthening emotional connections are essential for boosting their attractiveness. This, in turn, positively affects tourists' repeated visits and loyalty to the destination. The research recommended improving tourism marketing strategies that aim to build a comprehensive positive image of destinations, emphasizing emotional aspects that enrich tourists' experiences and encourage them to choose the destination again, thereby supporting the local tourism sector and ensuring its sustainability.

Keywords: cognitive; affective; conative; destination choice.

Jel Classification Codes: M370; Z330; Z390.

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1. Introduction.

The tourism sector stands as one of the most significant economic pillars globally, renowned for its resilience and capacity to recover from crises. This resilience was notably demonstrated during the 2008 financial crisis and the extensive lockdowns triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic. Local tourist destinations are pivotal contributors to national tourism revenues and must be effectively marketed on both local and international scales. The more attractive a destination, the higher the demand it garners, thus fulfilling key development objectives. Building a robust brand and enhancing both the perceived image and value of destinations are essential strategies to heighten tourism competitiveness among domestic and international destinations.

Skikda, one of Algeria's famous tourist destinations, epitomizes this need for strategic marketing, particularly with its appeal in coastal and mountain tourism. This coastal city seamlessly blends colonial-style architecture with modern structures and is enriched by Roman relics, the most notable of which is the Roman amphitheater. Skikda is also distinguished by its diverse culinary offerings and high-quality agricultural products, with strawberries being a standout crop that has earned That's why Skikda is called the "Strawberry Capital".

The impact of destination image on tourists' decision-making is a critical topic within the literature on destination marketing. Understanding which components exert the most influence is crucial, as the destination image encompasses an array of beliefs, ideas, and impressions held by individuals. This image comprises a wealth of information related to a specific destination, including components such as tourism facilities and attractions. A tourism destination is defined by its combination of facilities and services, with multidimensional attributes that collectively shape its appeal to a particular individual under specific choice conditions. Consequently, the formation of the destination image as a multidimensional construct has been extensively explored in academic literature.

The destination image itself is composed of three interrelated yet distinct components: cognitive, affective, and conative. This concept It reflects an individual's perceptions of knowledge (beliefs), emotions, and the overall impression of the destination. Many studies have examined the structure of the destination image. through varying levels of evaluation, such as cognitive and affective images. This study aims to build on these insights to deepen the understanding of the relationship between destination image and tourist choice behavior, this leads us to formulate the problem statement.

Do the cognitive and affective dimensions impact tourists' decision to choose Skikda as a tourist destination?

The main problem outlined above can be broken down into the following sub-questions:

- *What impact does the cognitive dimension play in the tourists' decision to choose Skikda as a tourist destination?*
- *What impact does the affective dimension play in the tourists' decision to choose Skikda as a tourist destination?*

This study is founded on the following primary hypothesis:

There is a statistically significant effect at a significance level of 5% of the cognitive and affective dimension on the tourists' decision to choose Skikda as a tourist destination

The main hypothesis leads to the development of the following two sub-hypotheses:

- *There is a statistically significant effect at a significance level of 5% of Cognitive destination image on the tourists' decision to choose Skikda as a tourist destination.*

- *There is a statistically significant effect at a significance level of 5% of affective destination image on the tourists' decision to choose Skikda as a tourist destination.*

Through this paper, we aim to achieve following objectives:

- Defining the conceptual framework for the independent variables reflected in the cognitive and affective dimensions, and the dependent variable represented by the conative dimension;
- Demonstrating their explanatory importance for tourist behavior when choosing a destination;
- Assessing the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable and evaluating the strength of each.

2. The Nature of the Tourist Destination

While the tourist remains the most important point of contact that must be satisfied by all parties involved in the complex phenomenon known as tourism, it is important to recognize that the tourist destination is the basic unit for studying and managing activities, especially with the intensifying competition among these tourist destinations. Competitive advantage requires the ability to effectively manage all components of the tourism system to ensure success, by doing much to understand the organization and management of the destination to make it more effective and competitive(Khuong & Phuong, 2017a).

2.1. Concept of a Tourist Destination:

In tourism studies, tourist destinations have been examined from various angles. Researchers have differed in defining the concept of a destination, and the definition by Lew (1978) is among the most cited. He proposed that tourist attractions or destinations can be addressed within a framework of ideological and organizational and/or touristic features. From an ideological standpoint, destinations are framed based on their physical existence, whether natural (such as mountains) or human-made (such as built facilities). Organizationally, the focus is on their spatial and temporal characteristics and capacity, i.e., based on size and scope(KHAÏRANI & FACHÏRA, 2022a).

The World Tourism Organization defines it as "a physical space where Visitors spend at least one night, including tourism products such as support services, with defined physical and administrative boundaries, and images and perceptions that determine its competitiveness in the market." The attractiveness of a destination reflects visitors' feelings and opinions about its ability to meet their needs; the greater the destination's attractiveness, the higher the likelihood of it being chosen. It is also closely related to the abundance of tourism facilities and services(Stylos et al., n.d.).

Healt and Wall (1992) state that it is "the motivating link that unites and maintains all drivers and all sectors of the tourism industry, such as transport, accommodation, catering, and entertainment, as it is complex and specific to tourism.(Agapito et al., 2013a)"

Buhalis (2000) considers it "a mix of tourism products that provide a comprehensive experience for consumers, arguing that a destination can also be a perceptual concept that consumers interpret subjectively based on their travel itinerary, cultural and educational background, and previous experiences." Thus, a destination is defined as a geographic area that visitors regard as a unique entity, rather than through maps and political decisions. Typically, a destination is given identity through its brands' name, creating an image of it in the minds of customers. However, Buhalis emphasizes that decisions regarding marketing and planning in destination management organizations must have the necessary capacities and resources to achieve specific strategic objectives; therefore, the tourist has very limited authority to influence his own experience(Dominique et al., 2011).

2.2. Components of the Tourist Destination

focusing on geography-driven research in tourism studies, destinations are traditionally considered specific geographical areas, such as a country, island, or a city. Medlik and Middleton (1973) proposed a model of elements that is the most commonly used to view tourist destinations, where the widespread acceptance of this approach is based on the idea that if people do not travel from A to B, providing various types of services is pointless (Khuong & Phuong, 2017a).

In its 2007 scientific guide on destination management issued in Madrid, the World Tourism Organization (WTO) acknowledged that tourist destinations contain several essential components that attract visitors and meet their desires upon arrival. These essential components can be summarized as follows:

- a. **Tourist Attractions:** These are among the most important basic elements that visitors care about, serving as primary motivations for visiting a tourist destination. They consist of natural elements (such as beaches, seas, and climate) (Enhancing Destination Image, 2011), built elements (such as buildings, heritage sites, religious sites, and conference facilities), in addition to cultural attractions (such as museums, theaters, and cultural events).
- b. **Comfort Facilities:** This includes a range of services and facilities that support the stay and accommodation of visitors at the tourist destination, represented by infrastructure (such as public facilities, transportation, and road networks, etc.), as well as services provided to tourists (such as lodging services, shopping facilities, tourist guidance, etc.).
- c. **Accessibility:** This is one of the most important elements that make a tourist destination available to a large number of audiences, through the availability of various types of transportation, making it relatively easy to access. This includes visa procedures, entry processes at border crossings, additionally to the need to simplify entry procedures for the tourist destination (Khuong & Phuong, 2017a).
- d. **Destination Image:** it is considered a crucial factor in attracting visitors. It is of little importance to have tourist attractions and comfort facilities available to potential tourists if they are not aware of them. Therefore (Rajesh, 2013a), it is essential to resort to various available means to enhance the tourist destination's image, such as marketing, branding, tourism media, etc.
- e. **Price:** Price is a sensitive and important aspect in the competition of a tourist destination with others. Prices are linked to various factors that determine their levels, including transportation costs (to and from the tourist destination), accommodation costs, and those associated with various services requested by visitors. Additionally, a visitor's choice of tourist destination can be influenced by specific economic factors of the destination that affect price levels.
- f. **Human Resources:** Having a qualified and trained workforce in the tourism sector, along with citizens who are highly aware of the benefits of tourism growth and the responsibilities that lie upon them. Consequently, human resource management and Operations in the tourist destination should align with its overall strategies.

3. Nature of Destination Image

According to Avraham and Ketter (2008), the image of a place is generally considered one of the central concepts in various fields of research. This stems from the hypothesis that the image of a country, a city, or a tourist area significantly influences the actions and activities of individuals in those areas. Decisions such as choosing a place to live, a travel destination, an investment area, or a study location, as well as supporting a country in a conflict, are often the result of the image of that place in individuals' minds (Slabbert & Martin, 2017).

Also, Cooper and Hall (2008) justify that the image of a tourist destination is also a highly influential factor in shaping individuals' perceptions of the tourist destination and subsequently influencing their choice (Custódio & Gouveia, 2007). Therefore, it is a concept of great importance for the successful tourist destinations marketing.

However, Cooper and Hall (2008) find that the image of a tourist destination is a simplified version of reality and a way to provide meaning to the various stimuli related to the tourist destination that visitors or potential visitors receive and process (Yang et al., 2022a). The generation of a mental image associated with tourist destinations differs from other images related to other consumer products because the visitors themselves are the ones who form these images using various sources. This means that marketers in tourist destinations have a significantly lower influence, despite their importance in the visitors' choice of tourist destinations.

Thus, Cooper and Hall emphasize that understanding how the image of a tourist destination is formed and its characteristics are crucial for contemporary marketing of tourist destinations.

3.1. Characteristics and Formation of Destination Image

a. Characteristics of Destination Image

Tourist images are characterized by several unique features, including:

- Inaccuracy: Many researchers argue that the tourist image lacks precision. This is because the image of a tourist destination consists of impressions that are not necessarily based on objective scientific evidence but are a simplification of reality. Additionally, it does not necessarily reflect the complete reality but often represents only a part of it. Tourists typically form a comprehensive view of a destination based on limited information due to their inability to gather complete data (Michael et al., 2018a).
- Resistance to Change: The image of a tourist destination tends to be stable. Various factors determine and influence when and how potential changes to that image may occur.
- Slow Change: The tourist destination image changes slowly. The primary factor influencing this change is the amount and volume of new information that tourists receive from various sources. If the information received remains constant over a long period, especially if it contradicts the current image, it leads to a gradual change in the destination's image and the formation of a new one (Qu et al., 2011).
- Subjectivity: The images of tourist destinations lead to biased perceptions among tourists, often resulting in subjective and prejudiced judgments that are far from objective. Through the tourist image, the visitor sees certain aspects of reality while ignoring others that may not align with their beliefs and attitudes or not coincide with their way of thinking.
- Future Prediction: The mental image that a tourist has of a destination contributes to predicting their future behavior and actions to that destination (Shabani Fard & Ali, 2009).

b. Formation of Destination Image

Gallarza et al. (2004) indicates that there has been a recent recognition of the need for more precise knowledge and insight into the process of forming a destination image, as the concept of the tourist destination image is considered the most important and commonly used tool for interpreting the choices made by tourists, as indicated by a large body of reviewed academic and specialized research. Despite this, there is a clear lack of empirical studies aimed at understanding in detail how the destination image is formed and developed in the minds of tourists (Yang et al., 2022b).

Phelps (1986) proposed distinguishing the process of forming a destination image by classifying the concept(Chon & Usa, n.d.) into two types:

- Primary Image: This is the image constructed after the tourist's visit to the destination.
- Secondary Image: This is the image constructed before the actual visit to the destination.

Additionally, Gunn (1989) and Mansfeld (1992) differentiated two types of images within the secondary image(Agapito et al., 2013b):

- Organic Image: known as the unofficial image, derived from non-commercial information.
- Induced Image: This is the promoted or official image, related to the information conveyed by the commercial organization responsible for the destination.

Many studies on the perceptual effects of a specific tourist destination on the image of that destination among potential tourists(Li et al., 2023), which was compiled into four stages:

- Vague and Unrealistic Image: This is the image formed before the traveling to the destination. It is shaped by information from advertising, learning, and word of mouth, which prompts thoughts of travel as a positive behavior.
- Distortion of the Image: The image of the destination is affected and becomes clearer and broader as soon as the vacation plan is completed. This occurs when the individual decides to go on vacation, choosing the duration of their stay and their destination, and the types of tourism products they are looking for.
- Improved Image: In this stage, the image is improved by eliminating incorrect or dubious elements and reinforcing those elements that have proven to be accurate as a result of the direct experience with the tourism product.
- Resulting Image: This refers to recent memories of the vacation experience, which lead to nostalgia. During this phase, a collection of new images is produced that guides future decisions related to the same product(Rajesh, 2013b).

3.2. Dimensions of the Tourist Destination Image and Their Behavioral and Marketing Effects:

a. Dimensions of the Tourist Destination Image:

Gartner (1993) suggested that the image of a tourist destination consists of three distinct, yet interconnected and sequential components(KHAÏRANI & FACHÏRA, 2022). are as follows:

- Cognitive Dimensions:

This consists of the information, ideas, and attitudes regarding the tourist destination, based on which the tourist forms his mental image about the destination, this results in the formation of a favorable mental image of its characteristics, which relies on the volume of information the tourist receives from external sources. Therefore, errors in the tourist image formed among tourists are primarily due to incorrect information and knowledge that these tourists received or acquired directly through what they experienced as tourists visiting that destination, which may also affect the emergence and nature of their cognitive image.

- Affective Dimensions:

Defined by Gartner (1994) as the "individual's motivations for choosing a particular tourist destination," this refers to the total emotions and emotional attitudes toward, a specific tourist

destination, or the personal evaluation of the tourist. The tourist's feelings toward the destination may be categorized as positive, negative, or neutral. Over time, information and knowledge fade, leaving emotional aspects, making the affective component active during the evaluation phase in the destination choice process(KHAİRANĪ & FACHĪRA, 2022).

- **Conative Dimensions:**

This represents the intention and desire to visit the destination at a certain time. It is similar to behavior because it relates to action; after being exposed to internal and external stimuli related to the tourist destination, the tourist's behavior reflects the nature of the tourism image formed in their mind. The importance of the mental image in its behavioral aspect is that it enables the prediction of tourist behavior based on his desire to visit the tourist destination at a given time or not.

Some scholars contend that the cognitive aspect comes before the affective aspect in shaping the overall image of a tourist destination, with emotional judgments being based on cognitive assessments. While they differ, both are interconnected, and together, cognitive and emotional evaluations contribute to forming the destination's overall image(Michael et al., 2018b).

b. Behavioral and Marketing Effects of the Tourist Destination Image:

With the increasing competition among tourist destinations today, many questions have emerged that have preoccupied those responsible for them regarding how to market their destinations effectively to increase their share in the global tourism market. Understanding the decision-making process of tourists has become a major focus for marketers to build competitive advantages in the tourism industry and to ensure the repetition of visits by tourists in the future. The topic of the tourist destination image has become a fundamental element in tourist behavior and a significant issue in destination marketing research(Hidalgo-Alcazar et al., n.d.).

- **Impact of the Tourist Destination Image on Tourist Behavior:**

After a series of studies and researcher in recent years, it has become clear that the concept of the destination image holds significant weight in understanding the process by which tourists choose one destination over another. It is a necessary factor for comparison and selection among tourist destinations. Giving the intangible nature of tourism products, the image effectively serves as an alternative means of evaluating the product. Consequently, marketers invest substantial efforts into understanding the relationship between decision-making and the tourist destination image. The simultaneous nature of both production and consumption processes in tourism implies that the image of the destination will change once the tourist visits, due to the insights gained from the tourism experience at that destination(Llodrà-Riera et al., 2015).

From this perspective, we will explore the impact of the tourist destination image on the tourist and the marketing implications, highlighting its significance for destination marketers and its crucial role in crafting effective marketing strategies(Ekinci, 2003).

- **Impact of the Tourist Destination Image on Tourist Behavior Before the Visit:**

Tourism studies consistently acknowledge that the image of a destination plays a crucial role in influencing a tourist's choice of where to visit. The destination image is associated with the decision to choose a tourist destination(Llodrà-Riera et al., 2015), as confirmed by researchers such as Bigné et al. (2001) and Baloglu & McCleary (1999). Their research indicates the process of choosing a tourist destination relies on the degree of preference for one destination over a set of potential destination images from the perspective of that tourist.

Other studies have indicated that awareness of the tourist destination means the presence of an image of that destination in the tourist's mind, leading to an increase in curiosity about that destination. Tourists will not visit a destination unless it has a positive image in their minds, except in certain cases such as business trips or when children are involved in the decision-making process. However, in most cases, awareness involves having a destination image in the minds of decision-makers as part of the set of feasible options (Llodrà-Riera et al., 2015).

- Impact of the Image on Tourist Behavior During the Visit:

This part of the study lacks objective analysis; however, both Dadgostar & Isotalo (1992) confirmed that there is a moderate impact of the image along with other variables on tourists' leisure time spent in city destinations close to home. Measuring the impact of the image may be somewhat ambiguous, as there is a relative relationship between the image and the time spent at the destination. It has been observed that tourists who stay longer tend to acquire a better and more accurate image of the destination compared to those who spend less time there. In conclusion, the tourist destination image significantly influences tourist behavior across various stages, from pre-visit decisions to experiences during the visit, emphasizing its vital role in developing effective marketing strategies for destinations (Michael et al., 2018).

- The Impact of the Tourist Destination Image on Post-Visit Tourist Behavior:

Although the post-visit image of the tourist destination holds great importance, its considerable effect on tourist behavior, there has been little incentive to expand research efforts to study this impact. Only a few researchers have examined this effect in practice. For instance, Tasci and Cortner (2007) explored the relationship between destination image and intentions to revisit or loyalty towards the destination. Additionally, Chi and Qu (2008) considered that the destination image can positively influence satisfaction and plays a crucial role in achieving tourist loyalty. Therefore, it is essential to improve the overall image of the place retained by individuals, enabling them to make a positive final assessment of their stay, which in turn can lead to positive word-of-mouth to others and possibly reconsideration of the destination.

Research by De Nisco et al. suggested that a country's ability to provide High-quality tourist experiences contribute to enhancing the image of the destination in the tourist's mind, which influences their decisions (Basaran, 2016).

3.3. Marketing Implications Resulting from Understanding the Tourist Destination Image:

Tourism destination marketers aim to uncover the factors that influence tourists' destination selection to develop and enhance appropriate marketing strategies and effectively plan various tourism services. Many researchers, such as Branvell and Lane, have suggested that a tourist destination that can better meet tourists' needs becomes more attractive and is more likely to be chosen over other destinations in the final decision.

Destination marketing aims to develop a positive image by enhancing potential visitors' perceptions, and this image is used to achieve the following:

- Convey messages about tourist destinations: Communicating information and unique attributes of the destination (Khuong & Phuong, 2017).
- Redefine and reposition tourist destinations: Improving how destinations appear in the minds of the public.
- Counter negative perceptions and promote positive aspects: Addressing negative imagery and emphasizing the positive traits of the destinations.

- Key to targeting major market areas: Directing marketing efforts toward the most impactful markets(Rajesh, 2013).

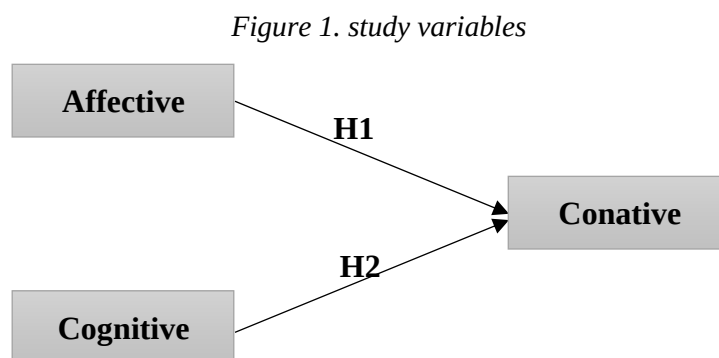
In this way, understanding the tourist destination image and its effect on the tourist behavior after the visit can contribute to enhancing marketing campaigns and increasing tourist loyalty to destinations, ultimately improving the performance of destinations in the global market.

4. Research methods design

4.1. The study community and sample:

The study population consists of Algerian tourists who have actually visited Skikda, where 235 questionnaires were randomly distributed, all of which were retrieved, during the period from January 10, 2024, to February 25, 2024.

The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section focused on personal information, including gender, age, educational level, occupation, and income. The second section included 23 statements distributed across three dimensions: the cognitive dimension (from statement 01 to statement 10), the affective dimension (from statement 11 to statement 18), and the behavioral dimension (from statement 19 to statement 23). The following figure illustrates the proposed model for the study:



Source: Prepared by researcher

This diagram illustrates a conceptual model that explains the relationships between the cognitive and affective dimensions and the conative dimension (Tourist destination Choice). Here's an explanation of the model:

- Cognitive Dimension:** This represents the knowledge and beliefs that tourists have about a destination. It includes factual information and tangible attributes.
- Affective Dimension:** This refers to the emotional responses or feelings that tourists associate with a destination. It is related to the mood or emotional connection that the destination evokes.
- Conative Dimension:** This is the behavioral intention, which indicates a tourist's willingness or intention to visit or recommend a destination. It represents the final stage of the decision-making process, where attitudes translate into action.

Hypotheses Explained:

- H1 *There is a statistically significant effect of Cognitive destination image on the tourists' decision to choose Skikda as a tourist destination.*
- H2 *There is a statistically significant effect of affective destination image on the tourists' decision to choose Skikda as a tourist destination.*

The model is used to test whether and to what extent the cognitive and affective dimensions influence tourists' conative behavior. If validated through statistical analysis, the model helps understand which of these dimensions play a more significant role in shaping tourists' decisions, which is valuable for tourism marketers and destination planners to tailor their strategies effectively.

5. Results and discussion:

5.1. Results.

- a. Results of the Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test:** The table below presents the Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

Table 1. Reliability Statistics

	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Cognitive	0.857	10
Affective	0.819	8
Conative	0.756	5
TOTAL	0.895	23

Source: Prepared by researcher based on the SPSS 22 outputs

We observe from the table that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient reached 89.5% for the entire questionnaire, indicating a high level of stability. This suggests that all dimensions of the questionnaire demonstrate stability. It is noteworthy that all dimensions had Cronbach's alpha coefficients exceeding 60%, as follows: 85.7% for the cognitive dimension, 81.9% for the affective dimension, and 75.6% for the conative dimension. These values reflect a good level of reliability and consistency across all dimensions, ensuring sufficient reliability to achieve the desired results.

- b. Test for Normal Distribution of Data:** A Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was performed to confirm that the data follows a normal distribution, which is a prerequisite for conducting parametric tests.

Table 2. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for One Sample

		cognitive	affective	conative	Total
	N	235	235	235	235
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	3.4796	3.6000	3.5430	3.5352
	Standard Deviation	.69725	.70718	.67125	.56905
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.076	.082	.082	.067
	Positive	.052	.060	.082	.044
	Negative	-.076-	-.082-	-.079-	-.067-
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.163	1.258	1.257	1.026
Asymptotic Significance (Two-tailed)		.134	.084	.085	.243

a. The distribution to be tested is normal. b. Calculated from data.

b. Calculated from data.

Source: Prepared by researcher based on the SPSS 22 outputs

The table above shows the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for a single sample (K-S), which assesses whether the observations follow a specific distribution. The significance level (Sig) for the components of all dimensions (cognitive, affective, and behavioral), as well as the overall dimension representing the destination image, is greater than (0.05) α , indicating that the distribution is not significant. This confirms the null hypothesis, meaning that the observations follow a normal distribution.

- c. **Personal Data Analysis:** The characteristics of the study sample will be analyzed in terms of gender, age, educational level, occupation, and experience, as shown in the following table.

Table 3. demographic characteristics of the participant

Variable	Frequencies	Percentage
Gender		
Male	148	63%
Female	87	37%
Age		
Under 20 years	8	3.4%
From 20 to 40 years	211	89.8%
From 41 to 60 years	16	6.8%
Educational Level		
High school or less	24	10.2%
University	145	61.7%
Postgraduate studies	66	28.1%
Occupation		
Student	59	25.1%
Employee	124	52.8%
Freelance	12	5.1%
Unemployed	36	15.3%
Retired	4	1.7%
Income		
Less than 18,000	69	29.4%
From 18,000 to 30,000	29	12.3%
From 30,000 to 50,000	72	30.6%
50,000 and above	65	27.7%

Source: Prepared by researcher based on the SPSS 22 outputs

The data from the table reveals that the majority of the study sample are males (63.5%), with most participants falling within the 20 to 40 age range (90.9%), showing a diverse age group. In terms of education, 63.9% hold university degrees, followed by 26.1% with postgraduate qualifications, while a smaller portion has a high school education or less (10%). Regarding occupation, over half of the participants (54.3%) are employed, with students (23.5%), self-employed individuals (18.7%), unemployed (2.2%), and retirees (1.3%) making up the rest. Income levels are spread across various brackets, with 31.7% earning between 30,000 and 50,000, followed by 29.6% earning less than 18,000, and 27.4% earning over 50,000, reflecting diverse financial backgrounds.

- d. **Testing the Study Model:**

Table 4. Coefficients ^a

Model	Coefficients Unstandardized		Coefficients standardized	t	Sig.
	A	Error standard	Beta		
(Constante)	.996	.200		4.976	.000
1 cognitive	.206	.053	.214	3.897	.000
affective	.508	.052	.535	9.738	.000

a. Variable dependent: conative

Source: Prepared by researcher based on the SPSS 22 outputs

Both the cognitive and affective dimensions significantly predict the conative dimension, with the affective dimension having a stronger influence (Beta = 0.535) compared to the cognitive dimension (Beta = 0.214). The low p-values (Sig. = 0.000) indicate that these relationships are statistically significant. This suggests that both cognitive and affective factors play important roles in influencing conative behavior, with affective factors having a more substantial effect.

Table 5. Summary of Models

Model	R	R-deux	D	Sig.
1	.658 ^a	.433	88.583	.000 ^b

a. Variable dependent: conative

b. Values predicts: (constant's), affective, cognitive

Source: Prepared by researcher based on the SPSS 22 outputs

This model demonstrates a moderate level of explanatory power, with the affective and cognitive dimensions explaining 43.3% of the variance in the conative dimension. The high F-statistic and low p-value (Sig. = 0.000) confirm that the model is statistically significant, supporting the relevance of both affective and cognitive dimensions in predicting conative behavior.

5.2. Discussion:

The results from the statistical model analysis indicate that both the cognitive and affective dimensions significantly impact the conative dimension (behavioral intention) of tourists. The standardized Beta coefficient for the affective dimension is 0.535, which is higher than that of the cognitive dimension at 0.214. This suggests that the affective dimension has a stronger influence on tourists' behavior compared to the cognitive dimension. Additionally, the p-values (Sig.) for both dimensions are very low (0.000), indicating that these relationships are highly statistically significant.

Furthermore, the regression model summary (Table 5) shows that the cognitive and affective dimensions explain approximately 43.3% of the variance in the conative dimension. This percentage indicates a moderate explanatory power of the model, reinforcing the importance of both dimensions in influencing tourists' behavior and choices.

Determination of Accepted Hypotheses:

Based on the results presented:

a. Main Hypothesis:

- There is a statistically significant effect at a significance level of 5% of the cognitive and affective dimensions on the tourists' decision to choose Skikda as a tourist destination.
- Result: Accepted. The results show that both cognitive and affective have a strong statistically significant effect on tourists' behavior.

b. First Sub-Hypothesis:

- There is a statistically significant effect at a significance level of 5% of the cognitive destination image on the tourists' decision to choose Skikda as a tourist destination."
- Result: Accepted The cognitive dimension demonstrated a significant impact (Beta = 0.214, Sig. = 0.000), confirming a clear effect of the cognitive aspect.

c. Second Sub-Hypothesis:

- There is a statistically significant effect at a significance level of 5% of the affective destination image on the tourists' decision to choose Skikda as a tourist destination."

- Result: Accepted. The affective dimension had a greater impact (Beta = 0.535, Sig. = 0.000), highlighting that affective factors play a major and more significant role in determining tourists' behavior and choices.

The findings emphasize the significant importance of both cognitive and affective dimensions in influencing tourists' decisions to choose tourist destinations. Notably, the affective dimension plays a more crucial role compared to the cognitive dimension. This suggests that emotional factors have a stronger influence on tourists when selecting a destination like Skikda. Therefore, tourism marketers and planners should focus on enhancing both the cognitive attributes (e.g., facilities, attractions) and the affective components (e.g., emotional appeal, atmosphere) to attract more tourists.

6. Conclusion.

This paper explored the significance of the tourism destination image and its influence on tourist behavior, with a focus on the case of Skikda as a tourist destination. The hypothesis on which this paper is based is that there is an effect of the cognitive and emotional components on the purchasing behavior of tourists. This assumption draws from literature that unanimously underscores the need for synergy between the components of the tourism destination image to attract tourists and inspire them to select a particular destination. The destination image holds significant power to influence tourists' decisions, which enhances the destination's ability to develop due to increased demand and interest in its offerings, ultimately reflecting positively on its revenues.

To achieve the objectives of the study, the most important literature related to tourism marketing, destination image, and tourist behavior was reviewed, and an experimental study was conducted to apply the theoretical concepts and the literature findings to the case of Skikda as a tourist destination. The main findings of this paper are as follows:

- A strong positive relationship was found between the knowledge tourists possess and their decision to choose Skikda, highlighting the importance of disseminating as much information as possible about the tourist destination across various media;
- A very strong positive relationship was found between the emotional connections that tourists form towards the destination and their decision to visit Skikda, supporting the approach of making the experience of visiting Skikda one that tourists enjoy and desire;
- The results of the linear regression analysis concluded that there is a positive effect of prior knowledge about Skikda as a tourist destination, but this effect was even more significant in terms of the emotional connections tourists have with Skikda as a destination. This finding contrasts with much of the literature, which often suggests that the cognitive dimension has a stronger impact than the emotional dimension. This opens the door for reconsidering the impact of image dimensions on the purchasing decision, especially in cases of repeat visits.

There is no disagreement on the importance of building a positive image of a tourist destination, as it is one of the key factors that stimulate latent demand. This can be achieved by disseminating as much information as possible about the destination and fostering emotional connections between the destination and tourists, whether those gathering information for their holiday or those who have already visited. This approach enhances the impact of the mental image on tourist satisfaction and loyalty to the destination.

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