

USA VISITORS' PERCEPTION IN COLOMBIA

A Structural Equation Modeling Analysis

Gonzalo Luna-Cortés
Katholische Universität Eichstätt-Ingolstadt
WFI – Ingolstadt School of Management
Ingolstadt (Alemania)

This research examines the perception of USA tourists in Bogotá, Colombia. To analyze their perception, the study focuses on a construct known as self-congruity, which measures the degree of congruence between the tourism experience and the tourist's self-concept. Subsequently, the study analyses if self-congruity has an effect on the perception of the Colombian Destination Brand by the USA visitors, and on the use of their social networks after their trip. Finally, the research examines if the area where the tourists stayed moderates the mentioned relationships. This means, the strength in the relationship might be higher or lower if the tourist stayed in a hotel located in a lower or higher stratum in the capital of Colombia. Confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling were used to analyze the results of this research. The results show that the tourists that feel a congruence between the tourism experience and their identity perceive a better image of the destination brand. Also, self-congruity motivates the creation of positive content about Colombia by the tourists in their social networks. However, this relationship can only be accepted among the tourists that stayed in a hotel located in a higher stratum of the city. As part of the conclusions, the paper includes some guidelines for the management of tourism in Colombia.

KEY WORDS: *Colombian Destination Brand, self-congruity, social media, confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation modeling.*