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Title: Current Perceptions of Cuba by Americans

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Abstract:

The United States and Cuba have a long, complicated, and entangled relationship. In light of recent economic and trade policy changes in both countries, this study seeks to understand how Americans currently view Cuba as a travel destination. Specifically, we will explore some of the nuanced relationships between Americans' perceptions of Cuba and their interest in traveling there.

The research investigates the relationship of political leanings, knowledge about Cuba, and previous travel behavior with potential American visitors' feelings about Cuba. Survey respondents were recruited using a panel to ensure that they met certain criteria (e.g., income threshold, having traveled from home within the past year); 800 responses were gathered in all. Several variables will be used to examine Americans' perceptions of Cuba, including their feelings on the U.S. trade embargo, a sense of urgency to travel to Cuba, motivations for traveling to Cuba, concerns about traveling to Cuba, and perceptions of Cuba relative to other Caribbean destinations. The exploration of these dependent variables may provide insights of value to those marketing Cuba as a potential destination. For example, details on the state of Americans' motivations and concerns related to travel to Cuba could be used to create materials aimed at improving the image of Cuba as a destination. Furthermore, little is known about how Americans perceive Cuba relative to other Caribbean destinations. In the already crowded marketplace of Caribbean travel, this information may help those marketing Cuba as a destination determine factors that could improve Cuba's competitiveness.