
From Motivations to Yield Paths of Tourism Development: The Case of the Algarve

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Introduction

This paper develops new measurements of tourist yield in the context of the Algarve, which is a sun and sand destination where tourism demand persistently grows, in spite of the signs of destination maturity. This growth contradicts the essence of maturity and drove this research, which attempts to identify the critical preferences which are able to improve destination positioning.

According to Pine and Gilmore (1999) in the emerging experience economy, consumers seek unique experiences. This new demand for unique and memorable experiences leads destinations to offer a distinct value-added provision for products and services when they have already achieved a consistent, high level of functional quality. New tourists are more concerned with sophistication, specialization and innovation of tourism products. Thus, because tourism products contain a large number and range of attributes, each tourist experience becomes distinct. Moreover, the overall attractiveness of a destination has long been regarded as a critical criterion in tourism consumer decision making and choice (Crouch, 2011).

Hence, the uniqueness of those experiences relies on the declared tourists preferences, which will be treated as motivations in this research (Decrop, 2000; Goodall, 1991; Hsu *et al*, 2009). However, another stream of research shows that motivations are of paramount importance for the positioning of destinations (Seddighi & Theocharous, 2002), and that these motivations are dynamic (Crompton & McKay, 1997).

Motivations and preferences are treated as indistinguishable constructs since we only focus on attributes of the destination and therefore, the tangibility of these motivations may be assumed as preferences. Despite the slight difference outlined by Decrop (2000), it seems widely accepted that motivations may be regarded as comprising two stages, the first one is the driving force that pushes tourists to travel and the other, related with the destination and type of holidays chosen,

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