Building Destination Image for Kosovo Through Events: The Perceptions of Event Managers Towards the Effects of Events on City Image

Arta Kuçi
Szent Istvan University, Hungary
Email: arta@phd.uni-szie.hu

Abstract: Brand image is the general perception in consumers’ mind that is built from all sources, and it is perceived to be a crucial instrument from many city marketers. A powerful brand image is one that increases visitors' satisfaction, tourists' affirmative return, customer loyalty and positive publicity. Even though Kosovo is known for its cultural, historical and natural resources, there is a gap in the literature regarding the impacts of events about building and empowering destination image. The present study aims to fill this gap by examining Kosovo's brand among event managers who organize various events in Kosovo. With the help of Kosovo's event managers, we undertook a qualitative study consisting of 15 interviews, from which we attempted to achieve the purposes of our research. In such a manner, this study has tried to prove that successful events do play a crucial role in people's positive perceptions regarding the city image. Correspondingly, it aimed to offer recommendations towards building positive impressions about city image based on the views of managers. The data were analyzed through the Constant Comparative Method – the Grounded theory. Based on the results retrieved, it has been concluded that events do affect the perceptions of people on the image of the city/country positively. Also, the challenges that managers face while running an event have been identified and presented in details. The present study also showed that there is a lack of financial support from the government, namely for infrastructure and marketing. As a sequence, like a domino effect - the lack of financial backing weakens the promotion of events, which also cuts the interest of foreign tourists to visit the city/country.

Keywords: destination image; events; effects of events