

The importance of the intangible heritage as brand image of UNESCO: A case study from heritage sites (Penang, Malaysia)

Abstract

The study purposes to investigate tourists' perception on intangible heritage as brand image of UNESCO awarded of heritage sites as an activity for holiday that will help tourism development growth. It is generally true that the Intangible Heritage as a factor of developing national and cultural identity and promoting, is the consideration of the UNESCO specifying in the promotion of culture and tourism, thereby creating tourism demand. The tourist offer of Penang, Malaysia includes intangible cultural heritage which is diffidently and incompetently presented and interpreted. The recognized branding theory and behavior theory was used as the main theoretical framework to explore tourists' perceptions toward identify intangible heritage as brand image that will contribute to tourism industry. Its aim is to highlight the importance of intangible heritage as a factor involved in creating the serious mass of the contemporarily understood cultural tourism products which can significantly enrich the desirability of the tourist offer of Malaysia. Questionnaire surveys used as main data collection methods included with 1,000 respondents participated in this research. Results indicate that visitors were interested differently when determining to visit heritage sites and contribute to tourism growth. Lastly, overall brand attitudes as intangible heritage were identified as key brand image associations toward heritage destinations and contributes to tourism growth of Penang, Malaysia.

Keywords

Behavior theory; Brand image; Brand image theory; Intangible heritage; Malaysia; Penang; UNESCO