



## DESTINATION BRANDING AND THE ROLE OF EMIGRANTS: THE CASE OF MOROCCO.

Fatimazohra el Aouni

Dipòsit Legal: T 308-2015

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## Doctoral Thesis

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Reus, 2014



## *Dedication*

This thesis is lovingly dedicated to:

الى روح ابي الغالي فليرحمك الله ويسكنك اوسع جناته

(ابي لم ترحل)

the memory of my father

(you are alive)

الى امي الغالية اطلال الباري عز وجل في عمرك

my beloved mother Haja Zhor El bouzidi

و الى اختي بشرى

and to Bouchra, my little sister.



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## كلمة شكر وتقدير

بسم الله والصلاة والسلام على مولانا رسول الله

الحمد لله حمداً يليق بجلاله وعظمته . وصلّى اللهم على خاتم الرسل ، من لا نبي بعده ، صلاةً تقضي لنا بها الحاجات وترفعنا بها أعلى الدرجات ، و تبلّغنا بها أقصى الغايات من جميع الخيرات ، في الحياة وبعد الممات .

الشكر أولاً وأخيراً لله تعالى على حسن توفيقه ، وكريم عونه، وعلى ما منّ وفتح به عليّ من إنجاز لهذه الأطروحة بعد أن يسّر العسير، وذللّ الصعب، وفرّج الهم والكرب وأنار الطريق.

قال سيّدنا رسول الله صلّى الله عليه وسلّم: “مَنْ آتَى إِلَيْكُمْ مَعْرُوفًا فَكَافَتْهُ فَإِنْ لَمْ تَجِدُوا فَادْعُوا اللَّهَ لَهُ حَتَّى تَعْلَمُوا أَنْ قَدْ كَفَأْتُمُوهُ” و ثبت في حديث اخر قوله صلوات المولى عليه، “أشكر النَّاسَ لله أشكرهم للنَّاسِ”.

و في هذا الصدد، يسرني بأن أخص بالشكر والعرفان بالجميل الى والدي الكريمين، الى والدي الغالي محمدالعوني رحمة الله عليك ياأبي الغالي، كنت خير سند لي طيلة حياتي فكم من تشجيع ودعاء وصبر وعطاء وحب غمرتني به كم وددت يا أبي لوكنت بجانبني كي اوفيك حقك ولوبالقليل لكن سبحانه وتعالى اختارك بجواره فلا مرد لقضاء الله فتم قرير العين يا أبي، ان شاء الله يا أبي ساكون تلك البنت التي ستدعو لك بالظاهر والباطن، عساني أن أرد لك لو القليل من تضحيتك و كرمك تجاهي وتجاه كل العائلة فشكرا لتربيته لنا وعطفك وحنانك الذي لم يعوض ولن يعوض ابدا.

وأتقدم بالشكر الخالص والعرفان بالجميل لامي الحبيبة الحاجة زهور البوزيدي ذات القلب الحنون التي دعمتني ولازلت بدعواتها الصادقة وتحفيزها الايجابي الذي خفّف عني الجهد والتعب وعناء الغربة فلكي جزيل الشكر على تعبك وتضحيتك يا امي دمتي تاجا فوق رؤوسنا ونيراسا يضيئ طريقنا يا غالية وجعل الله ما تبدلين من جهد في ميزان حسناتك وأمدّ في عمرك على الصالحات، وأعانني على برك وحسن طاعتك.

كما أتقدم بالشكر إلى إخوتي الحبيبات الكريمات (عزيزة وبشرى) و الى اخي جمال لوقوفهم بجانبني و دعواتهم الصادقة وحبهم الكبير طوال هذه السنوات.

فدعواتي لك الخالصة يا بشرى ان يفوقك عز وجل على صبرك وتضحيتك، فنعم الاخوت والصديقة والسند فشكرا على طبيبتك وكرمك وحنانك وحسن اخلاقك جزاك الله عني خير الجزاء ممنونة لكي.

امانتما يا عزيزة وجمال فتمنيتاتي لكما بمسيرة موفقة في حياتكما العملية والشخصية و ان ينير الباري طريقكما الى الصلاح والخير.

وبكل إخلاص وتقدير و عرفان بالجميل أتقدم بالشكر لكل الجمعيات ومغاربة العالم الذين ساهموا في الاجابة على الحوارات و الاستثمارات المبعثة لهم فشكرا جزيلا على تعاونكم.

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واختتم تشكراتي وتقديري للجميع بالايات الكريمت "ياايها الناس انا خلقناكم من ذكر وانثى وجعلناكم شعوبا وقبائل لتعارفوا اكرمكم عند الله اتقاكم ان الله عليم خبير". "وفوق كل ذي علم عليم" صدق الله العظيم .

وما توفيقي الا بالله

# **DESTINATION BRANDING AND THE ROLE OF EMIGRANTS: THE CASE OF MOROCCO**

## **Table of contents**

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| List of tables.....   | 11        |
| List of figures.....  | 13        |
| <b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>  | <b>19</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>CHAPTER 1</b>  |           |
| <b>THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW</b>  |           |
| 1. INTRODUCTION.....  | 27        |
| 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....   | 27        |
| 3. LITERATURE REVIEW: A NEW RESEARCH LINE ON THE ROLE OF MIGRATION ON DESTINATION BRANDING.....                 | 33        |
| <b>THE ROLE OF EMIGRANTS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF A DESTINATION BRAND: A NEW RESEARCH LINE</b>                    |           |
| 1. INTRODUCTION.....  | 36        |
| 2. DESTINATION BRANDING CONCEPT: DIFFERENT APPROACHES.....  | 37        |
| 3. THE ROLE OF EMIGRANT POPULATION ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF DESTINATION BRAND: PROPOSING A NEW RESEARCH LINE..... | 41        |
| 4. CONCLUSIONS.....   | 47        |
| REFERENCES.....   | 49        |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>CHAPTER 2</b>  |           |
| <b>THE ROLE OF MOROCCAN EMIGRANTS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF MOROCCO BRAND: A PILOT QUALITATIVE APPROACH</b>        |           |
| 1. INTRODUCTION.....  | 57        |
| 2. TOURISM IN MOROCCO: CONTEXTUAL SETTING.....  | 58        |
| 3. THE ROLE OF OFFICIAL WEBSITES IN TOURISM.....  | 65        |
| 4. MOROCCAN MIGRATION.....  | 71        |
| <b>BUILDING THE "MOROCCO" BRAND AS A TOURIST DESTINATION: THE ROLE OF EMIGRANTS AND INSTITUTIONAL WEBSITES</b>  |           |
| INTRODUCTION.....   | 84        |
| THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF DESTINATION BRANDING.....  | 85        |
| Conceptualizing place branding and destination branding.....  | 85        |
| The construction of destination branding: The brand identity.....   | 86        |
| Brand identity created by the emigrant population.....  | 87        |
| Brand identity created by government institutions.....  | 89        |
| METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS.....   | 90        |
| Methodology.....  | 90        |
| Construction of the "Morocco" brand by Moroccan emigrants in Spain.....   | 91        |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Perceptions of Moroccan emigrants of the Moroccan government's role in the destination brand built through the use of websites ..... | 95 |
| CONCLUSIONS .....  | 96 |
| REFERENCES .....   | 98 |

### CHAPTER 3

#### ANALYSIS OF THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE MOROCCO BRAND FROM THE MOROCCAN EMIGRANTS' PERSPECTIVE

|                                      |     |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. INTRODUCTION.....                 | 107 |
| 2. THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE BRAND ..... | 108 |

#### THE MOROCCO BRAND THROUGH THE EYES OF ITS EMIGRANTS

|                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
| INTRODUCTION.....        | 114 |
| LITERATURE REVIEW.....   | 115 |
| METHODOLOGY.....         | 117 |
| ANALYSIS OF RESULTS..... | 119 |
| DISCUSSION .....         | 126 |
| CONCLUSION .....         | 128 |
| REFERENCES .....         | 128 |

#### THE MOROCCO BRAND FROM THE MOROCCAN EMIGRANTS' PERSPECTIVE

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| INTRODUCTION .....   | 131 |
| THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE INFLUENCE OF LOCAL PEOPLE ON DESTINATION BRANDING ..... | 133 |
| METHODOLOGY .....  | 137 |
| Data collection.....   | 137 |
| The questionnaire .....  | 138 |
| RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....  | 139 |
| CONCLUSIONS .....  | 148 |
| REFERENCES.....  | 150 |

#### CONCLUSIONS .....

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 1. CONCLUSIONS .....                            | 157 |
| 2. LIMITATIONS .....                            | 160 |
| 3. THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS ..... | 161 |
| 4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.....         | 162 |

#### REFERENCES.....

#### APPENDIX.....

## List of tables

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Table I. Glossary of destination branding .....  | 32  |
| Table II. Economic data of tourism in Morocco .....  | 59  |
| Table III. Programs for tourism development from 1949 to 1999 .....                                      | 61  |
| Table IV. Tourism website studies .....  | 67  |
| Table V. Number of migrants by regions (Millions) .....  | 72  |
| Table VI. Migrants living (Millions) .....   | 73  |
| Table VII. Glossary of the main topics related to migration .....  | 74  |
| Table VIII. Labor and Social security Conventions signed between Morocco and European Countries<br>..... | 78  |
| Table IX. Moroccan migrants over the world .....   | 79  |
| Table X. Organisations for the Moroccan emigrants living abroad .....                                    | 80  |
| Table XI. Literature review on brand attributes .....  | 111 |
|  |     |
| Table 1. Demographic characteristics .....   | 119 |
| Table 2. Tangible/functional attributes of the brand .....   | 122 |
| Table 3. Intangible/emotional attributes of the brand .....  | 123 |
| Table 4. Evaluation of the emigrants' contribution to the brand construction .....                       | 125 |



## List of figures

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Figure I. Destination branding elements .....                                       | 30  |
| Figure II. A framework for creating strategic destination brands .....              | 31  |
| Figure III. Destinations and lines of tourist development .....                     | 63  |
| Figure IV. Evolution of economic data related to tourism .....                      | 64  |
| Figure V. Model on tourism destination branding .....                               | 109 |
| Figure VI. Integrative model of brand attributes .....                              | 110 |
| <br>  |     |
| Figure 1. Destination branding: Conceptual model .....                              | 40  |
| Figure 2. The influence of emigrants on the construction of destination brand ..... | 47  |





## **Abstract**

This Ph.D thesis seeks to analyse the role of Moroccan emigrants' in the construction of Morocco brand as a tourist destination. To do so, firstly, this study proposes a conceptual model to understand the role of emigrant population in the construction of their places of origin's brand. Secondly, it determines the key aspects of the role played by Moroccan emigrants living in Spain in the construction of the Morocco brand. Finally, it analyses the main attributes of the Morocco brand transmitted by Moroccan emigrants, and their perceptions of their influence on the Morocco brand as a tourist destination. The findings sum up that Moroccan emigrants highlight emotional attributes more than functional ones to characterise Morocco. Our data also show that Moroccan emigrants think that they exert a strong influence on the construction of their country brand, and that their message of their country is positive, clear and consistent.

## **Resumen**

Esta tesis pretende analizar el papel del emigrante marroquí en la construcción de la marca Marruecos como destino turístico. Para lograr este objetivo, este estudio propone, primero, desarrollar un modelo conceptual que permita comprender el papel de la población emigrante en la construcción de la marca de sus lugares de origen. Segundo, determinar los aspectos clave del papel del emigrante marroquí residente en España en la construcción de la marca Marruecos. Por último, analizar los principales atributos de la marca Marruecos que transmiten los emigrantes, y sus percepciones sobre su influencia a la hora de formar la marca Marruecos como reclamo turístico. Los resultados demuestran que el emigrante marroquí destaca los atributos emocionales por encima de los funcionales cuando trata de caracterizar su país, también ponen de manifiesto que su influencia es fuerte, en la construcción de la marca de su país, lanzando un mensaje positivo, claro y consistente.

## **Resumen**

Aquesta tesi pretén analitzar el paper de l'emigrant marroquí en la construcció de la marca Marroc com a destinació turística. Per aconseguir aquest objectiu, aquest estudi proposa, primer, desenvolupar un model conceptual que permeti comprendre el paper de

la població emigrant en la construcció de la marca dels seus llocs d'origen. Segon, determinar els aspectes clau del paper de l'emigrant marroquí resident a Espanya en la construcció de la marca Marroc. Finalment, analitzar els principals atributs de la marca Marroc que transmeten els emigrants, i les seves percepcions sobre la seva influència a l'hora de formar la marca Marroc com a reclam turístic. Els resultats demostren que l'emigrant marroquí destaca els atributs emocionals per sobre dels funcionals quan tracta de caracteritzar el seu país, també posen de manifest que la seva influència és forta, en la construcció de la marca del seu país, llançant un missatge positiu, clar i consistent.

*“One ‘channel of communication’ which is fully equal to the huge task of communicating the complexities and contradictions of a place to the global marketplace is its people. When each ordinary citizen – not just diplomats, media stars and politicians – becomes a passionate ambassador for his or her home country or city, positive change can really happen.*

*The human capital of the nation is in a very real sense the country’s main source of primary resource”.*

**Simon Anholt**

**WIPO International Seminar on Intellectual Property and Development, Geneva,  
May 2-3, 2005.**



## **INTRODUCTION**



Brand as a concept is not new, while its historical roots can be placed in the late 19th century with the development of well-known branded consumer products (Blain et al., 2005). This concept is conceived as a message, in the form of a name, sign, symbol, etc., which tries to identify and differentiate products, goods and services (AMA, 1995). Branding, on the other hand, implies a wider concept, which involves the process of creating and managing the brands (Keller, 2002). Brands and branding have emerged from corporations and, more specifically, have been applied to their products, goods and services to improve their credibility and notoriety, attracting more consumers and provoking, as a result, higher incomes and a major economic wealth for companies (Kotler and Gertner, 2002). These benefits of branding have encouraged its use in other contexts and spheres, for example, places, on its economic and geographic levels (Papadopoulos and Heslop, 2002).

Nowadays places and, more specifically, destinations as places for tourism (Buhalis, 2000; Morgan et al., 2003) compete to attract visitors, residents, events, investments and companies. Some of them share a lot of similarities, and it is necessary to establish the mechanisms to differentiate them. With this purpose, different agents try to sell the uniqueness of destinations, and present them in a positive way highlighting their exclusive infrastructures and unique attractions (Pride, 2002). In order to attain these objectives and get more benefits from the resources of the territories, these destination agents try to create a brand as an adequate tool for identification, differentiation and positioning (Aaker, 2004). Therefore, branding also exerts a positive influence not just on products, but also on territories at a different level, and on places linked to specific economic activities, like tourism is an example of tourism destination branding.

There are relevant similarities between corporate branding and branding in other contexts, like tourist destinations (Kavartzis and Ashworth, 2005), but there are also relevant differences. In the specific case of destination branding, it is necessary to highlight its particularities and complexities (Pike, 2005). Many of them derive from the variety of stakeholders involved in its management process and the multiple functions of destinations (Morgan et al., 2003). These various stakeholders, which include governments, employees, customers, suppliers and members of local communities, have different interests, roles, objectives and points of view about their places or destinations (Sauttet and Leisen, 1999).



In regards to local communities, many studies highlight the significant role played by local people, as relevant stakeholders involved in identity creation and identification of places, facilitated, in this case, by the high knowledge and sense of belonging that local people show to their places of origin (Devadson, 2010). However, as far as we know, there is scarce research about the role played by emigrants, as part of these local people who have migrated to other countries, in the process of destination branding. Some studies have examined the influence of ethnicity, multiculturalism or mobility on destination branding in the host countries (Sheth, 2010), but not their role in destination branding when they transmit information about their countries of origin. Identifying this gap invites us to conduct this doctoral research study with the goal of exploring destination branding from a migration approach.

The general objective of this doctoral thesis consists of exploring the role played by Moroccan emigrants in the construction of the Morocco brand as a tourist destination. To do so, the analyses will be centred on Moroccan emigrants living in Spain.

On that basis, the research objectives of this work are to:

- clarify the theoretical model that explains the link between emigrants and tourist destination branding;
- explore which could be the different aspects of the role played by Moroccan emigrants in the construction of their country of origin's brand;
- analyse Moroccan emigrants' perceptions of the official brand of Morocco as a tourist destination, built by the Moroccan Ministry of Tourism;
- determine the most important elements of the Morocco brand as a tourist destination transmitted by emigrants;
- highlight the Moroccan emigrants' perceptions about their influence on the construction of the Morocco brand.

To reach these research objectives, both methodological approaches, qualitative and quantitative, were applied. According to Kelle (2006), the combination of these two methodologies, which do not have to be present in all the phases of the research process (Brannen, 2005), serves to provide rich information, giving a complete and coherent picture of the subject of study, especially when the research objectives intended to

contribute to a recent or not sufficiently explored field, where empirical research is still scarce.

For our purpose of exploring the role of Moroccan emigrants in the construction of the Morocco brand as a tourist destination, firstly we conducted a literature review on topics related to place and destination branding, trying to determine the role of migration in the theoretical model of the process of branding. The literature review shows a considerable lack of studies on the influence of migration on destination branding, encouraging us to conduct a new research line on this topic.

Secondly, we used a qualitative approach in order to recognise the role of Moroccan emigrants in the construction of their country of origin's brand as a tourist destination. The qualitative nature of this research is justified because the role of migration on destination branding constitutes a new research line and, to our knowledge, there is a big gap in empirical research on this topic. Thus, it was appropriate to make a first approximation of the influence of Moroccan emigrants in the Morocco brand through some in depth interviews formulated in an open-ended manner that allow us to determine the main topics of these emigrants contribution to the brand construction of their countries of origin.

Thirdly, we conducted two quantitative studies with the goal of determining the main elements of the Morocco brand as a tourist destination, constructed and transmitted by Moroccan emigrants, and their perception of their influence in the construction of their country of origin's brand. To do so, two studies were conducted, using a questionnaire distributed amongst Moroccan emigrants living in Spain. Both of them intended to determine the main elements of the Morocco brand constructed and transmitted by Moroccan emigrants, and explored whether this brand is convergent and coherent or, on the contrary, diverges depending on the socio-demographic profile of Moroccan emigrants. However, the first considers an aggregation of the elements of the brand forming categories, and the second explores the possible differences in the brand construction analysing the elements of brand individually and in detail. Also, it explores the Moroccan emigrants' perception of their contribution to the brand creation.

As outputs of this research work, we obtained the publication of four international academic papers.

The first paper titled *The Role of Emigrants in the Construction of a Destination Brand: A new Research Line* shows the literature review on destination branding and the role of migration in tourism, related to ethnicity and mobility. In this research, we identify the gap in tourism destination literature in regards to the influence of emigrants as relevant stakeholders in brand identity.

The second article titled *Building the Morocco Brand as Tourist Destination: The Role of Emigrants and Institutional Websites* explores the most significant aspects of the role Moroccan emigrants living in Spain play in the construction of their country of origin's brand and their perceptions regarding the work of the Moroccan government through its official tourism websites.

The third work, "The Morocco brand through the eyes of its emigrants", analyses in detail the homogeneity and consistency of the Morocco brand created and transmitted by Moroccan emigrants, considering all the elements that intervene in the brand identity of their country of origin, and also explores the perception of these emigrants in the brand creation.

Finally, the last work titled "The Morocco brand from the Moroccan emigrant's perspective", seeks to determine the major elements of the Morocco brand transmitted by Moroccan emigrants living abroad, and the consistency and coherence of this brand, forming categories with these factors and attributes of the Morocco brand.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW**



## **1. Introduction**

This chapter sets the main foundations of the theoretical framework of this doctoral thesis, with the purpose of shedding some light on the confused terminology regarding place and destination branding. Also, this chapter aims to develop a literature review related to the role of migration on destination branding, emphasising the scarce literature on this specific topic and the necessity to initiate a new research line

Besides this brief introduction, the structure of the chapter includes two sections. The first section is devoted to the theoretical framework, which includes the clarification of the main concepts and definitions involved in the creation and use of brands for territories, its evolution from corporate brands, the main elements of its management process and the different approaches used by research for its study.

In the second section, we will present the paper titled *The Role of Emigrants in the Construction of a Destination Brand: A new Research Line*. The main objective of this research is to expose the foundations for proposing a new research line in tourism destination branding that stresses the role of emigrants.

This paper was published in 2013, in the *Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Management*, Vol. 19, No. 1, pp. 35-47. It was also presented in the IV Catalan Congress of Accounting and Management, IV ACCID Congress, held in Barcelona (Spain) in 2011.

## **2. Theoretical framework**

The concept of destination branding, as its homologous concept of branding in general, is considered multidisciplinary by many authors, since researchers with diverse bodies of knowledge and academic disciplines have investigated it. This is not only the case in economic and management sciences, but also in sociology, history, geography, anthropology and political sciences, among others (Hankinson, 2007). Besides, in recent times, the interest in destination branding has increased enormously among academics and practitioners. This tendency can be seen in the multiple numbers of scientific

articles and books published on this subject recently (Ahonen et al., 2007). However, despite this proliferation of studies, many authors highlight that this issue is still in its infancy phase, and many fundamental aspects of destination branding still need to be further discussed (Pike, 2010, Tasci and Kozak, 2006).

But exactly what is the meaning of destination branding? First of all, it is necessary to mention the confusion between place and destination in the field of branding. According to Anholt (2009), place can be used in a holistic way, including the economic, political and social spheres of the territory in its different geographical levels. From this perspective, the tourism dimension would be just one of the spheres involved in the concept of place. On the other hand, the term destination would be referred more specifically to the tourist activity, referring to the place (country, city, region, etc.) visited or hoped to be visited by tourists (Anholt, 2009). However, it is not always easy to differentiate and split up tourism activities from others, like business activities. They coexist, interact and maintain cause-effect relationships. Thus many authors use both, place and destination, reciprocally (Campelo et al., 2014; Gnoth, 2007; Hankinson, 2007). For our purpose, destinations would be considered as part of a place, strategically positioned to be visited and consumed from a tourism perspective.

Many academics have made efforts to provide a proper definition of destination branding. Just to name a few relevant examples, it is important to mention the work of Blain et al. (2005, p.331), who define destination branding as the marketing activities that:

- (1) support the creation of a name, symbol, logo, word mark or other graphic that both identifies and differentiates a destination;
- (2) convey the promise of a memorable travel experience that is uniquely associated with destination; and
- (3) serve to consolidate and reinforce the recollection of pleasurable memories of a destination experience, all with the intent purpose of creating an image that influences consumers' decisions to visit the destination in question, as opposed to an alternative one.

Cai (2002, p. 722) also conceptualises destination branding as the selection of a consistent mix of elements to identify and distinguish a destination through a positive building of its image. The brand elements include a name, term, logo, sign, symbol, slogan package, or a combination of these, of which the name would be the first and foremost.

Morrison Anderson (2002), on the other hand, in his description of destination branding emphasises the process to develop a unique identity and personality that is different from all competitive destinations.

If we analyse the common elements of these destination branding definitions, we can observe that the majority of them are inspired by Ritchie and Ritchie's (1998) propositions of destination branding. For these authors, destination branding involves a set of activities and phases, constituting a process that involves the creation, use and promotion of a brand. Besides, they highlight the physical format used to form this brand (name, symbol or other graphical elements). The purpose of this process is to form an image of the destination associated with uniqueness, to identify and differentiate a destination from the competition and ensure the attraction of tourists, consumers and economic activity.

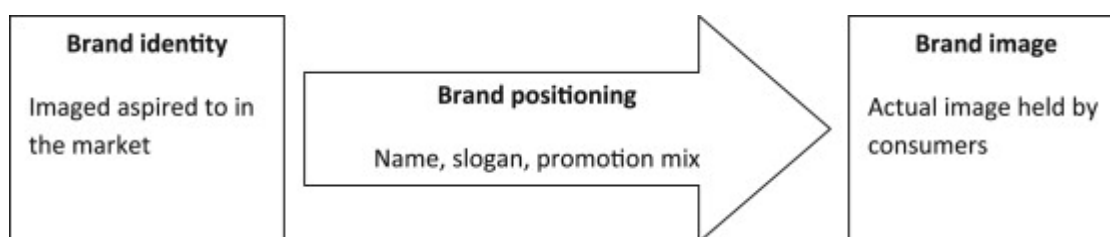
Despite the differences between destination branding and corporate branding, there are also important similarities. As Kavartzis (2007) stated, both involve multiple stakeholders and identities, a high level of intangibility and complexity, and take into account social responsibility and the need for long-term development.

Indeed, branding destinations or the process of creating and managing a brand for a destination, involves complexity and challenge. This complexity arises from the multidimensional and heterogenic character of destinations. For this reason, many authors stress the necessity of the involvement of all destinations' stakeholders, including local people and tourists. The creation of a successful destination brand comes from sharing the vision and mission of the branding strategy, and it is only possible when all stakeholders' voices are heard. Destination branding exercises two traditional functions: identification and differentiation. Identification implies creating an identity brand for the destination on the basis of its valuable components and important



elements. On the other hand, differentiation emerges from the projection of the destination brand image on the minds of consumers (Qu et al., 2011). The concepts of image and identity interact, as we can see in Figure I, and they both are vital for destination brand building (Pike, 2012). They both determine personality, awareness and positioning of the destination and its brand, which finally generate brand loyalty and equity, and a higher economic value for destinations.

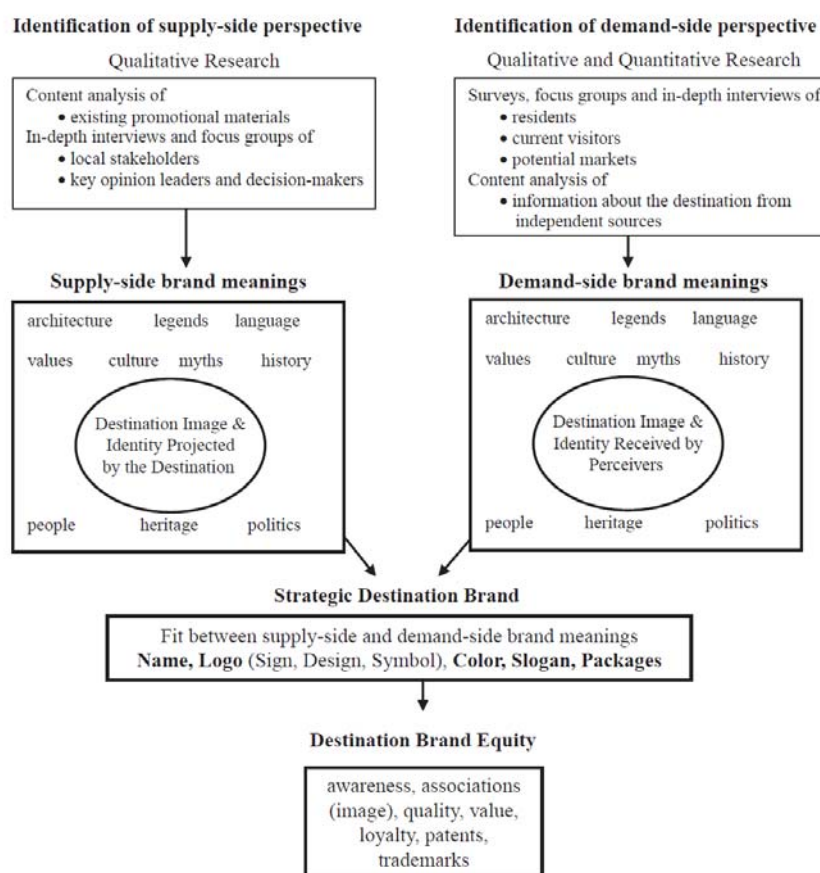
Figure I. Destination branding elements



Source: Pike (2012, p.101)

In order to better understand destination branding construction, many standpoints have to be considered. The complexity of the concept and the multiplicity of aspects and perspectives in it has resulted in various authors having developed conceptual models trying to explain the relationships and interactions involved. Some of these models highlight the relationship between stakeholders and their influence on some relevant elements of destination branding (Garcia et al., 2012). Others are based on specific elements of the destination branding process, like the brand image (Qu et al., 2011) or the interaction between brand image and identity in destinations (Cai, 2002). There are also models centred on the brand functions, for example, Hankinson (2004), who provides a model based on brand networks in which brands exercise various functions. More recently Tasci and Gartner (2009) suggest a more holistic model (Figure II), which is centred in constructing a framework to create strategic destination brands, integrating some of the perspectives already mentioned and analysed by other authors,

Figure II. A framework for creating strategic destination brands



Source: Tasci and Gartner (2009, p.157)

As Figure II shows, the creation of a strategic destination brand implies the fit between the supply and the demand-side, which means to get a match between the destination image and identity projected by the builders of the brand, and the destination image and identity perceived by the users to whom the brand is addressed. Only with this match will the brand gain awareness, quality and value.

In the review of the theoretical framework of destination branding, there has appeared some common elements that many of the models include, such as personality, awareness, equity, value, etc. Just to clarify this terminology to some extent, here is included a Table (Table I) with brief definitions of the most important ones (Anholt, 2009; Ritchie and Ritchie, 1998).

Table I. Glossary of destination branding

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Brand equity</b>      | The total accumulated value or worth of a brand, including tangible and intangible assets that the brand contributes to its corporate parents.   |
| <b>Brand identity</b>    | It specifies what the brand aspires to stand for and has multiple roles. First, it is a set of associations that the brand strategist seeks to create and maintain. Second, it represents a vision of how a particular brand should be perceived by its target audience. |
| <b>Brand image</b>       | The current views and perceptions of customers about the brand, it is synonymous with either the brand's strategic personality or its reputation as a whole.   |
| <b>Brand personality</b> | The set of human characteristics and personalities associated with the brand.  |
| <b>Brand positioning</b> | It is related to create the perception of a brand in the customers' mind and achieve differentiation that stands apart from competitors' brands offerings and that meets the consumers' needs or expectations.   |
| <b>Brand culture</b>     | The system of values related to a brand, like the cultural values.   |
| <b>Brand awareness</b>   | People's awareness of the brand in key target markets, the extent to which people are aware of the brand.  |
| <b>Brand ambassadors</b> | A generic term that describe people (usually destination stakeholders) who have been officially appointed or asked to promote awareness and adoption of the brand in their sectors of influence.   |
| <b>Brand experience</b>  | The experience that visitors can expect to have when they visit the destination.   |

Table I clearly states the different details and aspects that can be observed in the concept of destination branding. Proper destination branding may have positive impacts on the area, attracting visitors, investments and greater economic wealth. The relevance of this topic for tourism management explains the interest in research to determine how the brand is built, what stakeholders are involved, and what brand elements they transmit.

### **3. Literature review: A new research line on the role of migration on destination branding**

Many authors suggest the usefulness of clarifying the different types of stakeholders involved in destination branding (García et al., 2012). From the supply side, meaning from the side of the brand builders, literature shows that brand identity usually adopts a top-down approach (Campelo et al., 2009), as if it was only relevant to the leadership of destination management organisations (DMOs), governments and institutions through their agencies for economic or tourism development. However, other stakeholders that adopt a down-top perspective can also exert a fundamental role in destination branding. This would be the case for local people who also make an important contribution to destination branding through their sense of belonging to a specific place (Campelo et al., 2009).

Indeed, local population is one of the focuses of the literature on destination branding from an internal point of view. These studies conclude that the local population is a very valuable resource for the formation of the destination brand of a particular region. The value of this population is especially significant when it is difficult to differentiate between destinations that share very similar characteristics, whereby local people become a truly differentiating factor between them. Also, the strong sense of belonging that local people usually show towards their region of origin can have a very significant influence on the construction of the brand, and can send a stronger message that tourists could easily perceive from that place.

However, this research refers to the local people who currently live in the tourist destination whose brand is under analysis and, as far as we know, there is very little research on the influence that the emigrant population has on destination branding and, in particular, with regards to which brand attributes they communicate (Haug et al., 2007; Johansson and Cornebise, 2010; McClinchey, 2008).

In the paper presented below, we conducted a literature review on destination branding and related topics, such as migration and ethnicity in tourism. This literature review shows that, despite the fact that the study of emigrants' identities has attracted considerable amount of research, few studies have focused specifically on the role of

emigrants in the construction of their country of origin's destination brands. Having identified this gap, this study proposes a conceptual model to understand the role of the emigrant population in the construction of their countries' brand.

This article is divided into four parts. The first part presents a brief introduction of the topic and contextualises its relevance. After this, a literature review is presented on the main concepts related to destination branding and the different approaches used by previous research. This section concludes with a holistic model that tries to integrate different perspectives on destination branding. In the third part, after the identification of the gap in destination branding studies, related to the role of migration, a new research line is proposed on the role of migration in the construction of the destination brands of their countries of origin. Likewise, a model is developed that suggests diverse aspects that should be compassed by future research.

## **The role of emigrants in the construction of a destination brand: A new research line**

### ***Abstract***

*Purpose:* The main objective of this work consists of proposing a new line of research which consists of exploring the role of emigrants in the construction of their country of origin's brand.

*Design and methodology:* To justify the need of this new research line we provide arguments by conducting a literature review on destination branding and topics related to migration in tourism.

*Approach:* A proper destination branding may have a bearing on the image of a particular area, attracting visitors, investments, and a greater economic wealth for the region. The relevance of this topic for tourism management explains the interest of research in determining the elements of the brand of touristic destinations and its influence on the tourists' behaviour.

*Originality:* Scant attention has been paid by the literature on the influence of stakeholders on brand construction at a regional level, and specifically on the influence of emigrant population, that is those people who are living outside their original territories and whose identity might exert an influence on the construction of their country's brand and attract potential tourists.

*Findings:* This study proposes a conceptual model to understand the role of emigrant population in the construction of their places of origin's destination brand. This model suggests that social identity processes may affect the way emigrants communicate to locals a brand about their places of origin, contributing therefore to the construction of the brand of their countries.

***Keywords:*** Destination branding, brand identity, brand image, emigrants, social identity.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In general terms, it is assumed that the creation and use of a good brand will enable political authorities, companies and society in general to reap the benefits of a more attractive region that attracts investments, capital and more people to develop different economic activities. In this context, destination branding as the brand process of a tourist destination arises as a key activity in tourism management.

The strategic and economic implications of destination branding have led to multiple studies from different perspectives in recent years (Hanna & Rowley, 2008). This proliferation has caused confusion with regard to the terminology (Hanna & Rowley, 2008; García et al., 2012), emerging different and complex concepts, such as place and destination branding, brand image, destination image, brand identity, brand awareness, brand meaning, brand equity, etc. whose definitions are not clear. This confusion has also been exacerbated by the lack of clarity of the contributions and main findings of this body of research. Indeed, some works assert that the study of branding as applied to regions is still in its early stages, despite its startling growth in the last few years (Iversen & Hem, 2008).

In addition, it is important to highlight the scant attention paid to analysing the influence that certain stakeholders may exert on brand construction at a regional level. Indeed, only very few studies analyse the influence of local people, and specifically, of emigrant populations on the construction of a destination brand (Haug et al., 2007; Johansson & Cornebise, 2010). These studies analyse the influence that emigrants exert on tourism in the places where they are living, in many cases studying the effects of ethnic neighbourhoods and festivals because tourists could be attracted by their specific identity. But, as far as we know, previous research has not been interested in the role of emigrants in relation to the formation of their countries of origin's brand as tourist destinations. This neglect in the literature seems surprising given the important role that emigrants might accomplish regarding the construction of their countries of origin's brand when relating with locals in the hosting countries who might be potential tourists. This gap is particularly significant considering the increase of migratory movements in recent times.

The above arguments justify the objective of this work, which consists of proposing a new research line on the role of the emigrant population in the construction of the destination brand of their country of origin.

To do so, a review on destination branding and main topics related to migration in tourism, such as ethnicity and mobility, was conducted. The databases selected to do the search were the *ISI Web of Knowledge* and *Scopus*, because of their general acceptance and prestige in academic fields, and because both of them cover a large number of well-known journals in fields related to administration, management, marketing and tourism. The literature review was conducted using different combinations of the keywords significant for this research in tourism, such as brand, place branding, destination branding, brand identity, brand image, mobility, emigrants, migration, migration movements, ethnicity, and social identity, covering the period of the last two decades, although some previous works were also included in the literature review.

The structure of this study is as follows: after this brief introduction, the second section develops a review of the main concepts of regional branding and the different approaches used by this body of research. The next section proposes and justifies a new research line on the role of emigrants in the construction of destination brands. Finally, there is a concluding section that exposes the main contributions of this study.

## **2. DESTINATION BRANDING CONCEPT: DIFFERENT APPROACHES**

Most brand definitions are based on the principles suggested by the American Marketing Association (Aaker, 1991; Wood, 2000) which defines a brand as a name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of any of these elements, intended to identify the goods and services of a company and differentiate it from its competitors.

The relevant strategic and economic implications of the efficient use of corporate brands aim to extend its use to a regional level. This is behind the appearance of the term 'destination branding'. It can be described as the brand of a particular geographical area, planned and perceived as a tourist destination (Hall, 1999; Crockett & Wood, 2002; Morgan et al., 2004; Pike, 2010). A proper management and understanding of destination branding is crucial in certain regions where tourism is a key economic driver (Hall & Higham, 2005; Bigano et al., 2007; Pike, 2010). Destination branding is the



process that allows a destination to be identified and differentiated from other alternatives, through the construction of a message, the brand, which tries to attract tourists and consumption (Cai, 2002; Qu et al., 2011). The ultimate objective is to create value for the different stakeholders involved in the region or for the tourist destination itself (Hankinson, 2004).

There are many common elements shared by corporate and regional brands (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005). However, since the elements that make up a region are broader and more heterogeneous than those of a corporation, it is recognised that destination branding might be more complex (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005). This complexity could be explained by the wide dispersion of control over the brand (Marzano & Scott, 2009), and the great number of different stakeholders involved (destination management organisations (DMOs), suppliers, consumers, workers, entrepreneurs, local people, tourists), all of whom have different interests with regard to the region and the tourist activity. The existence of this diversity of stakeholders makes more difficult to establish a common strategy to create and manage a brand to the benefit of all (Dinnie, 2004; Fan, 2006; Therkelsen & Halkier, 2008).

Another peculiarity of branding at a regional level concerns the physical unit of analysis. For example, destination branding can refer to different regional units such as countries, provinces, cities, etc., as well as other more specific or smaller spheres, which might include tourist complexes, theme parks and residential neighbourhoods, amongst others (Cai, 2002; Papadopoulos & Heslop, 2002; Johansson & Cornebise, 2010). This is important because it makes more difficult to reach generalised conclusions in this type of studies.

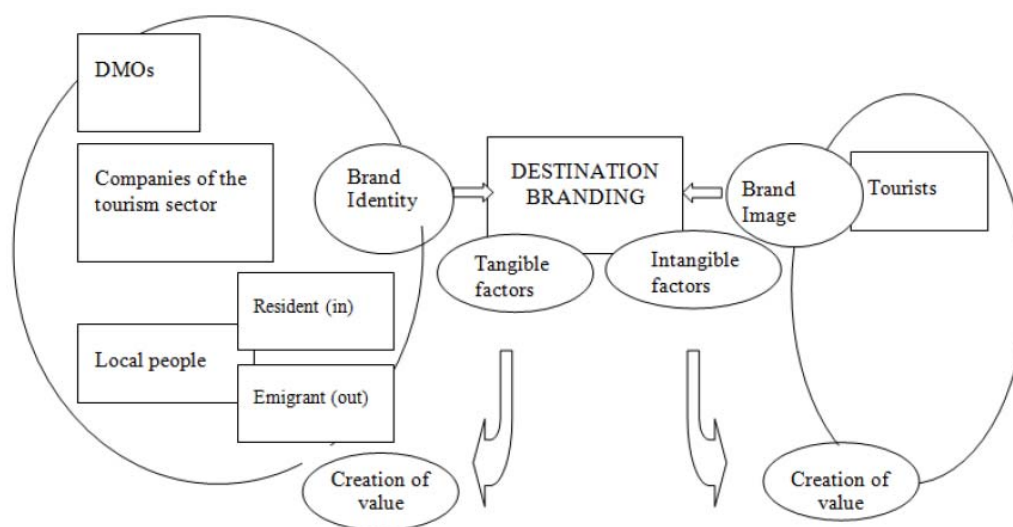
The literature has used a variety of approaches to analyse destination branding. On the one hand, we have those who use an external orientation and analyse the brand from the perspective of demand or its outputs (Aaker, 1996). This approach considers the consumer perception of tourists as the most important perspective for analysing destination branding, which they call the destination brand image (Kapferer, 1997; Hankinson, 2004; Kaplan et al., 2010). The brand image about a particular tourist destination has a crucial influence on the final choice of destination and on the tourist consumer behaviour of different tourist products.

On the other hand, we find an internally orientated approach which analyses the brand from the perspective of supply or its inputs (Aaker, 1996). This approach focuses on the influence exerted by the builders or owners of the destination brand through different communication, channels and media on the users, consumers or visitors of a specific tourist destination (Aaker, 1996; Hankinson, 2004; Kaplan et al., 2010). In this case, the recommendation is to base the construction of the destination brand on the attributes that determine the region's identity, to differentiate the destination from its competition (Cai, 2002; Mak, 2011).

These two research approaches differentiate between brand identity and brand image (Cai, 2002; Qu et al., 2011); the first analyses destination branding from the perspective of the creator of the message or brand, while the second takes the viewpoint of the recipient of the message or brand (Kapferer, 1997). Brand identity is the answer to the question "*Who are we?*", while brand image answers the question "*How are we perceived?*" (Konecnik & Go, 2008). The answers to both questions will help regional managers and DMOs to select the relevant attributes when creating the global projection of the destination brand.

In an attempt to capture both of the above approaches we have included the following figure (Figure 1), adapted from various works that have made a conceptual study of destination branding (Cai, 2002; Hankinson, 2004; Govers & Go, 2009; Saraniemi, 2010). The aim is to develop a holistic and integrative model that considers the different approaches used in the literature on destination branding.

Figure 1. Destination branding: Conceptual model



Source: compiled by the authors from Cai (2002), Hankinson (2004), Govers and Go (2009) and Saraniemi (2010).

As Figure 1 shows, destination branding is composed at a theoretical level of different kinds of factors, tangible and intangible aspects of the brand. These factors are the elements that constitute the content of the destination brand and its value depends on them. This Figure also shows that there are two different approaches of destination branding, and they do not necessarily match. On the one hand, the destination brand is constructed through multiple stakeholders (governmental institutions, companies, local people, including emigrants, etc.) Who and how they are influence the factors included in the brand that they construct. On the other hand, this brand is transmitted to tourists, actual and potential tourists, and these tourists' perceptions determine the image of the destination brand. So, the elements included in the brand identity and in the brand image of a tourist destination could be not exactly the same, because the brand identity depends on the idea of the brand's builders over themselves and their regions, while the brand image is determined by the tourists' perceptions on the regions' brand. Thus, there are two different ways of analysing destination branding, from the point of view of the builders of the brand (brand identity) and from the point of view of the recipients of the brand (brand image). Identity and image do not influence the process of branding, they constitute two perspectives to analyse branding.

The literature on destination branding has primarily focused on analysing the brand image as this has a direct effect on the tourist consumer behaviour, so frequently this

research analyses data and information obtained from tourists. However, there have been fewer studies on brand identity, in spite of the importance of the role played by the different regional managers and the agents responsible for creating the destination brand (Konecnik & Go, 2008).

Brand identity can be defined as the contribution made by all the brand's stakeholders to creating an awareness, providing a direction, purpose and meaning to the brand, and turning it into a central element of the brand's strategic vision (Aaker, 1996). A review of the literature on brand identity allows us to identify the different elements or components which make up that identity (Zenker, 2011). However, every stakeholder can build their own brand identity by focusing on some of these different elements.

### **3. THE ROLE OF EMIGRANT POPULATION ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF DESTINATION BRAND: PROPOSING A NEW RESEARCH LINE**

Many authors suggest the usefulness of classifying the different types of stakeholders, depending on their strategic significance with the brand (García et al., 2012). Thus, it would be possible to differentiate between primary stakeholders that influence the brand directly, like DMOs or stakeholders that have regular interactions with them (industries, investors, etc.). On the other hand, secondary stakeholders would be those with no regular interactions with DMOs, although they could be important for specific issues, for example local people.

A review of contemporary practices and literature shows that brand identity usually adopt a top-down approach (Campelo et al., 2009), as if it was only relevant the leadership of DMOs, governments and institutions through their agencies for economic or tourism development. However, local people also make an important contribution to tourist-driven marketing through the sense of belonging to a specific place (Campelo et al., 2009). As García et al. (2012, p. 648) state "local people may be an important factor when distinguishing and selling a destination brand, and it would be problematic not taking them into account when constructing the destination brand identity".

Indeed, local population is one of the focuses of the literature on destination branding from an internal point of view. The influence of local people on destination branding has been highlighted by previous research. For example, Freire (2009, p. 420)

establishes that “local people are relevant and important for a destination brand-building process”. Moreover, Campelo et al. (2009, p. 2) suggest that “frequently, residents and ad-hoc communities are left out of the branding process”. However, as these authors suggest “it makes sense to include them in the process of branding”.

Most of the studies interested in the role of local people have analysed the elements of the brand that they tend to transmit, but many of these elements are specific to the particular destination that is being analysed in each case. Some examples of this type of research are the studies by Campelo et al. (2009) on Chatham Island (New Zealand), by Freire (2009) on the Portuguese Algarve, by Konecnik & Go (2008) on Slovenia; and by Wheeler et al. (2011) on Rural Victoria (Australia), amongst others.

The main attributes of brand identity repeatedly considered by the literature are the natural environment (landscape, flora, fauna, beaches, mountains, climate, etc.), the atmosphere (peaceful, relaxing, funny, nightlife, enjoyable, etc.), the infrastructures (monuments, accessibility, safety, accommodation quality, transport, etc.), the economic situation (most important business sectors, price-quality ratio, economic and commercial development), and sociocultural aspects (a sense of community, the friendliness and hospitality of the local people, traditions, cultural activities and attractions, history, gastronomy, etc.), amongst others. One important classification of these attributes considers the difference between physical or tangible elements, such as the natural environment, infrastructures and the economic situation; and intangible elements and attributes, which would include sociocultural aspects and the atmosphere of the tourist destination.

These studies conclude that the local population is a very valuable resource for the formation of the destination brand of a particular region. The value of this population emerges from the difficulty of differentiating between destinations that share very similar characteristics, whereby local people become a truly differentiating factor between them. Also, the strong sense of belonging that local people usually show towards their region of origin can have a very significant influence on the construction of the brand, and can send a stronger message that tourists could easily perceive of that place.

However, this research refers to the local people who currently live in the tourist destination whose brand is under analysis, and as far as we know there is very little research on the influence that the emigrant population has on destination branding, and in particular with regards to which brand attributes they communicate (Haug et al., 2007; Johansson & Cornebise, 2010; McClinchey, 2008).

Let's address some arguments with regards to the interest of exploring the role of emigrants in the construction of destination brands as a new research line.

First of all, it is necessary to note the relevance of the migration phenomenon in recent times. Migratory movements have become generalised, influenced by globalization and the economic and social crisis of certain regions compared to others (Moufakkir, 2008; 2011). Thus, emigrants constitute an increasing group in developed societies, which are the origin of most of the tourists.

Second, the arguments used to justify the relevance of local people for the construction of destination brands (Campelo et al., 2009; 2011; Freire, 2009) are also appropriate for emigrants. Even more, emigrants from the same country develop some common characteristics (longing for home, keeping local customs abroad, etc.) and the sense of belonging showed towards the region of origin is even stronger when people emigrate and live abroad. This factor may contribute to the construction and communication of the brand. However, the existing literature of migration in tourism just considers emigrants as workers in the hospitality sector (Janta et al., 2011a; 2011b; Janta, 2011; Jope, 2011) and neglects their role as potential builders of their country of origin's destination brand.

Third, emigrants of the same country might share their social identity and this fact could influence the construction of the destination brand. Since emigrants tend to define themselves in terms of their group membership to a social category such as a region, nation, culture, geographical area, etc. and since these social identities are made salient when they interact with locals through communicating the brand of their places of origin (Badea et al., 2011) Social Identity Theory (SIT) (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) appears as a suitable theoretical framework to analyse the influence of emigrants on the construction of destination brand.

Identity is a description of the idea of every individual about themselves and addresses two meanings ‘*Who am I?*’ and ‘*How should I act?*’ (Alvesson et al., 2008). Individuals’ self-concept has two dimensions; on the one hand, the idiosyncratic characteristic of ‘the self’, which is called ‘personal identity’; and on the other hand, ‘social identity’, which refers to the characteristics that define the salient group classification to which one belongs (Turner, 1985). Stets and Burke (2000) define social identity as being at one with a certain group, being like others in the group, and seeing things from the group’s perspective. This means that having a social identity implies defining oneself as a member of a social category and identifying with that. Therefore, individuals might have multiple social identities because of the different groups to which they pertain and identify with.

SIT has been used mainly to understand issues of social structure and inter-group relations. It establishes that members of a group have a favouring reaction and assessment towards in-group members compared to out-group ones. This social process has been defined as in-group favouritism and has been recognised as an important tool to protect self-esteem (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

This assumption of SIT might be applied to the specific case of emigrant population, in that they tend to perceive their in-group in a positive way and differentiate from the out-group members, who are the population of the places where they currently live. And in doing so, they construct and communicate a certain brand of their places of origin. Hence, emigrants’ social identity might influence the elements of the destination brand of their places of origin and the way they construct and communicate to the potential tourists the brand of these places.

Fourth, there is a relevant gap in the research on the construction of destination brands. Although in the last few years the study of emigrants’ identities has attracted considerable research (Jasperse et al., 2012; Phinney et al., 2001; Bastian & Haslam, 2008) in parallel with the increase of studies regarding ethnicity, mobility and migration in tourism as a consequence of globalization (Moufakkir, 2008; 2011; Wilson & Ypeij, 2012; Ypeij, 2012; Salazar, 2013), there are hardly any studies analysing the influence of emigrant populations on the construction of a destination brand. The few studies we have found either describe cases in which the destination brand has been enriched by a

multicultural presence, giving the example of the influence of an emigrant neighbourhood on a particular city (Johansson & Cornebise, 2010), or the proliferation of cultural festivals involving different ethnic groups (McClinchey, 2008). Regarding the first group of studies, the literature describes an ethnic destination as an urban space designed as an ethnic area for residents and tourists at the same time (Sheth, 2010). As Sheth (2010) states “ethnicity can be perceived as an element that boosts tourist destinations, however the proper management of an ethnic tourist destination, and the construction of its brand, is not a simple task because there might be controversial interests between different stakeholders like institutions, local population, different ethnic groups, etc.”. On the other hand, the group of studies on ethnic and cultural festivals shows that these can constitute an important element of the brand identity of a tourist destination, and might be associated to positive economic and social impacts for the territory (Schnell, 2003).

All these studies analyse the impact of multiculturalism, ethnicity, and emigrant population in the construction of the destination brand of the hosting region, but they have ignored the influence of emigrants on the construction of the brand of their places of origin.

Likewise, the studies regarding mobility, ethnicity and migration in tourism have focused on the role of emigrants as workers (Janta et al., 2011 a and 2011b, Janta, 2011, Joppe, 2012) or on the extent to which ethnic and gender identities influence and are influenced by tourists through the construction of a destination brand (Moufakkir, 2008; 2011; Ypeij, 2012) focusing on locals-tourist relationship but ignoring the emigrants-locals as potential tourist relationship.

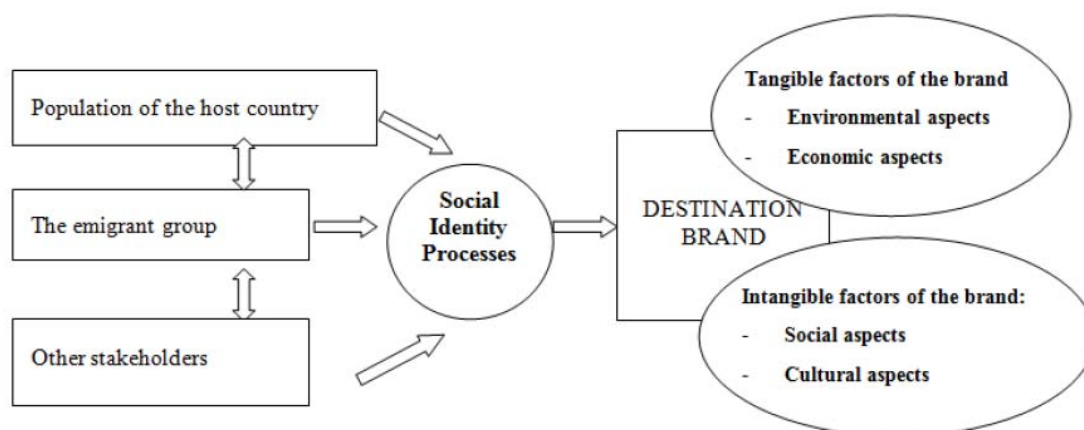
Regarding this topic, some research has already detected the close relationship between emigrants and tourists, because tourism can serve as a previous phase before the permanent residence in a specific region (Haug et al., 2007). Also, emigrants and tourists share common characteristics related with mobility, coexistence, and adaptation to a different context. Finally, not as an argument to justify our proposed line of research but as a necessary consideration for the operationalization of this future research, the heterogeneity of the emigrants as a group should be taken into account. Different groups of emigrants can be distinguished when we consider their specific



group identities. On the one hand, there is the group of emigrants usually from developed countries, who live abroad as permanent tourists and maintain a limited interaction with local population. The places where they live have a well defined identity, which is strongly linked to their countries of origin (as can be seen in their houses, bars, hospitals, shops, etc.), Costa del Sol in the South of Spain might be a good example (Haug et al., 2007). On the other hand, there is the group of emigrants whose motivation to emigrate has been based in economic reasons and to improve their quality of life. In this case, this group is frequently forced to interact with local population, for example, for working reasons, and normally does not have resources enough to build and adapt the places where they live to the characteristics and conditions of their country of origin (Devadason, 2010; Janta, 2011, Janta et al., 2011). However, in these groups of less wealthy emigrants, it is quite frequent also that close ghettos appear. It is important to note here that the most important factor for the construction of the destination brand is not the type of emigrant you are, but the interactions that the emigrant maintains with local population in the hosting country. When a group of emigrants, regardless of their type, chooses to live in a ghetto without regular interactions with local people, their social identity as emigrants from a particular region might be strengthened, but they will influence the construction of a destination brand very slightly because of the limited interaction with people from the out-group. In other words, the brand that they can build of their countries might not be broadly communicated. So, interaction is a crucial element in the destination brand construction by emigrants. As Devadason (2010) clearly stated “this interaction can be explained by other different reasons such as the feeling of belonging to a particular region, the characteristics shared between the country of origin and the hosting country, and the links between them”.

In an attempt to summarise the main aspects that should be considered when analysing the role of the emigrant population in the construction of destination brand, we have included the following figure (Figure 2). The aim is to develop a conceptual model that shows the different elements that should be considered by future research on this topic.

Figure 2. The influence of emigrants on the construction of destination brand



*Source: prepared by the authors*

Figure 2 shows that destination brand is composed of different kinds of elements, both tangible and intangible aspects. Also, social identity processes that arise from the interaction between different destination brand stakeholders might influence the destination branding process. In particular, the salience of emigrants' social identity as a consequence of their interaction with locals in the hosting countries might influence the construction and communication of their country of origin's brand, and its different elements. Moreover, the influence of emigrants on the construction of a destination brand may depend on their interactions with other stakeholders. Also, it would be interesting to compare the destination brand built by emigrant population with the brand constructed by other stakeholders, such as local population of the country of origin (residents in), companies of the tourism sector, or governmental institutions. This comparison is crucial given the relevance of constructing a homogeneous brand, which could be easily perceived and differentiated by potential tourists.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

The main objective of this study was to justify the need for a new line of research with regards to the role of emigrants on the construction of the destination brand of their country of origin. To do so, we conducted a literature review on destination branding and related topics such as migration and ethnicity in tourism. This literature review shows that despite the study of emigrants' identities has attracted considerable amount of research, few studies have focused specifically on the role of emigrants in the construction of their place of origin's destination brands. These studies are basically

interested in analysing the influence of emigration, ethnicity or multicultural phenomena on the construction of destination brand of their hosting countries, cities or neighbourhoods, but not of their countries of origin.

Having identified this gap, this study proposes a conceptual model to understand the role of emigrant population in the construction of their places of origin's destination brand. In this model, we suggest that social identity processes may affect the way emigrants communicate to locals a brand about their places of origin, contributing therefore to the construction of the brand of their countries. This destination brand could incorporate both, tangible aspects (like information about the environment, the economic situation, etc.), and intangible aspects (such as cultural and social characteristics of their countries). In addition, we suggest the degree of the influence of emigrants on the construction of this destination brand will depend on their interactions with local population, because if they live apart, maintaining scarce or weak relationships with local people, their messages about their country will not have any impact. The frequency and strength of these interactions might be influenced by the economic situation of the emigrant population or their previous link with the hosting country (for example, cultural proximity, geographical proximity, degree of mutual knowledge, etc.).

In sum, developing a strong and consistent destination brand is crucial for tourism management and should be a matter of concern for government agencies and DMOs trying to promote the tourism of their countries. This explains the necessity to explore what the contents of the brand build by emigrants are, with the purpose of aligning the messages of different stakeholders about the brand of a particular tourist destination. In this sense, understanding the brand elements communicated by emigrants may be useful in building a strong and consistent destination brand. In addition, governmental institutions should take into account and consider the contribution of emigrant population, who can act as ambassadors of their countries, representing their countries abroad, and might be considered as a valuable asset to promote them.

Therefore, it would be interesting to initiate the proposed line of research by choosing a specific group of emigrants in a hosting country to analyse: Firstly, whether the socio-demographic characteristics of the emigrants (gender, age, educational and professional

background) have an influence on the communicated destination brand elements. Secondly, to identify what are the elements of the destination brand related to their identity and what is really the brand that they build. Finally, to examine the tacit or explicit nature of the place branding elements, and the processes that could be used to make them more explicit.

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## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THE ROLE OF MOROCCAN EMIGRANTS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF MOROCCO BRAND: A PILOT QUALITATIVE APPROACH**



## 1. Introduction

In this second chapter titled “The role of Moroccan Emigrants in the Construction of Morocco Brand: A Pilot Qualitative Research”, the objective is to begin the exploration of the role played by Moroccan emigrants in the construction of their country of origin’s brand. To do so, we aim to determine, on the one hand, the key aspects of this role played by Moroccan emigrants, specifically those living in Spain, and, on the other hand, to reflect their perspectives on the Moroccan government’s brand management through the use of its official websites.

In this chapter, we will present the paper titled *Building the “Morocco” Brand as a Tourist Destination: The Role of Emigrants and Institutional Websites*, which was centred in the two objectives stated above. This paper was published in the *Journal of Urban Regeneration and Renewal*, Vol. 6, No. 3, pp 252-264. It was also presented at two conferences: the 4th ITW Conference about 'Destination Management and Branding in the Mediterranean Region: Sustainable Tourism in Times of Crisis', held in Antalya (Turkey) in 2012; and the First Congress on Leisure and Tourism OCITUR 2012, held in Mataró (Spain) in 2012.

This chapter is divided into three different parts. Before the presentation of the paper mentioned above, we will provide a brief overview of tourism and migration in Morocco, two relevant aspects that mean a significant source of income for the national economy of this country. Therefore, first of all, we will describe some relevant facts about Morocco, just to present the main aspects of the tourism policy of the Moroccan government, especially focused on “Vision 2020”, which is the last Moroccan plan to promote tourism as a key for socio-economic development of this country. Second, we will discuss the use of official websites to promote tourist destinations. We have not found any academic paper on this specific topic for the case of Morocco, but it is something that we tried to explore in our research about the construction of the Morocco brand as a tourist destination, so we include a brief literature review on the role of websites for destination brands. Third, we will describe some important facts about Moroccan migration, especially in Europe. In these three sections, we will try to

contextualise the three topics of the paper presented in this chapter: tourism, websites and migration.

## **2. Tourism in Morocco: Contextual setting**

The Kingdom of Morocco is located in the northwest of Africa. It is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the west, the Mediterranean Sea to the north, Algeria to the east and southeast, and the Sahara Desert to the south. It is separated from Europe by the Strait of Gibraltar, which means that it is just some few kilometres away, approximately 2.5 hours by plane from the main European capitals. Its area reaches 710,850 square kilometres and its population is approximately 33,270,772 million, according to the Moroccan Commission of Higher Planning (2014).

Morocco's capital city, Rabat, is located in the northwest of the country overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. Other major cities are Casablanca on the Atlantic Ocean, Marrakech (the business capital) in the centre, and Tangier in the north, on the Strait of Gibraltar. The official language remains Arabic. However, the Amazighe stands also as an official language and as a common heritage to all Moroccans. French is still widely spoken and used as the business language, especially in central and southern Morocco. Due to its proximity to Spain, Spanish is also widely spoken, particularly in the north.

Morocco is endowed with a diverse cultural heritage, resulting from the mix of traditions and customs from the different civilizations that have passed through the country: Amazigh, Carthaginian, Roman, Arab-Muslim, Hassani, Jewish, Andalusian, Mediterranean and African, amongst others. In addition, each region has its own peculiarities, which enrich the whole Moroccan cultural identity.

Geographically, Morocco is characterized by a varied environment, a coastline of 1,835 kilometres, a rugged mountainous interior, and large portions of desert. Atlas and Rif mountains expand from east to west, to disappear in the sand at the south border with Mauritania. The landscapes of the country are also varied, with dense forests on the central plateau, fertile plains on the Meseta, arid lands in the high plateau, luxurious oases in the Souss basin, the Sahara's sand dunes, and a variety of rivers and lakes.

The dominating weather in Morocco is the Mediterranean climate, moderated in the west and the north by the Atlantic Ocean. Inside the country, the weather is more continental with significant differences of temperature. The Atlas area is very humid with frequent snow falls and, in the south, there is a desert climate.

All this richness in landscape and culture helps Morocco to create a very complete product which suits different types of visitors' preferences. In fact, tourism is considered one of the most important economic activities of Morocco. The Mediterranean region, to which Morocco belongs, is considered one of the most famous tourist destinations in the world. According to the World Tourism Organisation, this region received, in 2011, 31% of international arrivals and 26% of the global receipts of tourism worldwide. Morocco, as part of the 29 destinations of the Mediterranean area, provides a good example of an emergent country which has embraced tourism as an important tool for its socio-economic development. Tourism in Morocco has a diverse and positive impact in the national economy, it contributes to its growth in several positive ways; for example, it is the top activity for the foreign exchange earner, the second contributor to GDP after agriculture, and the second creator of employment in the country (Boujerf, 2005).

To better illustrate the impact of tourism in the Moroccan economy, we provide Table II with some data collected by the World Travel and Tourism Council (2012). This table highlights the contributions of tourism activity on GDP, employment, investments during 2011 and 2012 and their estimation of growth in the next 10 years.

Table II. Economic data of tourism in Morocco

| <b>Morocco</b>                                 | <b>2011<br/>MADbn<sub>1</sub></b> | <b>2011<br/>%</b> | <b>2012<br/>Growth<sub>2</sub></b> | <b>2022<br/>MADbn</b> | <b>2022<br/>%</b> | <b>2022<br/>Growth<sub>3</sub></b> |
|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| Direct contribution to GDP                     | 71.8                              | 8.9               | 8.3                                | 133.4                 | 10.1              | 5.5                                |
| Total contribution to GDP                      | 152.5                             | 19.0              | 7.7                                | 281.4                 | 21.2              | 5.5                                |
| Direct contribution to employment <sub>4</sub> | 834                               | 7.8               | 6.6                                | 1,166                 | 9.0               | 2.8                                |
| Total contribution to employment <sub>4</sub>  | 1,798                             | 16.9              | 5.9                                | 2,472                 | 19.2              | 2.6                                |
| Visitor exports                                | 72.3                              | 25.6              | 10.5                               | 142.5                 | 23.8              | 6.0                                |
| Domestic spending                              | 30.3                              | 3.8               | 3.7                                | 48.9                  | 3.7               | 4.5                                |
| Leisure spending                               | 90.2                              | 11.2              | 9.0                                | 171.0                 | 12.9              | 5.7                                |

|                    |      |      |     |      |      |     |
|--------------------|------|------|-----|------|------|-----|
| Business spending  | 13.0 | 1.6  | 5.4 | 21.5 | 1.6  | 4.6 |
| Capital investment | 25.2 | 10.2 | 9.6 | 49.8 | 12.3 | 6.1 |

MAD Moroccan Dirham

- 1 Constant prices & exchange rates
  - 2 Real growth adjusted for inflation (%)
  - 3 Annualised real growth adjusted for inflation (%)
  - 4 Thousands Jobs
- Source: World Travel and Tourism Council (2012)

From Table II, it can be observed the positive contribution of tourism activities to the national GDP, as well as to employment creation. Besides, these two elements are growing and their estimations for future years show the same tendency of growth.

Regarding the historical context of tourism in Morocco, this activity starts during the French and Spanish protectorate (1912-1956). The main objective at the time was to cover the European community's needs of vacation and leisure (Boujerf, 2005). After the independence in 1956, the Moroccan government started a process in which the recognition of tourism as a key strategic sector for the economic development of Morocco was getting stronger. According to Hillali (2005), the main reasons for these decisions were, first of all, because Morocco is not a petroleum exporting country; secondly, because the country received important recommendations from international experts in the tourism sector to establish tourism as one of the key activities for the national economy; and thirdly, because Morocco has always enjoyed a good reputation among European countries as a tourist destination. All this impetus encouraged Morocco to consider tourism as a key driver for its economic growth.

All these arguments explain that the tourism activity has been present in practically all the national programs of development, from the fifties until the nineties. The following table (Table III) shows the budget and expenses devoted to the different national development programs of this period.

Table III. Programs for tourism development from 1949 to 1999

| <b>Plans and programs for tourism development</b> | <b>Period</b> | <b>Share of total budget</b> | <b>Expenses of the private sector</b> |
|---|---------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Equipment program                                 | 1949-1952     | 1.24%                        | 93,0%                                 |
| Equipment program                                 | 1954-1957     | 0.23%                        | 93,0%                                 |
| Program's equipment                               | 1958-1959     | 22.0%                        | 93,0%                                 |
| Five years program                                | 1960-1964     | 1.40%                        | 92,0%                                 |
| Triennial Plan                                    | 1965-1967     | 6.40%                        | 20.0%                                 |
| Five years plan                                   | 1968-1972     | 6.80%                        | 18.0%                                 |
| Five years plan                                   | 1973-1977     | 6.50%                        | 16.0%                                 |
| Triennial plan                                    | 1978-1980     | 3.40%                        | 90.6%                                 |
| Five years plan                                   | 1981-1985     | 1.80%                        | 90.0%                                 |
| Five years plan                                   | 1988-1992     | 1.20%                        | 94,0%                                 |
| White period                                      | 1993-1999     | 1.20%                        | 96.0%                                 |

Source: Hillali (2005)

Table III underlines that, during the last decades, tourism activity has been a strategic sector for the Moroccan economy. The portion of tourism in the budget of the different national plans has been always relevant, especially during the sixties and seventies. Also, the responsibility of managing this tourism budget has been shared between public and private sectors (Hillali, 2005). In fact, Boujerf (2005) reported four roles exercised by the Moroccan government related to tourism management: promoting tourism projects, supervising them, managing areas for tourism-implementation and encouraging the private sector to invest in tourism by providing facilities.

Despite the relevance of tourism for the Moroccan government, between 1993 and 1999, during the “White period”, Morocco took time for reflection towards a new vision of tourism. After this, tourism became a national priority for the country specifically with a program called “Vision 2010” or “Plan Azur” that intended, as the main objective, to receive 10 million tourists by the end of 2010. That objective was almost achieved by the reception of 9.3 million tourists in 2010. Based on the success of this program, the government continued along the same line with another program called



“Vision 2020” or “Azur 2020”. The relevance and ambitious objectives of this program deserve a more detailed analysis.

The main goal of this program is to raise Morocco among the world's top 20 tourist destinations in 2020, while establishing itself as a reference destination for sustainable development in the Mediterranean region. To do so, the five basic principles of this program are to:

1. continue with the development of the achievements of the previous program Vision 2010
2. move forward to a more integrated form of territorial improvement;
3. emphasise the great variety of resources of Morocco trying to respond to the demands of the most promising markets, and attracting them;
4. remedy the industry's persistent structural weaknesses by offering high quality products and infrastructures;
5. provide sustainable development and more value to natural and cultural resources, and include local community in socio-economic processes.

Finally, the general purpose is to build a spirit of co-operation that gets the involvement of all the relevant organisations in tourism from different levels (private and public, national and local).

Also, it is necessary to highlight the relevance of sustainability, which is presented by the program with an innovative approach, based on a new generation of touristic products, long-term ecosystem management and local people's participation in the development and the benefits of tourism. Sustainability could be considered as a primordial dimension that could be resumed in the following points as the program declares:

1. efficiency in the use of the water and energy
2. authenticity of the tourism experience, trying to enhance tourist satisfaction
3. participation of tourism in promoting tangible and intangible heritage at a local and national level
4. engagement of stakeholders in sustainable approaches and social responsibility

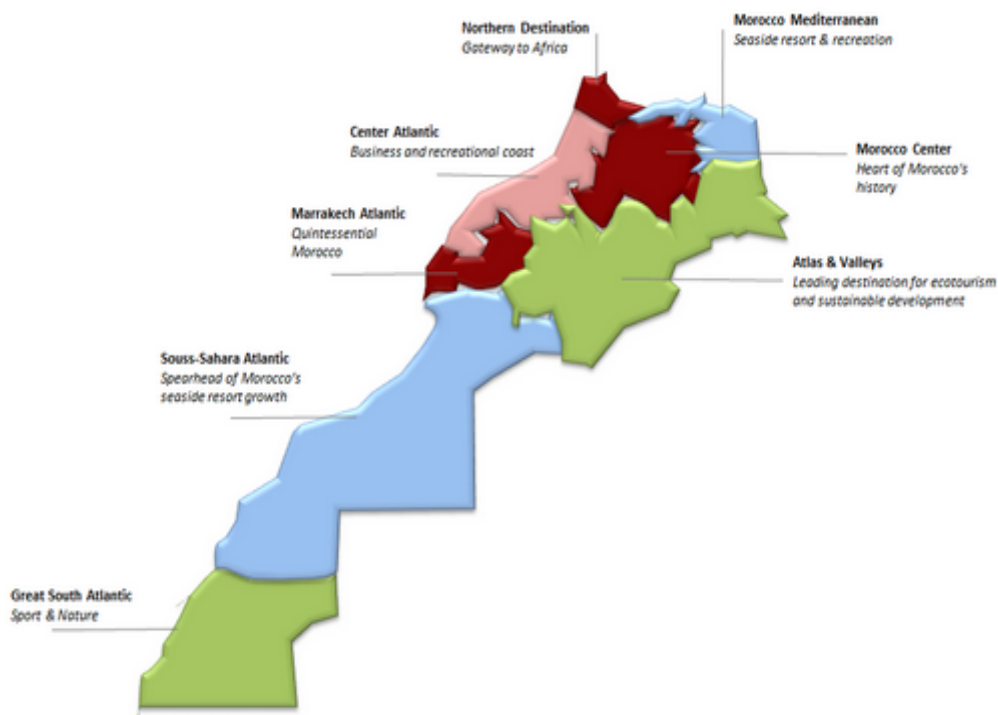
## 5. contribution of tourism in the local economy and employment development

In regards to the description of the touristic product offered by Morocco, the program states that the offer is diverse and that eight different clusters could be highlighted: the Northern Cape, Mediterranean Morocco, Central Atlantic, the Centre of Morocco, Atlas and the Valleys, Marrakech and the Atlantic, Souss-Sahara-Atlantic, and the Great Southern Atlantic Coast. Each of tourist products offered by these regions are inspired from the resources and specificities of the places as follows:

1. enhancement of **cultural** offers
2. continuous offensive positioning on **seaside**
3. creation of a **nature** offer
4. establishment of **thematic corridors**
5. structure of an effective **entertainment** offer

The following Figure (Figure III) illustrates the eight destinations and the principal lines of tourism development:

Figure III. Destinations and lines of tourist development



Source: The Moroccan Agency for Tourism Development  
<http://www.smit.gov.ma/en/morocco/strategic-action-framework>

We conclude the illustration of the relevance of tourism in Morocco with a short declaration that the Moroccan Minister of tourism provided on March 2014. He pointed out that, in 2013, this country received 10.05 million tourists, which is 7.2% higher in comparison to 2012. In 2013, Morocco earned 58 milliards of Dirhams in foreign exchange revenue, which represents an increment of 2% in comparison to 2012. This evolution of some important data related to tourism, including the previsions for 2020, can be also seen in Figure IV.

Figure IV. Evolution of economic data related to tourism



Source: Moroccan Agency for Tourism Development

All these actual achievements (shown in Figure IV) demonstrate that tourism activity in Morocco is starting to be solid, despite the actual financial crisis and the troubles in the Arabic world. At the same time, it can be observed that the Moroccan tourism policy tries to integrate and take advantage of all natural and cultural resources, including all the national territory in this process, applying a sustainable vision and the engagement of all the stakeholders, including local populations.

However, tourism only grows if the perception and satisfaction of tourists in a certain destination are favourable. Besides, a look into the causes of satisfaction or dissatisfaction of tourists provides better knowledge of the functioning of this economic activity, its characteristics, and the ways to improve it. In the case of Morocco, the Moroccan government recently started to evaluate the tourists' perceptions and expectations about Morocco as a tourist destination. On June 2012, the Moroccan

Tourism Observatory published a study titled *The Monitoring Tourist Satisfaction, Annual Barometer 2013*. This study evaluated the opinion of 50,000 international tourists from Britain, France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Belgium, and the USA. The Moroccan community living abroad was also included in this research. The principal goal of this study was to evaluate the satisfaction of tourists who visited Morocco, examining, firstly, their global satisfaction and, secondly, their satisfaction considering the details of their visit.

A brief summary of the results of this study shows that, in terms of global appreciation, 70% of tourists were very satisfied. By nationality, British tourists were the most satisfied, followed by the Spanish and French, and the least satisfied were the Italian tourists. Regarding the cities, three Moroccan cities obtained the highest scores. The first one was Marrakech, followed by Rabat and Agadir. Results on the details of the visits showed that the aspects tourist most appreciated were gastronomy, security and contact with local people, whilst the urban transportation and the public infrastructures were the least valued elements. This study also indicated some recommendations made by tourists and their intention of returning. The results were that 74% of tourists highly recommended Morocco as a tourist destination and 87% showed interest in coming back.

### **3. The role of official websites in tourism**

Another interesting topic related to tourism is the government's promotion of this activity through the use of new information and communication technologies (ICT), especially through the use of the Internet. Nowadays, the Internet and, more specifically, websites have become useful instruments for providing information and promoting destinations. This tool has transformed the tourism sector and consumer behaviour (Govers and Go, 2004). It has changed tourists' decisions and their election of destinations. An efficient tourism website allows a destination to gain notoriety and a better position among similar ones (Park and Gretzel, 2007).

As we said in the introduction of this chapter, to our knowledge, there is not an exhaustive amount of research on the efficiency of official tourism websites of Morocco. However, there are some studies that analyse, in general terms, the role of

websites for destination brands. Since the nineties, the concept of tourism and hospitality websites became a hot topic of study for practitioners and academics (Park and Gretzel, 2007). In this sense, Law et al. (2010) conducted a study where they analysed 75 relevant papers about tourism websites, considering all e-tourism activities, such as destination websites, travel websites, airlines and hotels websites in different regions of the world. From the 75 articles analysed by these authors, 17 evaluate official tourist destination websites, including countries and cities, as well as urban and rural areas. In Table IV, we provide a brief overview of these tourism website studies and their relationship with destination brands.

Table IV. Tourism website studies

| <b>Authors /years</b>    | <b>Target sample</b>         | <b>Website</b>                        | <b>Region</b>                             | <b>Methodology</b>          | <b>Focus of analysis</b>   |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|--|
| Murphy et al., (1996)    | Researchers                  | Destination management website        | US  | Qualitative<br>Quantitative | Web content analysis from the supplier perspectives  |
| Jung and Baker (1998)    | Researchers<br>Practitioners | National Tourism Organization website | Worldwide                                 | Qualitative<br>Quantitative | Users' views of using the Internet for national tourism and the importance of website design                                     |
| Frew (1999)              | Researchers                  | Destination management website        | Austria<br>England<br>Ireland<br>Scotland | Qualitative<br>Quantitative | Counting the appearances and rating the importance of the destination management systems and their implantation characteristics. |
| Tierney (2000)           | Consumers                    | Destination Management website        | US  | Quantitative                | Using online survey to study the consumer's perspective when carrying out an e-search  |
| Buhalis and Spada (2000) | Researchers                  | Qualitative                           | Worldwide                                 | Qualitative<br>Quantitative | Adopting an integrated perspective to analyse the needs and desires of different stakeholders                                    |

|                               |                 |                             |              |                             |  |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|--|
|                               |                 |                             |              |                             |  |
| Benckendorff and Black (2000) | Practitioners   | Rural destination website   | Australia    | Qualitative<br>Quantitative | Content analysis   |
| Oertel et al., (2001)         | Researchers     | Destinations web management | Europe       | Quantitative                | External benchmarking with other tourist destinations  |
| Wober (2003)                  | Laboratory test | Destinations web management | Europe       | Quantitative                | Web content and web usage mining using an automated website analytical tool                                  |
| Feng et al. (2003)            | Laboratory test | Destinations web management | China and US | Quantitative                | Benchmarking process to identify a set of critical success factors to help the evaluation of a hotel website |
| Aaberge et al. (2004)         | Laboratory test | Destinations web management | Norway       | Qualitative                 | Benchmarking process   |
| Kaplanidou and Vogt (2004)    | Consumers       | Destinations web management | US           | Quantitative                | Detect consumers' perception on website importance and performance   |

|                                |                 |                             |   |              |  |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|---|--------------|--|
| Douglas and Mills (2004)       | Laboratory test | Destinations web management | Caribbean   | Quantitative | Benchmarking approach                                |
| Zhou and DeSantis (2005)       | Researcher      | City tourism website        | North America, Europe, Asia, Australia and Africa | Quantitative | Content analysis and user behavioural approach       |
| Mich et al. (2005)             | Researcher      | Rural destination website   | Worldwide   | Qualitative  | Content analysis based on users perspective          |
| Beldona and Cai (2006)         | Laboratory test | Rural destination website   | US  | Quantitative | Content analysis                                     |
| Stockdale and Borovicka (2007) | Laboratory test | Rural destination website   | Austria   | Quantitative | Website evaluation based on users' judgment          |
| Park and Gretzel (2007)        | Researchers     | Destinations web management | Worldwide   | Qualitative  | Categorisation of review studies using meta analysis |



|                               |  |                                   |             |              |   |
|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-------------|--------------|---|
| Bauerfeind and Mitsche (2008) | Researchers                                    | Destinations<br>web<br>management | Researchers | Quantitative | Benchmarking approach   |
| Qi et al. (2008)              | Researchers<br>Consumers<br>Laboratory<br>Test | Destinations<br>web<br>management | China       | Quantitative | Numerical calculation process based on consumers and professionals' evaluations results |

Source: Adapted from Law et al. (2010)

As we can observe from Table IV, the majority of these studies examine the visual characteristics of destination websites, exploring the technique aspects and comparing the effectiveness of a destination website applying benchmarking methods. In the majority of the studies, the target is not only researchers, but also practitioners, exploring their opinions about official websites. Only one academic paper was devoted to explore consumers' perceptions.

Regarding the local population and their interaction with official websites, we identified some relevant studies, which take into account local people's perceptions of their countries' brand, as tourist destinations. Some examples are the study elaborated by Campelo et al. (2009) of New Zealand in which they analysed the perception of New Zealanders on the new promotional video of their country. We also highlight the work of Ooi and Pedersen (2010) who showed the effort made by all the stakeholders to change the old negative brand of Copenhagen, and construct a new brand with website support, which reflects mainly the cultural resources of the area. Northover (2010) also examined the brand of the city of Belfast, in Ireland, frequently linked to terrorist actions. The official stakeholders include the opinions of the local community in the new rebranding strategy of this city. All of these studies stress the relevance of taking into account the opinion of the local community for brand management and they recommend applying a bottom up approach in destination brand management. The inclusion of the local people's opinions in the brand management process could lead to efficient communication about the territory and also reinforce their sense of belonging. These advantages encourage us to explore the perception local people, specifically Moroccan people living abroad, have about the official tourism websites of Morocco.

#### **4. Moroccan migration**

The third section of this chapter is centred on Moroccan migration, just to contextualise its relevance for this country.

Migration is not a new phenomenon; it is a part of human history as people have always had the tendency to move from one place to another (Alonso, 2011). There are many reasons behind these movements, which can be internal, within the same country, or external, also called international, when migrants move from one country to another

(Alonso, 2011). Some people are forced to leave their territory, whilst other people make these decisions by choice (Wood, 1994).

Moreover, despite the extensive barriers for reducing international migration, in fact, it is increasing, as this element is still vital for countries' development. According to the United Nations's Report on trends in international migration stock (2013), the number of international migrants in the world went beyond 231 million in 2013. From 1999, the number of international migrants increased by 53 million in the global north, while in the global south this number has increased by 24 million. In order to better understand this increase and the main distribution of migrants by continents, we provide the following Table (Table V), which reflects this evolution from 1990 until 2013 in different regions of the world.

Table V. Number of migrants by regions (Millions)

| <b>Regions</b>                  | <b>1990</b> | <b>2000</b> | <b>2010</b> | <b>2013</b> |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| World                           | 154.2       | 174.5       | 220.7       | 231.5       |
| Developed regions               | 82.3        | 103.4       | 129.7       | 135.6       |
| Developing regions              | 71.9        | 71.1        | 91          | 95.9        |
| Africa                          | 15.6        | 15.6        | 17.1        | 18.6        |
| Asia                            | 49.9        | 50.4        | 67.8        | 70.8        |
| Europe                          | 49          | 56.2        | 69.2        | 72.4        |
| Latin America and the Caribbean | 7.1         | 6.5         | 8.1         | 8.5         |
| Northern America                | 27.8        | 40.4        | 51.2        | 53.1        |
| Oceania                         | 4.7         | 5.4         | 7.3         | 7.9         |

Source United Nations (2013), Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2013 Revision

From Table V, we can observe that the international migration tendency is in constant increase. Both the developed and developing countries are receiving more migrants over time because of the social and economic opportunities they offer to the actual and potential migrants. We can also observe the increase of international migration to countries, classified as southern emergent countries; they turned out to be host countries because of the new job opportunities they offer to migrants. This is the case for many

countries in Latin-America and some other countries that become host countries after being considered places of transit. Morocco could be an example, with sub-Saharan migrants who want to go to Europe. Despite this increase and the enormous number of international migrants in the world, there are only ten countries in the world, as Table VI shows, where international migrants actually reside. This phenomenon could be justified by the socio-economic attractiveness of these host countries that actually means there is good reason to stay for a long time, even generating second and more generations of migrants.

Table VI. Migrants living (Millions)

| <b>Countries</b>     | <b>Total of international 2013</b> |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| United States        | 45.8                               |
| Russian Federation   | 11                                 |
| Germany              | 9.8                                |
| Saudi Arabia         | 9.1                                |
| United Arab Emirates | 7.8                                |
| United Kingdom       | 7.8                                |
| France               | 7.8                                |
| Canada               | 7.5                                |
| Australia            | 7.3                                |
| Spain                | 6.5                                |

Source: Source United Nations (2013), Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2013 Revision

But what can be understood by “migration”? Migration has become a hot topic in different fields of research; it can be studied from different points of view and in different contexts. This explains the lack of consensus and the difficulties to generalise and develop an exact definition of migration and a concrete theory that explains it. In fact, there are many reasons that justify these difficulties. Firstly, it is necessary to highlight the complexity of the phenomenon; secondly, it is important not to forget the variety of relationships between migration and different socio-economic issues; and, finally, the impact of migration at different levels is also relevant, both in the countries of origin as well as in the host countries. Despite these difficulties, there are some

widely recognised definitions of migration. For example, Shaw (1975) describes the concept of migration as a relatively permanent movement of people over a significant distance, on the one hand, and the movement of a person or a group of people, either across an international border, or within a single nation. Therefore, migration can be understood as a movement of population, encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes. Thus, it includes migration of refugees, displaced people, economic migrants, and people moving for other purposes, including family reunification. Some similarities can be observed with the definition provided by Kok (1999, p. 12), who conceptualises migration as “the crossing of a spatial boundary by one or more people involving a change of residence”. From this author’s point of view, three components must be included in the definition of migration: spatial boundaries, change of residence, and time.

The same way that there are different approaches to the concept of migration, there is not a universally accepted definition for "migrant" at an international level. The term migrant was usually understood to cover all cases where the decision to migrate was made, including reasons of personal convenience, and also situations in which an external compelling factor intervened. It is, therefore, applied to people and family members, moving to another country or region to improve their material or social conditions and the prospects for themselves or their family.

Attempting to clarify the terminology related to migration, we provide the following table (Table VII), which includes a glossary of the main migration topics.

Table VII. Glossary of the main topics related to migration

| <b>Topics</b>    | <b>Meaning</b>   |
|------------------|--|
| <b>Migration</b> | The movement of a person or a group of people, either across an international border, or within a State. It is a population movement, encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes; it includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, economic migrants, and persons moving for other purposes, including family reunification |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Immigration</b>                          | A process by which non-nationals move into a country for the purpose of settlement   |
| <b>Migrant</b>                              | The United Nations defines the migrant as an individual who has resided in a foreign country for more than one year, regardless of the causes, voluntary or involuntary, and the means, regular or irregular, used to migrate. Under such a definition, those travelling for shorter periods, as tourists and business people, would not be considered migrants          |
| <b>Expatriate</b>                           | A person who lives outside his or her native country. This term is often used in the context of professionals or skilled workers sent abroad by their companies  |
| <b>Country of origin or sending country</b> | The country that is a source of migratory flows (regular or irregular)   |
| <b>Receiving country</b>                    | Country of destination or a third country. In the case of return or repatriation, also the country of origin. Country that receives migrants or refugees   |
| <b>Remittances</b>                          | Money earned or acquired by non-nationals that are transferred back to their country of origin   |
| <b>Diasporas</b>                            | Individuals, members, networks, associations and/or communities, who have left their country of origin, but maintain relationships with their homeland. This concept covers more settled expatriate communities, migrant workers based abroad temporarily, expatriates with the nationality of the host country, dual nationals, and second/third-generation of migrants |
| <b>International migration</b>              | Movement of people who leave their country of origin, or the country of habitual residence, to establish themselves either permanently or temporarily in another country, an international frontier is therefore crossed   |

Source: International Organization of Migration (IOM)

The analyses of the main reasons that drive people to change their country of residence, and the consequences of migration on the territories, have been hot topics in this research field, which has concluded that there are various reasons behind migration. Some people are forced to leave their country as a result of poverty, unemployment, low incomes, armed conflicts or natural disasters; other people make this decision voluntarily, they aspire to improve their economic, academic or social conditions in the host place (Castles, 2010). Academics normally categorise the motivations to leave the country of origin into two different categories, called push and pull factors (Parkins, 2010). The push factors are related generally to the hard reality of the place of origin, while the pull factors emerge from the positive aspects of the host destination.

In addition, as we established before, migration goes beyond the movement from one place to another, this phenomenon exerts impacts on human behaviour and their decisions, and also generates socio-cultural impacts in the sending and receiving countries.

The measurement of the impacts of migration is still a very hard task, despite the fact that it has been discussed from different points of view, and through different methodological approaches (Dustman and Giltz, 2005).

Scholars classify those impacts in positive and negative ways, depending on the benefits and disadvantages associated to them. The benefits are linked with the remittances sent by migrants to their countries of origin, whereas the disadvantages are normally related to the unqualified jobs and lower salaries in comparison with national citizens, or the cultural differences that can, in some way, damage migrants in the host countries. Sorensen (2004) divides these impacts of migration into three groups:

1. the impacts on the host countries because migrants supply labour force demanded by them;
2. the impacts on the migrant population and their families through the potential improvement of incomes and the better possibilities of livelihood in host countries, but also the disadvantages of living abroad;
3. the impacts on the sending countries due to the inflows of financial and human capital.

In the specific case of Morocco, this country can be conceived as a migration sending country, which maintains strong links with Europe, as the most important host region for its migrant movements (Sorensen 2004). It can be explained by geographical and historical reasons. An historical analysis determines that the earliest Moroccan movements to Europe started with the Franco-Spanish protectorate (1912-1956) (Sorensen 2004). During this time, colonial authorities sent the Moroccan community to work in the French industry or to become soldiers in the Spanish Civil War. Nevertheless, the real important mobility towards the European continent started in the 60s, mainly as labour migration, by sending guest workers towards some specific destinations, like France, Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands. Later on, this migration changed towards Spain and Italy, when some European countries began to apply more restricted policies to close their borders.

Khashani (1998) declared that Moroccan migration to Europe is changing in terms of nature, time and size. He classified this migration into five categories.

1. Individual male migration: This movement started in the sixties and had a big increase between 1973 and the middle of the 1980s.
2. Family reunion: Normally, when wives and children joined their husbands or fathers in host destinations.
3. Individual female migration: This phenomenon started in the 1980s and it was addressed towards some particular destinations like Italy, Spain, Gulf countries and Libya. It was a choice of women (single or divorced) who wanted to improve their economic level.
4. Seasonal migration: This type includes men and women who moved to work for a short time in some countries of Europe, for example, agricultural sector in Spain or tourism in France.
5. Irregular migration: This kind of migration began in the 1990s with the Schengen agreement and the Maastricht treaty, which established more strict access to work in the European countries.

In general terms, Moroccan migration can be considered as a voluntary decision. The main pull and push factors that invite Moroccan residents to migrate to other countries are, for the most part, the economic and social advantages that exist in the



host countries and the lack of labour opportunities in their country of origin. In this sense, Khachani (2002) classifies these reasons into three categories.

- **Economic factors:** These elements have a clear relationship with the high differences in salaries and GDP per capita between the European countries and Morocco, on the one hand, and the elevated rate of unemployment between young people in Morocco, on the other.
- **Attractive factors:** Some of the more relevant factors of this type can be the positive image of the host country transmitted by emigrants, the perfect image seen in mass media by potential migrants, and the geographical proximity to Europe, which act as the main reasons that invite Moroccan people to leave their country.
- **Call factors:** Some of the most common factors of this type are the high numbers of non-qualified positions offered in the host countries that locals in those countries usually reject, as well as the possibility of getting labour permission or permanent cards for residence in some European countries.

The Moroccan government considers migration as a relevant source of income and a tool for the social and economic development of the country. This explains the multiple agreements signed by the Moroccan government, trying to facilitate these movements for its nationals. Table VIII shows the first conventions signed by Morocco and some of the main European countries, indicating the long tradition of these policies in the case of Morocco.

Table VIII. Labour and Social security Conventions signed between Morocco and European Countries

| <b>European Countries</b> | <b>European Convention<br/>labour</b> | <b>European Convention of<br/>social security</b> |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| France                    | 1 June 1963                           | 9 July 1965                                       |
| Belgium                   | 17 February 1963                      | 24 June 1968                                      |
| The Netherlands           | 14 May 1969                           | 14 February 1972                                  |

Source: Khachani (2002)

With almost 3.5 million Moroccans living abroad (see Table IX), this community generates an impact in their host countries, as well as in Morocco. The most significant impact for Morocco is related to the financial remittances. According to Bentour (2014), Morocco in 2006 ranked in the top ten receiving countries in terms of remittances, which represent 5% to 9% of the national GDP, as well as other external resources, for example, tourism and foreign direct investments.

Table IX. Moroccan migrants over the world

| <b>Host Countries</b>               | <b>Number of Moroccan migrants 2013</b> |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| France                              | 1,146,652                               |
| Spain                               | 671,669                                 |
| Italy                               | 486,558                                 |
| Belgium                             | 297,919                                 |
| The Netherlands                     | 264,909                                 |
| Germany                             | 125,954                                 |
| Libya                               | 69,276                                  |
| Canada                              | 53,707                                  |
| Algeria                             | 45,451                                  |
| Saudi Arabia                        | 35,724                                  |
| United States                       | 33,047                                  |
| Tunisia                             | 30,635                                  |
| United kingdom                      | 26,191                                  |
| Switzerland                         | 8,590                                   |
| Sweden                              | 7,542                                   |
| Denmark                             | 6,369                                   |
| United Arab Emirates                | 15,915                                  |
| Sub-Saharan Africa and South Africa | 9,366                                   |
| Asia and Oceania                    | 9,366                                   |
| Other Arab countries                | 17,420                                  |
| Other European countries            | 16,066                                  |

Source: Moroccan Ministry of Community living Abroad (2012)

The remittances sent by Moroccans living abroad flow to the country of origin through official and non-official channels, such as families and banks. In order to regulate this financial source, the Moroccan government has established many national banks in Europe, as well as specific sections in the local banks in Morocco, which have the role to advise this community in terms of their investments and transfers. Regarding time, the remittances are usually sent on special occasions, for example, Ramadan and religious celebrations, as a reference of solidarity between families.

The remittances inflow often generates positive consequences in developing countries. In the case of Morocco, Bentour (2014) underlines the contribution of remittances in financial development, emphasising its role to reduce the negative effect of the trade deficit caused by energy and food imports. De Haas (2008) and Khachani (2009) also point out the positive remittances' impacts in some particular regions of Morocco, such as the Rif region in the north, and the Souss valley in the south. These regions are well known for their high tradition of migration and the strong solidarity between families. In these regions, the socio-economic impacts of the remittances have positively affected some economic sectors, especially construction and agriculture. Similarly, Khachani (2009) identified the change in the investments made by emigrants in recent years, particularly in Moroccan second generation migrants who are introducing new techniques in the agriculture sector or new projects in tourism and commerce, for example.

Regarding the Moroccan policy of migrations, it is important to point out that the Moroccan community living abroad has a special consideration within the country. Since 1990, the government has started to establish institutions or organisations which look out for the interest of Moroccan emigrants living abroad. The next Table (Table X) summarises some of the most relevant institutions and their mission.

Table X. Organisations for the Moroccan emigrants living abroad

| <b>Organisations</b>                      | <b>Mission</b>   |
|---|--|
| Ministry of the Moroccan Community Abroad | Defend the interest and rights of emigrants in their country of residence<br>Establishment of cultural centres in host countries |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Council of the Moroccan Community Abroad            | Protection of rights, interest and priorities of Moroccans living abroad<br>Organisation of national and cultural events  |
| Council of the Moroccan Community living Abroad     | Identification and analysis of emigrants' problems derived from emigration  |
| Moroccan Council of Ulemas for Europe               | Provide dialogue and peace between all religions and beliefs<br>Offer training to Imams in European countries<br>Send religious guides during Ramadan   |
| Observatory of the Moroccan Community living Abroad | Collect and disseminate information on Moroccans abroad   |
| Hassan II Foundation                                | Manage administrative and legal tasks of the Moroccans living abroad<br>Enhance the cultural influence in the host country<br>Expand cultural and educational activities to second and third generations of emigrants |
| Mohamed V Foundation                                | Deal with summer return of Moroccan migrants<br>Facilitate the operation of transit from the port of entry to their final destination   |

Source: Bilgili and Weyel (2012)

Taking into account the special considerations given to the Moroccan community abroad, we conclude this section with King Hassan II's speech (1976) during his visit to France as a good example of the relevance and consideration of migration for Morocco: "Remain Moroccan so that your country can, in time, count on its sons everywhere they find themselves. You must give a good example and continue to fulfill the role of ambassadors of your country" (Collinson, 1996, p. 23).

After these sections on tourism and migration, it seems clear that both aspects play a significant role in the Moroccan economy, both of them representing a source of foreign currency and external incomes for the country.

Both concepts, tourism and migration, share many similarities, which have drawn the attention of research. For example, they both involve people's movement across borders and places. Also, they generate socio-economic impact on the destination and on the country of origin. In 2009, the World Tourism Organisation published a study titled *Tourism and Migration, Exploring the Relationship Between two Phenomena* that explores the bidirectional relationship between tourism and migration from an economic approach, addressing a number of issues, such as the impact of emigration on tourism or the contribution of immigrants to the tourism industry. The impacts of tourism and migration affect both, the origin and the destination countries, provoking cultural enrichment and exchange, economic contributions, changes in demography, the appearance of new skills, services and technologies, etc.

In our case, our purpose was also to explore the relationship between tourism and migration, but from a novel and under researched perspective. The main objective was to understand the role that emigrants play in shaping their country of origin's brand in their host society. Specifically, we wanted to explore how the community of Moroccan emigrants in Spain defines and contributes to the creation of the Morocco brand as a tourist destination.

To do so, we decided to use a qualitative approach. The qualitative nature of this research is justified because the role of migration on destination branding constitutes a new research line and, to our knowledge, there is a big gap in empirical research on this topic. Thus, it was appropriate to first approximate the influence of Moroccan emigrants in the Morocco brand through some in depth interviews formulated in an open-ended manner that allow us to determine the main topics these emigrants contribute to in the brand construction of their countries of origin. The results of this qualitative research are exposed in the following paper: *Building the "Morocco" Brand as a Tourist Destination: The Role of Emigrants and Institutional Websites*.

## **Building the "Morocco" brand as a tourist destination: the role of emigrants and institutional websites**

### **Abstract**

The concept of branding is experiencing an evolutionary process that is leading to its use outside a purely business context. In particular, this concept is now being applied at a regional level through the emergence of place branding and destination branding. Effective management of tourist destination brands may have a bearing on the image and on the regeneration process of a particular area, attracting visitors and investment, which ultimately translate to greater economic wealth for the region. All of these arguments justify the importance of the proper management and use of destination branding, although this is a complex task.

The main objective of this exploratory work is twofold: On the one hand, it aims to determine, the key aspects of the role played by Moroccan emigrants living in Spain in the construction of their country of origin's brand; and on the other hand, it pursues to reflect their perspective on the Moroccan government's brand management through the use of websites.

The findings of this study sum up the most relevant factors of Moroccan emigrants' identity that influence their country's brand, and raises doubts about the effectiveness of institutional websites to construct a proper brand for Morocco.

**Keywords:** Place branding, Destination branding, Brand identity, Brand image, Moroccan emigrants, Institutional websites.

## INTRODUCTION

The interest that place branding arouses among academics and practitioners, is inspired by the strategic and economic implications of the correct use of the brand <sup>1</sup>. This fact explains the startling growth of this literature in recent times <sup>2</sup>, although some works assert that the study of branding as applied to regions is still in its early stages <sup>3</sup>.

Another noteworthy point is the scant attention paid to analysing the influence that certain stakeholders may exert on brand construction at a regional level. Although in the last few years the study of emigrants' identities has attracted considerable research <sup>4, 5, 6, 7</sup>, there are hardly any studies analysing the influence of emigrant populations on the construction of a destination brand. This gap is particularly significant at a time such as this, when migratory movements have become generalised and exacerbated by the phenomenon of globalisation. A case in point is Spain, which in recent years has become a host country for emigrants from all over the world, especially from Latin America and neighbouring North African countries, attracted by the 'pulling power' of Spain's economic growth prior to the current global economic and financial crisis.

The above arguments are the inspiration behind the twofold objective of this work, which entails conducting a pilot study to explore the role of Moroccan emigrants in Spain, in the construction and regeneration of the Morocco destination brand, and also to explore their perspectives on the Moroccan government's management of this brand through institutional websites.

The structure of this study is as follows. After this brief introduction, the second section is devoted to a review of the main concepts of regional branding and the different approaches used by this body of research. Following, the third section explains the methods to conduct this pilot study. Next, the findings of the pilot study are presented. Finally, there is a concluding section that expounds the main contributions of the study undertaken and suggests future lines of research.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF DESTINATION BRANDING**

### ***Conceptualizing place branding and destination branding***

The possibility of increasing a company's profits as a result of the efficient use of a brand for goods and services has aroused interest in other fields, which aim to learn from the corporate marketing experience and extend the use of brands to other levels. Place branding refers to the creation and management of a brand applied to a region in order to attract all kinds of economic activities and to position and differentiate that region from its competitors<sup>8,9</sup>. Likewise destination branding can be described as the brand of a particular geographical area, planned and perceived as a tourist destination<sup>10,11,12</sup>.

Destination branding has aroused a great deal of interest in researchers due to the importance of tourism, which is a key economic driver in certain regions<sup>13,14,15</sup>. Destination branding allows a destination to be identified and differentiated from other alternatives in the minds of the target market, through the selection of a consistent mix of brand elements that will constitute the message intended to attract consumers<sup>16,17</sup>.

Although there are many common elements shared by the brands used for regions and corporate brands<sup>18</sup>, we cannot ignore the greater complexity of the former as the elements that make up a region are broader and more heterogeneous. The way we view a region goes beyond a 'product that extends across a certain space'<sup>19</sup>. Among the factors that bring added complexity to branding at a regional level, we should mention the wide dispersal of control over the brand<sup>20</sup>, and the number of different stakeholders involved (institutions, suppliers, consumers, society in general). The existence of this diversity of stakeholders makes it much more difficult to establish a common strategy to create and manage a brand to the benefit of all<sup>21,22,23</sup>, because of their conflicting ideological forces that shape destination images in different ways<sup>24</sup>. These differences have prompted the coining of the term 'cross-sectorial branding' to reflect the intention of building a common 'umbrella' brand that is useful to the different activity sectors in the region and its different stakeholders<sup>25</sup>.



An additional factor that adds complexity to regional branding is the diversity of actions that may influence the brand creation. One of these factors, frequently analysed by previous research, is the regeneration of the territory, as a process to improve and renew the environment, image and safety of certain areas <sup>26, 27</sup>. Moreover, the relationship between regeneration and branding is quite complex, because there is a mutual influence between them. It can be clearly seen in tourism destinations, where destination branding can be positively affected by the regeneration of the territory, and vice versa. Some relevant examples highlighted by the literature are cities such as Barcelona, Bilbao, Glasgow, Liverpool, to name just a few, where the process of urban regeneration has redeveloped and improved the city through cultural events, art, entertainment, festivals, sport events such as Olympic Games, the construction of museums, the rehabilitation of city centres, etc. <sup>28, 29</sup>. All these actions for the regeneration of the area may act as a catalyst for its development and change and contribute to create a new brand that differentiates that area from others, attracts new investment and visitors, and improves its competitive position.

### ***The construction of destination branding: The brand identity***

The literature has used a variety of approaches to analyse destination branding. On the one hand, we have those who use an external orientation and analyse the brand from the perspective of demand <sup>30</sup>. This approach considers the consumer perception of tourists as the most important perspective for analysing destination branding, which they call the destination brand image <sup>31, 32, 33</sup>. A second approach is internally orientated, analysing the market from the perspective of supply <sup>34</sup>. This approach focuses on the influence exerted by the builders of the destination brand by their communications, using different channels and media, with the users, consumers or visitors of a specific tourist destination <sup>35, 36, 37</sup>.

These two research approaches differentiate between brand identity and brand image <sup>38, 39</sup> depending on the viewpoint. Therefore, brand identity is the term used when destination branding is analysed from the perspective of the creator of the message or brand, while brand image is the choice to represent the perspective of the recipient of the message or brand <sup>40</sup>.

The literature on destination branding has primarily focused on analysing the brand image, as this has a direct effect on the consumer behaviour of tourism products. There have been fewer studies on brand identity<sup>41</sup>. Also, although the identity of the migrant population has been analysed in depth<sup>42, 43, 44</sup>, their role in creating a brand identity has been neglected.

Brand identity is composed of different elements<sup>45</sup>, and constructed by different stakeholders who highlight different characteristics. These differences are particularly relevant in the case of developing countries, where tourism promotions, media and governmental institutions tend to mystify such destinations and raise a destination brand which ignores the brand identity constructed by local population<sup>46</sup>.

All these arguments justify the aim of this study that tries to explore the brand identity of “Morocco” as a tourist destination and in particular the role of Moroccan emigrants in Spain in the construction of this brand identity. Furthermore, it aims to analyse their perception about the effectiveness of the branding by the Moroccan government through its websites.

### ***Brand identity created by the emigrant population***

One of the factors that has been analysed by the literature from an internal, or supply, perspective of destination branding is the local population. There are several studies of this kind that have taken an interest in analysing the attributes or elements of the brand that the local population communicates. However, it is very difficult to generalise conclusions from this research because most of these studies are specific to the particular area considered in each case. Some examples of this research are the studies by Campelo et al.<sup>47</sup> on Chatham Island (New Zealand), by Freire<sup>48</sup> on the Portuguese Algarve, by Konecnik & Go<sup>49</sup> on Slovenia; and by Wheeler et al.<sup>50</sup> on Rural Victoria (Australia), amongst others.

The main attributes or elements of brand identity, which the literature highlights repeatedly, are the natural environment (landscape, flora, fauna, beaches, mountains, climate, etc.), the ambience or atmosphere (peace, relaxation, fun, nightlife, enjoyment, etc.), the infrastructure (monuments, accessibility, safety, accommodation quality,

transport, etc.), the economic situation (business sectors, price-quality ratio, economic and commercial development), and sociocultural aspects (a sense of community, the friendliness and hospitality of the local people, traditions, cultural activities and attractions, history, gastronomy, etc.), amongst others. As we can see, the attributes that make up a brand identity are many and varied, so they have been classified. One of the most important is the difference between physical or tangible elements and attributes, which would primarily include the natural environment, infrastructure and the economic situation, and intangible elements and attributes, which would include sociocultural aspects and the atmosphere or 'feel' of the tourist destination. Moreover, these different elements are not independent; on the contrary, tangible attributes can affect intangible ones, and vice versa, and both of them can be influenced by actions for the regeneration of the area.

These studies conclude that the local population is a very valuable resource for understanding the elements that determine the formation of an image of a particular region. Above all, their value stems from the difficulty of differentiating between destinations that share very similar characteristics, whereby the local population becomes a truly differentiating factor between them. Another reason that justifies the value of the local population relates to the strong sense of belonging that local people usually show towards their region of origin, which can have a very significant influence on the perceived image of that place.

However, all these contributions from the literature refer to the local people who actually live in the tourist destination whose brand is under analysis, and as far as we know there is none or very little research on the influence that the emigrant population has on destination branding. The closest studies we have found describe cases in which the destination brand has been enriched by a multicultural presence and ethnicity, giving the example of the influence of an emigrant neighbourhood on a particular city<sup>51, 52</sup>, or the proliferation of cultural festivals involving different ethnic groups<sup>53</sup>. In fact, from the point of view of brand identity, the specific case of ethnic communities is especially relevant because they find themselves constantly affirming and trying to maintain their identity<sup>54</sup>.

This gap in the literature has inspired the first question of this research: What influence do Moroccan emigrants in Spain exert on the creation of the ‘Morocco’ brand as a tourist destination?

### ***Brand identity created by government institutions***

Other studies along the same lines have focused on the local population’s evaluation of the brand when conveyed at an institutional level. Some examples of this kind are the study by Campelo et al.<sup>55</sup> on the evaluation by local residents of a promotional video on New Zealand, and the work by Konecnik & Go<sup>56</sup> which analyses the evaluation of the promotional website created by the Slovenia Tourist Board.

This research highlights the fact that the creation and management of a regional brand is of palpable concern at an institutional level. Some of the more relevant examples relate to the description of the institutional efforts made to improve the brand image of certain cities or regions, which are associated with a negative image for various reasons, such as terrorism problems, drugs, etc. In this respect there is a study by Northover<sup>57</sup>, which analyses the role played by municipal authorities in trying to improve the image of the city of Belfast, affected by the terrorist actions of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), and the work by Ooi and Perderson<sup>58</sup> which analyses the case of Copenhagen and the efforts made by the local government to change the negative perception of the city brand, which had been affected by being seen as too liberal which could exacerbate particular problems associated with drugs, amongst others. In other cases, the concern of governments and local authorities is related to improve the physical, economic and social aspects of areas which have been subject to decline, frequently because of their previous industrial development<sup>59</sup>. In this situation the effort is orientated towards transforming industrial regions into service-oriented economies and improving housing, employment, sustainability, and other economic activities, like tourism<sup>60</sup>.

One of the most important topics analysed in these studies relates to the precise role played by institutions when it comes to generating, promoting and managing a regional brand<sup>61</sup>. In this respect, the literature recognises that in most cases the task of the institution entails initiating a whole process of brand creation, which might involve promotional campaigns to disseminate a certain image using different media. But above all, the literature emphasises the creation and use of websites to disseminate information

on a particular region and promote it with a view to attract tourism, investment and capital <sup>62</sup>. This explains researchers' interest in specifying which characteristics these websites would need in order to optimise their visibility and skill in communicating the destination brand <sup>63</sup>.

To sum up, it is important to highlight the need for coordination between the different organisations at an institutional level, and between the different stakeholders involved in creating and transmitting the destination brand, given that this will strengthen the intended message, avoid contradictions and achieve a clearer identity for the region that differentiates it from the competition <sup>64</sup>. This objective can be especially relevant for developing countries that try to improve their brand images to attract tourism and economic activity. To do so, they usually reflect a message of primitive, sensuous, untouched or paradisiacal destination that may be contrary to the local identity <sup>65</sup>.

These arguments inspire the second question of this research: What is the perception of the emigrant Moroccan population in Spain of the destination branding broadcast by the Moroccan government through its websites?

## **METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS**

### ***Methodology***

To respond to the research questions proposed, a qualitative approach was deemed as appropriate since they are exploratory questions formulated in terms of “What” that try to reflect emigrants' perspectives <sup>66</sup>.

To grasp emigrants' perspectives of Morocco as a tourist destination and of the role of the government in Morocco's destination branding, in-depth interviews were judged as the appropriate data collection method. In particular, semi-structured interviews of an hour and a half length were conducted and verbatim transcribed with three emigrants working and living in Spain for 4, 5 and 11 years respectively. The three cases were not extreme cases, but were theoretically sampled in base of their age, gender and occupation in order to maximise our opportunities to build theory in the next stages of the study. For instance, our pilot sample consisted of a woman of 42 not studying who

works as a cleaner, a young man of 34 with an Economics Bachelor and a Masters degree in Cultural Heritage Management who works in a scientific tourist park, and a 32-year-old woman with a Bachelor in Law and a Masters degree in Tourism Planning and Management. At this stage, they were used as a pilot sample to identify important categories and to refine the interview guide.

The interviews were framed by a number of core question areas: how participants defined Morocco as a tourist destination and as a country of origin; perceptions of their role in relation to the creation of Morocco brand image; perceptions about the accuracy of the image of Morocco in Spain; narratives of their experiences as foreigners in Spain and when interacting with Spanish people; how they defined themselves in cultural terms and perceptions about the role of the Morocco government in destination branding. However, participants were free to raise and explore anything they considered salient to their experiences. Questions were formulated in an open-ended manner<sup>67</sup> to elicit their perspectives on the issues explored. Cross-cultural interviewing<sup>68</sup>, given that one of the interviewers was Moroccan, facilitates the establishment of a good rapport with interviewees, and it was key in the obtaining of rich data for the purposes of this study.

To answer the initially proposed research questions, analysis of the interview data adopted what Glaser and Strauss<sup>69</sup> call constant comparison analysis. As being in an initial stage of this study, we just tried to organise data into first-order codes such as “role of the emigrant regarding Morocco image”; “cultural identity”; etc. and make sense of these categories by identifying consistencies, differences and meanings, as the inductive qualitative analysis recommends.

### ***Construction of the “Morocco” brand by Moroccan emigrants in Spain***

The interviews highlighted the fact that the destination branding of Morocco is built on the regional identity transmitted by its emigrants and the image in the minds of local people (Spanish people or foreigners in Spain).

The aspects of destination brand identity that emigrants tell local people are defined by the aim of counteracting or correcting the image formed by people who are not familiar

with the country. In this respect, the country identity conveyed by emigrants in Spain centres above all on the intangible attributes, particularly sociocultural ones, which mostly relate to the stereotypes upon which potential tourists build the image of the country. Examples of this include the role of women in Moroccan society, the Muslim religion, culture and traditions associated with the country, etc. The marked disparity between the image and the identity of the country in terms of these attributes gives rise to a certain cognitive dissonance among emigrants which they try to overcome by giving local people proper information, as explained in the following quote:

*“They don’t see me as Moroccan because I don’t match the picture they have in their minds; for example, on the Master courses a girl asked me if my religion allowed me to study, or the typical question: you’re Moroccan and you don’t wear a veil? and How come a Moroccan girl is living over here? and How did you get permission to leave the country? They have a vision of Moroccan women as being confined to the house with the children, having never been to school or university, and not speaking any languages (...) they think I’m the only one who’s managed to get out of the country to study, and I tell them I’m not the only one” (...)* (Amal)

*... “in general there’s a uniform image, they always mention Marrakech, the desert, couscous... they tell you that kebab restaurants are Moroccan too (...) they know very little, they think it’s still a medieval country, they always talk about the aromas, the colours; sometimes they have this romantic image, and of course there are aromas and colours (...), but Morocco is much more than that”* (Laia)

In some cases, this disparity between image and identity can surprise and even annoy emigrants in view of the lack of knowledge or misinformation that has been built up about the country despite its geographical and historical proximity to Spain.

*“It may be lack of knowledge or that people just aren’t interested (...). For example, if a piece of news comes out about the Arab world (...), they can’t say whether it’s going on in Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt..., they think the whole region is very similar, the language is similar, the dialect is similar, everything is similar over there”* (Amal)

When the emigrants perceive an image that is consistent with the country's identity, it surprises them. This disparate image that potential tourists have of Morocco puts the emigrants who do not meet a preconceived stereotype and who might have a certain academic and professional baggage in a privileged position that gives them a certain status and credibility in the eyes of local people and even other emigrants.

*“They assume that because you're Moroccan you don't have any education or anything, so anything you do have is a gift” (Mohamed)*

*“And you notice that people are really pleased when they know what you're studying, and they say very good, very good, you need to carry on studying to have any kind of status here” (Amal)*

This status and credibility puts them also in a position of responsibility in terms of constructing their country brand and disseminating it to potential tourists. Moreover, this imprecise image of Morocco places emigrants in the role of ambassadors for their country in order to contradict or confirm the image that has been projected.

*“I always answer these kinds of questions by trying to provide some clarification, for example about the landscapes, if they talk about the desert, I say yes, there is a desert, but we also have two coastlines, the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, plus we have three mountain ranges, ski resorts... people can't imagine there is snow in Morocco; or for example when I say I'm cold, they say, how?, you're used to the heat (...) I can identify the people who are really interested in knowing things and I'm very willing and happy to tell them (...) I'm taking on the role of an ambassador without realising it” (Laia)*

The information they give not only focuses on the positive points of the country; they also try to include a critical perspective which, according to the emigrants, provides a greater affinity and connection with the problems of local people, helping to eliminate the stereotypes created by intergroup comparisons<sup>70</sup>:

*“I'm very critical about Morocco, to the point that I almost believe that the more critical I am, the more I'm doing Morocco a favour (...) because criticizing*



*Morocco makes you sound more credible, because if you make Morocco out to be a paradise nobody believes you” (Mohamed)*

By contrast, when a region’s identity is not communicated in response to the image held by potential tourists, but in the absence of a stimulus, this identity centres on both tangible and intangible aspects, as shown in the following quote:

*“It’s an Arab and an African country, there are various identities, there are Berbers, there are mountain tribes and Saharans; it’s an emerging country, a poor country compared to other countries in terms of energy; it’s an open country, a tolerant country, a welcoming country, it offers a lot to other people; it’s tolerant, a developing country, a poor country, though you can’t compare it to Somalia or Chad (...), the geographical situation of the country also affects it (...), it has its own identity, it’s a country that combines modernity and tradition, you could find yourself in some really conservative places yet in other areas you might think you were in Europe. In general, it’s a country of contrasts” (Amal)*

Thus, the identity of Morocco can be regarded as a social identity, which refers to an identity that arises from pertaining to social groups, in this case to a country as a social group <sup>71</sup>. And therefore, as expounded by Social Identity Theory <sup>72</sup>, building this identity is done by a process of social comparison with other groups on the following characteristics of the group:

Warmth, proximity and long-lasting relationships:

*“You could say that the people here can be very cold; sometimes you might be with someone for an evening, an afternoon, a few days (...), they tell you their things and you tell them yours, and at the end you expect that the relationship might be for the long term, but no, the next day you might bump into them and they don’t say anything (...) generally speaking, relationships aren’t sustainable, though there is always the exception to the rule” (Laia)*

Cooperation and support as opposed to individualism:

*“In Morocco, if you’re on the bus and an older person or a pregnant woman gets on... the youngsters, the boys, get up and give that person their seat; another example is if you’re loaded down with shopping, people ask if you need any help, or they’ll take your bags off you to help” (Laia)*

Openness and sociability as opposed to social inscrutability:

*“You realise that people here don’t open up to others (...) for two years I was sharing an apartment with local people and they hold special events in the same house and don’t invite you, or for example people living in the villages around Tarragona never ask you if you want to come and visit them” (Mohamed)*

### ***Perceptions of Moroccan emigrants of the Moroccan government’s role in the destination brand built through the use of websites***

The second part of the exploratory analysis aims to analyse the brand built by the Moroccan government through its tourism websites, and to explore the perception of Moroccan emigrants about it in order to observe similarities and differences.

An examination and analysis of the contents of tourism websites (www.visitmorocco.com, www.turisme.gov.ma) revealed seven predominant themes: cultural richness (as exemplified by festivals, concerts, art, shows, gastronomy); landscape (involving beaches, deserts, parks, nature); lifestyle (including hospitality, authenticity, tolerance, openness); history (berber origins, kingdom and dynasties, varied heritage); types of accommodation (hotels, camping, etc.); activities (such as shopping, water sports, golf, trekking); and finally physical characteristics (climatic conditions of the territory).

In an attempt to compare the brand built by emigrant population and institutions, this study includes some questions in the interviews about the emigrant's perception on the role of government to construct a brand of Morocco as a tourism destination. Generally speaking, emigrants believe that the role of the government creating place branding is inadequate or insufficient through its websites, apart from which very few people know of their existence. The following quote expands on this subject:

*“A lot more importance has been given to some areas over others; in some there is a big infrastructure for hosting tourists, but in other zones the infrastructure is inadequate; also, there is a directional issue, for example if you go to the tourist office in Tetuan you can’t get the exact information you need for tourists to know where to go, what to visit, where to eat (...) you can’t find the official website of the Tetuan tourist office (...) on the website of the National Tourist Board there is information about all the cities, but it’s just general” (Amal)*

In addition, the destination branding done by emigrants does not match the government’s branding, emphasising the appeal of places that are not being promoted to tourists, as illustrated in the following comment:

*“The disadvantage of having places that have not been developed for tourism is an advantage for tourists who want to experience the ‘real’ country because the people in those regions act in a very natural and spontaneous way, you can see the genuine culture, the everyday routines of these people (...), it’s not like in other tourist areas where they just see the tourist’s wallet, like in the big cities, like Marrakech” (Mohamed)*

Despite these dissonances on the destination branding built by emigrants and institutions, some relevant similarities were also observed. One of the most frequent similarities was related to lifestyle and personality. For example, openness, hospitality and authenticity are common messages from both, institutional websites and emigrants' discourse. Similarly, both of them highlighted sociocultural richness, transmitting the relevance of traditions, gastronomy, etc. Finally, other such themes were related to history and landscapes, describing deserts, beaches, the geographical situation of the region; or the varied heritage, for example, some particular aspects of the history, berber origins, etc. as can be seen in some comments of the interviews.

## CONCLUSIONS

The main objective of this pilot study has been to explore the role of Moroccan emigrants in Spain as an important stakeholder in the construction of the ‘Morocco’ brand as a tourist destination, and also to analyse their perception of the work being

done by the Moroccan government in the destination branding of Morocco on its websites. This objective has involved a further analysis on the influence of a numerous emigrant population in Spain on the brand creation of their country, and has highlighted the potential discrepancies between different stakeholders that shape destination images. Despite the focus of this study on brand identity, most of the comments of respondents refer to the image of Morocco that Spanish people have. This is because identities are produced and confirmed through interactions with others, trying to respond and react to judgement and stereotypes of the local population <sup>73</sup>. In addition, this reaction of Moroccan emigrants is even more evident because they constitute a numerous emigrant population in comparison with other less numerous communities, and because they suffer locals' prejudices and racist attitudes for historical and economic reasons. So, it is not surprising that many relevant aspects of brand identity of Moroccan emigrants in Spain emerge to react and correct a wrong image of the country.

The most important issues discussed during the research process were how participants defined Morocco as a tourist destination; perceptions of their role in the creation of the Morocco brand; perceptions about the accuracy of the image of Morocco in Spain; narratives of their experiences as foreigners in Spain; how they defined themselves, etc. More specifically, the findings demonstrate the importance of the intangible aspects, mentioned by the emigrants when expressing their brand identity. The most relevant were those of a sociocultural nature, cultural richness and lifestyle, such as warmth, proximity, openness and cooperation as personality traits that characterise the country. With regard to the work of the Moroccan government on its websites, it was evident that the emigrants know very little about these tools. In addition, there is a lack of consistency between the destination branding elements that identify Morocco on these websites, essentially based on some typical tourist destinations, and the destination branding built by emigrants. However, they share some similarities related to lifestyle and personality, for example, openness, hospitality and authenticity. Also, both of them transmit the relevance of traditions, gastronomy, and richness of history and landscapes. A relevant contribution of this type of studies is that they can provide valuable information that can be used by institutions. Local authorities and governments can obtain a better idea about what are the most relevant components of their region's identity, and can guide their actions towards the strengthening of these elements. This can affect their decisions on the regeneration process of certain cities and regions and

make clear the need to align the messages that are released about their regions as tourist destinations and the actual value of emigrant population as ambassadors of their country. Also this study highlights the importance of consistency among different stakeholders involved in the construction of a destination brand as some authors already advised <sup>74</sup>.

The main limitation of this work is determined by its very nature as an exploratory study which does not allow the findings to be generalized. In a later phase of this research the plan is to conduct a theoretical sampling which would include Moroccan emigrants with different characteristics, allowing us to explore the following issues in greater depth. Firstly, whether the characteristics of the emigrant (gender, age, educational and professional background) have an influence on the destination branding elements that communicate their country's identity. Secondly, we will try to identify the place branding elements expressed by emigrants, continue exploring the comparison with what is given on the institutional websites, determine whether there is any consistency between them, and to what extent a collaboration could be planned, and explore the efficacy of both stakeholders when it comes to counteracting the stereotypical image of the country. Finally, we will examine the tacit or explicit nature of the place branding elements that form their country's identity, and the processes that could be used to make them more explicit.

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### **CHAPTER 3**

#### **ANALYSIS OF THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE MOROCCO BRAND FROM THE MOROCCAN EMIGRANTS' PERSPECTIVE**



## **1. Introduction**

In this third chapter, on the attributes of the Morocco brand from the Moroccan emigrants' perspective, the main objective is to determine the main elements and factors of the Morocco brand as a tourist destination, constructed and transmitted by Moroccan emigrants, and their perception of their influence in the construction of their country of origin's brand. To do so, two studies were conducted, using a questionnaire distributed amongst Moroccan emigrants living in Spain. Both of them were intended to determine the main elements of the Morocco brand constructed and transmitted by Moroccan emigrants, and explore whether this brand is convergent and coherent or, on the contrary, diverges depending on the socio-demographic profile of Moroccan emigrants.

Both studies have been published and will be presented in this chapter. The first one titled *The Morocco Brand Through the Eyes of its Emigrants* was published in the *IUP Journal of Brand Management*, Vol. 10, No. 4, pp. 16-36. The aim of this study, as we said before, is to explore the main elements of the Morocco brand transmitted by Moroccan emigrants, and their perceptions of their influence on the construction of the Morocco brand as a tourist destination, but considering all the elements or attributes of the Morocco brand separately, which allows us to develop a more in depth analysis of these attributes.

The second paper is titled *The Morocco Brand from the Moroccan Emigrants' Perspective*, and was published in *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, Vol. 10, pp. 55-69. It was also presented in the Second International Scientific Conference on "Tourism in South and East Europe" in 2013. This research also seeks to determine the main elements of the Morocco brand constructed and transmitted by emigrants, but classifying these attributes in the main factors, and exploring whether these factors are convergent or divergent depending on the socio-demographic profile of Moroccan emigrants.

Besides this brief introduction, the structure of the chapter includes three sections. The first section is devoted to the literature review on the attributes of the brand. In the last two sections of the chapter, we will present the two papers mentioned above.

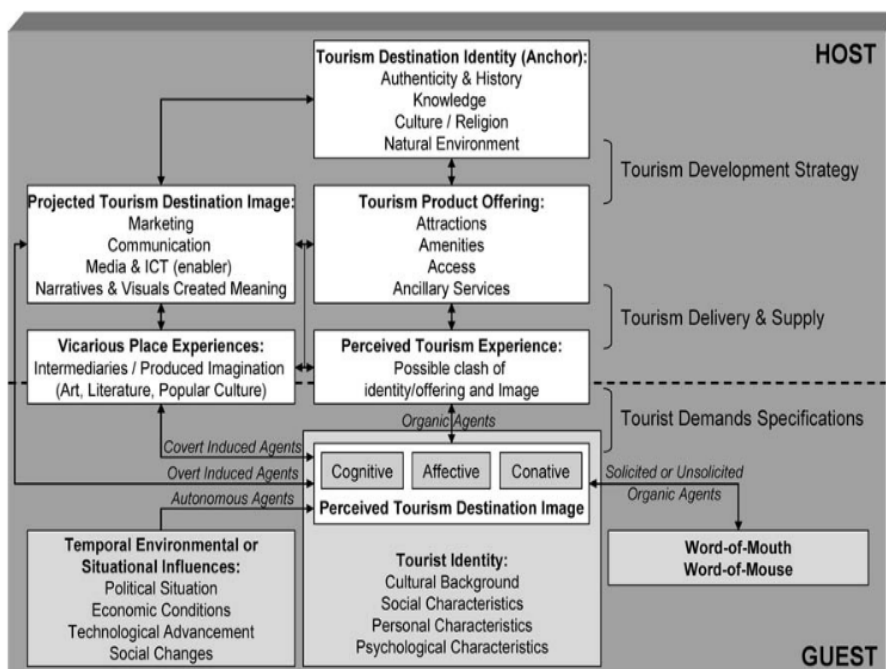
## **2. The attributes of the brand**

There is a wide agreement amongst academic and practitioners about the relevance of destination brands, which go beyond just a visual of commercial aspects. Destination brands must reflect the essences of the place and give assurance to visitors' experiences. This explains the academics' recommendation and advice about developing a destination brand inspired by the real qualities of the place, where all the stakeholders would be taken into account. In this sense, academics have proposed different conceptual models which try to facilitate an efficient destination brand management.

In this section, which is devoted to the attributes of destination brands, it is necessary to come back to one of the most relevant models of destination branding, which is centred in two of its traditional functions: identification and differentiation. Identification is related to the creation of brand identity, whilst differentiation emerges from the image formed by consumers, tourists in this case (Qu et al., 2011). For its relevance in destination branding, identity and image are subjects of academic and professional research from different approaches and contexts, and must be considered also when brand attributes are analysed. According to Marzano (2009), the majority of studies have focused on exploring the external side of the destination brand, the brand image, paying more attention to exploring tourist perceptions on the elements or attributes of a destination brand (Qu et al., 2011). However, despite the high interest in the image side of destination branding, recently the identity of the brand has started gaining academic interest (Kapferer, 1997). Therefore, the recipients of the brand form an image of the place, depending on the attributes transmitted by the brand builders and their own experiences.

As we have already stated, the concepts of image and identity interact, and they both are vital for the destination brand building (Pike, 2012). Even more, as it can be seen in Figure V, there are interactions between the tourism destination identity and the tourism destination image, which could be divided into the projected image of the tourism destination formed by the supply side (the builders or constructors of the brand) and the perceived image of the tourism destination, formed by the recipients of the brand (tourists). And, on both sides of the equation, builders and recipients, the brand of the destination is formed by attributes that are not always exactly the same.

Figure V. Model on tourism destination branding



Source: Govers et al. (2007)

Govers et al. (2007) provided this holistic model on the formation of the tourism destination image, which takes into account the host strategy, the guest perception and the external elements that can influence both. Figure V clearly shows that there are important components, elements or attributes in destination brands, not only in the brand image, but also in the tourism destination identity, like natural environment, history or culture, which operate exactly the same as in corporate brands for goods and services. These attributes express the characteristics and essence of the destination and, in the case of the destination brand identity, from the moment they are transmitted through different media, allow the formation of the projected image of the destination, and finally the perceived brand image. These attributes help to differentiate and obtain a better positioning for the tourist destination, especially when it is compared to other similar competing destinations.

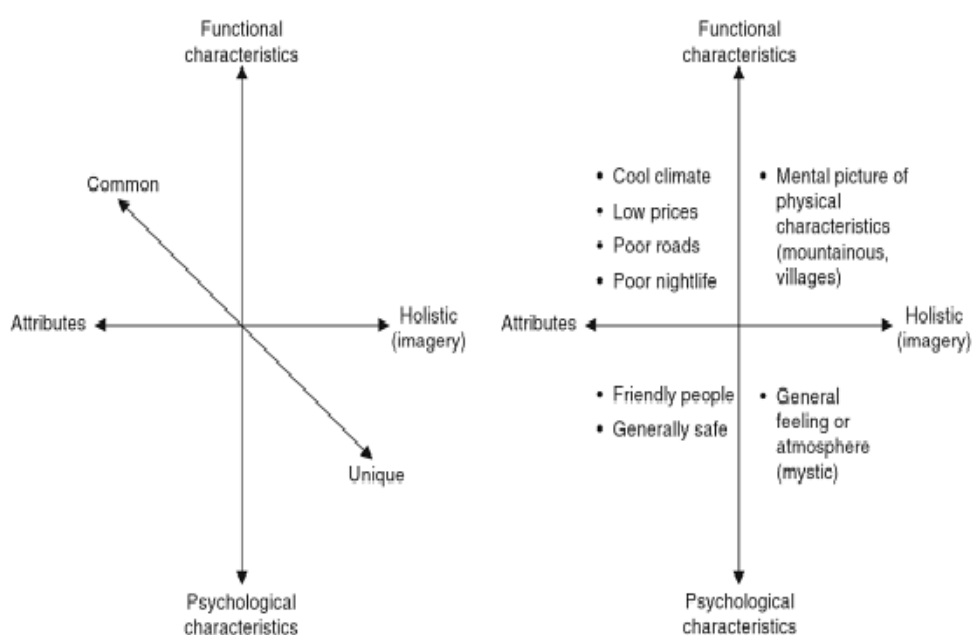
In order to analyse the main elements of a destination brand, many authors have developed theoretical models and classifications for understanding the meaning of the brand identity and the creation of the brand image. One of the most relevant and used by research is that classifying the brand attributes into two different kinds: tangible/functional/cognitive attributes, on the one hand, and intangible/symbolic/emotional attributes, on the other (Balakrishnan, 2009).



This literature on the attributes of destination brand usually considers some common elements, such as landscape, climate, sports, facilities, infrastructures, shopping, history, and so on, in the first group of tangible/functional/cognitive attributes, and feelings, motivations and people’s expectations of the place (e.g. pleasant, exciting, sophisticated, boring and so on) in the second group of intangible/symbolic/emotional ones.

Besides these classifications, research also has developed theoretical models to integrate and seek relationships between the different types of destination brand attributes, trying to understand a better way to manage an efficient destination brand and obtain a good differentiation and position of the brand. An example could be the model of Echtner and Ritchie (2003), applied to a study of tourism in Nepal. As Figure VI shows, destination brands gain uniqueness and value when they integrate all their independent attributes in a holistic picture, especially when the emotional or intangible attributes of the brand dominate.

Figure VI. Integrative model of brand attributes



Source: Echtner and Ritchie (2003)

However, despite the efforts of research to identify the most salient attributes of the brand, and how to manage them to obtain the best brand, there is scarce agreement in research. This

is due to the complexity around the concept of place and the multiple approaches to analyse it. For example, destination brands can be applied to different contexts, like countries, cities, neighbourhoods, resorts, etc., and from diverse approaches, like the various stakeholders involved, local population, DMO, tourists, experts, etc. It is not surprising that the attributes of the brand are adapted for each case. In fact, the destination brand attributes are strongly influenced by the characteristics of each destination and are responsible for their formation.

In an attempt to revise the most relevant literature on the destination brand attributes, the studies of Balakrishnan (2009) and Zenker (2011) are quite useful. These authors make a revision of the most relevant literature considering each attribute of destination brand, as Table XI shows. In this table, we have added and completed the revision of Balakrishnan and Zenker with some additional references of works that also consider brand attributes in their analyses.

Table XI. Literature review on brand attributes

| <b>Brand attributes</b>  | <b>Authors</b>  |
|--|---|
| Architecture, facilities, places of interests, scenery, accommodation, infrastructures | Cheng and Taylor, 2007; Correira et al., 2007; de Jager, 2010; Hankinson, 2004; 2005; Kerr and Johnson, 2005; Kim and Gray, 2004; Kim and Richardson, 2003; Leisen, 2001; O’Cass and Grace, 2003; Parkerson and Saunders, 2004; Pawitra and Tan, 2003; Prayag, 2010; San Martín and Rodríguez, 2010; Vaidya et al., 2009; Warnaby and Davies, 1997  |
| Shopping   | de Jager, 2010; Gordon, 1986; Leisen, 2001; Merrilees et al., 2009; Parkerson and Saunders, 2004; Warnaby and Davies, 1997  |
| Attractions, food, nightlife   | Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; de Jager, 2010; Kim and Gray, 2004; Kim and Richardson, 2003; Parkerson and Saunders, 2004; Vanolo, 2008  |
| History, heritage, culture, ambience and experience, entertainment                     | Anholt, 2006; Bandyopadhyay and Morais, 2005; Beerli and Martín, 2004; Chen and Gursoy, 2001; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Cheng and Taylor, 2007; González and Bello, 2002; Hankinson, 2004; 2005; Hosany et al., 2007; Law et al., 2004; Leisen, 2001; Moorthi, 2002; Parkerson and Saunders, 2004; Pawitra and Tan, 2003; Prayag, 2010; Runyan and Huddleston, 2006; San Martín and Rodríguez, 2010; Vaidya et al., 2009 |
| Economic activity, economic development and industrial environment                     | de Jager, 2010; Hankinson, 2004; 2005; IMD, 2005; Kerr and Johnson, 2005; Lee and Jain, 2009; Merrilees et al., 2009; Parkerson and Saunders, 2004; Vaidya et al., 2009; Zenker et al., 2009  |
| Accessibility  | de Jager, 2010; Hankinson, 2004, 2005; Kim and Gray, 2004   |
| Affordability,   | Anholt, 2006; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Future Brands, 2006  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| pricing  |   |
| People characteristics, familiarity, friendly, interaction and empathy | Anholt, 2006; Bang et al., 2005; de Jager, 2010; Hankinson, 2004, 2005; Kayaman and Arasli, 2007; Lee and Jain, 2009; Moorthi, 2002; Vaidya et al., 2009;   |
| Social, quality of life, welfare                                       | IMD, 2005; Merrilees et al., 2009; Trueman et al., 2004   |
| Health   | González and Bello, 2002; Tan, 2007; WTTC, 2003   |
| Education  | Anholt, 2006; Marklein, 2006; Vanolo, 2008  |
| Rest, recreation, sports   | Beerli and Martín, 2004; González and Bello, 2002; Kerr and Johnson, 2005; Leisen, 2001; Zenker et al., 2009  |
| Events   | Hunter, 2006  |
| Religion   | Deloitte, 2006  |
| Natural wonders, climate, environment                                  | Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Bandyopadhyay and Morais, 2005; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Future Brands, 2006; González and Bello, 2002; Hankinson, 2004; Law et al., 2004; Leisen, 2001; Prayag, 2010; San Martín and Rodríguez, 2010 |
| Reputation   | Anholt, 2006; Hankinson, 2004, 2005; Merrilees et al., 2009; Spithoven, 2000  |
| Service satisfaction   | de Jager, 2010; McDougall and Levesque, 2000; Warnaby and Davies, 1997  |
| Personal and social values, personality, lifestyle                     | Bandyopadhyay and Morais, 2005; Davis, 2002; González and Bello, 2002; Jamal and Goode, 2001  |
| Emotions, mood, senses   | Davis, 2002; Jamal and Goode, 2001; O’Cass and Grace, 2003; Parkerson and Saunders, 2004; Pritchard and Morgan, 1998; Roberts, 2005; Wood, 2007   |
| Exciting, pleasant, glamorous, honest, sincere, sophisticate           | Beerli and Martín, 2004; Guzmán and Paswan, 2009; Kim and Richardson, 2003; Li et al., 2009; San Martín and Rodríguez, 2010   |

Source: Adapted from various authors

Table XI highlights the great amount of academic works interested in the study of brand attributes, which is also related to the various approaches used by research to analyse this topic. In general terms, quantitative research is frequently used, through the use of questionnaires that include a certain number of items, each one devoted to an attribute of the destination brand (Echtner and Richie, 2003). Then, there are mainly two different approaches used. On the one hand, there is academic research that considers each one of these attributes individually, developing some kind of descriptive research (Bandyopadhyay and Morais, 2005; de Jager, 2010; Li et al., 2009). On the other hand, there is extensive literature which is interested in determining the relationships between these attributes of destination brands, instead of considering each attribute of the brand separately (Alegre and Garau, 2010; Beerli

and Martín, 2004; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Kim and Gray, 2004; Kim and Richardson, 2003; San Martín and Rodríguez, 2010).

This distinction suggested the opportunity to develop our study on the attributes of the Morocco brand from the Moroccan emigrants' perspective using these two approaches, which allow us to publish two different papers that will be presented below.

In the first paper, titled *The Morocco Brand Through the Eyes of its Emigrants*, the aim is to explore the main elements of the Morocco brand transmitted by Moroccan emigrants. In this case, we consider all the elements or attributes of the Morocco brand separately, which allows us to develop a more in depth analysis of these attributes. In this paper, we are also interested in Moroccan emigrants' perceptions of their influence on the construction of the Morocco brand as a tourist destination.

The second paper, titled *The Morocco Brand from the Moroccan Emigrants' Perspective*, also seeks to determine the main elements of the Morocco brand constructed and transmitted by emigrants, but classifies these attributes in the main factors, and explores whether these factors are convergent or divergent depending on the socio-demographic profile of Moroccan emigrants.

## **The Morocco brand through the eyes of its emigrants**

*The aim of this study is to explore the main elements of the Morocco brand transmitted by Moroccan emigrants, and their perceptions of their influence on the construction of the Morocco brand as a tourist destination. The data was collected through a questionnaire from 131 Moroccan emigrants living in Spain. The findings sum up the most relevant factors of the Morocco brand transmitted by the emigrants to the local population in Spain. These elements are landscape, nature, beaches, mountains, gastronomy and climate, as tangible attributes of the country brand; and hospitality, tradition, joy and multiculturalism, as intangible attributes. All attributes together can be considered as the content of the Morocco brand constructed by emigrants. The results also show that emigrants think that they exert a strong influence on the construction of their country brand, and that the message they transmit of their country is positive, clear and consistent.*

### **Introduction**

The research on destination branding has been centered on analyzing the brand image, considering the perception of tourists of a destination brand. In contrast, there are only a few studies on the analysis of destination branding from the supply side, centered on the brand identity (Konecnik and Go, 2008).

The analysis of brand identity usually adopts a top-down approach (Campelo et al., 2009), which means that it is basically interested in Destination Management Organizations (DMO). However, other stakeholders, like local people also exert an important contribution to the construction of destination brands (Andriotis and Vaughan, 2003; García et al., 2012; and Woosman, 2013).

Local population emerges as a crucial element for distinguishing and selling a tourist destination, because it acts as a differentiation factor between similar competing tourist destinations. In these cases, the strong sense of belonging that local people usually show towards their region of origin can have a significant influence on the construction of the

brand. Also, they can communicate better a proper message of the destination and its products to the potential tourists (Campelo et al., 2009 and 2011; and Freire, 2009).

However, previous research on the role of local people in destination branding shows an important gap about local people living abroad, or in other words, emigrants who might influence destination branding, and in particular with regard to their influence on the brand attributes (Haug et al., 2007; McClinchey, 2008; and Johansson and Cornebise, 2010). This gap in research is surprising given the similarities between local people living currently in the territory and emigrants of this place living abroad. Even more, emigrants develop a sense of belonging towards the region of origin that maybe even stronger (Campelo et al., 2009). However, the existing literature of migration in tourism considers emigrants just as workers in the hospitality sector (Janta, 2011; Janta et al., 2011a and 2011b; and Joppe, 2012) and neglects their role as potential builders of their country of origin brand.

The main objectives of this study are to conduct an exploratory analysis to determine the principal elements of the Morocco brand influenced by Moroccan emigrants, and to analyze their perception of influence on the construction of the Morocco brand as a tourist destination. This study aims to help DMO to create and promote a coherent brand by recognizing the relevance and influence of emigrants in the branding process of their territories.

## **Literature review**

A review of recent research on destination branding shows that the focus of most of the works has been on the role of DMO in the process of brand construction (Campelo et al., 2009). These studies centered on the strategies of tourism development created by DMO. As Govers and Go (2004, p. 168) state, “These strategies involve the evaluation, reassembling, repositioning and reformulation of the tourism product offering, its branding and communication”, García et al., 2012 observe that they are focused basically on visitors and on attracting potential tourists.

However, an increasing stream of research is pointing to the risk of not taking into account other stakeholders such as entrepreneurs, companies in the tourism sector and local people, whose roles and contributions are also important for the formation of the destination brand (Campelo et al., 2009; and García et al., 2012). Indeed, Freire (2009, p. 420) establishes that

“local people are relevant and important for a destination brandbuilding process”. In addition, Campelo et al. (2009, p. 2) suggest that “it makes sense to include residents and ad hoc communities in the process of branding”. Despite the importance that local people seem to exert on the brand construction for a tourist destination, some of the studies interested in the role of local people do not consider them as actors that actually intervene in the construction of the brand, but as factors that exert some kind of influence on visitors and their brand image (Freire, 2009; and García et al., 2012).

The relevance of including local people in the process of branding resides in their potential to communicate through their experiences and narratives and to exert some influence on visitors. For a tourism destination, it is not only important to have and identify its resources, the unique and most important ones, in which reside its sustainable competitive advantage (Govers and Go, 2004), but also to have the potential of communicating and selling these resources. At this point, the value of local people emerges, when it is crucial to communicate effectively the message about a territory, especially in destinations that share similar characteristics, in these cases, local people become a truly differentiating factor (Campelo et al., 2009; and Freire, 2009).

Some relevant studies centered on the role of local people as builders of the destination brand are interested in the elements of the brand that they tend to transmit. For example, the work of Campelo et al. (2009), on Chatham Island (New Zealand), emphasized four constructs—weather, ancestry, community and landscape—as the major influences over lifestyle and identity of local people. Also, Konecnik and de Chernatony (2013), in their study on the Slovenia brand, recognized some of the most important preferences in the brand identity of local people, which were functional attributes (beautiful nature, mountains, forests, beautiful towns), and also psychological elements (green, diverse, small, peaceful, simple, safe, kindness, hospitality, heartiness, unspoiled, cleanliness, tidy, good food). Many of the elements of the brand presented in these studies are specific to the particular destination that is being analyzed in each case, but in general terms they coincide with the elements and attributes of the brand identified in the research on brand image (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Beerli and Martín, 2004; Chen and Tsai, 2007; and Alegre and Garau, 2010). Thus, all these attributes can be classified into physical or tangible elements, such as the natural environment, infrastructure and the economic situation; and intangible elements of the brand,

which would include sociocultural aspects and the atmosphere/ambience of the tourist destination, among others.

The above literature refers to the role of local people in the construction of the destination brand and the message that they transmit to visitors, but it centers on the case of host communities that are currently living in the tourist destination whose brand is under analysis. As far as we know, there is very little research on the influence that local population can exert when they are living abroad; in other words, the influence that emigrant population has on destination branding, and in particular with regard to which brand attributes they communicate (Haug et al., 2007; McClinchey, 2008; Johansson and Cornebise, 2010; and El aouni et al., 2013a and 2013b). Some exceptions include studies on the influence of emigrant communities that form part of ethnic neighborhoods or festivals (Schnell, 2003; McClinchey, 2008; and Sheth, 2010). These studies focus on analyzing how these phenomena should be managed and the attracting effect that they would exert on potential visitors. However, its focus is neither on the role of emigrant or ethnic communities living abroad in the brand construction, nor on the brand construction of the country of origin of these communities.

In this research context, we pose the following research questions to address the research gaps highlighted above: (i) Which are the main elements of the destination brand transmitted by emigrants about their countries of origin? and (ii) What are the emigrants' perceptions about their influence on the construction of their country of origin brand?

## **Methodology**

The data was collected from 45 Moroccan emigrant associations in Spain. The information about the emigrant associations was obtained through the "Moroccan Community Living Abroad" website ([www.marocainsdumonde.gov.ma](http://www.marocainsdumonde.gov.ma)). They were contacted through e-mail in the first round, and then by telephone, to get their collaboration. The data was collected between September 2012 and March 2013. We obtained completed questionnaires from 131 Moroccan emigrants living in Spain, covering people living in 36 different cities in Spain, all around the territory, and coming from 18 different cities in Morocco.

The data was collected through a questionnaire (see Appendix) elaborated in the context of the research project "Communication of Tourist Destinations" CODETUR (CSO 2011-22691) funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation in 2011. The main purpose



of this project was to evaluate the coherence, effectiveness and suitability of the communication regarding tourist destinations. The questionnaire comprised different themes related to the accessibility, usability, commercialization and communication of tourist destinations. One of the themes included was about the destination brand, and it was the specific part of the questionnaire used in this work.

Although the research project CODETUR was focused on the communication of tourist destinations, specially using new Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), we consider it appropriate for this study to use its items about the brand because they may allow us to develop a comparative research in the future and make comparisons between the elements of the brand constructed and communicated by emigrants and by DMO using other media, like the Internet.

Moreover, the items about the brand extracted from the questionnaire of CODETUR were adapted to include the most important elements of a destination brand extracted from previous research (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Beerli and Martín, 2004; Chen and Tsai, 2007; and Alegre and Garau, 2010) to avoid incongruences in the most relevant attributes of destination brands.

The questionnaire comprised four parts. The first one included generic information to determine the profile of the respondents such as gender, age, time living abroad and educational background. The second and the third parts of the questionnaire (with 20 and 31 items, respectively) were about the main elements of the Morocco brand that emigrants emphasize—the second part was about the tangible/functional aspects of the brand, and the third about the intangible/emotional ones. Finally, the last part of the questionnaire included three questions to evaluate the influence that Moroccan emigrants think that they exert in the construction of their country brand, in terms of high, positive and clear contribution. The questionnaire used a 3-point Likert scale for parts two and three, on the tangible and intangible aspects of the brand, ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 3 (Absolutely), conserving the scale of the original CODETUR questionnaire. The final part of the questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 5 (Absolutely).

## Analysis of results

The answers of the respondents were analyzed to obtain the frequencies, average and standard deviation of the items, and to find the existence of significant difference between the values of the brand attributes and the emigrants' perception on their contribution to the brand creation.

A Cronbach test was also conducted to evaluate the internal reliability of the data. Nunnally (1978) stated that if the alpha value is higher than 0.7, the result is reliable. The result obtained was 0.869 for the tangible/functional attributes of the brand, 0.932 for the intangible/emotional elements, and 0.851 for the items of the emigrants' perception on their contribution to their country brand. These values led to the conclusion that the obtained data has a high level of internal consistency.

Table 1 shows the frequencies of demographic characteristics of our sample, the percentages of Moroccan emigrants in each category considering gender, age, time living abroad and educational background.

Table 1 indicates that the sample analyzed consisted a similar percentage of men and women (45.8% and 51.9%, respectively). Also, a majority of the respondents were young in the age group of 20 to 40 years (71.7%), with a considerable number of years living in Spain (people with more than 5 years living in Spain was 81.7%), and with formal education, especially university education (48.9%).

Table 1. Demographic characteristics

|                    | Number | Percentage |
|--------------------|--------|------------|
| <b>Gender</b>      |        |            |
| Men                | 60     | 45.8       |
| Women              | 68     | 51.9       |
| No answer (NA)     | 3      | 2.3        |
| <b>Age (Years)</b> |        |            |
| Less than 20       | 9      | 6.9        |
| 20 to 39           | 94     | 71.7       |
| 40 to 59           | 22     | 16.8       |
| 60 or more         | 0      | 0          |

|                               |    |      |
|-------------------------------|----|------|
| NA                            | 6  | 4.6  |
| <b>Time abroad</b>            |    |      |
| Less than 1 year              | 1  | 0.8  |
| Between 1-5 years             | 20 | 15.3 |
| Between 5-10 years            | 45 | 34.4 |
| More than 10 years            | 62 | 47.3 |
| NA                            | 3  | 2.3  |
| <b>Educational background</b> |    |      |
| Primary education             | 3  | 2.3  |
| Secondary education           | 25 | 19.1 |
| University education          | 64 | 48.9 |
| Master or PhD                 | 35 | 26.7 |
| NA                            | 4  | 3.1  |

Tables 2, 3 and 4 show means and standard deviations for each item of the second, third and fourth parts of the questionnaire, about tangible/functional (Table 2) and intangible/ emotional attributes (Table 3) of the Morocco brand, and about the Moroccan emigrants' contribution to the construction of their country brand (Table 4). Additionally, these tables incorporate t-test and one-way ANOVA analyses to determine the existence of significant differences in the mean values of these items depending on the gender, time living abroad and educational background of Moroccan emigrants. We have not considered the age variable for the group formation because most of the respondents were in the age group of 20 to 40 years. We have also not considered the categories "less than 1 year living in Spain" and "primary education" due to the low number of respondents in each of these categories.

Table 2 indicates that the most valued tangible attributes for Moroccan emigrants in Spain were landscape, nature, beaches, mountains, gastronomy and climate. On the contrary, the less valued ones were related to sports. In addition, there was no significant difference between the tangible/functional elements of the Morocco brand identified by men and women, with a few exceptions like gastronomy, shopping and rural landscape, more valued by women. In a similar manner, no significant difference could be perceived in the tangible/functional attributes of the brand when considering different groups in terms of the

time lived abroad, except for winter and water sports, nor in terms of education, except for landscape and nature, history and beaches.

Table 3 on intangible attributes of the destination brand shows that Moroccan emigrants especially valued hospitality, tradition, joy/fun and multiculturalism. The less valued ones were sustainability and innovation. However, the averages of the mean values given by emigrants to tangible and intangible attributes indicated that the valuation was higher in the case of the intangible elements of the brand (2.04 versus 1.99). In addition, there were some significant differences in the mean values of some of the intangible/emotional attributes when we compare men and women, e.g., tolerance, magic, charm and imagination, multiculturalism, creativity, current situations, seduction, joy, tradition, quality of life, sophistication, religion, and cultural and popular events.

Table 2. Tangible/functional attributes of the brand

| Variables                                  | Man  |      | Woman |      | t       | Between 1 and 5 years |      | Between 5 and 10 years |      | More than 10 years |      | F       | Secondary education |      | University education |      | Master/PhD |      | F       | Total mean  | Total sd |
|--|------|------|-------|------|---------|-----------------------|------|------------------------|------|--------------------|------|---------|---------------------|------|----------------------|------|------------|------|---------|-------------|----------|
|  | mean | sd   | mean  | sd   |         | mean                  | sd   | mean                   | sd   | mean               | sd   |         | mean                | sd   | mean                 | sd   | mean       | sd   |         |             |          |
| Landscape and nature                       | 2.47 | .728 | 2.46  | .611 | .100    | 2.58                  | .607 | 2.36                   | .743 | 2.52               | .620 | 1.069   | 2.79                | .509 | 2.52                 | .618 | 2.20       | .719 | 4.426** | <b>2.47</b> | .666     |
| Cultural heritage and historical monuments | 2.31 | .793 | 2.43  | .676 | -.931   | 2.50                  | .761 | 2.33                   | .707 | 2.35               | .749 | .381    | 2.50                | .834 | 2.39                 | .657 | 2.37       | .731 | 2.386   | 2.37        | .733     |
| History                                    | 2.22 | .796 | 2.07  | .822 | 1.029   | 2.16                  | .765 | 2.20                   | .815 | 2.10               | .831 | .204    | 2.29                | .751 | 2.02                 | .820 | 2.37       | .770 | 2.839*  | 2.14        | .810     |
| Technology                                 | 1.50 | .656 | 1.56  | .632 | -.512   | 1.40                  | .503 | 1.61                   | .689 | 1.52               | .646 | .797    | 1.50                | .590 | 1.60                 | .661 | 1.49       | .658 | 1.025   | 1.53        | .641     |
| Adventure sports                           | 1.53 | .679 | 1.45  | .634 | .664    | 1.35                  | .671 | 1.58                   | .723 | 1.46               | .594 | .926    | 1.46                | .588 | 1.53                 | .712 | 1.47       | .615 | .667    | 1.48        | .654     |
| Night life                                 | 1.64 | .713 | 1.55  | .658 | .751    | 1.55                  | .686 | 1.64                   | .645 | 1.57               | .718 | .188    | 1.46                | .658 | 1.65                 | .626 | 1.66       | .802 | 1.320   | 1.60        | .683     |
| Art work                                   | 1.49 | .751 | 1.56  | .720 | -.515   | 1.50                  | .761 | 1.47                   | .661 | 1.58               | .780 | .329    | 1.75                | .847 | 1.55                 | .754 | 1.40       | .604 | 1.641   | 1.53        | .733     |
| Architecture and urbanism                  | 1.63 | .692 | 1.90  | .831 | -1.971  | 1.50                  | .761 | 1.76                   | .743 | 1.87               | .799 | 1.752   | 1.79                | .884 | 1.83                 | .788 | 1.74       | .701 | 1.116   | 1.77        | .779     |
| Beach                                      | 2.54 | .703 | 2.74  | .509 | -1.764  | 2.60                  | .754 | 2.67                   | .606 | 2.64               | .578 | .104    | 2.92                | .282 | 2.64                 | .606 | 2.57       | .655 | 3.125*  | <b>2.65</b> | .614     |
| Mountain                                   | 2.41 | .746 | 2.63  | .596 | -1.864  | 2.65                  | .671 | 2.56                   | .693 | 2.47               | .671 | .605    | 2.67                | .637 | 2.48                 | .666 | 2.60       | .651 | 1.199   | <b>2.53</b> | .676     |
| Gastronomy/beverage/oenology               | 2.47 | .774 | 2.75  | .532 | -2.267* | 2.40                  | .883 | 2.61                   | .722 | 2.69               | .531 | 1.475   | 2.67                | .565 | 2.63                 | .679 | 2.66       | .639 | .973    | <b>2.62</b> | .668     |
| Hiking                                     | 1.57 | .652 | 1.61  | .699 | -.304   | 1.35                  | .489 | 1.70                   | .741 | 1.59               | .668 | 1.836   | 1.67                | .637 | 1.61                 | .662 | 1.56       | .746 | .911    | 1.59        | .675     |
| Winter sports                              | 1.46 | .625 | 1.44  | .608 | .150    | 1.15                  | .366 | 1.64                   | .679 | 1.40               | .586 | 5.150** | 1.50                | .659 | 1.47                 | .642 | 1.43       | .558 | .617    | 1.45        | .613     |

|                    |      |      |      |      |           |      |      |      |      |      |      |         |      |      |      |      |      |      |       |             |      |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------------|------|
| Water sports       | 1.59 | .673 | 1.51 | .746 | .674      | 1.10 | .308 | 1.73 | .720 | 1.56 | .742 | 5.937** | 1.74 | .810 | 1.48 | .666 | 1.60 | .736 | 1.388 | 1.55        | .711 |
| Climate            | 2.50 | .707 | 2.65 | .540 | -1.327    | 2.42 | .838 | 2.70 | .509 | 2.54 | .621 | 1.618   | 2.70 | .559 | 2.62 | .607 | 2.53 | .615 | 1.326 | <b>2.58</b> | .626 |
| Elite sports       | 1.32 | .507 | 1.37 | .693 | -.467     | 1.20 | .410 | 1.36 | .609 | 1.39 | .665 | .756    | 1.52 | .790 | 1.27 | .542 | 1.43 | .608 | 1.546 | 1.35        | .611 |
| Luxury/Glamour     | 1.75 | .756 | 1.85 | .783 | -.763     | 1.80 | .834 | 1.78 | .704 | 1.82 | .806 | .038    | 1.92 | .881 | 1.84 | .745 | 1.71 | .750 | .748  | 1.80        | .770 |
| Business potential | 2.07 | .763 | 2.00 | .829 | .477      | 1.80 | .834 | 2.04 | .767 | 2.10 | .804 | 1.061   | 2.08 | .776 | 2.08 | .783 | 2.03 | .822 | 1.827 | 2.03        | .796 |
| Shopping           | 2.05 | .804 | 2.55 | .661 | -3.752*** | 2.40 | .821 | 2.19 | .764 | 2.38 | .756 | .924    | 2.46 | .833 | 2.24 | .740 | 2.41 | .743 | .814  | 2.31        | .769 |
| Rural landscape    | 2.21 | .853 | 2.63 | .546 | -3.220**  | 2.33 | .686 | 2.29 | .787 | 2.56 | .692 | 2.067   | 2.61 | .783 | 2.38 | .701 | 2.50 | .707 | 1.033 | <b>2.43</b> | .733 |

p value: \*\*\*<0.001, \*\*<0.01, \*<0.05

Table 3. Intangible/emotional attributes of the brand

| Variables                 | Man  |      | Woman |      | t       | Between 1 and 5 years |      | Between 5 and 10 years |      | More than 10 years |      | F     | Secondary education |      | University education |      | Master/PhD |      | F      | Total mean | Total sd |
|---------------------------|------|------|-------|------|---------|-----------------------|------|------------------------|------|--------------------|------|-------|---------------------|------|----------------------|------|------------|------|--------|------------|----------|
|                           | mean | sd   | mean  | sd   |         | mean                  | sd   | mean                   | sd   | mean               | sd   |       | mean                | sd   | mean                 | sd   | mean       | sd   |        |            |          |
| Tolerance                 | 2.20 | .732 | 2.46  | .659 | -2.129* | 2.60                  | .754 | 2.23                   | .711 | 2.34               | .655 | 2.597 | 2.68                | .557 | 2.29                 | .728 | 2.29       | .667 | 3.282* | 2.34       | .704     |
| Romanticism               | 1.62 | .666 | 1.78  | .735 | -1.276  | 1.85                  | .745 | 1.66                   | .645 | 1.69               | .737 | .676  | 1.96                | .676 | 1.75                 | .740 | 1.49       | .612 | 2.671  | 1.70       | .705     |
| Magic, charm, imagination | 1.88 | .783 | 2.18  | .802 | -2.110* | 1.84                  | .765 | 2.02                   | .731 | 2.13               | .859 | 1.208 | 2.40                | .707 | 1.98                 | .820 | 1.94       | .765 | 2.230  | 2.04       | .804     |
| Innovation                | 1.63 | .736 | 1.53  | .638 | .842    | 1.60                  | .681 | 1.57                   | .695 | 1.56               | .671 | 1.480 | 1.80                | .816 | 1.65                 | .680 | 1.37       | .547 | 2.970* | 1.58       | .685     |
| Non conformity            | 1.58 | .743 | 1.61  | .742 | -.172   | 1.55                  | .686 | 1.45                   | .663 | 1.69               | .786 | 2.139 | 1.84                | .850 | 1.61                 | .710 | 1.43       | .698 | 1.663  | 1.60       | .739     |

|                          |      |      |      |      |          |      |      |      |      |      |      |         |      |      |      |      |      |      |        |             |      |
|--------------------------|------|------|------|------|----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------|-------------|------|
| Exotic aspects           | 1.76 | .802 | 1.79 | .814 | -.201    | 1.60 | .821 | 1.70 | .708 | 1.87 | .853 | 1.497   | 2.00 | .957 | 1.78 | .783 | 1.69 | .718 | 1.753  | 1.77        | .805 |
| Evasion                  | 1.69 | .749 | 1.58 | .705 | .845     | 1.45 | .605 | 1.77 | .751 | 1.58 | .720 | 2.262   | 1.80 | .707 | 1.54 | .697 | 1.76 | .781 | 1.939  | 1.64        | .725 |
| Modernity                | 1.85 | .685 | 2.00 | .784 | -1.138   | 1.95 | .705 | 1.84 | .680 | 1.97 | .789 | .967    | 2.17 | .761 | 1.87 | .751 | 1.97 | .664 | 2.676  | 1.93        | .739 |
| Cosmopolitanism          | 1.72 | .715 | 1.79 | .795 | -.527    | 1.65 | .671 | 1.73 | .727 | 1.79 | .798 | 1.092   | 1.60 | .645 | 1.79 | .792 | 1.89 | .758 | 1.774  | 1.75        | .756 |
| Sustainability           | 1.37 | .645 | 1.41 | .629 | -.380    | 1.45 | .605 | 1.43 | .728 | 1.34 | .574 | .340    | 1.42 | .717 | 1.43 | .665 | 1.35 | .544 | .498   | 1.39        | .634 |
| Social responsibility    | 1.83 | .752 | 1.99 | .743 | -1.181   | 2.05 | .759 | 1.73 | .751 | 2.00 | .730 | 2.078   | 1.96 | .690 | 1.87 | .772 | 1.97 | .747 | .167   | 1.91        | .749 |
| Multiculturalism         | 2.30 | .830 | 2.58 | .631 | -2.138*  | 2.65 | .671 | 2.34 | .776 | 2.48 | .718 | 2.175   | 2.48 | .823 | 2.44 | .713 | 2.57 | .655 | 2.753* | <b>2.45</b> | .742 |
| Entertainment            | 2.23 | .789 | 2.33 | .824 | -.662    | 2.20 | .894 | 2.32 | .740 | 2.27 | .833 | .360    | 2.32 | .852 | 2.33 | .803 | 2.31 | .718 | 2.794* | 2.28        | .806 |
| Creativity               | 1.85 | .777 | 2.15 | .789 | -2.157*  | 2.15 | .875 | 1.89 | .754 | 2.05 | .805 | .605    | 1.92 | .812 | 2.18 | .779 | 1.89 | .758 | 3.083* | 2.01        | .795 |
| Senses/sensory           | 1.89 | .838 | 2.00 | .816 | -.707    | 1.78 | .808 | 2.00 | .835 | 1.95 | .825 | .852    | 2.00 | .834 | 2.00 | .816 | 1.91 | .853 | .676   | 1.95        | .825 |
| Current events/situation | 1.93 | .728 | 2.22 | .739 | -2.143*  | 2.00 | .795 | 2.10 | .726 | 2.12 | .745 | .832    | 2.29 | .751 | 2.12 | .715 | 1.94 | .776 | 1.414  | 2.08        | .745 |
| Seduction                | 1.70 | .755 | 2.04 | .860 | -2.339*  | 2.16 | .834 | 1.56 | .666 | 2.02 | .866 | 4.364** | 2.25 | .944 | 1.87 | .785 | 1.74 | .780 | 2.428  | 1.89        | .828 |
| Joy/fun                  | 2.20 | .738 | 2.62 | .630 | -3.354** | 2.61 | .698 | 2.23 | .718 | 2.52 | .671 | 3.313*  | 2.58 | .654 | 2.49 | .674 | 2.29 | .750 | 2.283  | <b>2.42</b> | .711 |
| Youth/freshness          | 2.29 | .726 | 2.46 | .682 | -1.346   | 2.47 | .612 | 2.35 | .686 | 2.37 | .752 | .394    | 2.48 | .714 | 2.37 | .683 | 2.44 | .660 | 1.302  | 2.38        | .705 |
| Dynamism/vitality        | 2.07 | .841 | 2.20 | .754 | -.934    | 2.10 | .788 | 2.07 | .799 | 2.18 | .806 | .562    | 2.24 | .831 | 2.11 | .777 | 2.17 | .785 | .520   | 2.14        | .797 |
| Tranquillity             | 2.22 | .804 | 2.41 | .629 | -1.514   | 2.35 | .671 | 2.24 | .712 | 2.39 | .732 | 1.493   | 2.28 | .737 | 2.36 | .698 | 2.34 | .725 | .290   | 2.32        | .720 |
| Tradition                | 2.42 | .766 | 2.78 | .487 | -3.116** | 2.65 | .671 | 2.51 | .695 | 2.66 | .629 | .574    | 2.67 | .565 | 2.61 | .681 | 2.66 | .591 | 1.016  | <b>2.61</b> | .657 |
| Hospitality              | 2.53 | .731 | 2.71 | .600 | -1.423   | 2.68 | .671 | 2.64 | .650 | 2.63 | .659 | 2.092   | 2.68 | .627 | 2.58 | .714 | 2.77 | .490 | 1.664  | <b>2.63</b> | .666 |
| Quality of life          | 2.05 | .723 | 2.31 | .701 | -2.083*  | 2.20 | .834 | 2.09 | .668 | 2.25 | .722 | .836    | 2.25 | .737 | 2.25 | .667 | 2.11 | .758 | .863   | 2.19        | .721 |
| Rigor/Severity           | 1.64 | .713 | 1.83 | .692 | -1.504   | 1.95 | .826 | 1.71 | .727 | 1.68 | .628 | 1.865   | 1.80 | .707 | 1.80 | .679 | 1.66 | .765 | .703   | 1.74        | .706 |

|                             |      |      |      |      |          |      |      |      |      |      |      |         |      |      |      |      |      |      |        |      |      |
|-----------------------------|------|------|------|------|----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------|------|------|
| Sophistication              | 1.54 | .625 | 1.84 | .687 | -2.494*  | 2.05 | .621 | 1.52 | .590 | 1.69 | .692 | 4.327** | 1.72 | .792 | 1.69 | .616 | 1.77 | .690 | 1.230  | 1.70 | .673 |
| Ambition                    | 1.86 | .753 | 1.91 | .805 | -.341    | 2.11 | .809 | 1.80 | .757 | 1.87 | .778 | 1.386   | 2.16 | .850 | 1.90 | .756 | 1.77 | .731 | 2.693* | 1.89 | .779 |
| Power                       | 1.80 | .846 | 1.92 | .810 | -.861    | 2.11 | .737 | 1.82 | .834 | 1.80 | .840 | 1.339   | 1.96 | .908 | 1.89 | .791 | 1.86 | .845 | 1.219  | 1.86 | .826 |
| Diversity                   | 2.18 | .792 | 2.41 | .784 | -1.607   | 2.35 | .988 | 2.29 | .727 | 2.28 | .783 | .293    | 2.16 | .850 | 2.40 | .708 | 2.35 | .849 | 2.193  | 2.30 | .793 |
| Religion                    | 2.15 | .867 | 2.55 | .610 | -2.954** | 2.55 | .686 | 2.36 | .773 | 2.31 | .786 | .734    | 2.42 | .776 | 2.37 | .768 | 2.40 | .736 | .280   | 2.37 | .765 |
| Cultural and popular events | 2.03 | .718 | 2.40 | .736 | -2.805** | 2.25 | .786 | 2.18 | .716 | 2.26 | .767 | .158    | 2.21 | .721 | 2.22 | .806 | 2.31 | .631 | .249   | 2.23 | .747 |

p value: \*\*\*<0.001, \*\*<0.01, \*<0.05

Table 4. Evaluation of the emigrants' contribution to the brand construction

| Variables             | Man  |      | Woman |      | t      | Between 1 and 5 years |      | Between 5 and 10 years |      | More than 10 years |      | F     | Secondary education |      | University education |      | Master/PhD |      | F       | Total mean | Total sd |
|-----------------------|------|------|-------|------|--------|-----------------------|------|------------------------|------|--------------------|------|-------|---------------------|------|----------------------|------|------------|------|---------|------------|----------|
|                       | mean | sd   | mean  | sd   |        | mean                  | sd   | mean                   | sd   | mean               | sd   |       | mean                | sd   | mean                 | sd   | mean       | sd   |         |            |          |
| High contribution     | 3.82 | 1.20 | 3.96  | 1.04 | -.702  | 4.05                  | .999 | 3.82                   | 1.07 | 3.87               | 1.19 | .521  | 4.20                | .913 | 4.00                 | 1.05 | 3.71       | 1.13 | 4.522** | 3.89       | 1.12     |
| Positive contribution | 3.90 | 1.08 | 4.11  | 1.01 | -1.104 | 3.95                  | 1.22 | 4.05                   | .987 | 3.98               | 1.05 | .345  | 4.28                | .843 | 4.19                 | .955 | 3.69       | 1.05 | 4.543** | 4.01       | 1.05     |
| Clear contribution    | 3.78 | 1.15 | 3.91  | 1.07 | -.645  | 4.10                  | 1.02 | 3.64                   | 1.06 | 3.90               | 1.15 | 1.305 | 4.20                | 1.04 | 3.94                 | .998 | 3.69       | 1.10 | 4.547** | 3.85       | 1.11     |

p value: \*\*\*<0.001, \*\*<0.01, \*<0.05



As we can see, the differences affected a major number of intangible attributes of the brand than tangible ones. In all these elements, the values given by women were higher than the valuation given by men. When the differences between the mean values of intangible/emotional attributes of the destination brand are considered comparing different categories of emigrants in terms of their time living abroad, less significant differences were observed. It has been just the case of seduction, joy/fun and sophistication, especially valued by people with fewer years abroad. Finally, when we compare the valuation of intangible/emotional attributes of the brand given by emigrants with different educational background, we observe significant differences in tolerance, innovation, multiculturalism, entertainment, creativity and ambition.

Table 4 shows the results of the perception of Moroccan emigrants of their contribution to the construction of the brand, in response to three questions if their contribution is high, positive or clear. The findings reveal pretty high mean values for these three questions. The most valued one was the positive contribution, and the lower one was clearness. When we compare different categories of emigrants, it is interesting to observe that it is not possible to determine significant difference in the values given by men and women, neither in the values given by emigrants with different tenure in Spain. However, when we compare the values given by emigrants with different educational background, significant differences can be seen for the three questions, and always the values given by emigrants with master or Ph.D. degree was lower than that given by other emigrants.

## **Discussion**

Most of the existing research on the elements of destination brands has been conducted from an external approach, considering tourists' perceptions, as the recipients of the brand, and the image that they have of tourist destinations and their brands (Konecnik and Go, 2008). Less attention has been paid to the influence of the brand builders in the process of destination branding, and specifically their influence on the brand content. On the other hand, the literature from an internal approach has basically analyzed the role of DMO and their management work and responsibility to construct the brand (Govers and Go, 2004). In recent years, however, this literature has started considering the relevance of local people in the construction of the destination brand (Andriotis and

Vaughan, 2003; García et al., 2012; and Woosman, 2013). The underlying reason for this change might be the influence that people have in transmitting a message that creates a difference, especially in the case of similar tourist destinations. This influence is more important than the one exerted by public and private institutions, whose contact with visitors and potential tourists is much more ambiguous.

The role of emigrants could be considered even stronger than the influence of local people currently living in the tourist destination. From our point of view, this statement can be justified through two main reasons. The first one is that the influence of emigrants could be exerted on a broader amount of people, not just actual tourists, but potential ones and people who perhaps never have thought about visiting their countries. The second reason is because sometimes the sense of belonging that makes a real difference to enhance the value of a place can be stronger in the case of people living abroad. Despite its importance, the literature has neglected the role of emigrants in the construction of destination brands of their countries of origin. All these arguments encourage developing an exploratory study on this matter.

Our results on different groups of Moroccan emigrants living in Spain reveal that these emigrants really think that they have a high, positive and clear contribution to the construction of the Morocco brand. And this result can be generalized for all the groups considered, independently on their gender, time living abroad or educational background. This perception is a bit lower in the case of emigrants with higher educational qualifications, perhaps because they have a more critical perspective of their influence on the construction of a brand for their country.

The analysis of the Morocco brand transmitted by emigrants lets us to observe the most important elements, which are landscape, nature, beaches, mountains, gastronomy and climate, as tangible/functional elements of the brand; and hospitality, tradition, joy/ fun and multiculturalism, as intangible/emotional ones. The less valued aspects in both categories were related to sports, sustainability and innovation. Also, it must be mentioned that it is possible to observe some significant differences in the values given by different kinds of emigrants. For example, women gave high values especially to certain tangible elements like gastronomy, shopping and rural landscape, and to some intangible ones like tolerance, magic, charm and imagination, multiculturalism,

creativity, current situations, seduction, joy/fun, tradition, quality of life, sophistication, religion, and cultural and popular events. In a similar manner, seduction, joy/fun and sophistication were especially valued by people with fewer years abroad. And finally, emigrants with lower levels of education gave high values to landscape, nature and beaches, while tolerance, innovation, multiculturalism, entertainment, creativity and ambition were valued differently depending on the educational background of the emigrants. These results suggest that brand identity communicated by emigrants could be affected by their demographic characteristics. It leads us to question the existence of a “prototype ambassador” on whom to concentrate brand management actions.

### **Conclusion**

The main contribution of this study is to show the most relevant attributes of the Morocco brand constructed by Moroccan emigrants and the differences in the brand identity depending on their characteristics. The results of this study point out that a good knowledge of the emigrant population living abroad and their demographic characteristics might affect the contents of the Morocco brand transmitted by them. Thus, these findings could be a guide to orientate DMO about the brand that they should build and transmit through different media. Good previous knowledge of the brand already transmitted by emigrants can avoid incongruences on the message constructed about the country and can help to improve the brand by strengthening the most relevant aspects already transmitted by people and/or by complementing their message.

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## **THE MOROCCO BRAND FROM THE MOROCCAN EMIGRANTS' PERSPECTIVE**

**ABSTRACT** The aim of this work is twofold: on the one hand, it consists of determining the main elements of the Morocco brand constructed and transmitted by Moroccan emigrants, and on the other it explores whether this brand is convergent and coherent or, on the contrary, diverges depending on the socio-demographic profile of Moroccan emigrants. To achieve these objectives, data from 131 Moroccan emigrants living in Spain were collected through a questionnaire. The findings sum up the most relevant factors of the Morocco brand transmitted by emigrants to the local population in Spain. These elements are: environment, infrastructures and activities, culture and innovation, as functional attributes of the country brand; and the contrast of old and new life, including hospitality, religion, traditions but also modernity, cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism, and lifestyle as emotional attributes. Moroccan emigrants highlight emotional attributes more than functional ones to characterise Morocco. Our data also show that Moroccan emigrants construct and transmit a convergent and coherent brand, despite their differences in age, gender and education. At a theoretical level, we conclude that this work contributes to a scarce literature on the analysis of destination branding from an internal point of view, and more specifically with regard to the role of migration on the brand construction. Moreover, from a practical point of view this study offers important insights to be considered by destination management organisations (DMO) in order to align all the multiple voices from different stakeholders of a destination brand into a coherent and non-contradictory message. In addition, this study entails implications for DMO regarding the appropriate use of emigrants as potential ambassadors of a destination brand.

**Keywords:** destination branding; brand identity; Morocco brand; Moroccan emigrants

### **INTRODUCTION**

The research on destination branding has used multiple approaches. Its principal focus has been on analysing the brand image, from an external perspective, considering the

perception of tourists on a destination brand, because this image may affect the consumer behaviour of tourist products. By contrast, the analysis of destination branding from the supply side, centred in the brand identity, has received less attention (Konecnik and Go, 2008). This latter approach focuses on the influence exerted by the builders of the destination brand, connected through different channels and media with the users, consumers or visitors of a specific tourist destination (Aaker, 1996; Hankinson, 2004; Kaplan et al, 2010).

The analysis of brand identity usually adopts a top-down approach (Bennett and Savani, 2003; Campelo et al, 2009), which means that it is centred in the influence of destination management organisations (DMO), governments and public and private institutions through their agencies for economic or tourism development. However, other stakeholders are also involved in the process of place branding and need to be empowered as active agents in the creation, development and communication of place brands (Bennett and Savani, 2003; Kavaratzis, 2012). It is the case of local people who also exert an important contribution on the construction of destination brands. García et al (2012, p. 648) stated that ‘local people may be an important factor when distinguishing and selling a destination brand, and it would be problematic not taking them into account when constructing the destination brand identity’. Andriotis and Vaughan (2003) also pointed out that the relevance of residents’ attitudes is an outstanding topic in an extensive number of studies; and Woosman (2013) stated that this perspective is gaining a great consideration in tourism academic research.

The relevance of local population in the construction of a destination brand is evident when differentiating between similar tourist destinations in competition becomes complicated. In these cases, the strong sense of belonging that local people usually show towards their region of origin plays an important role in the construction of the destination brand and its appropriate communication to increase the appeal of the destination to potential tourists (Campelo et al., 2009; Freire, 2009).

However, this research has neglected the role played by local people living abroad, such as emigrants, who might also influence destination branding (Haug et al, 2007; McClinchey, 2008; Johansson and Cornebise, 2010). This gap in research is surprising given the similarities in the characteristics commented above between local people

living currently in the territory and emigrants of this place living abroad. Furthermore, emigrants develop a sense of belonging towards the region of origin that may be stronger than that of local people (Campelo et al., 2009).

However, the attention given to emigrants in the existing literature of migration in tourism considers emigrants just as workers in the hospitality sector (Janta et al, 2011a, b; Janta, 2011; Joppe, 2012) and has neglected their role as potential builders of their country of origin brand.

The relevance of local people in the construction of destination brands, and particularly the scant attention paid to the role of emigrants as local people living abroad, invited us to conduct an exploratory study on Moroccan emigrants living in Spain, concerning their role in the construction of Morocco destination brand.

In particular, we explore what are the main attributes of the brand constructed by these emigrants about their country of origin, and if the brand constructed is a coherent and convergent one, or on the contrary, if it diverges depending on the socio-demographic characteristics of emigrants.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE INFLUENCE OF LOCAL PEOPLE ON DESTINATION BRANDING**

A review of recent research on destination branding shows that the focus of most of the works has been determined in a top-down manner, centred on the role of government authorities and DMO in the destination-branding process (Bennett and Savani, 2003; Campelo et al., 2009). These studies basically analyse the strategies of tourism development created by authorities and DMO for improving the tourism product offering, its branding and communication (Govers and Go, 2004).

However, an increasing stream of research is pointing out the risk of not taking into account other stakeholders such as entrepreneurs, companies in the tourism sector, visitors and local people, whose roles and contributions are also important for the formation of the destination brand (Baker, 2007; Campelo et al., 2009; García et al., 2012). As Kavaratzis (2012, p. 7) pointed out, 'there is an urgent need to rethink place



branding towards a more participation-oriented practice, based on the centrality of stakeholders in the creation, development and ownership of place brands'. This need entails to offer stakeholders the real chance to participate in branding their tourist destinations, positioning the brand and making it different from others, because having conflicting voices and generating dialogue and debate might favour the flows of new perspectives and ideas that enrich the branding process (Baker, 2007; Houghton and Stevens, 2011; Pike, 2012). Thus, stakeholders should be thought as active groups of people motivated to define their own meaning of the place, and should collaborate and be engaged during the whole branding process (D'Angela and Go, 2009; Kavaratzis, 2012).

In the specific case of local people, Freire (2009, p. 420) establishes that 'local people are relevant and important for a destination brand-building process'. Campelo et al. (2009, p. 2) also suggest that 'it makes sense to include residents and ad-hoc communities in the process of branding'. The relevance of including local people in the process of branding resides in their potential to communicate through their experiences and narratives and to exert some influences on visitors (Govers and Go, 2004). Braun et al. (2013, p. 19) recognised different roles of residents in place branding: as an integrated part of a place brand, because their interactions form the social context of their places; as citizens, who can contribute in destination branding through their votes and participation in political decisions; and as ambassadors for the place brand, who provide informal, authentic and insider sources of information about the destination. Thus, local people add authenticity and distinctiveness to the brand of their territories, and their value emerges when it is crucial to differentiate places, especially in destinations that share similar characteristics (Croes et al., 2013). Table 1 summarises some studies that highlight the value of local people coming from their core competencies as hosts, their strong relationship with visitors, and their sense of belonging to their region of origin.

**Table 1:** Local people and destination branding

| <i>Authors</i>               | <i>Value of local people</i>   | <i>Conclusions</i>  |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| Campelo <i>et al.</i> , 2009 | Sense of place of local people   | The attributes that local people attach to place create the sense of place, and the interaction between them are fundamental to the place brand   |
| Freire, 2009                 | Local people as a differentiation factor   | Place image is likely to be created by stereotyping the 'typical' local people. Tourist employees can be considered a factor to justify consumption and can differentiate positively and negatively distinct offers in the market |
| García <i>et al.</i> , 2012  | Double effect of local people, as members of the local society, and as workers within the tourist industry | DMO must develop a two-stage strategy, focussing first on the stakeholders closest to the destination, including local people   |
| Kavaratzis, 2012             | Different roles of local people  | Residents act as citizens, integrated part and ambassadors of a place brand, and thus it is a necessity to engage them in place branding  |
| Salazar, 2012                | Local guides develop a role as ambassadors   | Tour guides are often the only 'locals' with whom tourists expend considerable time; they influence the image-building process of people and places, and shape tourist destination images   |
| Yen, 2013                    | Sport people act as ambassadors of their countries   | Sport people can be successful in promoting informal international relations, engaging in so-called practical diplomacy instead of formal political diplomacy   |

Most of the studies centred in the role of local people as builders of the destination brand have been interested in the elements of the brand that they tend to transmit. These brand associations have typically been classified into two categories that comprise two dimensions (Iversen and Hem, 2008): cognitive and affective. Balakrishnan (2009) established that the positioning and differentiation can be achieved through brand components, which can be tangible or intangible, and functional or symbolic. This author also pointed out the parallelism between the tangible, visual or functional attributes of the brand and the intangible, emotional or symbolic elements. The first group of brand components can be interpreted as beliefs about the physical attributes of a place, or the evaluation of the known physical attributes of the destination. The second group, on the other hand, refers to feelings and emotional responses to the destination experience. The literature on the attributes of destination brand usually considers some common elements such as landscape, climate, sports, facilities, infrastructures, shopping, history and so on, into the first group of functional attributes; and pleasant, exciting, sophisticated, boring and so on, into the second group of intangible or symbolic ones. Normally, research approaches this topic considering generic attributes of the brand that identify and can be applied to different tourist destinations (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Beerli and Martín, 2004; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Alegre and Garau, 2010). However, there are also studies that analyse some specific attributes, which are especially relevant and characteristic of particular tourist destinations, for example the value of 'green' in the case of Slovenia (Konecnik and de Chernatony, 2013) or the alpine identity for tourism in South Tyrol, Italy (Sartori *et al.*, 2012).

In the specific case of Morocco, in which this research is centred, the study of its brand has also raised interest in research, as Table 2 shows. These studies emphasise the following attributes of the Morocco brand as a tourist destination, transmitted by different stakeholders and media.

**Table 2:** Morocco brand

| <i>Authors</i>                  | <i>Topic</i>  | <i>Conclusions</i>   |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Shanka, 2001                    | Comparing tourism slogans in different African countries: Botswana, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, Zambia                                      | The slogans in this study were perceived to be similar and fit into three categories: warmth, hospitality and natural  |
| López-Lara, 2005                | Tourist image of Morocco through the Internet   | Cultural duality, a mix between Occident and Orient, exotic destination, culture, architecture and gastronomy  |
| Govers and Go, 2007             | Elements of Morocco brand from pre-visit perceived image of tourists  | Hot, smell, culture, spice, desert, colour, building, Arab, markets, street, Casablanca, Muslin, African, sun, camels, tea   |
| Kendall and Gursoy, 2007        | Comparing the positioning of the brand in different Mediterranean countries (Italy, Egypt, Morocco, Spain, Greece, Cyprus, Malta, Turkey) through data provided by World Travel & Tourism Council | A positioning map was obtained that revealed that the closely competitive destinations show competitiveness indicators that cluster together   |
| Pitt <i>et al.</i> , 2007       | Brand personality dimensions through websites in Angola, Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Morocco, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe   | Morocco is known for its sophistication, rich Arabian heritage, its exclusive cuisine and hotels, as well as the numerous traditional Kasbahs that a tourist might encounter on shopping trips |
| El Wartiti <i>et al.</i> , 2008 | Analysis of landscapes, rock and fossils in the Tabular Middle Atlas of Morocco   | Geological heritage sites, properly managed, can generate employment and new economic activities like ecotourism and geotourism  |
| El aouni <i>et al.</i> , 2013b  | Role of emigrants and institutional websites in the construction of Morocco brand   | Relevance of the intangible aspects in the Morocco brand constructed by emigrants  |

As can be seen, the research has analysed normally the Morocco brand not separately, but in comparison with other close tourist destinations in Africa or in the Mediterranean area, and using secondary data, the image of tourists, or information from institutional websites. Thus, it would be appropriate to complete this research with a deeper study on the composition of the Morocco destination brand, and considering the role of local people in its construction. In addition, given the relevance of migration in Morocco, it would be especially relevant to analyse the influence that local population can exert when they are living abroad; in other words, the influence that emigrant population has on destination branding (Haug *et al.*, 2007; McClinchey, 2008; Johansson and Cornebise, 2010; El aouni *et al.*, 2013a). As far as we know, scant research has been interested in analysing this influence, although some related topics can be found, specifically about the value of emigrants and ethnicity for territories, as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Migration and destination branding

| <i>Authors</i>             | <i>Value of migration/ethnicity</i>                                | <i>Conclusions</i>   |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| Singh, 1995                | Emigrants are custodians of their country of origin's values       | Emigrant Hindu women in South Africa maintain and emphasise their ethnic identity and continuity with tradition through their personal beliefs and behaviour   |
| Tiesler and Cairns, 2007   | Emigrant associations promote their original identity in the media | Youth Association of the Islamic Community in Lisbon is frequently asked to speak about Islam-related issues in the Portuguese media. Islam and Muslimness are important to them and they have become more engaged in Muslim |
| Casado <i>et al</i> , 2010 | Attachment to homeland of emigrants                                | This factor explains the migratory grief experience among emigrants and the special strength of their narratives about their countries   |
| Sheth, 2010                | Economic value of migration for a place                            | Defining a place in ethnic terms attracts outsiders to an area and bolsters local commerce and tourism   |

These studies analyse how migrant population maintain and emphasise their identity, acting as ambassadors of their territories, and how ethnicity fostered by migration in some point, when well organised and managed, might constitute a value through its attracting effect on residents and visitors. However, the topics of the research revised do not consider the role of emigrants and ethnic communities living abroad in the formation of the destination brand of their countries of origin.

In this research context, we pose the following research questions in order to address the research gaps highlighted above:

First, which are the main attributes of the Morocco brand constructed by Moroccan emigrants?

And second, is the Morocco brand formed by emigrants convergent and coherent, or does it depend on the socio-demographic characteristics of Moroccan emigrants?

This study aims to respond to these two research questions, developing an exploratory research on Moroccan emigrants living in Spain.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### ***Data collection***

Data for responding to the research questions proposed were collected through the contact with 45 Moroccan emigrant associations in Spain. This host country was chosen because Spain has traditionally been a receptor for the migration movements of Moroccans. Moroccan migration to Spain grew especially since 2000 because of the wealth and the employment rates in the Spanish economy at this moment. The official

number of Moroccan people living in Spain in 2010 was 788.768, and this number has grown by 40.888 people in 2011 (INE, 2013).

The information about the emigrant associations was obtained through the ‘Moroccan Community Living Abroad’ website ([http://en: marocainsdumonde.gov.ma/](http://en.marocainsdumonde.gov.ma/)). They were contacted in the period between October 2012 and December 2012 by e-mail, in a first round, and later on by telephone, to get their collaboration. The data were collected between September 2012 and March 2013. We obtained completed questionnaires from 131 Moroccan emigrants living in Spain, covering people who live in 36 different cities in Spain, all around the territory, and coming from 18 different cities in Morocco.

### *The questionnaire*

Data were collected through a questionnaire elaborated in the context of the research project ‘Communication of tourist destinations’ CODETUR (CSO 2011-22691) funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation in 2011. For the purposes of this work, we only use the specific part of the CODETUR questionnaire about destination brands. We considered it appropriate because it was applicable and comprehensive, including functional and emotional dimensions of destination brands, and also because it specifically further develops the emotional attributes that had been less analysed by previous research (Beerli and Martin, 2004; Pike, 2010). The choice of the CODETUR questionnaire is also justified because in future research we would like to develop comparative research between the elements of the brand constructed and communicated by emigrants and those communicated by DMO using other media, such as the Internet, the latter being the main objective of the CODETUR project.

Moreover, the brand items from the CODETUR questionnaire were adapted to avoid incongruence with the most important elements of a destination brand outlined by previous research (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Beerli and Martín, 2004; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Alegre and Garau, 2010; Pike, 2010).

In our case, the brand attributes included are general ones that can be applied and identify different tourist destinations, including Morocco. The content of the scales was checked by two experts, involved either professionally or academically with tourism,

whose opinions were considered in the final version of the questionnaire to assure a wide and complete picture of Morocco and avoid stereotypes about this country as a tourist destination.

The questionnaire was composed of three parts. The first one included generic information to determine the profile of the respondents, with questions such as gender, age, time living abroad and educational background. The second and the third parts of the questionnaire (with 20 and 31 items, respectively) were about the main attributes of the Morocco brand that emigrants emphasise, the second part was about the functional aspects of the brand and the third about the emotional ones. The questionnaire used a 3-point Likert scale for parts two and three, on the attributes of the brand, ranging from 1 (not at all/not applicable) to 3 (a great deal), conserving the scale of the original CODETUR questionnaire.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The answers of the respondents were analysed to obtain the frequencies, average and standard deviation of the items, and to find the existence of significant differences between the values of the brand attributes given by Moroccan emigrants.

Table 4 shows the frequencies of demographic characteristics of our sample, the percentages of Moroccan emigrants in each category considering gender, age, time living abroad and educational background.

**Table 4:** Sample characteristics

|                               | <i>Number</i> | <i>Percentage (%)</i> |
|-------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Gender</i>                 |               |                       |
| Man                           | 60            | 45.8                  |
| Woman                         | 68            | 51.9                  |
| No answer (NA)                | 3             | 2.3                   |
| <i>Age</i>                    |               |                       |
| Less than 20 years            | 9             | 6.9                   |
| Between 20 and 39 years       | 94            | 71.7                  |
| Between 40 and 59 years       | 22            | 16.8                  |
| 60 years or more              | 0             | 0                     |
| NA                            | 6             | 4.6                   |
| <i>Time abroad</i>            |               |                       |
| Less than 1 year              | 1             | 0.8                   |
| Between 1 and 5 years         | 20            | 15.3                  |
| Between 5 and 10 years        | 45            | 34.4                  |
| More than 10 years            | 62            | 47.3                  |
| NA                            | 3             | 2.3                   |
| <i>Educational background</i> |               |                       |
| Primary education             | 3             | 2.3                   |
| Secondary education           | 25            | 19.1                  |
| University education          | 64            | 48.9                  |
| Master's or PhD               | 35            | 26.7                  |
| NA                            | 4             | 3.1                   |

As can be observed, the sample analysed was composed of a similar percentage of men and women (45.8 per cent and 51.9 per cent, respectively). In addition, the majority of the respondents were young people, between 20 and 40 years of age (71.7 per cent), with a considerable number of years living in Spain (the addition of people with more than 5 years living in Spain was 81.7 per cent), and with formal education, especially at university level (48.9 per cent).

A Cronbach test was also conducted in order to evaluate the internal reliability of the data (Pike, 2010). The results obtained were 0.869 for the functional attributes of the brand and 0.932 for the emotional elements. These values lead to the conclusion that the obtained data have a high level of internal consistency.

Given the closeness of many of the brand attributes, in both groups functional and emotional, and to provide more meaningful analysis, two exploratory factor analyses (EFA) were conducted, with Principal Components Analysis and varimax rotation. The first EFA, as Table 5 shows, was applied to the functional attributes of the Morocco brand and generated six factors that explained 64.5 per cent of variance. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling was 0.782 and Bartlett’s test of sphericity was significant (P-value<=0.000).

**Table 5:** Exploratory factor analysis: functional attributes of the Morocco brand

| Factors                                    | Alpha | Factor loadings | Eigenvalue | Variance | Comm. |
|--|-------|-----------------|------------|----------|-------|
| <b>SPORTS</b>                              | 0.793 | —               | 5.839      | 14.47    | —     |
| Adventure sports                           | —     | 0.69            | —          | —        | 0.61  |
| Hiking                                     | —     | 0.77            | —          | —        | 0.68  |
| Winter sports                              | —     | 0.86            | —          | —        | 0.80  |
| Water sports                               | —     | 0.74            | —          | —        | 0.63  |
| <b>ENVIRONMENT</b>                         | 0.711 | —               | 2.109      | 13.54    | —     |
| Landscape and nature                       | —     | 0.58            | —          | —        | 0.62  |
| Beach                                      | —     | 0.81            | —          | —        | 0.77  |
| Mountain                                   | —     | 0.66            | —          | —        | 0.58  |
| Climate                                    | —     | 0.53            | —          | —        | 0.53  |
| <b>INFRASTRUCT/ACTIVITIES</b>              | 0.690 | —               | 1.580      | 11.35    | —     |
| Architecture and urbanism                  | —     | 0.60            | —          | —        | 0.61  |
| Eating/drinking                            | —     | 0.63            | —          | —        | 0.64  |
| Shopping                                   | —     | 0.75            | —          | —        | 0.66  |
| Rural activities                           | —     | 0.63            | —          | —        | 0.62  |
| <b>MONEY/LUXURY/STATUS</b>                 | 0.677 | —               | 1.202      | 9.67     | —     |
| Art work                                   | —     | 0.46            | —          | —        | 0.59  |
| Golf                                       | —     | 0.71            | —          | —        | 0.69  |
| Glamour                                    | —     | 0.77            | —          | —        | 0.75  |
| Business potential                         | —     | 0.55            | —          | —        | 0.57  |
| <b>CULTURE AND INNOVATION</b>              | 0.614 | 1.111           | 1.111      | 8.23     | —     |
| Cultural heritage and historical monuments | —     | 0.73            | —          | —        | 0.74  |
| History                                    | —     | 0.53            | —          | —        | 0.59  |
| Technology                                 | —     | 0.58            | —          | —        | 0.61  |
| <b>NIGHTLIFE</b>                           | 1.00  | —               | 1.058      | 7.25     | —     |
| Nightlife                                  | —     | 0.77            | —          | —        | 0.63  |
| Total Variance                             | —     | —               | —          | 64.50    | —     |

The first factor has been labelled ‘Sports’, as it consists of different kinds of sports such as water and winter sports, hiking and adventure sports. The second factor, ‘Environment’, includes items related to landscape, nature and climate. Factor three, ‘Infrastructures and Activities’, relates to the relevance of architecture, urbanism and different tourist activities such as shopping, eating, drinking and so on. The fourth factor, labelled ‘Money/Luxury/Glamour’, contains attributes related to elite and economic potential. Factor five, ‘Culture and Innovation’, relates to the perception that emigrants have regarding heritage, monuments, history and technology. Finally, factor six only considers one attribute ‘Nightlife’, which is not related to any other.

The second EFA analysis (Table 6) was conducted over the emotional attributes of the Morocco brand and generated eight factors, explaining 68.85 per cent of the variance. In this case, the cleanest rotated solution was obtained by omitting two attributes: Ecology/Sustainability and Cultural/Popular events, which did not correlate with any other variables at the fourth level. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling was 0.812 and Bartlett’s test of sphericity was significant (P-value<=0.000).



**Table 6:** Exploratory factor analysis: emotional attributes of the Morocco Brand

| <i>Factors</i>                 | <i>Alpha</i> | <i>Factor loadings</i> | <i>Eigenvalue</i> | <i>Variance</i> | <i>Comm.</i> |
|--------------------------------|--------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| <i>SENSES and CHANGE</i>       | 0.851        | —                      | 10.217            | 13.62           | —            |
| Magic/charm                    | —            | 0.67                   | —                 | —               | 0.68         |
| Nonconformity                  | —            | 0.57                   | —                 | —               | 0.54         |
| Exotic                         | —            | 0.81                   | —                 | —               | 0.78         |
| Evasion                        | —            | 0.60                   | —                 | —               | 0.57         |
| Entertainment                  | —            | 0.42                   | —                 | —               | 0.69         |
| Creativity                     | —            | 0.58                   | —                 | —               | 0.62         |
| Sensory                        | —            | 0.76                   | —                 | —               | 0.72         |
| Seduction                      | —            | 0.43                   | —                 | —               | 0.61         |
| <i>LIFESTYLE</i>               | 0.809        | —                      | 2.068             | 12.26           | —            |
| Youth                          | —            | 0.73                   | —                 | —               | 0.71         |
| Vitality                       | —            | 0.71                   | —                 | —               | 0.70         |
| Tranquility                    | —            | 0.76                   | —                 | —               | 0.77         |
| Quality of life                | —            | 0.61                   | —                 | —               | 0.68         |
| <i>VALUES</i>                  | 0.676        | —                      | 1.556             | 8.51            | —            |
| Innovation                     | —            | 0.50                   | —                 | —               | 0.72         |
| Rigor/Severity                 | —            | 0.62                   | —                 | —               | 0.63         |
| Sophistication                 | —            | 0.65                   | —                 | —               | 0.68         |
| Diversity                      | —            | 0.52                   | —                 | —               | 0.59         |
| <i>FEELINGS</i>                | 0.745        | —                      | 1.497             | 8.34            | —            |
| Tolerance                      | —            | 0.78                   | —                 | —               | 0.77         |
| Romanticism                    | —            | 0.54                   | —                 | —               | 0.71         |
| Awareness                      | —            | 0.54                   | —                 | —               | 0.70         |
| Joy/Fun                        | —            | 0.50                   | —                 | —               | 0.72         |
| <i>NEW LIFE</i>                | 0.735        | —                      | 1.295             | 8.33            | —            |
| Modernity                      | —            | 0.76                   | —                 | —               | 0.74         |
| Cosmopolitanism                | —            | 0.71                   | —                 | —               | 0.72         |
| Multiculturalism               | —            | 0.54                   | —                 | —               | 0.70         |
| <i>POWER</i>                   | 0.750        | —                      | 1.190             | 7.05            | —            |
| Ambition                       | —            | 0.71                   | —                 | —               | 0.81         |
| Control                        | —            | 0.79                   | —                 | —               | 0.80         |
| <i>OLD LIFE</i>                | 0.571        | —                      | 1.131             | 6.50            | —            |
| Hospitality                    | —            | 0.51                   | —                 | —               | 0.58         |
| Tradition                      | —            | 0.61                   | —                 | —               | 0.76         |
| Religion                       | —            | 0.69                   | —                 | —               | 0.56         |
| <i>RESPONSIBILITY/SECURITY</i> | 1.00         | —                      | 1.011             | 4.24            | —            |
| Responsibility and security    | —            | 0.81                   | —                 | —               | 0.71         |
| Total Variance                 | —            | —                      | —                 | 68.85           | —            |

The first factor, ‘Senses and Change’, considers attributes such as magic, exotic, seduction, creativity and non-conformity. The second factor, labelled ‘Lifestyle’, includes items related to the way of living in Morocco: tranquility, quality of life, freshness, vitality. Factor three, called ‘Values’, relates to the perception that emigrants have on some characteristic values of Morocco, such as sophistication, diversity or severity. The fourth factor, ‘Feelings’, comprises tolerance, romanticism, awareness of the situation and fun. Factor five, labelled ‘New life’, includes brand attributes concerning new characteristics of the way of living in Morocco, such as modernity or cosmopolitanism. Factor six, ‘Power’, considers two items: control and ambition. Factor seven, ‘Old life’, includes some traditional characteristic of Morocco, such as the relevance of religion, hospitality and traditions. And finally, factor eight only considers one attribute ‘Responsibility and Security’, which is not related to any other.

For the purpose of determining the coherence of the Morocco brand formed by Moroccan emigrants, Tables 7 and 8 perform multivariate analysis of variance

(MANOVA) tests for the set of factors of brand attributes being the dependent variables, to examine the overall effects of the emigrants' profile (gender, time abroad and educational background). We have not considered the age variable for the group formation because most of the respondents were in the category of people between 20 and 40 years of age. We have not considered either the categories 'less than 1 year living in Spain' and 'primary education' owing to the low number of respondents in each of these categories.

**Table 7:** MANOVA tests for functional attributes

| <i>EFFECT</i>          | <i>Model</i>   | <i>Value</i> | <i>F</i> |
|------------------------|----------------|--------------|----------|
| Gender                 | Pillai's trace | 0.154        | 3.103**  |
|                        | Wilks' lambda  | 0.846        | 3.103**  |
| Time abroad            | Pillai's trace | 0.181        | 1.696    |
|                        | Wilks' lambda  | 0.826        | 1.685    |
| Educational background | Pillai's trace | 0.154        | 0.910    |
|                        | Wilks' lambda  | 0.852        | 0.911    |

*P*-value: \*\*\*<0.001, \*\*<0.01, \*<0.05.

**Table 8:** MANOVA tests for emotional attributes

| <i>EFFECT</i>          | <i>Model</i>   | <i>Value</i> | <i>F</i> |
|------------------------|----------------|--------------|----------|
| Gender                 | Pillai's trace | 0.118        | 1.439    |
|                        | Wilks' lambda  | 0.882        | 1.439    |
| Time abroad            | Pillai's trace | 0.191        | 1.135    |
|                        | Wilks' lambda  | 0.815        | 1.143    |
| Educational background | Pillai's trace | 0.347        | 1.390    |
|                        | Wilks' lambda  | 0.687        | 1.389    |

*P*-value: \*\*\*<0.001, \*\*<0.01, \*<0.05.

Table 7 indicates that only gender has an impact on functional attributes of the Morocco brand. On the other hand, considering all these attributes simultaneously, any significant difference was observed among the diverse groups of emigrants determined by their time abroad and their educational background.

Something similar occurs in the case of emotional attributes, where Table 8 indicates that any group, considering gender, time abroad or educational background, has a significant impact causing difference in all the emotional attributes of the Morocco brand simultaneously.

Tables 9 and 10 show means and standard deviation for each factor corresponding to functional and emotional attributes of the brand. In addition, these tables incorporate t-test and univariate analyses of variance (ANOVA) to examine individual effects of emigrant groups on each factor and to determine the existence of significant differences in their mean values.

For the purpose of determining the main elements of the Morocco brand constructed by Moroccan emigrants, we calculate a global mean using the average of the attributes forming each factor. This transformation was necessary because the factors obtained through EFA were standardised, avoiding the possibility of comparison between them. Table 9 indicates that the most valued functional attributes for Moroccan emigrants in Spain were environment, infrastructures and activities, culture and innovation. On the contrary, the less valued ones were related to sports and nightlife.

These results are consistent with some findings of previous research highlighting the importance of tangible or functional attributes in the Morocco brand. For example, Shanka (2001) in a study conducted with tourist slogans of different African countries concludes that the attribute 'natural' is one of the most relevant, as in the case of Morocco. López-Lara (2005) pointed out the relevance of culture, architecture and gastronomy in the Morocco brand constructed through tourism websites. Govers and Go (2007) emphasised culture, infrastructures, climate and nature as some relevant elements of the Morocco brand, as well as Pitt et al. (2007), who outlined cuisine, tourist infrastructure and shopping. Our results are consistent with the relevance of some of these brand attributes constructed by other stakeholders, and point out the coincidence in the functional attributes of the Morocco brand formed by different agents.

In addition, comparing the different groups of emigrants, data allow us to observe that women especially highlight environment, infrastructures and activities, whereas men valued sports, money/ luxury, culture and innovation, and nightlife. However, there are no significant differences between these functional attributes considering men and women, with the only exception of infrastructure and activities, more valued by women. In a similar manner, no significant differences can be perceived in the functional attributes of the brand when considering different groups in terms of the time lived

abroad, except for sports, more valued by emigrants with 5–10 years living abroad. Finally, considering groups of emigrants in terms of educational background, emigrants with secondary education were the group with highest scores for the majority of functional attributes, but no significant difference can be mentioned in this case.

When analysing previous findings on the effects of demographic characteristics on destination branding, most of the studies consider gender, education and age, among other demographic traits such as marital status, annual incomes or number of children, only to describe the sample (Chen and Tsai, 2007; Pike, 2010). Moreover, usually these demographic traits are used as control variables to explain the relationship between others; for example, Alegre and Garau (2010) used age and education to control the dependency between the levels of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with different aspects of Balearic Islands as a tourist destination. Their results only confirmed the negative influence of age and education on environment as a functional attribute of the destination brand. Beerli and Martín (2004), on the other hand, considered gender, age and education as predictors of the attributes of the brand image of potential tourists for Turkey. They concluded that age positively influenced natural and social environment, gender also positively affected infrastructure, and natural and cultural resources were more valued by women than by men. These results are partially consistent with the findings obtained in this work that states the relevance of infrastructure and activities, more valued by women.

Table 10, on emotional attributes of the destination brand, shows that Moroccan emigrants valued especially old and new life, and lifestyle, highlighting the relevance of the contrasts in this country. The less valued ones were values and power. The averages of the mean values given by emigrants to functional and emotional attributes indicated that the valuation was higher in the case of the emotional elements of the brand (2.06 versus 1.94). This result is interesting and it is in line with previous works that highlight the importance of emotional attributes above functional ones (El aouni et al., 2013b). Previous research on this topic has emphasised different emotional attributes in the Morocco brand. For example, Pitt et al (2007) in a study on brand personality constructed through tourist websites in different African countries emphasized sophistication as the most relevant attribute of the Morocco brand personality. Govers and Go (2007) in their study on tourist image of Morocco also pointed out the relevance

of some intangible attributes related to sensory and religion. Shanka (2001) not only considered the relevance of natural in the slogan of Morocco and other African countries, but also hospitality. Finally, López-Lara (2005) stated the characteristic 'exotic' as one of the main descriptions used to promote Morocco on the Internet. Some of these elements of the Morocco brand outlined by previous research, especially hospitality and religion, match with our results and were also highlighted by Moroccan emigrants.

Comparing men and women, data show that women value higher all the emotional attributes of the Morocco brand, except new life; however the only significant difference was found for old life, more valued by women than by men. When the differences between the mean values of emotional attributes are considered comparing different categories of emigrants in terms of their time living abroad, no significant differences were observed. Finally, when we compare the valuation of emotional attributes of the brand given by emigrants with different educational background, we observe significant differences in feelings, more valued by emigrants with secondary education, and new life valued higher by emigrants with Masters or PhD studies. Research on the emotional attributes of the brand is scarce; however it is possible to highlight some previous studies on the influence of demographic characteristics on the formation of these intangible attributes of the brand. For example, Beerli and Martín (2004) demonstrated that education and gender influenced the affective attributes, and thus female tourists and more educated potential tourists valued the pleasantness and excitement of Turkey more. However, and in line with the results obtained in this work, some studies have pointed out the lack of influence of this kind of demographic variables on the emotional attributes of the brand (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; San Martín and Rodríguez, 2010).

**Table 9:** Functional attributes of the brand

| FACTORS           | Man    |       | Woman  |        | t               | Between 1 and 5 years |        | Between 5 and 10 years |      | More than 10 years |      | F     | Secondary education |      | University education |       | Masters/PhD |        | F     | Global mean |      |       |
|-------------------|--------|-------|--------|--------|-----------------|-----------------------|--------|------------------------|------|--------------------|------|-------|---------------------|------|----------------------|-------|-------------|--------|-------|-------------|------|-------|
|                   | Mean   | SD    | Mean   | SD     |                 | Mean                  | SD     | Mean                   | SD   | Mean               | SD   |       | Mean                | SD   | Mean                 | SD    | Mean        | SD     |       |             | Mean | SD    |
|                   | Sports | 0.138 | 0.10   | -0.131 |                 | 1.01                  | -1.411 | -0.543                 | 0.69 | 0.334              | 1.08 |       | -0.080              | 0.95 | <b>5.057**</b>       | 0.044 | 0.96        | -0.013 |       |             | 1.03 | 0.080 |
| Environment       | -0.069 | 1.20  | 0.065  | 0.76   | 0.687           | 0.094                 | 1.15   | 0.073                  | 1.01 | -0.081             | 0.96 | 0.345 | 0.346               | 0.71 | -0.024               | 1.04  | -0.036      | 0.87   | 1.453 | 2.56        |      |       |
| Infrastruct Activ | -0.363 | 1.03  | 0.344  | 0.84   | <b>3.931***</b> | -0.306                | 1.03   | -0.176                 | 0.98 | 0.2180             | 0.97 | 2.722 | 0.096               | 1.21 | -0.001               | 1.02  | 0.037       | 1.07   | 0.272 | 2.28        |      |       |
| Mon Lux Status    | 0.045  | 0.91  | -0.043 | 1.08   | -0.458          | 0.052                 | 0.88   | -0.103                 | 0.98 | 0.059              | 1.06 | 0.317 | 0.250               | 1.28 | -0.014               | 0.90  | -0.103      | 1.02   | 0.716 | 1.68        |      |       |
| Culture Innovat   | 0.022  | 0.95  | -0.021 | 1.05   | -0.227          | 0.260                 | 0.92   | -0.014                 | 0.93 | -0.067             | 1.08 | 0.663 | 0.174               | 1.19 | -0.090               | 0.86  | 0.142       | 1.12   | 1.268 | 2.01        |      |       |
| Nightlife         | 0.056  | 1.10  | -0.053 | 0.91   | -0.565          | -0.079                | 0.92   | 0.191                  | 1.13 | -0.115             | 0.91 | 1.123 | -0.240              | 1.14 | 0.076                | 0.83  | 0.106       | 1.21   | 1.016 | 1.60        |      |       |

P-value: \*\*\*<0.001, \*\*<0.01, \*<0.05; Significant values in bold.

**Table 10:** Emotional attributes of the brand

| FACTORS              | Man               |        | Woman  |       | t              | Between 1 and 5 years |       | Between 5 and 10 years |      | More than 10 years |      | F     | Secondary education |      | University education |       | Masters/PhD |       | F             | Global mean |      |        |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------|--------|-------|----------------|-----------------------|-------|------------------------|------|--------------------|------|-------|---------------------|------|----------------------|-------|-------------|-------|---------------|-------------|------|--------|
|                      | Mean              | SD     | Mean   | SD    |                | Mean                  | SD    | Mean                   | SD   | Mean               | SD   |       | Mean                | SD   | Mean                 | SD    | Mean        | SD    |               |             | Mean | SD     |
|                      | Senses and Change | -0.001 | 0.95   | 0.001 |                | 1.05                  | 0.011 | -0.131                 | 1.00 | -0.001             | 1.02 |       | 0.041               | 1.00 | 0.155                | 0.254 | 1.11        | 0.019 |               |             | 0.99 | -0.091 |
| Lifestyle            | -0.095            | 1.01   | 0.086  | 1.00  | 0.880          | -0.110                | 1.01  | -0.045                 | 0.80 | 0.070              | 1.15 | 0.228 | 0.061               | 0.89 | 0.021                | 0.97  | -0.041      | 1.04  | 0.057         | 2.25        |      |        |
| Values               | -0.072            | 0.92   | 0.065  | 1.07  | 0.663          | 0.548                 | 1.28  | -0.082                 | 0.88 | -0.105             | 0.96 | 2.551 | -0.118              | 1.21 | 0.133                | 0.95  | -0.043      | 1.00  | 0.661         | 1.83        |      |        |
| Feelings             | -0.133            | 0.96   | 0.120  | 1.03  | 1.237          | 0.383                 | 0.75  | -0.183                 | 1.22 | 0.027              | 0.85 | 1.670 | 0.637               | 0.61 | -0.023               | 0.97  | -0.267      | 1.12  | <b>3.559*</b> | 2.14        |      |        |
| New life             | 0.017             | 0.93   | -0.015 | 1.07  | -0.155         | -0.114                | 0.70  | 0.077                  | 1.07 | -0.026             | 1.04 | 0.211 | -0.147              | 0.64 | -0.076               | 1.12  | 0.337       | 0.91  | <b>3.364*</b> | 2.05        |      |        |
| Power                | -0.027            | 0.98   | 0.024  | 1.02  | 0.247          | 0.101                 | 0.84  | -0.017                 | 0.98 | -0.017             | 1.08 | 0.082 | 0.224               | 1.30 | -0.079               | 0.83  | 0.056       | 1.04  | 0.916         | 1.88        |      |        |
| Old life             | -0.295            | 1.12   | 0.265  | 0.79  | <b>2.774**</b> | 0.507                 | 1.10  | -0.127                 | 0.91 | -0.056             | 1.01 | 2.219 | -0.121              | 0.92 | -0.011               | 0.95  | 0.214       | 1.02  | 1.098         | 2.53        |      |        |
| Respon. and Security | -0.099            | 0.99   | 0.090  | 1.01  | 0.919          | 0.187                 | 0.89  | -0.263                 | 1.03 | 0.152              | 0.98 | 2.053 | 0.133               | 1.02 | -0.121               | 1.07  | 0.050       | 0.91  | 0.631         | 1.91        |      |        |

P-value: \*\*\*<0.001, \*\*<0.01, \*<0.05; Significant values in bold.

## CONCLUSIONS

The contribution of this article is twofold: on the one hand, it defines the main functional and emotional attributes of the Morocco brand as a tourist destination constructed and transmitted by Moroccan emigrants to the local population in Spain, and on the other it has explored the coherence, coincidence and convergence of the Morocco brand among emigrants with different socio-demographic characteristics, or put in other words it has examined whether the different socio-demographic profile of Moroccan emigrants influences the Morocco brand transmitted.

With regard to the first contribution, we highlight that Morocco brand formed by emigrants comprises six functional attributes (sports, environment, infrastructures and activities, money/luxury/glamour, culture and innovation and nightlife), with environment, infrastructures and activities, culture and innovation as the most valued, and sports and nightlife as the least valued ones; and eight emotional factors (senses and change, lifestyle, values, feelings, new life, power, old life and responsibility and security), with old and new life and lifestyle being the attributes most emphasised and values and power the least valued. In addition, emotional attributes are more highlighted than functional ones to characterise Morocco.

Regarding the second contribution, which has fulfilled the second aim initially proposed for this research, Morocco brand arises as a uniform, coherent and convergent message regardless of the socio-demographic differences among emigrants in terms of gender, time living abroad and educational background. Considering all the brand attributes together, there is only a significant difference provoked by gender that affects the functional attributes of the Morocco brand simultaneously. All in all, the Morocco brand constructed and communicated by Moroccan emigrants in Spain is coincident with that constructed by other stakeholders such as DMO. However, emigrants as active agents in the construction and communication of the brand emphasise more on the emotional attributes of the brand than other stakeholders. This should be taken into account by DMO as an important complement for their message.

At a theoretical level, we conclude that this work contributes to a scarce literature on the analysis of destination branding from the supplyside point of view, and more

specifically with regard to the role of migration on the brand construction. Most of the existing research on the attributes composition of destination brands has been conducted from an external approach or a demand point of view, considering tourists' perceptions and the image that they have of tourist destinations and their brands (Konecnik and Go, 2008). This study not only contributes at a theoretical level by paying attention to the less studied perspective of the brand builders, but also by focusing the attention on a disregarded actor from this research perspective, the emigrants as local people living abroad. As we already noted in the theoretical framework of the influence of local people on destination branding, very few have been the studies that identified this research gap before and get into the role that emigrants play in the construction of a destination brand (Tiesler and Cairns, 2007; El aouni et al, 2013b). With this study, we hope to foster this new line of research on the role of emigrants in the construction and communication of a destination brand and to continue it with further future research aims that we have not been able to cover in the present study. For instance, it would be necessary to compare Morocco brand image perceived by Spanish local people with the brand identity communicated by emigrants. In particular, it would be useful to explore what kind of attributes, functional or emotional, are most valued by Spanish local people. Moreover, it would be very interesting to explore the social and psychological processes associated with the construction of both identity and image by social interaction, and whether elements of the social interaction such as prejudices, and so on, determine the final composition of the Morocco brand.

Some practical implications also derive from this research. On the one hand, this study offers important insights to be considered by DMO in order to align all the multiple voices from different stakeholders of a destination brand into a coherent and non-contradictory destination brand message. For instance, DMO can benefit from knowing the functional attributes and emotional attributes that emigrants most highlighted from the Morocco brand, in order not to communicate a contradictory message. By adjusting their constructed brand to the one transmitted by local people and emigrants, DMO can take advantage including them as important actors in the construction and communication of the destination brand, for example including their narratives in the promotion of the place through different media. We think this strategy is more respectful with local people identities and in the long term will be more successful by achieving to transmit a stronger and more coherent and convergent brand identity, as the



brand created as a result of aligning the DMO message with the destination brand identity constructed by local people would be nothing artificial but one that arises from cultural identities, and therefore strong and long lasting. In addition, this study entails implications for DMO regarding the appropriate use of emigrants as potential ambassadors of a destination brand to make the most of their potential as active agents in the creation, development and communication of destination brands. In particular, the results are good news for DMO because the lack of significant differences in the brand attributes emphasised by different types of emigrants points that it is not necessary to segment their actions towards achieving a coherent destination brand identity, but that emigrants can be considered as a homogeneous block. The coherence and convergence of emigrants' brand message converts them in an important and effective agent in whom to invest resources to collaborate with as important ambassadors of the destination brand and allies of DMO. The lack of segmentation will allow the DMO actions addressed to communicate a coherent destination brand, through for instance emigrants associations in different countries, to be more effective. However, this research also has some important limitations that impede to generalize the results. First, it would be interesting to expand the sample to other countries with Moroccan emigration, because the scope of this research has been centred just in the Moroccan emigration living in Spain. Second, the procedure to collect the data has avoided obtaining broader information from certain groups, for example emigrants with less than 1 year living abroad, with primary or no formal studies, and those in the age group between 20 and 40 years.

Despite these limitations, we hope this study will open a new and interesting research line for the future, centred in the analysis of the role of emigrants in the construction of their country of origin brand.

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## **CONCLUSIONS**



## **1. Conclusions**

In this final section, we will present a summary of the main conclusions obtained in the course of our investigation, as well as its academic and practical contributions. We will highlight also the limitations of this thesis project and the future research lines that could be developed in relation to the main topic of our research.

As we have mentioned in the introduction section, the goal of this doctoral thesis was mainly to explore the role played by Moroccan emigrants in the construction of the Morocco brand as a tourist destination. To do so, the analyses were centred on Moroccan emigrants living in Spain.

To reach this goal, several objectives were established. They were to:

- clarify the theoretical model that explains the link between emigrants and tourist destination branding;
- explore the different aspects of the role played by Moroccan emigrants regarding the construction of their country of origin's brand;
- analyse Moroccan emigrants' perceptions of the official brand of Morocco as a tourist destination, built by the Moroccan Ministry of Tourism;
- determine the most important elements of the Morocco brand as a tourist destination transmitted by emigrants;
- highlight the Moroccan emigrants' perceptions about their influence on the construction of the Morocco brand.

To reach the first objective of this study, we conducted a literature review on destination branding and other topics related to the research field of this thesis, such as migration, ethnicity and multiculturalism. This literature review allowed us to identify the gap in destination branding studies related to the need to consider emigrants as one of the main stakeholders involved in destination branding. This revision helped us to construct a conceptual model, which highlighted the presence of both tangible and intangible attributes of destination brands and the relevance and the relationships between different stakeholders with influence on the destination branding processes, including emigrants.



The model suggested that social identity processes might affect the way emigrants construct and communicate the brand of their countries to locals. We also concluded that the influence of emigrants on the construction of their countries of origin's brand depends on their interactions with local people, which could be affected by different factors, like the economic situation of the emigrant population and their previous links with the hosting community.

To reach the second objective of exploring the different aspects of the role Moroccan emigrants played in the construction of their country of origin's brand, we carried out a pilot qualitative research study. This pilot study was necessary due to the lack of previous research on this specific topic and the need to obtain some preliminary information in order to determine how to develop further research on this topic. The main important issues discussed during the research process were how Moroccan emigrants defined Morocco as a tourist destination; perceptions of their role in the creation of the Morocco brand; perceptions of the accuracy of the image of Morocco abroad, specifically in Spain, where the study was carried out; narratives of their experiences as foreigners; how they defined themselves, etc. The findings demonstrated the relevance of the intangible aspects mentioned by the emigrants when expressing their brand identity. The most relevant were those of a socio-cultural nature, cultural richness and lifestyle, such as warmth, proximity, openness and cooperation as personality traits that characterise the country. Another relevant result was that many key aspects of the brand identity transmitted by Moroccan emigrants in Spain emerged to react to and correct a wrong image of Morocco in the host country.

With regard to the third objective, the pilot qualitative research described above also allowed us to explore how Moroccan emigrants evaluate the official brand of Morocco as a tourist destination. The results showed that Moroccan emigrants had in general a scarce knowledge about the official brand constructed by the Moroccan government to promote Morocco and the tools used to build it. Despite this ignorance, both brands, the official brand and the brand built by emigrants, shared some similarities related to lifestyle and personality, for example, openness, hospitality and authenticity. Also, both of them transmitted the relevance of traditions, gastronomy and richness of history and landscapes. However, this research also pointed out some lack of consistency between the attributes of the Morocco brand shown on official tourist websites and those

transmitted by emigrants. One reason could be that the official brand exaggerates some positive aspects and tries to transmit only the most idyllic attributes. These differences affect basically to some typical tourist destinations of Morocco.

The fourth and the fifth objectives were related to determine the most important attributes of the Morocco brand as a tourist destination transmitted by Moroccan emigrants and their perception of their influence on the construction of the Morocco brand. To accomplish these objectives, we conducted quantitative research to explore the attributes of the Morocco brand, and the coherence of the image of Morocco projected by Moroccan emigrants, considering their different socio-demographic characteristics and features.

The study of the attributes of the Morocco brand transmitted by Moroccan emigrants was carried out using two different approaches. Firstly, we analysed these elements separately, one by one, just to determine the most and less valued ones from the point of view of Moroccan emigrants, when they project the Morocco image. The literature review and the previous exploratory qualitative research were used to determine the attributes of the Morocco brand to be included in our research. The results showed the most important elements, which are landscape, nature, beaches, mountains, gastronomy, and climate, as tangible/functional elements of the brand; and hospitality, tradition, joy/fun and multiculturalism, as intangible/emotional ones. The less valued aspects in both categories were related to sports, sustainability and innovation. Some significant differences were observed in the values given by different kinds of emigrants. It meant that brand identity communicated by emigrants could be affected by their demographic characteristics, in terms of gender, time living abroad and educational background. Considering the brand attributes separately complicated our ability to recognise a “prototype ambassador” on whom to concentrate brand management actions. Thus, a more generic study on the attributes of the Morocco brand seemed to be necessary, to analyse not every detail of the image of Morocco projected by Moroccan emigrants, but Morocco brand in more generic terms, which could allow us to establish a more general conclusion.

To do so, a second quantitative research study was carried out, trying to group and classify the most and less valued attributes of the Morocco brand transmitted by

emigrants. In this second study, the main results showed that the functional attributes could be grouped into six categories (sports, environment, infrastructures and activities, money/luxury/glamour, culture and innovation and nightlife). The most valued ones were environment, infrastructures and activities, and culture and innovation, whilst sports and nightlife were the least valued. The emotional attributes were classified into eight factors (senses and change, lifestyle, values, feelings, new life, power, old life and responsibility and security), with old and new life and lifestyle being the attributes most emphasised and values and power the least valued. In addition, emotional attributes are more highlighted than functional ones to characterise Morocco.

The findings also pointed out that Morocco brand arises as a uniform, coherent and convergent message regardless of the socio-demographic differences among emigrants in terms of gender, time living abroad and educational background. Considering all the brand attributes together, there is only a significant difference provoked by gender that affects the functional attributes of the Morocco brand simultaneously. All in all, the Morocco brand constructed and communicated by Moroccan emigrants in Spain is coincident with that constructed by other stakeholders such as DMO. However, emigrants, as active agents in the construction and communication of the brand, emphasise the emotional attributes of the brand more than other stakeholders. DMO should take this into account as an important complement for their message.

## **2. Limitations**

This doctoral thesis embraced an ambitious objective related to the openness of a new research line, centred in the analyses of the role of migration in the construction of destination brands. The difficulties of this goal explain in part some of its limitations. Due to the novelty of our research topic, approximation has been slow. First of all, we begin with exploratory qualitative research that orientated us towards the contribution and the role of Moroccan emigrants in the construction of the Morocco brand. However, this pilot research only included the participation of three emigrants, which is not a sufficient number to generalise the conclusions obtained. This generalisation was not our objective. On the contrary, we aimed to obtain a preliminary idea of this role that

would help us proceed further with the study. Nevertheless, it would have been better to have a higher number of responses.

Secondly, this research has considered only Moroccan emigrants living in Spain because the access to this kind of respondent was easy. This choice was also supported by the relevance of the migratory movements from Morocco to Spain in the last decades; we thought that it was a specific case that deserved study. However, it would have been even better to include respondents from other host countries of Moroccan migration, which could let us analyse whether the Morocco brand emigrants built is uniform or not depending on the country of residence of these migrants. Also, the procedure to collect data through the Internet could introduce some bias in the data, for example, getting access to younger people and to a larger number of migrants with a higher level of education, more than the access to migrants with basic or no postsecondary schooling at all and older ones.

Thirdly, the study has explored the opinion of Moroccan emigrants, but considering this opinion in isolation. We think that it would have been interesting to contrast this perception of Moroccan emigrants with the view of other relevant stakeholders, like the residents of the host countries, the local people living in Morocco, or tourist visitors of the country. This comparison would have given us a better idea of the coherence and strength of the Morocco brand. It would have allowed us to analyse the Morocco brand from the demand and the supply sides.

### **3. Theoretical and practical implications**

Despite the limitations mentioned above, we hope this study has contributed to open a new line of research in destination branding studies. Therefore, the main contribution at a theoretical level would be to pay attention to the less studied perspective of the brand builders, especially focusing on a disregarded actor, the emigrants as local people living abroad, and their role in the construction and communication of a tourist destination brand.

Some practical implications also derive from this research. On the one hand, this study offers important insights to be considered by DMO in order to align all the multiple

voices from different stakeholders of a destination brand into a coherent and non-contradictory destination brand message. For instance, DMO can benefit from knowing the attributes that emigrants most highlighted from the Morocco brand, in order not to communicate a contradictory message.

We think this strategy in the long term could contribute to form a stronger and more coherent and convergent brand identity, resulting in the alignment of the DMO message with the destination brand identity constructed by local people, including those living abroad. In addition, this study entails implications for DMO regarding the appropriate use of emigrants as potential ambassadors of a destination brand to make the most of their potential as active agents in the creation, development and communication of destination brands. In particular, the results are good news for DMO because the lack of significant differences in the brand attributes emphasised by different types of emigrants proves that it is not necessary to segment their actions towards achieving a coherent destination brand identity, on the contrary, emigrants can be considered as a quite homogeneous block.

#### **4. Suggestions for future research**

The new research line described in this doctoral thesis opens the door for new and varied studies centred on different aspects of the role of migration in destination branding.

In the short term, our aim is to continue with the studies that constitute the core of this thesis, from the double approach used, both qualitative and quantitative, but enhancing the number of interviews and questionnaires collected, including emigrants with more varied characteristics, trying to overcome the limitations and bias pointed out above.

From the quantitative point of view, we would like to construct some explanatory models to analyse the most important factors and attributes of the Morocco brand that explain the contribution of emigrants in the brand construction. The idea is to consider the main factors and groups of brand attributes and determine which of these factors are related to a higher influence of emigrants in brand construction, creating a brand clearer

and more positive. This way, we could contribute adding knowledge about the factors of the brand that explain the contribution of emigrants in terms of the brand creation.

From a qualitative point of view, and trying to broaden the focus of our research beyond destination branding, we would like also to start a research line to explore the ethnic identity of Moroccan emigrants abroad. In particular we aim to study the psychosocial processes underlying the construction of their cultural identities and to delve into the meanings that compose Moroccan migrants' ethnic identity.. Moreover, and following this line of research, we aim to explore whether there are different patterns of acculturation (integration, assimilation, separation and marginalisation) according to different demographic variables and if the different patterns can be related to different contents of their ethnic identities.

*Conclusions*

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## **APPENDIX**



## **Interview**

### **I-Introduction**

Hello. I am thankful for accepting to collaborate in this work. I want just tell you that this interview is part of my thesis Project. The subject of this project is to explore the role of the emigrant in the construction of the brand of their country of origin.

Before starting this interview, I would like to inform you that there are not correct or incorrect questions; the aim in this discussion is that you can share with us your opinions and perceptions about this topic.

### **II-Contextualising interviewees' life stories and their contact with Spain/Catalonia**

Could you please introduce yourself? How old are you? , What is your occupation, Where do you come from? Did you work before coming to Spain? Or you didn't?

When did you arrive to Spain, and why?

Have you being living in other countries before coming to Spain?

Did you come here alone or with family?

Now what do you do here?

Did you have different experiences of work or jobs here?

How did you evaluate your experience living in Spain?

How do you describe your experience of living here?

Do you feel integrated in the Spanish society?

What is your opinion?

How was the experience of leaving your country?

How did you describe this experience?

Do you want to return to your country? Why?

### **III - Exploring the interaction of emigrants with locals and how this process contributes to construct and transmit a country image**

Tell me about your country and the local population. How are they?

In which sense are they similar and different to people from here?

How do people recognize you as a Moroccan here in Spain?

When they know that you are Moroccan, how is their reaction? Do you realize any change?

When they have more information about you, except your nationality, do they change their behaviours toward you?

What do you think about the image of Morocco and Moroccan that have people here in their mind?

Would you like to change it?

How do you think you could change it?

How do you evaluate the knowledge or the information that people have here about Morocco and Moroccan people?

Do you identify any differences in this image or perception in comparison to the image of other people from different nationalities?

What are the most frequent subjects you are asked about or you talk about when you participate in a meeting or other kind of events?. Could you give me some examples?

What are the main subjects that attract people's interest while talking about Morocco and Moroccan people?

How do you feel about these questions and comments?

In order to finalise the interview could you please go through the following sentences?

I'm.....

I want to .....

Now I'm .....

I feel.....

Morocco is .....

The region where I came from is .....

Spain is.....

The people here are.....

To be Moroccan is .....

#### **IV -Constructing the Morocco brand: Emigrants versus Government discourses**

How do you describe Morocco as country and as tourism destination?

What's your opinion of these two ultimate slogans used by the Tourism National Office to describe Morocco as a tourist destination?

*"Morocco is the most beautiful country in the world"*

*"Travel to reality"*

What do you think of these two messages? Did you know them? Which one do you prefer?

Did you know that tourism is a very important activity for the Moroccan economy?  
What's your opinion about the tourism strategy of the Moroccan government?

Many thanks for your collaboration.

## نص محاور المقابلة:

### I-المقدمة:

مساء الخير، شكرا جزيلاً لموافقتك على التعاون معي في هذا العمل. أود أولاً أن أوضح لك ان هذه المقابلة هي

جزء من عملي الميداني الخاص برسالة الدكتوراه والتي تخص دراسة دور المهاجرين في الترويج ببلدهم الاصيلي.

وفي هذا الاطار وقبل أن نبدأ، أود اثارث انتباهكم أنه لا توجد إجابات صحيحة أو خاطئة، وإنما المهم بالنسبة لنا هو معرفة أفكارك تجاربك حول الموضوعات التي تهمننا

السياق العام حول الأشخاص التي تتم محاورتهم وحول تاريخهم وعلاقتهم إسبانيا / كاتالونيا:

عرف (عرفني) بنفسك من فضلك

كم عمرك ؟ في أي مجال عملت في المغرب قبل وصولك إلى إسبانيا؟

اخبرنا قليلا عن وصولك الى اسبانيا ... اتيت للدراسة

متى أتيت؟ ما السبب او الدافع للهجرة؟

هل عشت في أي مكان آخر عدا إسبانيا، أو المغرب؟

اتيت لوحديك ام مع العائلة؟

ماذا تعمل (تشتغل) هنا؟

قيم تجربتك في إسبانيا. كيف كانت خلال هذه السنوات التي عشتها هنا؟

كيف عشت تجربة ترك بلدك؟

هل تفكر (تخطط) الرجوع يوما ما؟ لأي سبب؟

II -كيف تطورت علاقتك مع سكان هذا البلد وكيف تساهم نقل أوبناء صورة بلدك من موقعك كمهاجر:

كيف تطورت علاقتك بالسكان هنا؟ و كيف تساهم في بناء و نشر صورة بلدك؟

كلمني (اخبرني) عن بلدك و عن الناس فيها كيف هم؟



هل ترى أي تشابه بينهم و الناس هنا؟ و فيما هم مختلفون؟

كيف يعرفون انك مغربي؟

كيف تكون ردة فعلهم عندما يعرفون انك مغربي؟ (هل) أتلاحظ أي تغيير او ردة فعل...؟

هل تلاحظ أي تغيير في السلوك او ردة فعل اخرى عند معرفتهم معلومات اكثر تخصك من غير جنسيتك؟

ماهي الصورة التي عند الناس هنا حول المغرب و المغاربة؟

هل تحب ان تغير هذه الصورة؟

هل تعتقد ان بإمكانك فعل أي شيء لتغييرها؟

كيف يمكنك تقييم لمعلومات الناس هنا عن بلدك و المغاربة؟

هل تلاحظ اختلافات بين الناس \_ من جنسيات مختلفة \_ الذين تتواصل معهم؟

ما هي المواضيع التي تتكرر عند اخبارك او مشاركتك في اي حديث يتعلق بالمغرب و المغاربة؟

ما هي الأشياء (المواضيع) التي يظهر الناس المزيد من الاهتمام نحوها (التي تجذب انتباه الناس اكثر) عند الحديث عن المغرب أو المغاربة؟

ما شعورك امام هذه الاسئلة؟ اسئلة عادية, غير عادية, اسئلة تطرح باحترام

لإنهاء هذا الجزء من المقابلة أود منك إنهاء الجمل التالية:

انا.....

اريد.....

انا.....

انا اشعر (احس).....

المغرب

المنطقة التي انا منها.....

اسبانيا

الناس هنا.....

ان تكون مغربيا.....

III -بناء العلامة السياحية "للمغرب" من طرف المهاجر ومن طرف الحكومة المغربية:

صف لي المغرب في كلمات. (كبلد و كوجهة سياحية)

لو اعتبرنا المغرب كشخص كيف يمكنك وصفه؟

سأكلمك (سأخبرك) عن اخر شعارين مستعملين من طرف (من قبل) الحكومة المغربية على  
مواقعها على شبكة الإنترنت

المغرب اجمل بلد في العالم

سافر الى الواقع

-----  
ما رأيك فيهم؟ هل تعتقد أنه يتم نقل (ال) صورة (ال) حقيقية؟ هل تشعر أنك المعني بهذه الجمل؟  
هل تعتقد أنها تصف بلدك وصفا جيدا وما يمكن للزائر ايجاده عند الوصول إلى هناك؟

ما رأيك في (طريقة) كيفية تسيير حكومتكم لبناء العلامة التجارية "المغرب"؟  
شكرا على تعاونك معنا



## Appendix

### Questionnaire

The aim of this questionnaire is to explore the role of the Moroccan emigrants in the formation of the Morocco brand. The questionnaire is divided into three main parts and each part consists of different questions. In some of these questions you will have to express agreement or disagreement. There are two types of questions: You either have to select from 1 to 3 (1: I totally disagree, 2: Neither agree nor disagree, 3: I totally agree) or from 1 to 5 (1: I totally disagree, 5: I totally agree). In the remaining questions, you will be asked to choose an answer that you find appropriate. For completing this questionnaire, you will not need more than 5 minutes. We would like to thank you in advance for your collaboration.

#### Demographic Information

Gender:

- Man     Woman

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Residence: \_\_\_\_\_

Time Living Abroad

- Less than 1 year  
 Between 1 and 5 years  
 Between 5 and 10 years  
 More than 10 years

Job/Profession \_\_\_\_\_

Educational Background

- Primary Education  
 Secondary Education  
 University Education  
 Master or Ph.D.

Appendix (Cont.)

| <b>Morocco Brand Attributes Transmitted by Moroccan Emigrants:<br/>Functional Elements</b>  |                          |                          |                          |            |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| When you participate in a conversation about Morocco, which kind of elements do you talk about?   |                          |                          |                          |            |
| <b>Landscape and Nature:</b> (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in detail.                       |                          |                          |                          |            |
| 1   | 2                        | 3                        |                          |            |
| Not at all  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Cultural Heritage and Historical Monuments:</b> (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in detail. |                          |                          |                          |            |
| 1   | 2                        | 3                        |                          |            |
| Not at all  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>History:</b> (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in detail.                                    |                          |                          |                          |            |
| 1   | 2                        | 3                        |                          |            |
| Not at all  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Technology:</b> (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in detail.                                 |                          |                          |                          |            |
| 1   | 2                        | 3                        |                          |            |
| Not at all  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Adventure Sports:</b> (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in detail.                           |                          |                          |                          |            |
| 1   | 2                        | 3                        |                          |            |
| Not at all  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Night Life:</b> (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in detail.                                 |                          |                          |                          |            |
| 1   | 2                        | 3                        |                          |            |
| Not at all  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Art Work:</b> (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in detail.                                   |                          |                          |                          |            |
| 1   | 2                        | 3                        |                          |            |
| Not at all  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |

Appendix (Cont.)

**Architecture and Urbanism:** (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in detail.

Not at all    1    2    3    Absolutely  
                      

**Beach:** (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in detail.

Not at all    1    2    3    Absolutely  
                      

**Mountain:** (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in detail.

Not at all    1    2    3    Absolutely  
                      

**Gastronomy and Beverage/Oenology:** (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in detail.

Not at all    1    2    3    Absolutely  
                      

**Hiking:** (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in detail.

Not at all    1    2    3    Absolutely  
                      

**Winter Sports:** (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in detail.

Not at all    1    2    3    Absolutely  
                      

**Water Sports:** (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (2) I always explain it in detail.

Not at all    1    2    3    Absolutely  
                      

**Climate:** (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in detail.

Not at all    1    2    3    Absolutely

Appendix (Cont.)

|  |                          |                          |                          |            |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| <b>Elite Sports (Golf):</b> (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in details.      |                          |                          |                          |            |
|  | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Luxury/Glamor:</b> (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in detail.             |                          |                          |                          |            |
|  | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Business Potential:</b> (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in detail.        |                          |                          |                          |            |
|  | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Shopping:</b> (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in detail.                  |                          |                          |                          |            |
|  | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Rural Landscape:</b> (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in detail.           |                          |                          |                          |            |
|  | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Others:</b> _____   |                          |                          |                          |            |
| <b>Others:</b> (1) I don't talk at all about it, (2) I might mention it, (3) I always explain it in detail.                    |                          |                          |                          |            |
|  | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Morocco Brand Attributes Transmitted by Moroccan Emigrants:<br/>Emotional Elements</b>                                      |                          |                          |                          |            |
| When you engage in a conversation about your country, Morocco, which of the following elements do you mention more frequently? |                          |                          |                          |            |
| <b>Tolerance:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.                                 |                          |                          |                          |            |
|  | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |

Appendix (Cont.)

|  |                          |                          |                          |            |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| <b>Romanticism:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.               |                          |                          |                          |            |
|  | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Magic, Charm, Imagination:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it. |                          |                          |                          |            |
|  | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Innovation:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.                |                          |                          |                          |            |
|  | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Nonconformity:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.             |                          |                          |                          |            |
|  | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Exoticism:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.                 |                          |                          |                          |            |
|  | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Evasion:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.                   |                          |                          |                          |            |
|  | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Modernity:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.                 |                          |                          |                          |            |
|  | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Cosmopolitanism:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.           |                          |                          |                          |            |
|  | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Ecology/Sustainability:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.    |                          |                          |                          |            |
|  | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |



Appendix (Cont.)

|   |                          |                          |                          |            |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| <b>Social Responsibility:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.    |                          |                          |                          |            |
|   | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Multiculturalism:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.         |                          |                          |                          |            |
|   | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Entertainment:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.            |                          |                          |                          |            |
|   | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Creativity:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.               |                          |                          |                          |            |
|   | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Senses/Sensory:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.           |                          |                          |                          |            |
|   | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Current Events/Situation:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it. |                          |                          |                          |            |
|   | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Seduction:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.                |                          |                          |                          |            |
|   | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Joy/Fun:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.                  |                          |                          |                          |            |
|   | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |
| <b>Youth/Freshness:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.          |                          |                          |                          |            |
|   | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |

Appendix (Cont.)

**Dynamism/Vitality:** (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.

|            |                          |                          |                          |            |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
|            | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |

**Tranquility:** (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.

|            |                          |                          |                          |            |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
|            | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |

**Tradition:** (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.

|            |                          |                          |                          |            |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
|            | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |

**Hospitality:** (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.

|            |                          |                          |                          |            |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
|            | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |

**Quality of Life:** (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.

|            |                          |                          |                          |            |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
|            | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |

**Rigor/Severity:** (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.

|            |                          |                          |                          |            |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
|            | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |

**Sophistication:** (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.

|            |                          |                          |                          |            |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
|            | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |

**Ambition:** (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.

|            |                          |                          |                          |            |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
|            | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |

**Power:** (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.

|            |                          |                          |                          |            |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
|            | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |            |
| Not at all | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Absolutely |

Appendix (Cont.)

|   |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| <p><b>Diversity:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.</p> <p>1      2      3</p> <p>Not at all   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   Absolutely</p>  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p><b>Religion:</b> ((1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.</p> <p>1      2      3</p> <p>Not at all   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   Absolutely</p>  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p><b>Cultural and Popular Events:</b> (1) I never mention it, (2) I mention it sometimes, (3) I always mention it.</p> <p>1      2      3</p> <p>Not at all   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   Absolutely</p>  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p><b>Others:</b> _____</p>   |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p><b>Others:</b> 1: I never mention it, 2: I mention it sometimes, 3: I always mention it</p> <p>1      2      3</p> <p>Not at all   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   Absolutely</p>   |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p><b>Evaluate Your Contribution to the Formation of the Morocco Brand</b></p>  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p>Do you think that your contribution in creating and transmitting a brand of your country is high?</p> <p>(1) I don't transmit any brand of Morocco, (5) I strongly transmit a brand of Morocco.</p> <p>1      2      3      4      5</p> <p>Not at all   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   Absolutely</p> |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p>Do you think that the brand that you transmit of your country is positive?</p> <p>(1) Very negative brand, (5) Very positive brand</p> <p>1      2      3      4      5</p> <p>Not at all   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   Absolutely</p>  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p>In your opinion, do you transmit a clear brand of your country?</p> <p>(1) I transmit a brand not clear or ambiguous, (5) I transmit a clear and consistent brand.</p> <p>1      2      3      4      5</p> <p>Not at all   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   <input type="checkbox"/>   Absolutely</p>                              |  |  |  |  |  |