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Motivations of Literary Tourism in Northern Portugal

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Purpose

The purpose of this study is to identify the motivations of literary tourism consumers in the northern region of Portugal. The aim of this information is to contribute to the development of literary routes and the promotion of the region's cultural and literary heritage. We hope to contribute to the promotion of tourism policies geared towards the development of new products and experiences, based on the identity and specificities of the different territories involved, with relevant authors and works.

Theoretical framework

Literary tourism includes visits to places related to literary works and their writers, and is categorized as cultural tourism (Anjo et al., 2021; Bu et al., 2021; Weiss, 2021). The motivation of literary tourists can vary between the desire to find some intellectual exchange in these spaces or an interest in expressing their admiration, the desire to honor writers, their work or literature (Anjo et al., 2021). Additionally, it can be associated with the desire for a leisure experience and nostalgia for the encounter with a literary and unique environment, or the historical-cultural heritage represented, for example, through architecture (Bu et al, 2021; Wang & Zhang, 2017, Weiss, 2021). Literary tourism involves visiting destinations related to writers and their works, and literary sites linked to the transmission of ideas, customs, beliefs and traditions (Bu et al., 2021; Ferreira et al., 2020a, 2020b), history, culture and heritage (Bu et al., 2021). These literary trips/visits envisage the creation of tourist activities and products that induce social creations, based, for example, on writers' residences as basic literary tourist resources, through the

connection between life and work, ensuring the interpretation of the story and its association with the author.

Methodology

To answer the study's objective, a questionnaire survey was administered to visitors to the northern region of Portugal who had carried out or intended to carry out an activity in the field of literary tourism between July and October 2023. The online questionnaire (Portuguese, English and French), accessible via a QR-CODE, was available on various platforms related to literary tourism (e.g. travel groups, literature and literary association pages, literary route pages). Participation in the "*Utopia-Festival de Literatura*" event in the city of Braga made it possible to collect answers for the online questionnaire. The paper questionnaire was made available at strategic locations such as writers' museum houses, literary centers and museums (e.g. Camilo Castelo Branco House Museum, Guerra Junqueiro Museum, Ferreira de Castro Study Center). The same was also applied to participants on the "*Caminhos de Ferreira de Castro*" and "*Eça e a Casa de Tormes-Caminho de Jacinto*" routes. A total of 301 responses were received, 191 from domestic visitors and 110 from foreign visitors.

Findings

The main push and pull motivations of literary consumers in the study region are presented. The push motivations most valued by respondents are: i) Having new experiences; ii) Satisfying curiosity; iii) Travelling and experiencing a different environment. The pull motivations stand out: i) Acquiring knowledge about the author and/or work(s); ii) Information about the writer's life and work; iii) Good value for money.

Research, practical & social implications

Understanding push and pull motivations, i.e. what drives people to visit a destination and what it is about the destination that attracts them, is a key success factor for the strategic planning of territories. In addition, it allows the promotion of regions and the adjustment of the offer, such as the creation of literary routes, with activities that can provide authentic experiences and the involvement of local communities, in favor of the preservation of literary heritage. The development of websites with relevant information for literary consumers' decision-making, among others, and the creation of APPs, are examples of the application of information that comes from the target audience that consumes literary tourism.

Originality

The study aims to involve the various regional players (local community, public and private entities) in the northern region of Portugal in the preservation and promotion of literary heritage. The creation of literary routes with immersive and authentic experiences, which establish a link between literature and the associated places, can boost the growth of literary tourism in various territories in the region. The availability of an APP that can guide the visitor's literary journey is an added value to complement the tourist experience.

Keywords

Literary tourism, Northern Portugal, Motivations, Destination development.

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