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By: Angela Torrecilla Winberg

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Using Events as Rebranding and Repositioning Tourism Strategies for Destinations: The Case of Ibiza.

Submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for
the BA (Hons) degree in Events Management

Angela Torrecilla Winberg

C3505043

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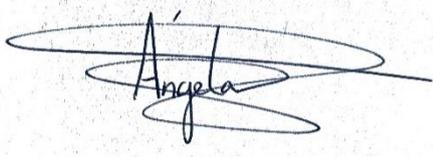
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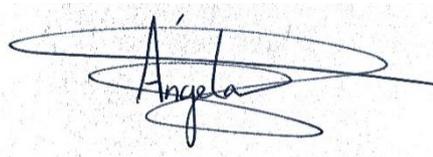
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Abstract

Issues regarding the impact mass tourism has had in countries worldwide have raised concerns from numerous national governments to research alternatives and develop conscious travel, through using events to de-seasonalise and change the already-formed destination image of nations. This research looked at discovering the effectiveness of diversification policies and the use of events implemented by the Spanish Government to resolve unsustainable mass tourism caused by previous branding, considering future connotations. It, therefore, focused on researching the case of Ibiza, due to the increase in popularity it received as a destination for luxury travel and party holidays. To meet objectives, qualitative data was collected through interviews with a council representative and a series of event professionals working in Ibiza to understand the topic through their experience and expert opinion.

Analysed results showed seasonality and previous branding's impact in tourism and event businesses, increased demand from attendees for authentic experiences, and evident involvement from the Government in promoting MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions) and sports events to de-seasonalise and reposition destination brand. However, results also showed the influence of external factors in mitigating unsustainable issues, such as the high dependance on transport connections and the need for a better balance between public and private sponsoring for Sports events. Finally, the researcher provided recommendations to consider for the future, indicating the opportunities for further research into the topic, as an example, by the Government investigating ways to improve communication and effective collaboration.

Introduction

Background

As mass tourism increases, causing irreparable damage in destinations, the present days have seen a development in governments introducing event strategies for policy formulation to rebrand and reposition tourism. Millions of tourists visit famous landmarks in cities such as Barcelona and Venice every year, particularly in summer (Kettle, 2017). This has kept generating extreme seasonality and negative cultural, economic, and environmental effects in nations, which many reporters and researchers hoped governments could fix before generating irremediable damage by achieving a sustainable balance in offer and demand (Becker, 2017).

In the case of Ibiza, it is important to examine these issues concerning mass tourism for numerous reasons. The Spanish authorities implemented campaigns and policies, such as the national development and competitiveness plan, *Spanish Tourism Plan Horizon 2020*, to ensure a sustainable tourism system (Turespaña, 2008-12). This was designed to defeat tourists' saturation in destinations and create long-term positive environmental advances through implementing Sports and MICE events portfolios politically, among others (Turespaña, 2008-12). This tourism and events plan recently came to an end in 2020, generating an appeal to research if the objectives have been met. Furthermore, this 572.56km² island part of the Spanish Balearic Islands (Ibiza Travel, 2019) has increased in popularity as a tourist destination during the last decade, particularly during the summer season, receiving 3.2 million tourists in 2018 (IBESTAT, 2020), while its estimated population is only of 157,704 residents (Forte, 2020). This continuous growth has consequently caused tourism development, bringing many economic benefits to the island, to the point it now heavily relies on tourism as the island's main economic motor, where 90% of the GDP is generated directly through the tourism industry (Palomo, 2017).

Additionally, Ibiza has been characterised for many years for its climate, beaches and nightlife (Balearic Islands Tourism Board, 2017), and is recognised as one of the world's leading markets for 3S tourism: "Sea, Sun and Sand" (Aguiló et al., 2005, p.

219). Nonetheless, Ibiza's key attractions go much further. Ibiza's biodiversity and culture were declared World Heritage by UNESCO in 1999 due to its endemic species oceanic Posidonia (UNESCO, 2020). Finally, the overconcentration of tourists has also led to negative consequences, including territorial and environmental deterioration (Ibiza Preservation, 2019) and the rejection from local communities and businesses towards tourists' misconduct regarding their involvement with substance abuse, sex, and violence, causing a loss of tourism competitiveness (Briggs, 2013, p. 11).

Research Aim

This academic research aims to explore the use of events within diversification strategies and policies used in the well-known party tourism destination Ibiza. Findings of this research should make an essential contribution to examining the effectiveness of using these events to rebrand and reposition the island as a destination, with a particular focus on their role in avoiding tourism seasonality and economic reliance on one specific tourism sector.

Research Objectives

- To consider the impact of the island's previous branding as a "party island" and the broader positive and negative implications of using different events, such as sustainable events, as a reaction to diversify tourism and change the island's destination branding.
- To discover if the objectives of tourism development strategies and Government policies implemented in previous years on the island of Ibiza have been met. If so, to analyse if events organised in previous years were part of the success.
- To recognise the consequences COVID-19 has had in using events to meet tourism development strategies and the future implications it will have on recovering strategies.

Literature Review

Increase in popularity and growth of tourism has made it crucial for government bodies to recognise the economic, social and environmental impacts tourism brings to destinations (Leiper, 1979, p. 391). As reported by WTTC (2019), tourism has become increasingly popular over the last decades, and it is now recognised as one of the world's largest industries, accounting for \$8.9 trillion contribution to the world's GDP.

Tourism and destination development

Leiper (1979, p. 391) defined tourism as visitors "touring and travelling for pleasure", which the UNWTO (2008) similarly describes as travelling to locations outside usual environment for personal or professional purposes. Despite the economic benefits, including driving economic growth and destination competitiveness (Webster and Ivanov, 2014, p. 137), uncontrolled mass tourism growth can negatively impact host communities (Gursoy et al., 2010). In addition, Xing and Dangerfield (2011) explored how an increase in mass tourism in islands with tourism-based economies can approximate irreparable damage. At present in Ibiza, mass tourism has led to beach privatisations, party boats' overuse, rise in crime, increase in rental prices and noise pollution, and the rejection from locals towards "unlimited, disrespectful and excessive tourism" (Dickinson, 2018).

Issues with seasonality:

Cuccia and Rizzo (2011) recognised the short-term economic benefits of seasonality; however, explored the long-run unsustainable effects it also creates in accessing capital, holding full-time staff, and overusing facilities (Butler, 1994, p. 5). Jang (2004, p. 819) defined this as a cyclical yearly pattern creating a temporal imbalance in demand, expressed in dimensions of visitor numbers, expenditure, transportation, and admissions to attractions (Butler, 1994, p. 23). The persistence of these issues has challenged the public sector's efforts to mitigate them, including financial aid, alternative marketing strategies, and policy formulation (Butler, 1994).

Destination life cycle

Following Butler's (1980) Tourism Area Life Cycle Model, seen in Figure 1, destinations go through 7 stages of tourism evolution brought by changes in visitors' preferences and needs, resulting in the cultural attractions and natural resources' gradual deterioration and possible disappearance.

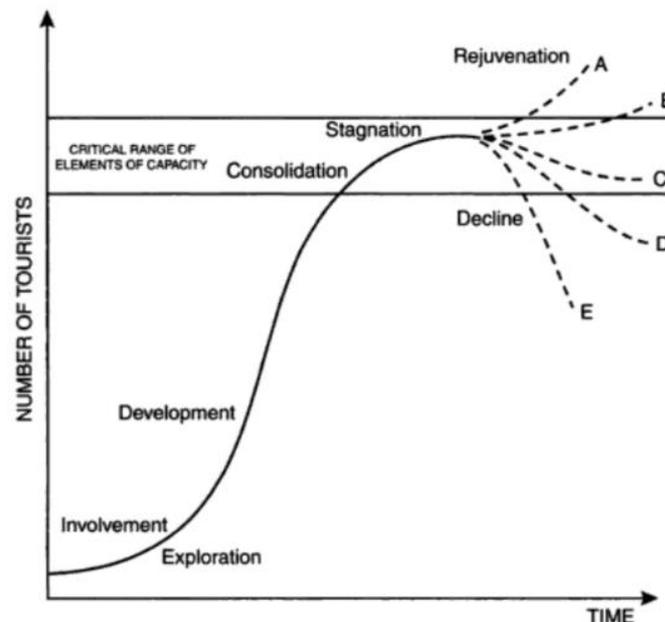


Figure 1. Hypothetical evolution of a tourist area (Butler 1980, p. 7).

Responding to Butler's (1980) cycle, Cardona and Cantalops (2014) applied these stages to Ibiza, starting in 1931 with the exploration phase and increase in tourism offer, and in the 2000s entering the stagnation stage, in which peak capacity levels were reached. This raises questions of what stage Ibiza falls in presently, perhaps falling under the rejuvenation stage, due to the Government's efforts to recommence the cycle using Ibiza's natural resources to achieve sustained growth. As Cardona and Cantalops (2014) recognised, this stage is almost unreachable without a shift in the tourist attractions, which Giannoni et al. (2020) confirms, showing the Balearic Islands' Government success in implementing restructuring policies to redefine the tourist offer to attract new market segments.

Event tourism development, event portfolios and national event funding policies

Looking at the public sector engaging in tourism development to ensure long-term improvement (Dung et al., 2018) and allocating resources in creating destination marketing campaigns to attract more visitors (Kubickova and Martin, 2020), national event funding policies have been used in destinations to achieve economic development objectives. Getz (2008) researched using events as motivators for tourism development to create economic impacts, including job and income generation through tourists' expenditure (Burgan and Mules, 2001, p. 322). In particular, sports mega-events, including the clear example of the Olympic Games, were widely used as government policy tools for capital accumulations and urban space transformation (Hiller, 2000, p. 440/41).

Nonetheless, despite mega-sporting events enhance destination brand image, increase tourist visitation, and create an uplift in tourism (Kotler and Gertner, 2002), Lea (1988, cited in Almeida-García, 2014) explored the lack of empirical research on tourism development policies' impact, as they disregard the social and territorial imbalances they create. Alternatively, Mikkonen and Lahovu (2020) explored how introducing cultural events instead can build a destination brand by diversifying the cultural offer. As Ormerod and Wood (2020) argue, the local government would achieve this by introducing and developing comprehensive local event portfolios, as they are characterised as being more effective in attracting and satisfying visitors.

Along with the use of event portfolios in destinations, Ziakas (2010) defined these as strategically interrelating events taking place in a host community through implementing joint event experiences (Ziakas, 2010. Cited in Kelly and Fairley, 2018, p. 261). Kelly and Fairley (2018, p. 260) similarly recognised they follow an integrative approach and are more complex than single events, as they shift to synergies to meet tourism, social, cultural and policy goals. In contrast, Andersson et al. (2020) established that by evaluating complex value-creation and its long-term impacts, it is possible to identify the social and cultural benefits event portfolios bring to regions. They also identified risks' complexity in present days, due to COVID-19 and the caused disruption in the events industry, including global mass cancellation

and postponement of events (Andersson et al. 2020, p. 414). This has caused event portfolio managers to rethink how to strategically manage risks in destinations to create a favourable destination image and achieve long-term outcomes (Andersson et al., 2020).

Looking at the national event funding policies implemented in Ibiza, in 2007, the competitiveness development plan worth 322 million euros, *Spanish Tourism Plan Horizon 2020* (Turespaña, 2008-12), was approved by the Ministry CONESTUR to centralise efforts to improve Spanish tourism by 2020 (Europa Press, 2007).

Objectives included:

- Promoting socio-territorial balance of tourism activities to increase economic benefits and improve natural and cultural locations' quality.
 - Creating services capable of operating throughout the year, such as strengthening MICE development schemes to increase off-season tourism.
 - Monitoring growth rate to create a new tourism cycle moved by sustainability.
- (Turespaña, 2008-12)

However, this plan did receive criticism from the Popular Party, who described it as "unrealistic", questioning the viability of actions proposed and expressing its lack of effective execution (Noriega, 2007). Nonetheless, concerning Ibiza, this plan marked the start of promotion initiatives from the Balearic Islands Tourism Board (2017), such as the *Plan Integral de Turismo de las Islas Baleares (2015-2025)*. This plan aimed to diversify the tourist offer to avoid seasonality issues and enhance destination branding by forming a cohesion of events. The local government became involved in:

- Hosting events of environmental repercussion
- Supporting present events part of the identity of Ibiza, such as sports, cultural, gastronomic, nautical, music and leisure events.
- Offering economic incentives to private event agencies considered of touristic interest.

(*Plan Integral de Turismo de las Islas Baleares, 2015-2025*)

Furthermore, considering the impact of COVID-19, UNWTO (2020) looked at implementing a recovery strategy to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Objectives included:

- Incentivising development to reorient the Tourism Value Chain towards contributing to sustainable travel and tourism.
- Boosting off-peak tourism to stimulate travel by specific groups.
- Diversifying services to avoid reliance on one single tourism activity.
- Reviewing country image in main markets by identifying strengths and weaknesses, and opportunities and threats for tourism marketing and destination branding.

(UNWTO, 2020)

Repositioning of tourism and destination image

Dragin-Jensen and Kwiatkowski (2018) recognised the importance of managing a strong destination image to increase destination competitiveness. Chalip and Costa (2005, p. 219) defined destination branding as the impression a destination creates in potential tourists' minds, including its functional and symbolic elements, which relates to Ritchie and Ritchie's (1998, cited in Blain et al., 2005, p. 329) description as the promise of a memorable travel experience associated with the destination. Berrozpe et al. (2017) used Kapferer's (1994) Brand Identity Prism to recognise how Ibiza's iconic, relational, and historic characteristics contribute to building Ibiza's global brand identity in all six dimensions, as seen in Figure 2.

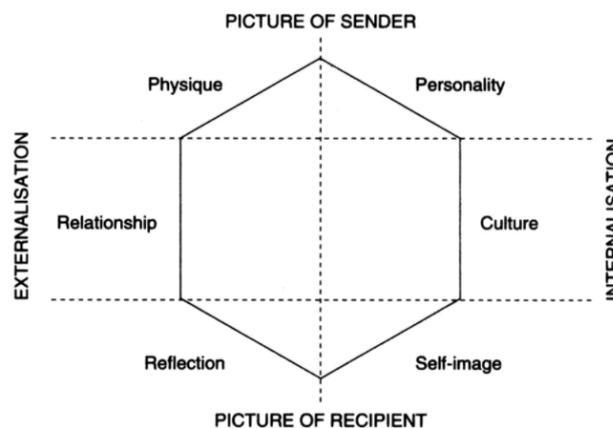


Figure 2. Brand identity prism (Kapferer, 1994. p. 43).

In particular, Ibiza's physical dimensions, including its bars, terraces, and nightclubs have contributed to global recognition as a "discotheque island", as this attractive symbol formed part of Ibiza's identity. Nonetheless, Berrozpe et al.'s (2017) research portrayed tourists knew no elements of nature and area of cultural tourism typical of the island. In addition, Tkaczynski et al. (2006) recognised the need for worldwide destinations with heavy tourism growth to utilise promotional campaigns to reposition the destination through image alteration and reclassification of tourism product. This would be caused by competition increase, changes in preferences of tourists, and a fixed image which does not promote the destination effectively (Tkaczynski et al., 2006, p. 3). Furthermore, bad press could damage a destination's reputation, gradually leading to a decline in the perceived attractiveness of a place (Avraham, 2006), which could be overcome by using media coverage of the perceived value and attractiveness of the new repositioned image as a destination image enhancer (De Jager, 2010).

Summary

To summarise, this section outlined previous academic research relevant to meeting the study aims and objectives. These being past exploration of the economic benefits and unsustainable effects of seasonality caused by tourism growth, the identified need for a shift in tourism attractions to achieve sustained growth, the importance of public-funded event portfolios and private events promoting both economic impacts and a socio-territorial balance. Lastly, the relevance of using promotional campaigns and government policies to reposition tourism and destination image.

Methodology

This section outlines the methodological approaches used to conduct the research to achieve the aims and objectives. Methodology was considered using layers of the Research Onion Model (Saunders et al., 2009): philosophy, strategy, choice of methods, and data collection and analysis. However, the extra layers: sampling, limitations, and ethical concerns have been introduced.

Research philosophy

It is crucial to understand philosophy to evaluate and choose the appropriate research methodology to comprehend world's structures (Smith, 1998, cited in Crossan, 2013, p. 47). For this exploratory empirical study, an interpretivism research philosophy was adopted to construct idealism and truth based on people's values, experiences, opinions, and beliefs (BRM, 2020). Furthermore, the researcher was able to look at meaning and motives behind people's actions to understand behaviour and interaction with others and understand the topic further (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998).

Research Strategy and choice of methods

This research focused on mono-method primary data collection. Frances et al. (2009, p. 309) investigated qualitative research as being concerned with understanding phenomena by gathering detailed responses about experiences. This qualitative empirical research method favoured participants' narrative based on opinion and ideas of the topic, which allowed readers to interpret meaning based on people's feelings and opinions (Hennink et al., 2010). Jamshed (2014) identified interviewing as the most common social science research tool for qualitative research data collection. Using this method, rather than focus groups, was due to practical reasons and limitations of the research nature, time management, and questions of individuals' perspectives, making personalised one-to-one meetings an appropriate choice. According to Gill et al., (2008, p. 291), semi-structured interviews define areas explored and allow space to flexibly diverge and discover crucial information from asking open-ended questions, which allowed for in-depth

discussion. Although written notes were taken throughout the one-to-one interviews, these were also recorded to capture data more accurately and ensure all key points were identified.

Sampling

Sampling techniques were investigated to identify the most appropriate to gather relevant data to meet the research objectives and understand theoretical frameworks. The research population was chosen following targeted purposive sampling and snowball non-probability sampling. Palinkas et al. (2016, p. 2) identified purposive sampling as the most effective technique for qualitative research, as it allows to identify information-rich participants related to the phenomenon of interest. Specifically, homogeneous sampling was used, as candidates shared similar characteristics, these being similar job roles (Etikan, 2016). Furthermore, Naderifar et al. (2017, p. 2) identified snowball sampling as existing participants contacting their acquaintances to recruit future subjects. This was applied when it became difficult to access participants with the target characteristics (Naderifar et al., 2017).

Therefore, fifteen event professionals from various event sectors, these being gastronomic, sports, cultural, MICE and wellness events, were contacted via email and LinkedIn, informed about the study, and asked to participate. As a second research population, local government representatives from the insular council's tourism department, along with the five local councils of the island were contacted (See appendix 1A-B for email templates). These were selected due to their expertise and extensive industry experience. Snowball sampling was used when few responses were achieved by asking existing participants to contact their network to find participants interested in sharing their opinions on the topic. These were applied considering participants' knowledge, experience, availability, and willingness to participate. Finally, following responses, the researcher interviewed a total of five participants, three of them managing private event agencies, one responsible for a mixed public and private events-related entity, and at last, one council representative from the tourism promotion department. These lasted 30 minutes to an hour and

followed a schematic presentation of eleven questions asked following a chronological order (Jamshed, 2014).

The Government representative was asked about involvement and success within applying government policies and future national funding support and implications. Similarly, businesses representatives were asked about the impact of previous branding, present seasonality issues, Government's mitigation involvement and future impacts. The researcher ensured questions were developed by identifying the main theories from the Literature Review and their relation to the questions (see appendix 2). Furthermore, as Majid et al. (2017) recognised, testing questions before conducting interviews was considered critical; therefore, piloting through rehearsing practice interviews was executed to ensure full understanding of the topic and questions.

Data Collection and analysis

Following the interviews, all data was collected, transcribed, and translated from Spanish into English (See appendix 3 for translated interview transcript). Subsequently, data was interpreted following thematic analysis through data reduction, coding and classification of themes and patterns. This type of analysis is defined as the method in which patterns are identified and analysed within data to capture important information and answer the overall research question (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 79). It is also considered appropriate for studies seeking to discover interpretations through accuracy, enhancing meaning in the research (Ibrahim, 2012).

Limitations

Some of the cons of qualitative research include the reliance on subjective factors in data collection, as participants' answers could lack objectivity by being impacted by personal viewpoints and values, increasing difficulties in reproduce findings in later research (BRM, 2020). The researcher was, therefore, mindful when managing data and analysing findings to avoid bias, as reliability and representativeness of data can be undermined. Thus, interviews took place via video call, and written interviews

were considered a backup to achieve better response outcomes. Limitations regarding difficulties of COVID-19 were considered, including accessing people due to availability restrains. Nonetheless, despite identified difficulties, this also generated opportunities to produce interest from participants and talk to key people in the industry, causing an effective collection of the sample.

Ethical concerns

Although the project lacked ethical sensitivities, as this research only involved remote contact with over 18-year-old participants, this research possessed a potential risk of compromising participant confidentiality and anonymity and could generate issues regarding consent and data protection. To mitigate these, personal details were made anonymous using pseudonyms (See table 1 in the discussion section) and were not shared without previous consent.

All partakers were asked to read an information sheet (See appendix 4) and sign a consent form (See appendix 5) containing rights of participation, rights of withdrawing data, voluntary participation, and usage, storage and protection of personal data. This research was conducted in compliance with regulations set by the UK GDPR (ICO, 2018) and with Leeds Beckett University policies on research ethics to ensure both participants and researcher's personal and legal safety. Therefore, data drawn from interviews was stored and kept secure in a password-protected computer.

Findings and Discussion

Following contacting participants, table 1 below shows a description of pseudonyms of participants and their characteristics.

Pseudonym	Characteristics
Participant 1 (P1)	Press manager of events and communication company organising health and wellness events in Ibiza.
Participant 2 (P2)	Project manager of events agency organising MICE events in the Balearic Islands, with a strong focus in Ibiza.
Participant 3 (P3)	Manager of the mixed public and private official association for the promotion of MICE events in Ibiza.
Participant 4 (P4)	CEO and founder of a major sport events company organising large events in Ibiza, mainland Spain, along with a range of other destinations.
Government Representative 1 (GR1)	Manager of the Tourism Promotion Foundation of Ibiza, representing Ibiza in International Tourism Fairs including FITUR.

Table 1. Table of pseudonyms and characteristics of participants.

After conducting the thematic analysis, the following themes, subthemes and patterns in Figure 3 below were identified.

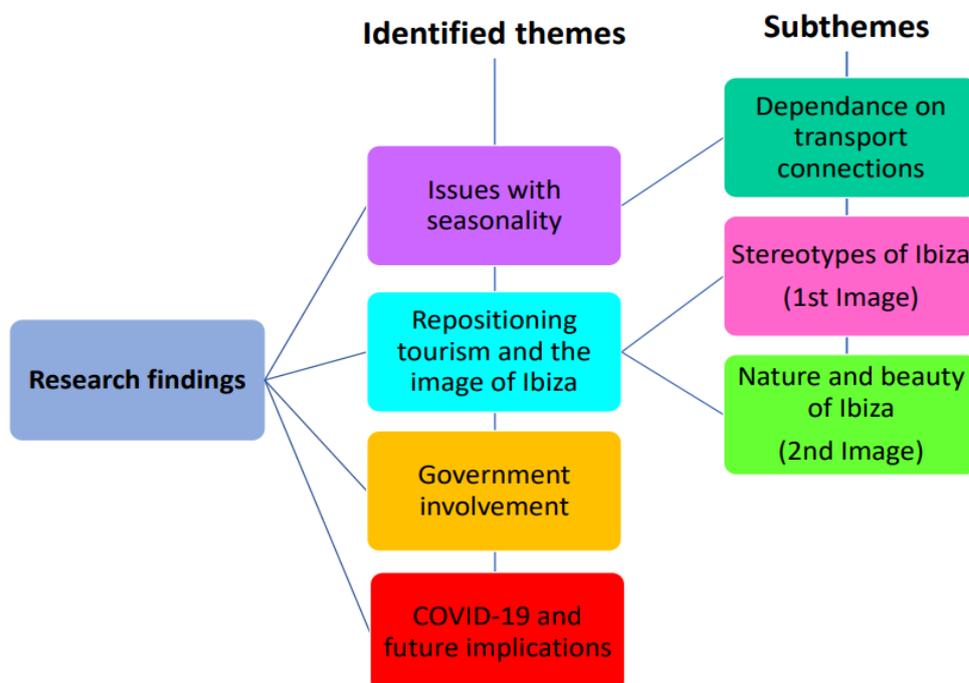


Figure 3. Diagram of interconnected relations between identified themes and subthemes.

Theme 1: Issues with Seasonality

Linking back to Cuccia and Rizzo's (2011) research on the short-term economic benefits and long-run unsustainable effects of seasonality, all participants were aware of the extreme seasonality created in Ibiza, and the dependence on this marked tourist season from June to August, where the island is exceedingly crowded, and prices are immoderately inflated (P3). Despite the interviewees acknowledged seasonality's economic benefits in Ibiza, having many businesses dependant on these, all participants recognised the advantages of organising events of their sector in the low season and the numerous logistic difficulties of organising events in the high season. These included, but not limited to, obtaining motivated and energised event staff after summer, finding affordable accommodation for big groups, and finding venue availability, as these were mostly used for clubbing events, in line with Butler's (1994) research on the unsustainable effects of seasonality. In contrast, organising events in the low seasons allowed organisers to book venues, which would usually be booked in summer, to organise their events. Some participants specified the high season was therefore not particularly used for organising MICE events. Instead, the "shoulder seasons", from May to June and from September to October, were used as a popular alternative, exploring possibilities of extending these seasons.

Contributing to Butler's (1994) research on the governments implementing financial aid, alternative marketing strategies and policies to reduce seasonality, the council representative (GR1) recognised one of the objectives when attending international fairs was promoting events in the low season. They also encouraged tourists to learn Ibiza is also an attractive winter destination. To do so, GR1 explained they enhanced a positive destination image by promoting events characterised by enhancing Ibiza's nature, culture, and gastronomy, including sports events, along with exploring Ibiza's business opportunities for MICE events.

Furthermore, following Getz (2008), and Kotler and Gertner's (2002) research on using events as motivators for tourism development and utilising sports events to enhance destination brand image, P4 explained organising sports events throughout

the year was the ideal approach to attract people during low seasons. Which, if invested in and organised well, would generate direct regional wealth in the island by providing a year-round income, as shown by the tourism impact rate of their annual sports event held in Ibiza of €2.3m in 2019.

Emerging Subtheme 1.1. Dependence on Transport Connections

When asked about reducing seasonality by organising events during the low seasons, all participants indicated there were major external factors which caused considerable inconveniences, including the total dependence on Ibiza's transport connections, including ferries and flights, due to it being an island.

P3 discussed Ibiza is a strategically well-placed destination because of the advantage of only being within a short 2-3 hours' distance from business-driven European countries, including Germany, UK, France, and Italy. These facilitated using Ibiza for MICE events, as attendees usually stay for one to three nights. Participants 1 and 2 also recognised Ibiza as an appealing destination for MICE events due to its desirable location.

However, as GR1 stated: "We go from having direct flights to 100 national and European destinations from March to October, to when it reaches the end of October, the airport board changes, and only national connections are available with the occasional flight to Paris, Amsterdam and London." This weak prevalence of flights could also affect the availability of hotels, and therefore, accommodation of an attendee visiting during the low season, creating a competitive disadvantage to other destinations more easily accessible in Europe.

GR1 mentioned the council and public sector's efforts in developing relationships with the airlines and teleoperators, including organising meetings and creating promotional campaigns to negotiate keeping the flight routes in winter. However, GR1 also explored the extreme difficulty of reaching an agreement, as airlines see this decision as unviable, as there is no direct benefit for the airlines if the level of demand is low. In addition, P4 showed success in communicating with big airlines and tour operators and increasing frequency of flights over the years, as the demand

increased when numerous athletes and their families booked flights to attend their sports events; nevertheless, P4 did recognise the potential for improvement.

Theme 2: Repositioning Tourism and the Image of the Island

Subtheme 2.1. Stereotypes of Ibiza (1st Image of Ibiza)

Within the literature review, Cardona and Cantalops (2014) identified the stagnating growth Ibiza experienced and the attempt from both public and private sectors to enter the rejuvenation stage and achieve sustained growth through changing tourist attractions. Furthermore, as Berroszpe et al. (2017) explored, Ibiza's global identity had been categorised as a "discotheque island", which influenced Ibiza's destination image and the type of tourists visiting the island; however, also challenged how most tourists did not widely know elements of the nature and culture.

Linking back to the literature, all participants recognised the previous stereotyping and strong initial image of Ibiza being classed as a "party island" due to its clubbing scene, along with the positive and negative consequences this had created. As P4 stated: "Ibiza is known in the whole world and is the number one destination for nightlife and luxury tourism.", which intakes that this powerful image had been positive in earning international recognition as a destination. Similarly, P1 mentioned its influence in attractiveness, as people were willing to travel from numerous places and pay extensive prices to see the best DJs perform in clubs such as Pacha in Ibiza.

This contrasts with P3, who acknowledged the economic benefits, however, recognised the adversity in attracting diverse tourists and acquiring new clients for MICE, as an example to organise a Medical Congress, as they assumed Ibiza was solely targeted at attracting party tourism for youth groups and therefore would have no potential in this sector. Clear examples of stereotypes of Ibiza solely being a party island include GR1s experience at an international fair, where an attendee responded: "No way! I am way too old for Ibiza now; I have a family." Along with P4, when talking to clients at European sports events, they had asked: "Wait, in Ibiza people do sport? the only marathon I have done in Ibiza is from one club to another".

As CR1 explained, this topic was becoming more prevalent, and the council had gotten involved in promotional campaigns to show this side of Ibiza, such as *Ibiza es Wellness*, in which wellness events including yoga and meditation retreats and sports events were supported. Event professionals also agreed their business had a strong focus in portraying the authenticity to their clients and attendees through their events, as their business aimed at encouraging attendees to see Ibiza through different eyes and challenged tourists' perspectives to break stereotypes and reposition its image. This was shown through their business and event slogans, in the case of P4's sport event being "Ibiza run and feel.", and in P2's company's recent change of slogan from "Experience of a lifetime" to "Discover the world through new eyes", which aimed at encouraging real and authentic experiences for attendees. Furthermore, P4 explained the visible customer loyalty in their organised sports events, as most attendees returned every year to challenge themselves with new personal sports goals and yearned to come back with family members or friends to explore the island further.

Theme 3: Government Involvement

In confirmation of the national event policies introduced by the national government and the local council, the council representative (CR1) demonstrated evident involvement, specifically from the five local councils of the island and the Consell de Ibiza to meet the objectives of promoting a socio-territorial balance of tourism activities and strengthening MICE development schemes and other events, such as sports events to de-seasonalise. This included sponsoring sports activities, developing offseason events, and their marketing and promotion annual action plan. The public sector had become involved in participating annually in the *Tour de España* stand and their own stand, in 18 to 30 of some of the most important international tourism and MICE events fairs, among them stands out IMEX, held in Frankfurt, IBTM in Barcelona, and FITUR and Madrid Fusión in Madrid.

Most participants specified the Government had shown willingness to support their events' delivery. In particular, P1 stated the council had become involved in promoting their events through their network, giving access to the event's information

on their official tourism website. Furthermore, P3 expressed the tight relationship with all five local councils, receiving support in promotion and annual funding for their mixed public and private business. In particular, the Santa Eulalia council's presence had stood out due to the Congress Palace being located here. Yet, CR1 noted improvement possibilities in terms of development and better organisation for sponsoring sports events and promoting offseason events to extend the season, due to the long-term process required for legislative government's approval. Similarly, P1 reaffirmed this demand for government bodies to communicate and collaborate effectively to distribute funds and achieve even better results. In addition, P4 recognised the insufficient private sponsoring for their sports events, examples being sponsoring from hotel chains and clubbing agencies. The participant also perceived the need for a better balance between private and public sponsoring, which would allow for the desired growth to be achieved.

Theme 4: COVID-19's Impact and Future Implications

Considering the pandemic's negative impacts and the UNWTO's (2020) plans for implementing specific tourism recovery strategies, all participants confirmed the urgent need for Government support, due to the experienced tourism and events decline caused by postponement and decrease in enquiries for future events. Furthermore, the Government representative also explored their vigorous efforts during the pandemic to reduce COVID-19's economic effects; however, explained authorities were yet to plan how to implement future recovery strategies for the events and tourism industry after the impact of COVID-19.

Nevertheless, contributing to Butler's (1980) Tourism Area Life Cycle Model, apart from businesses becoming more involved in showing the less-known richness image of Ibiza, participants also detailed, specifically at present, COVID-19 had contributed to the increase in demand from attendees and visitors for these types of events and activities, and therefore there had been a shift in tourism attractions. P1 and P2 specified they were receiving more demand for smaller-sized groups at events and personalised outdoor activities, which caused a transformation of their incentive events activities, and offered attendees opportunities to discover the culture and

nature of the island. Furthermore, P2 cited "people had lost the connection with nature, and they were going to Ibiza to party and not remember anything after", further exploring presently people were becoming more conscious and appreciating travelling and being outdoors more. CR1 similarly pinpointed the increase of smaller-sized events with more contact with the environment, due to businesses' needs to evolve and adapt to present circumstances and new tourists' values and lifestyles. Finally, P4 stated the present importance of redefining the tourism model to avoid Ibiza depending solely on clubbing events, as these tended to be organised in closed spaces with no ventilation and would therefore take longer to be authorised. Instead, outdoor sports events were more likely to thrive sooner in the future after a lift of travel restrictions, as attendees would benefit from breathing better-quality air. Nevertheless, this participant also identified Ibiza's insular nature and reliance on transport connections could act as a future advantage, as it could potentially gain international recognition as a safer destination.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This section analyses if the aims and objectives of the research have been met. These include exploring the impacts of destination branding and seasonality of private and public-funded events held in Ibiza, evaluating the effectiveness of events within government policies applied, and investigating present events' repercussions in achieving better results in the future. By considering previous academic research and primary qualitative, the researcher investigated if research' results contributed to or challenged previous theories regarding events' effectiveness and the Government's role in rebranding and repositioning the island as a destination.

In line with meeting the objective of considering the impact of seasonality and previous branding in Ibiza, following the research findings, Kapferer's (1994) Brand identity prism was applied and confirmed to the case of Ibiza. Ibiza's famous clubbing scene and luxury travel opportunities had served as an advantage to position this destination on the map, contributing to its destination competitiveness.

However, Ibiza had seemingly suffered some negative effects of extreme seasonality and previous branding as a discotheque island due to its economic reliance on this sector, despite the economic benefits these created. According to participants, this had affected their event businesses, as their attendees and clients considerably lacked familiarity with Ibiza's natural and cultural attractiveness, challenging opportunities to attain new clients. Nonetheless, it was also established there was a demand for events held in lower seasons characterised for promoting authentic aspects of the island, enhancing Ibiza's nature, cultural offer and traditions. Results, therefore, confirmed how the present efforts from private and public sectors in generating a shift in tourism activities were becoming more prevalent.

Furthermore, in accordance with the research objective of discovering if Government strategies had been carried out effectively, primary and secondary data research assisted in concluding that various objectives of Government policies implemented in Ibiza had been met. Particularly, objectives from the *Spanish Tourism Plan Horizon 2020* (Turespaña, 2008-12) of promoting a balance of tourism activities and strengthening MICE development schemes operating throughout the year to boost off-peak season tourism were achieved. Furthermore, GR1 showed evident involvement from the Government in accomplishing the objectives set in the *Plan Integral de Turismo de las Islas Baleares (2015-2025)* of diversifying the tourist offer and enhancing a positive destination image. This was feasible due to Government's support in the promotion of sports, cultural, gastronomic and leisure events portraying the authenticity of the island, along with awarding public funding to private event agencies promoting objectives to diversify tourism and reposition the image of the destination.

Linking to the literature, events were therefore confirmed to be previously and presently used as tools of tourism diversification policies by the private and public sector in Ibiza, contributing to previous theories of the topic. This was based on participants succeeding in attracting visitors during the low seasons to attend MICE and sports events, as these effectively promoted off-season tourism by diversifying and revitalising the offer. This also benefited the island as events encouraged

visitors to discover the authenticity, in terms of Ibiza's cultural, natural and gastronomical offer. However, success was limited due to external factors, including Ibiza's dependance on transport connections and agreements with the airlines on flight routes in low seasons affecting hotel availability, along with insufficient private sponsoring for some events such as sports events.

Lastly, looking at the research objective of considering future implications after the effects of the global pandemic, it was detected there was a need from event agencies for financial support from the Government to commence using events as tourism recovery strategies. Furthermore, GR1 also discussed the Government was yet to plan what direction to take to implement future tourism and event strategies under the present extensive uncertainty COVID-19 caused in these industries. This would contribute to the explored increase in demand for smaller-sized events organised outdoors, as visitors had started to shift their values and lifestyles by becoming more conscious and knowledgeable of the environment around them, wanting to learn more about the culture and traditions of destinations. Therefore, proposing outdoor events, such as sports events, could be used as recovery strategies for this tourism destination. To conclude, despite most policies applied in Ibiza had been achieved, the still present prevalence of these issues indicated possibilities for achieving better results in the future, suggesting there is still improvement to be made.

Recommendations

This study explored the lack of empirical studies on this research topic and the extreme importance of investigating the role of events in alternative policies and strategies to reposition branding of destinations and mitigate the prevalent global issues of extreme seasonality and mass tourism. Therefore, acknowledging research limitations, this paper portrayed the requirement for conducting future research to understand the topic further; specifically, looking at the case of Ibiza, the researcher identified necessities for further exploration in the following recommendations.

Regarding the limitations in policy implementation caused by Ibiza's insular nature and total dependence on transport connections, the Government should consider

creating agreement opportunities with airlines to increase flight routes during low seasons and achieve tourism growth. Although there was evident difficulty in reaching these agreements due to low demand, participants also showed success in improving these if the demand level were to arise. Therefore, by the public sector allocating grants and financial assistance, these opportunities may become more feasible. However, the present impacts of the global pandemic should be considered when researching further. Results also portrayed meeting objectives of diversification strategies was also affected by the insufficient private sponsoring for sports activities. As explained, the public sector becoming involved in allocating resources to provide a better balance between private and public sponsoring could alleviate the issues created; this topic should be therefore explored further to achieve better results.

Lastly, the Government could look at improving communication and effective collaboration to ensure a balance of tourism activities. This would mean continuing to avoid dismissal of clubbing events and luxury travel due to the competitive advantage and economic benefits they bring. However, the public sector should also investigate the benefits and disadvantages of investing further in sports events to maximise tourism growth in low seasons, contributing to avoiding economic dependance on the summer season, specifically considering the impacts of COVID-19. At last, councils should also avoid solely depending on these tourism attractions, and therefore further looking at funding and promoting other events characterised for allowing visitors to experience other aspects of the island, portraying its culture, nature and traditional aspects. This need for a better balance has increased and become crucial due to the negative effects of COVID-19 and uncertainties regarding future impacts, making it crucial for research to be made on how government bodies can implement events in recovery strategies after times of crisis to ensure an effective balance in popular tourist destinations.

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maintenance of an event portfolio, *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, vol. 36(2), pp. 260-275.

Appendices

Appendix 1: email templates for council representatives and event businesses

A) Email template for council representatives

Subject line: Research study to understand event tourism development in Ibiza, request for assistance

Dear (insert name),

My name is Angela Torrecilla, I am Bachelor Events Management student at Leeds Beckett University.

As part of my dissertation, I am undertaking a project about how events can be used as rebranding and repositioning tourism strategies for destinations. I will be focusing my research on the case of Ibiza, exploring how events have been used within diversification strategies and policies.

I am contacting you as I would be interested in hearing about your thoughts regarding this topic, and the government's involvement in events held throughout the island.

If you are interested in participating in this research, please reply to this email, this way I will also be able to provide further information about the interview and research consent details.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Angela Torrecilla

BA(Hons) Events Management student

Leeds Beckett University

A.torrecillawinberg2775@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk

+447857337175

B) Email template for event companies

Subject line: Research study to understand event tourism development in Ibiza, request for assistance

Dear (insert name),

My name is Angela Torrecilla, I am Bachelor Events Management student at Leeds Beckett University.

As part of my dissertation, I am undertaking a project about how events can be used as rebranding and repositioning tourism strategies for destinations. I will be focusing my research on the case of Ibiza, exploring how events have been used within diversification strategies and policies.

I am contacting you as I would be interested in hearing about your thoughts regarding this topic, and to find out more about the events you organise throughout the island.

If you are interested in participating in this research, please reply to this email, this way I will also be able to provide further information about the interview and research consent details.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Angela Torrecilla

BA(Hons) Events Management student

Leeds Beckett University

A.torrecillawinberg2775@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk

+447857337175

Appendix 2: table of relation from interview questions to literature review

Interview questions 1 (Government representative)	Interview questions 2 (Event agencies)	Relation to literature review
Introduction of development strategies to diversify tourism: How was Plan del Turismo Español Horizonte 2020 development and competitiveness plan introduced and implemented in the island?	Can you tell me more about the events you organise and how they have been affected by Government funding and development strategies?	Using economic events can bring negative consequences. Event tourism funding policies and practices that seek to create regional or national event strategies can be effective in gaining more socioeconomic outcomes (Ormerod & Wood, 2020).
Benefits of these: Why do you think events were chosen as a development strategy rather than another form of tourism development? What advantages event strategies bring?	How successful have the events you organise been in attracting tourists during the low seasons. What benefits do these have on the image of the island?	Local governments should intervene by creating a portfolio of local events, as it can be more effective in attracting and satisfying visitors (Ormerod & Wood, 2020).
Measuring success Regarding this event portfolio, would you consider they have been successful in attracting a number of tourists throughout the year during low seasons?	How successful have events been in attracting tourists during low seasons? Do you think they have played an important part in repositioning the image of the island towards tourists, why?	Acknowledged the effectiveness of implementing cultural tourism in regions to reduce seasonality (Cuccia and Rizzo, 2011). events can build a destination brand by spreading a positive destination image and diversifying the cultural offer (Mikkonen and Lahovuuo, 2020).
Sustainability Can you give more detail about how development schemes of MICE have helped to meet the objectives of improving tourism and promoting sustainability?	Has the event been successful in meeting the objectives of improving tourism and promoting sustainability?	Objectives of the <i>Spanish Tourism Plan Horizon 2020</i> include monitoring growth rate to create a new tourism cycle moved by sustainability (Turespaña, 2008-12).
Future implications Do you think the objectives have been met? Is there anything else which can be done to improve?	If not, is there anything else which can be done to improve this?	This plan received criticism described it as “unrealistic” questioning the viability of actions proposed and expressing its lack of effective execution (Noriega, 2007).
Impact of covid-19 Considering the global pandemic which has negatively impacted the tourism and events sector, is there any new recovery strategies of using events to incentivise sustainable travel and tourism sectors through events?	Considering the global pandemic which has negatively impacted the tourism and events sector, are the nature of your events going to change to incentivise sustainable travel and tourism sectors?	COVID19 Tourism Recovery technical Assistance Package (UNWTO, 2020) recovery strategies are stated in line with Sustainable Development Goals from the United Nations.
Future related to COVID-19: Do you consider this is the time to reconsider strategies and explore possibilities to develop and boost off-peak tourism by stimulating travel by specific groups in the future can events help to develop this? Why? Future support how are these events going to be supported in the future? Is there going to be more national event funding strategies?)	is this is the time to explore new possibilities to develop and boost off-peak tourism by stimulating travel by specific groups. Do you believe events can help to develop this? Why? If so, do you consider national event funding strategies helpful to achieving this?	One of the objectives of the UN recovery strategy is boosting off-peak tourism to stimulate travel by specific groups (UNWTO, 2020).

Appendix 3: Interview transcripts

A) Participant 4 Interview Transcript in Spanish

Investigador: ¿cuál es tu papel en la organización de eventos y en el desarrollo del turismo de tu compañía?

P4: realmente nosotros no somos un organizador de eventos, ni agencia de eventos ni DMC. Somos una asociación profesional de carácter mixto que se pone en marcha en la isla en el año 2011. Ahora en el 2021 celebraremos el décimo aniversario. Somos una entidad mixta, que en España un 90% de las organizaciones son mixtas, y en el caso de Ibiza se decidió crear un departamento de convenciones porque en la isla ya se venían desarrollando diferentes eventos, sobre todo corporativos. Mientras empezaba a crecer la oferta, se empezaron a abrir nuevos hoteles de 5 estrellas con salas para convenciones y se crearon nuevos DMC locales muy buenos y fuertes. Ibiza empezaba a despertar interés dentro de las compañías para incentivos, presentaciones y convenciones. En 2008 ya se había inaugurado el palacio de congresos, donde tenemos nuestra oficina. Sí que empezaba a haber un movimiento interesante dentro del sector MICE. Ibiza era un destino desconocido, y todavía a día de hoy muchas empresas siguen siéndolo sobre todo en la parte de MICE. Se necesitaba crear un ente oficial que albuminase la oferta de este tipo de servicios y de este sector tan específico y que no tiene nada que ver con un turista vacacional, que es quizás por lo que se conoce a la isla y en lo que los profesionales de la isla eran expertos. Dentro de la compañía realizamos una programación exclusiva y diferenciada en Ibiza dentro del sector MICE, y también hacemos una valoración de asesoramiento para todas aquellas empresas y agencias que están trabajando propuestas de eventos en la isla y, en una tercera línea, nos centramos en la homogeneización y profesionalización del sector.

En este contexto se decide crear esta compañía. Nosotros pertenecemos dentro de un paraguas, que es una organización empresarial mucho mas grande que tiene 90 años de historia llamada Fomento de Turismo de la Isla de Ibiza. Esta hace diez u once años que decidió dar un paso más y crear diferentes clubs de productos específicos en diferentes tipologías, por ejemplo, *Ibiza Luxury Destination*, enfocados al turismo de lujo; nuestra empresa más enfocado al turismo del sector MICE, y ahora en los últimos años se han desarrollado otro tipo de productos.

Dentro de la parte privada parte tenemos 60 empresas, hoteles, restaurantes, DMC, agencias de actividades, es decir, todos los servicios que una empresa que venga a Ibiza puede necesitar para un evento. Empezamos hace 10 años con 27 empresas, que ha incrementado y evolucionado. Dentro de la parte pública, estamos apoyados por los diferentes organismos públicos y locales, el Consell de Ibiza, y por los 5 ayuntamientos de distintos municipios. Hay una relación estrecha con todos, pero de los 5, el Ayuntamiento de Santa Eulalia tiene una presencia mucho más destacada porque es donde está el Palacio de Congresos, y decidieron apoyar este proyecto global e invertir en la promoción que se hace desde dentro de nuestra compañía.

Desde esta posición, nosotros no organizamos eventos, pero sí que tenemos un rol dentro del sector de eventos desde la promoción a lo largo del año con el plan de marketing en diferentes mercados, con diferentes acciones siempre muy específicas para el sector MICE, workshops profesionales, ferias... que nos permitan dar a conocer la imagen de Ibiza dentro de este segmento. La isla siempre digo que tiene 2 partes, una buena y otra menos buena. La muy buena es la marca, Ibiza tiene una marca internacional muy fuerte y potente, yo a cualquier feria que voy conocen Ibiza y lo sitúan en el mapa, lo que es muy bueno, la parte menos buena es el cliché o el hándicap que tiene la isla que es que, cada vez menos afortunadamente, pero todavía hay muchos sectores que asocian a la isla solamente a esa imagen de fiesta, playa

verano y discotecas, que es la imagen que más se ha potenciado y que por diferentes factores más se conoce. Per afortunadamente cada vez son muchas más las empresas que descubren la parte B de la isla, que, sí, tenemos fiestas impresionantes y es un destino alucinante para venir en verano, pero que la isla es mucho más que todo esto. Entonces hacemos esa labor de promoción de la isla y de las empresas que están dentro del porfolio de nuestro departamento de convenciones, y dentro de la organización de eventos sí que somos esa ventana o primera puerta en la que un cliente entra a un destino que no conoce y se pone en contacto con nosotros, y nosotros hacemos ese asesoramiento. Guiamos evidentemente de forma prioritaria hacia las empresas que forman parte de la empresa y si no hay, se le busca ese servicio dentro de la isla.

Investigador: dentro del sector MICE, ¿hay algún evento que destaque?

P4: el 90% de los eventos que se han hecho en estos 10 años han sido en la parte corporativa, mucho incentivo y convención. Al ser eventos corporativos entra en juego la privacidad, son marcas que algunas no les importa difundir el evento, pero hay muchas otras que no quieren que se sepa dónde se ha hecho el evento. Dentro de todo esto, sí que hay algunos eventos que te puedo destacar. En la isla en los últimos años ha destacado en el tema de automoción de presentación de producto.

- En el año 2009, Wolsvagen hizo un evento mundial aquí del lanzamiento del nuevo Beatle. Fue su mayor evento a nivel internacional durante ese año, fueron 6-7 semanas seguidas y fue muy interesante a nivel destino porque se organizó durante el mes de noviembre, que evidentemente uno de los objetivos por los que se apuesta por el MICE para tratar de desestacionalizar. Ibiza tiene una temporada muy marcada de mayo a octubre, y ahora con la organización de eventos MICE estamos consiguiendo que se realice actividad fuera de esos meses principales, lo que es un complemento perfecto para nuestra temporada de sol y playa durante junio, julio y agosto, donde la isla está llena y no se necesita a más gente, pero sí alargar la temporada. Este evento además de atraer a muchas personas durante estas semanas fue muy interesante en cuanto a las fechas y tuvo una repercusión internacional.
- Cuando se inauguró el palacio de congresos, por ejemplo, SEAT hizo una presentación del Seat Ibiza.
- Hace unos cuatro años, más o menos, Audi hizo el lanzamiento del Audi Q2 durante octubre y noviembre, fechas que fueron muy buenas, aunque fue algo más pequeño del de Wolsvagen.
- En 2018, más reciente, Mercedes organizó un evento, que en este caso no fue una presentación de vehículo, sino un training internacional mundial que hicieron. Fue todavía más interesante aún porque se realizó durante los meses de febrero, marzo y abril, lo que quiere decir que, durante el mes de febrero y marzo, se abrieron tres hoteles de 5 estrellas de unas quinientas habitaciones que habitualmente estarían cerrados por ser temporada baja y se abrieron para el evento.
- Vodafone Italia hizo también una convención con unas ochocientas personas hace seis o siete años, Ópticas Afflelou, la marca de gafas hizo un evento hace tres o cuatro años de quinientas personas, Heineken ha hecho su convención anual con quinientas personas también...

La verdad es que Ibiza no está enfocada a un sector en concreto porque te podría decir que en la isla se han hecho eventos de laboratorios farmacéuticos,

comunicaciones, empresas de seguros, bancas, algún banco alemán, automoción, marcas de moda como Nike, Levis, Converse. Es bastante variado. Luego también es verdad que hay un porcentaje muy pequeño de convenciones que se hacen en la isla de tema médico. Por ejemplo, en 2016 se hizo un congreso nacional de quinientos asistentes de ginecología y obstetricia, este evento fue interesante desde el punto de vista de que se hizo en el palacio de congresos y tuvo una complejidad técnica bastante elevada porque parte de las sesiones que se hacían eran retransmisiones en directo, se conectaban con tres hospitales nacionales donde estaban realizando distintas intervenciones por laparoscopia. Tenía un componente híbrido.

Es una lástima que no podamos publicar una lista de todos los eventos organizados por la privacidad porque son nombres y marcas internacionales muy conocidas que seguramente atraerían a otras marcas.

Investigador: ¿cómo de exitosos han sido estos eventos en atraer personas durante la temporada baja? Ahora con el turismo de masas y la concentración del turismo en la temporada de verano, ¿por qué crees que es importante los eventos para el cambio de marca y para desestacionalizar?

P4: en cuanto al tema de las temporadas, es cierto que la mayoría de los eventos en Ibiza se organizan de abril a mayo y de septiembre a octubre. Estas quizás son las dos temporadas más fuertes de MICE. Pero bueno, Ibiza es muy especial en distintos aspectos y también es más complicado, pero sí que hemos visto algunos eventos que se han hecho en el mes de julio o a finales de agosto, que es una época en la que muchos laboratorios farmacéuticos hacen su reunión anual, para ellos supongo que es buena fecha y durante los últimos años hemos tenido laboratorios nacionales que han hecho sus eventos en agosto. Es un poco más complicado porque la isla ya está muy llena y es difícil encontrar disponibilidad en un hotel para un grupo de cien a trescientas personas, y el otro hándicap es que Ibiza en verano es para nada un destino barato, requiere un presupuesto alto. Sí que hay clientes que han estado dispuestos a pagar verdaderas locuras por el precio de estas habitaciones, pero era lo que querían. No es habitual, lo normal es de abril, mayo, finales de septiembre y todo el mes de octubre. La idea es seguir apostando en esa línea y alargar más la temporada, coger marzo y noviembre y tratar de desestacionalizar. Pero esto a veces es complicado porque hay muchos factores externos, al ser Ibiza una isla, tenemos una dependencia del sector aéreo total, no siempre es sencillo. Durante la temporada de invierno pasamos de tener de marzo a octubre cien destinos nacionales y europeos conectados en vuelos directos, además tenemos una ventaja, estamos a unas dos horas de Reino Unido, Alemania, Suiza, Bélgica, Francia, Italia..., es un destino estratégicamente colocado como destino de eventos. Las personas que vienen al evento se quedan una, dos o tres noches, por lo que las distancias cortas cobran valor. Cuando llega finales de octubre, cambia la cartelera del aeropuerto y nos quedamos con conexiones nacionales y con vuelo a París, Ámsterdam y Londres. Al haber menos vuelos, la mayor parte de los hoteles cierran, por ejemplo, no hay ningún hotel de 5 estrellas que esté abierto durante el invierno. Es verdad que ahora en la temporada de invierno ha habido algún hotel más abierto de jueves a domingo. Eso ya es una ayuda porque si el Beach Club está abierto en esos días es más posible que cojan a un grupo para un evento de incentivo.

Investigador: si has tenido alguna oportunidad de hablar con un cliente o con una persona que haya atendido un evento, ¿crees que han visto la isla de otra manera al ir durante la temporada baja? ¿se se han encontrado con una isla

completamente distinta a la que se pensaban que era? En cuanto a estereotipos y la imagen que se había creado de Ibiza.

P4: sin duda. Yo siempre le digo a los clientes cuando hacemos presentaciones que les invito a conocer el factor "guau" de la isla. Quizás todos podíamos haber llegado a tener una opinión o impresión de la isla, y siendo sinceros, a veces tiene un componente un tanto negativo cuando hablamos de hacer un congreso médico en la isla, por ejemplo. La gente se descoloca un poco, y no ve que Ibiza tenga potencial ahí. Pero realmente siempre les digo a las marcas y a las agencias con las que estamos en contacto que a veces no es fácil convencer al cliente de que cierren su evento en Ibiza, pero cuando hacen el evento en la isla, siempre les digo que añade un componente extra, un valor añadido y es ese factor sorpresa porque el 90-95% de la gente, hay casos especiales, pero, normalmente descubren mucho más. Evidentemente en los eventos que se organizan en Ibiza se intentan mostrar empresas de actividades locales y originales: un hippy tour, cosas muy ligadas a Ibiza que te descolocan más. Tenemos locales que están en la zona interior, fincas que quizás no es la imagen que todo el mundo tiene de la isla.

Entonces, sí, sin duda. Ibiza es un descubrimiento para mucha de la gente que viene para el evento, que es uno de los factores interesantes a nivel de MICE, no estamos ante un único cliente, estamos ante un futuro o potencial cliente vacacional. Es decir, si han venido dos días a Ibiza con su empresa para un evento y han visto algunos aspectos que le han llamado la atención, mucha gente va a repetir. Tiene esa doble importancia este turismo. A mí me ha llegado a pasar de organizar algún evento con agencias de eventos con agencias locales, que hagan un tour para que descubran cuales son las opciones y experimenten por ellos mismos todas las posibilidades de Ibiza. Me ha pasado con alguna agencia de Reino Unido que habían estado previamente en Ibiza de vacaciones, los llevo a ver el casco antiguo de Ibiza que es patrimonio de la UNESCO, y no lo habían visto. Se habían quedado entre la playa y el beach club, la discoteca y zona de san Antonio y no se habían movido.

Investigador: sobre la sostenibilidad, el turismo de masas a afectado a la sostenibilidad en Ibiza, por lo que el Gobierno ha intentado implementar alguna estrategia de sostenibilidad, quería saber cómo ha afectado a las empresas que organizan eventos.

P4: es cierto que en este sector en general, la sostenibilidad se está implementando cada vez más. Sí que es verdad que alguna vez nos han hecho una petición más enfocada a estos temas, pero quizás tampoco hay ninguna empresa que esté llevando a cabo cosas muy destacables. Por ejemplo, los hoteles están intentando reducir el tema de los plásticos, y tienen políticas en este sentido. Algún catering también, usando productos locales. No te puedo destacar ninguna empresa, este es un tema que creo que se está llevando a cabo a nivel mas general. Tampoco creo que Ibiza haya ido un paso más allá. Ahora mismo estamos trabajando en un proyecto para la segunda fase del Palacio de Congresos y los arquitectos sí que están trabajando con estas medidas para hacer un edificio sostenible energéticamente. Desde las empresas de restauración se está intentando que se utilice el producto Kilometro 0.

Investigador: al ser una entidad mixta pública y privada, el gobierno sí que se está involucrando en los eventos de Ibiza, ¿podrías contarme sobre alguna promoción, restricción o normativa del gobierno que ha afectado a las compañías?

P4: Desde el ayuntamiento de Santa Eulalia, que es el que está más involucrado hace una acción económica anual que nosotros utilizamos para acciones. Con el Consell de Ibiza hay ciertas acciones y ferias a las que asistimos, pero vamos de la mano de ellos. Ellos las contratan, financian y delegan la asistencia a nosotros. Por ejemplo, la feria IBTM en Barcelona, es uno de los referentes del Sector MICE internacional, hace 5 años nosotros participábamos como Ibiza con muchas más empresas dentro de un stand de las Islas Baleares, pero esto cambió, solicitamos al Consell apoyo en este sentido para dar un paso más y crear un stand propio de Ibiza. Ahora acudimos con nuestro propio stand con el objetivo de diferenciación, comercialización y promoción de nuestra marca. Es una feria muy cara, además, contratar suelo tiene un coste de mil euros por metro cuadrado, más los costes de construir el stand, servicios de limpieza... Si el Consell no estuviese detrás, no habríamos podido participar.

Investigador: sobre el Covid-19, ¿cómo ha impactado esto a la isla y organización de eventos?

P4: 2020 para el sector MICE ha sido un año a cero. Como Ibiza empieza su temporada a finales de marzo, principios de abril, abril y mayo son muy fuertes. La primera parte de la temporada desapareció de un día a otro. El sector MICE fue el primero que se puso en alerta por la cancelación o aplazamiento de clientes. Cuando éramos más optimistas y pensábamos que no iba a durar tanto, se intentaron posponer los eventos para el otoño y para el 2021. En verano pensábamos que sí se iban a realizar, pero lamentablemente no. A nivel económico fue brutal, a nivel sanitario tuvimos pocos casos, bastante leves por tanto era un destino bastante seguro. Hubo una temporada que a los hoteles no les iba tan mal dadas las circunstancias. En fines de semana tenían a lo mejor 70% de ocupación. Luego empezaron las restricciones de otros países como Reino Unido, las cuarentenas hicieron que dependiésemos de fuerzas mayores y precipitó que de un día para otro hacia el seis de septiembre cerraron los hoteles de golpe. Hubo una campaña que se llamaba "Move your spin.", que intentaba crear eventos. Había un calendario de eventos culturales durante los meses de octubre y noviembre para intentar alargar la temporada y recuperar la temporada de primavera que no habíamos tenido. Pero no tuvo éxito ya que no había tráfico ni hoteles.

Investigador: tengo aquí una noticia que se publicó en vuestra página oficial, ¿se hizo un evento de "networking"?

P4: nosotros como un lobby empresarial lo que hacemos es crear sinergias, crear una unión entre empresas y que se conozcan más. Teníamos previsto un evento en abril que es cuando se celebra el día mundial del MICE, que solemos hacer una actividad. Íbamos a ir a Formentera con los socios, pero se pospuso. En el momento en que se pudiese hacer eventos se iba a poder hacer algo así. Se tuvo que cambiar el concepto del evento y los objetivos, lo que teníamos previsto por la situación. Fue un evento con treinta socios para irnos a Formentera y reencontrarnos, experimentar los protocolos de seguridad para el Covid-19, y fue un evento muy agradable.

Investigador: ¿crees que en un futuro sea posible explorar oportunidades de aumentar el turismo en temporada baja? ¿y en cuanto a sanidad?

P4: el objetivo de Ibiza, con o sin Covid-19, es seguir apostando por eventos fuera de temporada, seguir avanzando, eso lo tenemos claro y creo que no ha cambiado, ni mejorado, ni empeorado con el Covid-19. De hecho, ahora en diciembre hicimos la junta directiva de nuestra empresa e introdujimos un plan de acciones para este año,

ya que el año pasado nuestro plan de marketing se cayó completamente y la mayor parte de los eventos a los que fuimos se suspendieron o se hicieron virtual e híbrido. La idea es que a partir de marzo deberíamos retomar los eventos presenciales, que ya tenemos algunos confirmados en Francia y Alemania. Pero todo depende, no se puede planificar ahora. Si el Covid-19 nos ha enseñado algo es que en el sector MICE, hay que tener una gran previsión de meses y años de preparación. Relacionado con los protocolos sanitarios, parte de las medidas sanitarias se van a quedar durante un tiempo, y otros que se irán. Los contratos y cláusulas.

Investigador: ¿consideras que son importantes las ayudas y subvenciones del gobierno a futuro?

P4: Sí. Aunque algunos hoteles han conseguido abrir e ingresar un poco de dinero, hay empresas muy específicas de MICE que llevan desde finales de octubre de 2019 sin trabajar, lo que es inviable. Por ejemplo, nosotros tenemos cuotas que se quedaron canceladas y no se cobró a ningún socio. Durante el 2021 vamos a hacer un 20% de descuento, lo que quiere decir que necesitaremos más ayudas externas. Hay una parte del sector MICE que está muy muy tocada, en general son empresas locales con estructuras pequeñas que si no tienen ciertas ayudas no van a poder superar la crisis.

B) Participant 4 colour coded Interview Transcript in English

Prompting questions:

- Why do you think that is?
- Would you be able to provide more examples?
- Could you elaborate on...? Can you give me some more detail about that?
- Can you tell me how you did that?
- What were the impacts of that action/decision?

Researcher: good morning, thank you for agreeing to participate in this research. My name is Angela, a current Events Management student at Leeds Beckett University.

If you don't mind if I record this interview?

Before this interview takes place, I want to make sure the information sheet has been read, and the consent form has been understood and signed. Some of the points mentioned include:

- **You can choose to withdraw from the study at any stage, however, no later than 15 days after completing the interview.**
- **Your name will remain anonymous, and all information collected will be held securely and password protected.**
- **All your answers will be treated in confidence.**

As an introduction, this interview will last a total of 45 minutes, which is what the application Zoom allows. As a guide, I will give a period of more less 5 minutes per question.

This interview aims to find out more information to support my research about the effectivity of the diversification strategies and government policies used in Ibiza to rebrand and reposition the island.

Great, let's start. First of all, what is your role in relation to the events your company organises and developing tourism?

P4: our company is not an events company, agency or DMC. We are a professional mixed public and private association which started in Ibiza in 2011. Now in 2021, we are celebrating our 10th Anniversary. 90% of organisations in Spain are mixed, and in the case of Ibiza, we decided to create a convention bureau, as this island was already developing different types of events, in particular corporate events. As the events offer increased, new 5star hotels with conference rooms started opening, and new strong local DMCs were created. Ibiza was starting to show interest in companies focused on incentive travel, presentations and conventions. The Santa Eulalia Congress Palace opened its doors in 2008, where we now have our office. The MICE movement started becoming more popular, even though Ibiza was an unknown destination for MICE, and it still is, which meant there was a need to create this official entity to represent these types of services. This sector is very specific and has nothing to do with attracting holiday tourists, which is what Ibiza is most known for and what the professionals in the island knew more about. This entity now produces an exclusive and different MICE programme in Ibiza, advises event agencies, and as a third purpose, makes this sector professional and homogeneous.

Within this context, our company belongs to a bigger 90-year-old business organisation called *Fomento de Turismo de la Isla de Ibiza*, which 10 years ago decided to take a step further and create a variety of specific products, such as *Ibiza Luxury Destination*, which focuses on luxury tourism, our company, focusing on the MICE sector, and in the last few years other products have also been developed. Within the private part, we started 10 years ago with 27 companies and now we have 60 private companies, hotels, restaurants, DMCs, activity agencies, providing all services which a client could need to hold an event in Ibiza. Within the public part, we are supported by the public sector, including the Consell de Ibiza, and the 5 different town councils. We have a tight relationship with all of them, however the Santa Eulalia Council has a

prominent presence and supports this global project by investing in promotion, as the Congress Palace is located here. Even though we don't organise events, we do play an important part with our marketing plan in the promotion of this sector at workshops and international fairs throughout the year, which allows us to promote the image of Ibiza in the MICE sector.

I always mention to our clients how Ibiza is known for its two images: a good image and a less positive image. Ibiza has a powerful international brand. Whenever we attend international fairs, all the attendees know Ibiza and can locate it in a map, which is a very good thing. However, the less positive side is perhaps the handicap or stereotype Ibiza has of, for several reasons, being recognised by a variety of sectors as a party island, famous as a holiday destination in summer because of its beaches and clubs, which is the image that has been promoted. Fortunately, more and more businesses are also discovering the less known part of the island, yes, we do have incredible parties and it is a perfect destination to come in summer, but this island offers so much more. This is the reason why we focus in promoting the island and the businesses as we are the first contact from a potential client who doesn't know the destination.

Researcher: within the MICE sector, are there any events which stand out you have helped organise?

P4: 90% of the events we have organised in the past 10 years are corporate, incentives and conventions. Because these are corporate events, unfortunately we have privacy policies which don't allow us to publish all the events we have organised or who our clients are. However, there are some events I can mention which stand out. In the last few years Ibiza has been popular in being a good destination for product launches events for automotive brands.

- In 2009, Volkswagen held their international product launch of the new Beetle here in Ibiza, which was their biggest international event that year. The event lasted 6 to 7 weeks and was interesting in terms of promoting Ibiza as a destination due to it being held in November. We precisely invest in MICE as it meets one of our overall objectives of boosting off-peak tourism to avoid seasonality. Ibiza has a very well established tourism high season from May to October, which MICE events aims to extend, as events can be organised out of these main months and complement the summer season during June, July and August when the island is full and doesn't need more people. This event was recognised globally as it attracted a large number of attendees during the low season.
- As another example, when the Congress Palace opened, SEAT made a presentation of the Seat Ibiza.
- 4 years ago, Audi launched the Audi Q2 in a product launch event in October/November time, which were really good dates, even though this was a smaller event than Volkswagen.
- More recent events include, in contrast with typical automotive product launches, the world international training Mercedes organised in 2018. This training was held from February up until April, which meant that three 5star hotels of around 500 rooms opened to accommodate the attendees, which would usually be closed due to the low season.
- Vodafone Italy also organised a convention with around 900 attendees seven years ago, Alena Fleú, the company that sells glasses held an event in 2017 of around 500

Researcher: if you have had a chance of talking with a client or with someone that attended an event, do you think they have seen the island in a different way due to going during the low season? Have they found the island completely different to how they imagined it was? In terms of stereotypes and the created image of Ibiza, has there been any surprises?

P4: Yes, without a doubt. I always tell our clients when we present the island to them, I'm inviting them to discover the "WOW" factor of the island. We all had formed an opinion and had an overall impression of the island, and if I'm being honest, sometimes it can have negative effects when we try to convince a client to organise their medical congress here, for example. People sometimes struggle to see how Ibiza has the potential of being used for these type of events. I do tell the event businesses who we work with that it's not easy to convince a client of agreeing to organise their event in Ibiza. But, when the event actually happens, the event creates extra value because of this surprise factor. 90-95% of attendees discover much more about Ibiza. The activities we organise at our events include local activities, original activities, such as a hippy tour, things which are typical of the island which they didn't know. We have venues in the heart of the island, in farms, which is not the image that comes to their mind when thinking of Ibiza. Ibiza is a discovery for most attendees, which is why MICE is interesting. We do not focus on one type of client, we are potentially influencing clients to come on holiday in the future. Meaning if an attendee came with their company for an event and saw some aspects of the island that caught their attention, they are most likely going to come back. This is why this type of tourism is extremely important. It has happened to me I have been talking to a client from the UK who had been in Ibiza on holiday, I had taken them to see the old historic town, which is world heritage from UNESCO, and they hadn't seen it. They had only been to the beach, clubs and the area of San Antonio, and they hadn't seen anything else.

Researcher: moving onto sustainability, looking at how mass tourism has affected the environment in Ibiza, I am aware the council has implemented some sustainability strategies, how have these affected your business and the events you organise?

P4: it is true that, in general, sustainability is being implemented more, there has been some enquiries to focus more on this topic. As an example, hotels are trying to reduce plastic consumption and have policies for them. Some catering companies are using local products as well. However, I am not able to point out any companies that have stood out from the crowd, I think this has been implemented in a more general way. I don't believe Ibiza has taken it a step further in terms of sustainability. We are now however working in a project for the Congress Palace, and the architects are working to create a more sustainable building so save more energy. Restaurants have also started using the product "OKm" which means they aren't imported and are produced locally.

Researcher: as your business belongs to both the public and private sector, and therefore the council is involved in your company, would you be able to tell me about any promotion, restriction or strategy which has affected your business?

P4: the Santa Eulalia Council, which is the most involved council, gives us a yearly economic contribution, which we use for different projects. We also attend a variety of international fairs with the Consell de Ibiza. They pay for the space, and then delegate assisting it to us. For example, we attend the IBTM Fair held in Barcelona, which is one of the biggest fairs for the MICE sector internationally. 5 years ago we participated in a stand for the Balearic Islands, but we asked the council to support us by helping us take a step further and create our own stand

to promote Ibiza. Now we use this opportunity to differentiate, commercialise and promote our destination brand. It is also a very expensive fair, hiring floor costs 1100 euros per metre square. And if you add having to build the stand, cleaning staff... If the council wasn't helping us, we wouldn't have had the opportunity to participate.

Researcher: how has COVID-19 affected the island and the events you organise?

P4: in 2020 it has been impossible to organise any MICE events. As Ibiza starts their season at the end of March, April and May are usually the strongest months. The first part of the season completely disappeared. MICE businesses were the first to realise the gravity of the situation due to the cancellation and postponement from clients. When we started being more optimistic and thought it wasn't going to last as long, we tried postponing the events for autumn and for 2021. In summer, we thought this would be possible, but it clearly wasn't. Economically, this was a brutal year, even though we had low cases and therefore it was considered a "safe" destination to go to. There was a period when the hotels had 70% capacity, which wasn't bad considering the circumstances. But then countries like United Kingdom and Germany started with the lockdowns and travel restrictions, which made all the hotels close in September.

There was a marketing campaign called *Move your spin*, which aimed at creating a portfolio of cultural events in October and November to try extend the season and recover the Spring Season we didn't have. But it didn't succeed as there was no means of transportation or hotels.

Researcher: I saw a news article published on your official website about a networking event?

P4: Yes, as part of our company, we aim at creating synergies between different businesses. We had organised an event for April, which is world MICE Day, and we usually organise an event. This event was postponed and it was decided as soon as we were able to, we would hold the event. We had to change the event concept and objectives due to the situation, and we ended up organising an event with 30 partners in Formentera to experiment with COVID-19 Health protocols, it worked out really well.

Researcher: Do you think it will be possible in the future to explore opportunities to increase off-peak tourism? Perhaps implementing health safety measures?

P4: even without Covid-19, our goal is to keep supporting events held in low season, we are certain our opinion hasn't been affected by Covid-19. In fact, the Board of Directors of our business had a meeting and we introduced a plan of action for next year, as our marketing plan died down last year because of the situation. Our plan is that after March, we will continue organising in person events, we already have some confirmed in France and Germany. But it all depends, this might change as it is more difficult to plan for events at the moment. If Covid-19 has taught us something, it's that planning for MICE requires months and even years of preparation. Regarding health measures, we will keep considering these in the future, as well as contract clauses, and cancellation and postponement policies.

Researcher: do you consider that Government funding can help to achieve this? Why?

P4: yes, definitely. Even though some hotels have managed to open and earn some profit, there are very specific MICE businesses who haven't been able to earn profit since October 2019. As an example, we froze all the partners' accounts so they wouldn't have to pay. In 2021 we are going to offer 20% discount to join, which means we will need external help. The MICE sector has been highly impacted, as most of the companies are local with small business structures, and if they don't get certain support they won't be able to survive the recession.

C) Colour coding

- Repositioning tourism and the image of the island
- Stereotypes of Ibiza (1st image of Ibiza)
- Nature and beauty of Ibiza
- Repositioning tourism and the image of Ibiza
- Sustainability
- Issues with seasonality
- Dependence on transport connections
- Government involvement
- Promotion marketing and advertising
- COVID-19's impact and future implications
- MICE Events

Appendix 4: Information sheet



School of Events, Tourism and
Hospitality Management
Macaulay Hall
Headingley Campus
Leeds
LS6 3QN

Information Sheet

Project Title: Using events as rebranding and repositioning tourism strategies for destinations: the case of Ibiza

Project Aim: This research project will explore the use of events within diversification strategies and policies used in the well-known party tourist destination Ibiza to rebrand and reposition the island. These events were implemented as part of an event portfolio to avoid seasonality and economic reliance on one type of tourism.

This research project forms part of a degree programme in Bachelor Honours Degree Events Management at Leeds Beckett University; its aim is to investigate the use of events within diversification strategies and policies used in Ibiza to rebrand and reposition the island.

The findings may be published in my research project, reports, development papers, at conferences, other documents, presentations and as teaching materials at Leeds Beckett University.

Data for this research project is being collected via video call semi-structured interviews. Participation in this research project is voluntary, and participants can choose to withdraw from the study at any stage, but no later than 15 days of completing the interview. This should be done by contacting the researcher, whose contact information is listed at the end of this information sheet.

All participants will remain anonymous; all information will be held securely and be password protected. Any details that could lead to the identification of the individual will be concealed within the final report. All your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence; only the researcher and their supervisor will be permitted to access any information you provide, and your information will not be passed on to a third party. Data stored electronically will be password-

protected and only viewed by the researcher and the research supervisor. Data will be held anonymously, and personal details are confidential. The information you provide will be used solely for the purpose intended by the researcher, as stated in the aim of the investigation (above).

All details gathered from you will be held in compliance with the UK's General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and any data protection legislation associated with the country in which the research is being undertaken. It will also be in full compliance with the ethics policy and regulations of Leeds Beckett University; this means that all personal data, and/or data that could identify you as a contributing individual/ organisation, will be destroyed within 10 years of the completion and submission of the research project.

If you have any question relating to this research, please contact either the researcher or the researcher's supervisor:

Researcher: Angela Torrecilla Winberg
a.torrecillawinberg2775@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Research supervisor: Dr Neil Ormerod
n.s.omerod@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

If you have any questions about how the ethics policies and procedures of Leeds Beckett University relate to this project, please contact the research ethics coordinator:

Research ethics coordinator (Events Management): Dr Ellie May
E.May@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Appendix 5: Example Signed Consent form

 **SCHOOL OF EVENTS, TOURISM & HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT**
LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY

School of Events, Tourism and Hospitality Management
Macaulay Hall
Headingley Campus
Leeds
LS6 3QN
United Kingdom

Name of Researcher: Angela Torrecilla Winberg

Title of Project: Using events as rebranding and repositioning tourism strategies for destinations: the case of Ibiza.

Please delete, as applicable

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet provided for the above study. Yes/No

I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered to my satisfaction. Yes/No

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw by 15th January (or) within 15 days of my participation, without giving any reason, and without my legal rights being affected. Yes/No

I give permission for the interview to be voiced and video recorded Yes/No

I certify that the information shared with the researcher can be revealed in the study Yes/No

I understand that my personal details will not be revealed for the study and that my contribution will be made anonymous within it. Yes/No

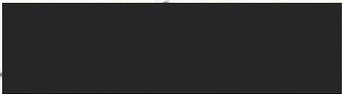
I understand that data which is stored electronically will be password-protected and only viewed by the researcher and the research supervisor. Data is held anonymously, and personal details are confidential. Yes/No

I certify that I have been informed, either verbally, or through a participant's information sheet, that, in exceptional circumstances, the data I have given can be shown to the researcher's supervisor, and that, under no circumstances, will that information be passed on to a third party. Yes/No

By signing this consent form, I agree to take part in the research study named at the top of this page.

Name of person giving consent (Please print your name here): 

Date: 26.11.2020

Signature: 

Researcher: Angela Torrecilla Winberg
Date: 6th November 2020
Signature:
Angela

Supplementary documents

- 1) Online Methods training completion certificate



2. Research ethics approval

Research Ethics



researchethics@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Thu 19/11/2020 15:22

To: Torrecilla Winberg, Angela (Student)



Application Ref: 75555

Applicant Name: ANGELA TORRECILLA WINBERG

Project Title: Using events to rebrand and reposition tourism destinations: the case of Ibiza

Dear ANGELA TORRECILLA WINBERG, Ellie May, the Local Research Ethics Co-ordinator, can confirm that the above research project has been given ethical approval and may commence. Please see your online application for any comments or recommendations.

This project has received research ethical approval in line with the Research Ethics Policy and Procedures of Leeds Beckett University.

Please note that if you wish to make substantial changes to the project, new ethical approval would be required.

Sent on behalf of the Local Research Ethics Co-ordinator.

[Click Here to View](#)

This email has been sent to your supervisor for information.

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