



Evaluating the Cultural Destination Brand of Athens, Istanbul & Rome: *Focusing on the tourists' perspective*

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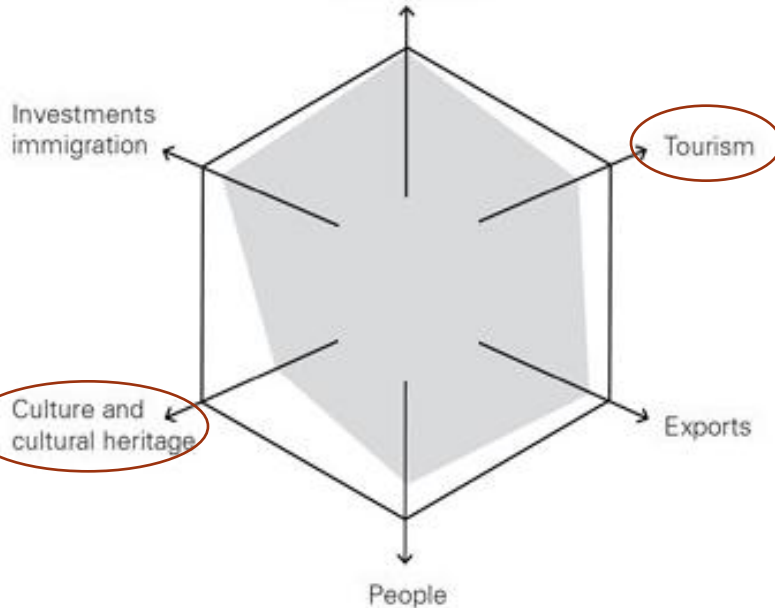
Cultural Events as Tourism Products of the Cities
Adalar Symposium
October 11, 2013

SYNOPSIS

- ⦿ **Background**
- ⦿ **Methodology**
- ⦿ **Findings**
- ⦿ **Conclusions**
- ⦿ **Implications – Future Research**

Place Brand Hexagon

(Anholt, 2003)
Government



- cultural tourism is defined as “a form of tourism that relies on a destination’s cultural heritage assets and transforms them into products that can be consumed by tourists”

(McKercher & du Cros, 2006: 211)

- branding a destination is “the process used to develop a unique identity and personality that is different from all competitive destinations”

(Morrison & Anderson, 2002, p. 17)

- sites like Luxor and Pisa will tend to be a once-in-a-life-time experience, while more generalised place products selling an ambiance or way of life rather than a specific attraction are more likely to motivate return visits

(Ashworth & Page, 2011)

- monuments/ heritage sites, cultural events, street culture, cuisine, traditions, contribution to world heritage, entertainment/ nightlife options, cultural festivals, museums, art centers

Brand Equity in a Cultural Tourism Context

- ❑ Brand Equity is the most popular term and methodology for evaluating destination brands
- ❑ Brand assets is mentioned only in 12 papers
- ❑ Some reference of **one** cultural asset and **one** brand equity dimension (e.g. events/ festivals and loyalty/ awareness)
- ❑ Reference to **one** cultural asset with **clear** connection to brand equity is available in 1 paper (Dimanche, 2002)

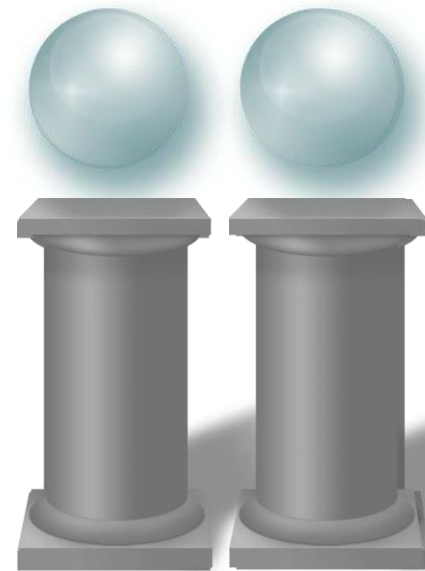
<i>(Destination/ Brand...)</i>	Frequencies (n=65)
...Equity	50
...Evaluation	21
...Effectiveness	18
...Performance	20
...Measurement	11
...Assessment	3

(Kladou et al., 2012)

- ❑ Individual structural relationships discussed, e.g.
 - ❑ image → quality (Kotler et al., 1996), unique characteristics → quality (Konecnik & Gartner, 2007), unique image → quality (Qu et al., 2011)
- ❑ The more complete structural model includes 4 dimensions (Boo et al., 2009)

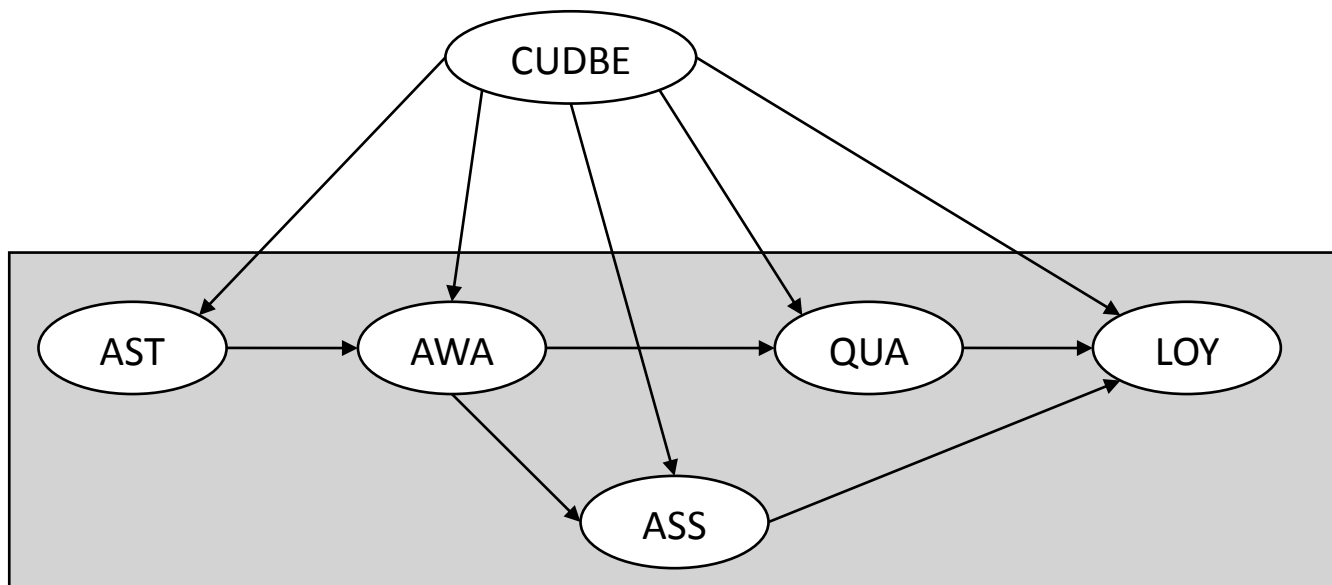
Methodology

- Objectives
- Question
- Research Method



- 
- Incorporating the cultural brand assets dimension into the brand equity model
 - Depicting the structural relationships developed between the five brand equity dimensions

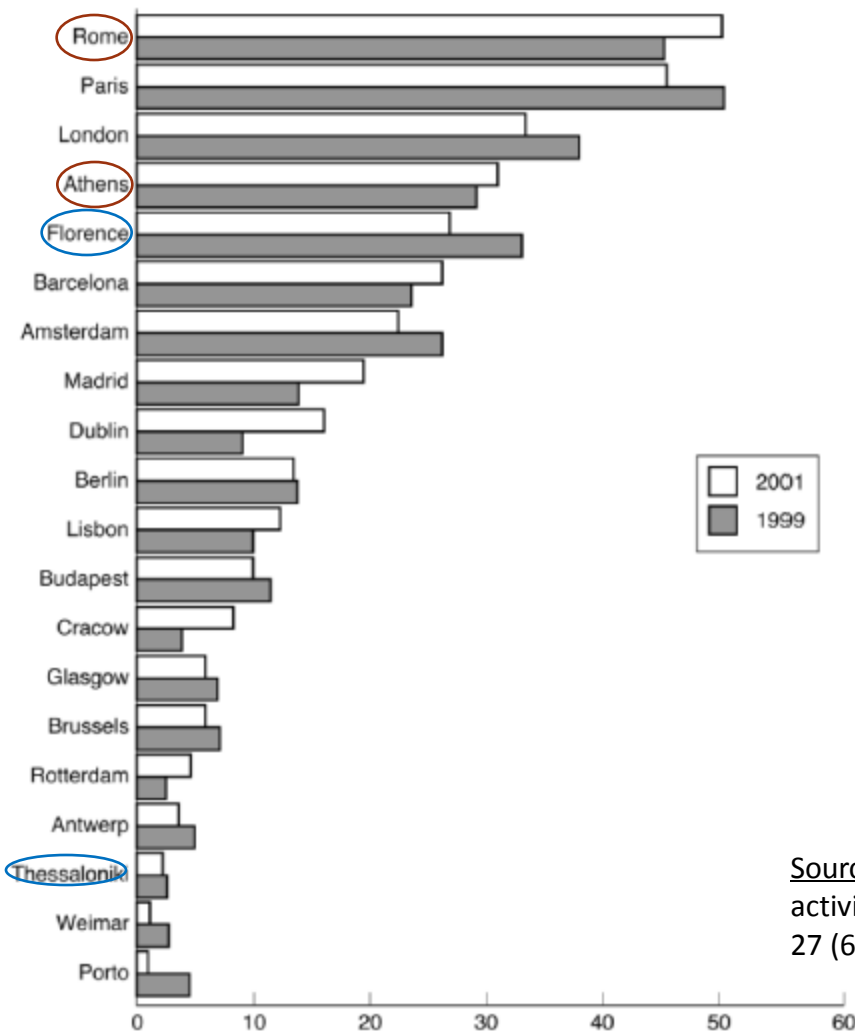
In the case of cultural urban destinations, can brand equity, consisting of five dimensions (namely assets, awareness, associations, quality, and loyalty), be used in order to evaluate branding input according to future behavior?



*CUDBE: Cultural Urban
Destination Brand Equity
AST: assets
AWA: awareness
ASS: associations
QUA: quality
LOY: loyalty*

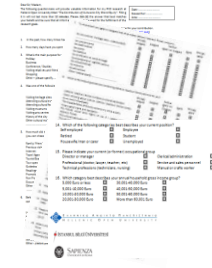
The Tourists' Perspective

- *European Capitals of Culture*



Source: Van der Ark, A. & Richards, G. (2006). Attractiveness of cultural activities in European cities: A latent class approach, *Tourism Management*, 27 (6): 1408 – 1413.

Research Method



Operationalization

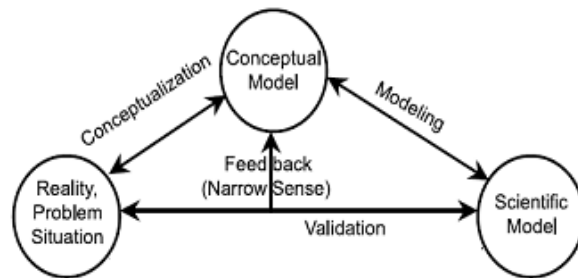
- Brand awareness, associations, quality, and loyalty scale adapted
- Cultural brand assets adapted
- Information sources, motives, pre-existing associations adapted
- 5-point Likert scale
- Urban brands (Athens, Istanbul, Rome)

Survey

- Pilot study in Athens & Istanbul
- International tourists/ 450 questionnaires distributed/ 2011

Statistical analysis

Descriptive analysis, Correlations, EFA for cultural brand assets, CFA, path analysis, Multi-group analysis, Invariance Testing

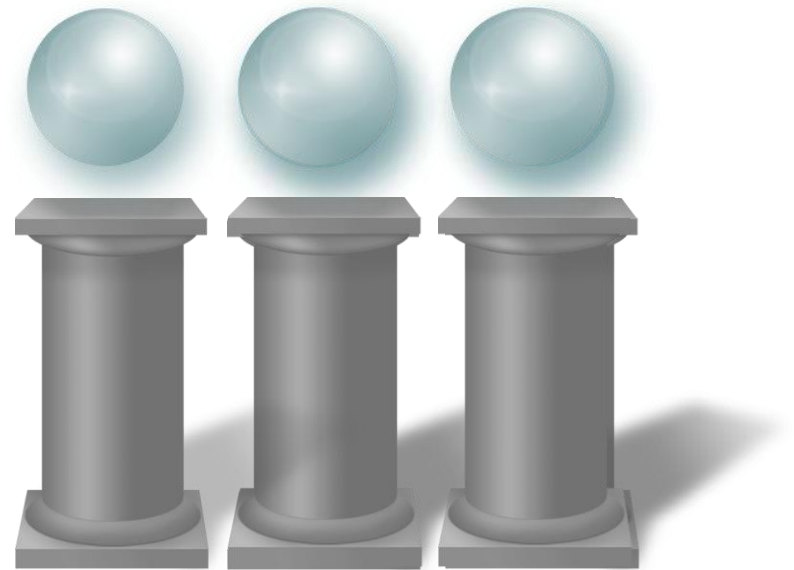


Research Models (Mitroff et al. (1974)



Category	Athens (N=399)	Istanbul (N=377)	Rome (N=382)
Female	49.6	54.6	59.1
20-29 years old	28.0	26.9	20.4
30-39 years old	30.1	25.0	24.7
Employee	56.1	45.7	39.1
Director/ manager	27.7	26.7	31
professional	37.8	35.5	37.2
40.001-50.000	20.8	19.1	31.6
60.001 or more	38.6	22	40.6

Findings Conclusions



The case of Istanbul

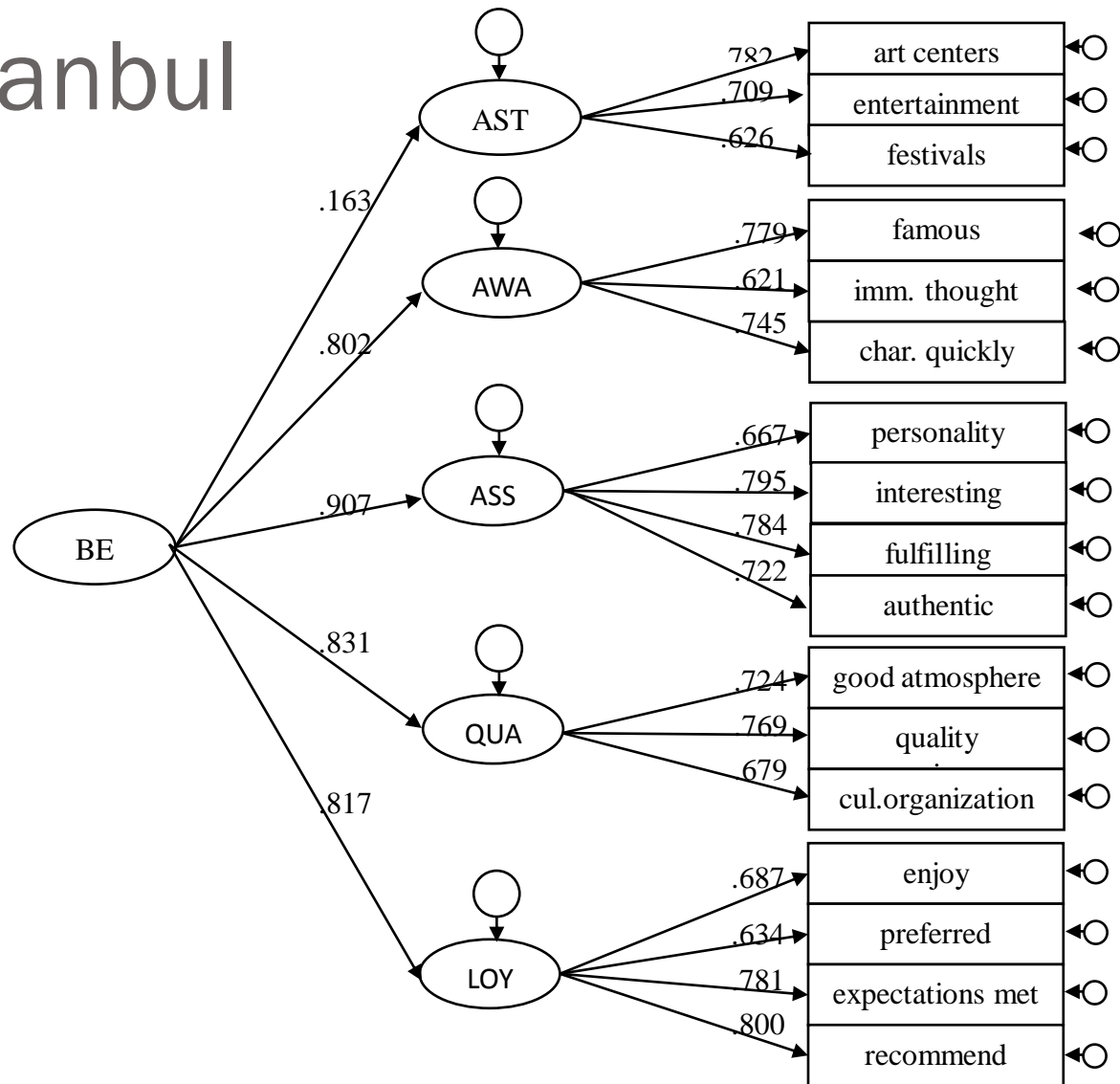
- ✚ First visit for 58.1%,
- ✚ Duration: 50.1%: 4-5 days, 19.1%: 6-7 days
- ✚ Holiday: 67.4%, Business: 12.7%
- ✚ The majority of the respondents were Americans, Germans, British and Australians

History of the city	70.6%
Visiting heritage sites	57.9%
Visiting museums	40.0%
Attending festivals	18.3%
Attending events	21.2%
Visiting art centers	26.8%

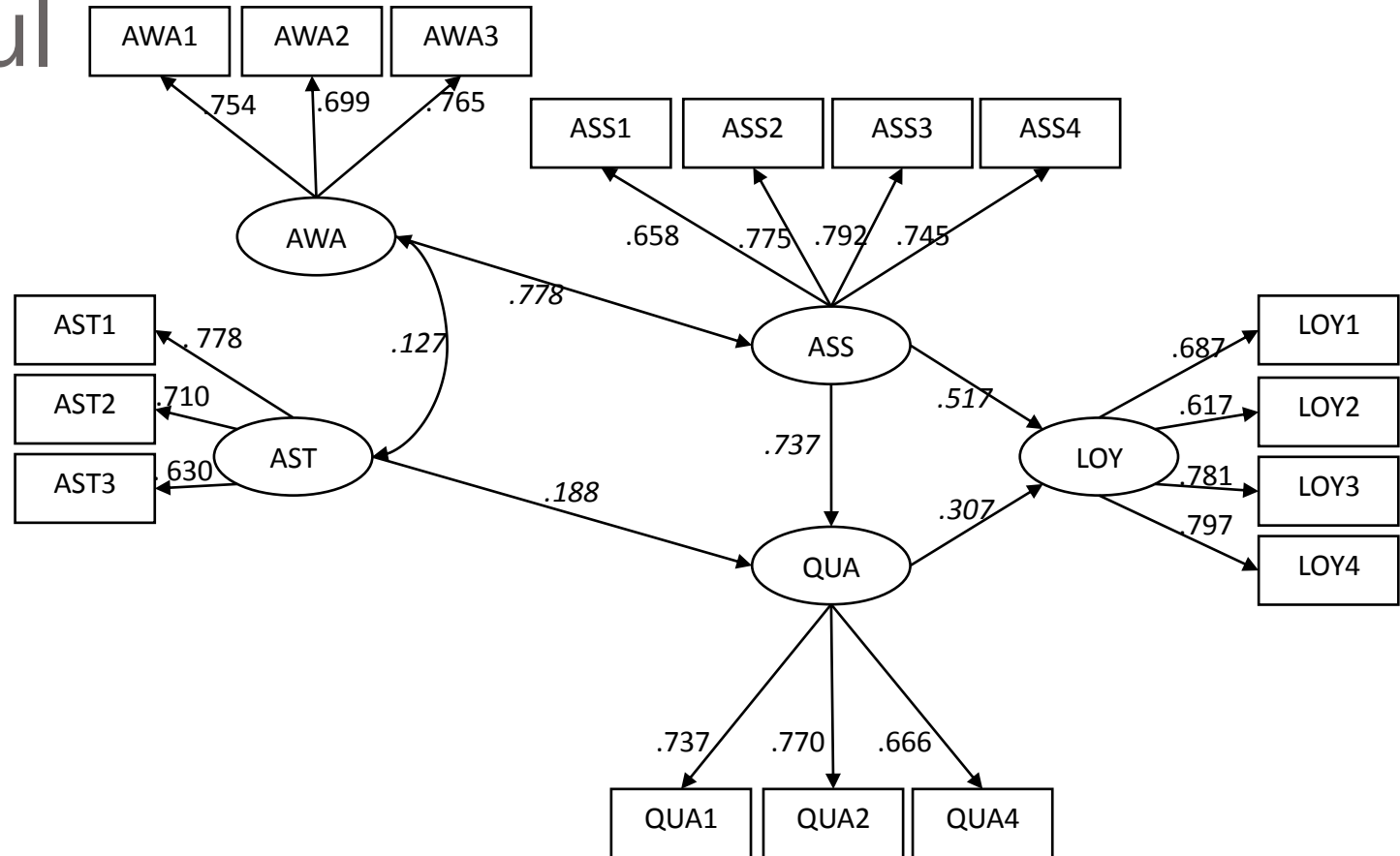
- Information sources: WoM (65.8%), previous experience (51.9%), guidebooks (50.8%), and the internet (48.7%)
- Pre-existing associations: historical heritage (87.9%), religious heritage (76.3%), street culture (60%), traditions (58.5%), landscapes (58.2%), and cuisine (56.7%)

- ✓ correlations between AST and each one of ASS and AWA are not significant at the 95% significance level
- ✓ 5-dimensional model preferred
- ✓ significant regression path from AST to QUA and from ASS to QUA
- ✓ not significant path from AWA to QUA

Istanbul



Istanbul



- Athens: Events
- Rome: Events, traditions, street culture
- Athens & Rome: Increasing Cultural Knowledge (quality)

Cross-city conclusions

Athens

- ❑ History of the city and heritage sites the most important motives
- ❑ Historical heritage recognized as significant pre-existing associations
- ❑ Evaluation of cultural brand assets higher than the Istanbul average
- ❑ Contribution of monuments/ heritage sites to the city uniqueness has received the highest evaluations

Istanbul

- ❑ Music, landscapes and street culture more important pre-existing associations
- ❑ Awareness, associations, quality & loyalty: Istanbul is rated higher than Athens yet lower than Rome
- ❑ Istanbul is not rated as good as Athens in terms of its rich history and its fame as a cultural destination

Rome

- ❑ Music and landscapes less important pre-existing associations
- ❑ Religious heritage recognized as significant pre-existing associations
- ❑ The brand equity dimensions of Rome, on the other hand, are constantly rated significantly higher than both Athens and Istanbul

Cross-city conclusions

- **Awareness** has a direct effect on **associations**
- **Associations** have a direct effect on **quality**
- **Quality** has a direct effect on **loyalty**
- **Athens and Rome:** impact of assets on awareness and of awareness on quality
- **Istanbul and Rome:** associations have a direct impact on loyalty

In terms of the **magnitude** of their impact on brand equity, the dimensions can be classified in the following order:

In Athens: quality → associations → loyalty → awareness → assets

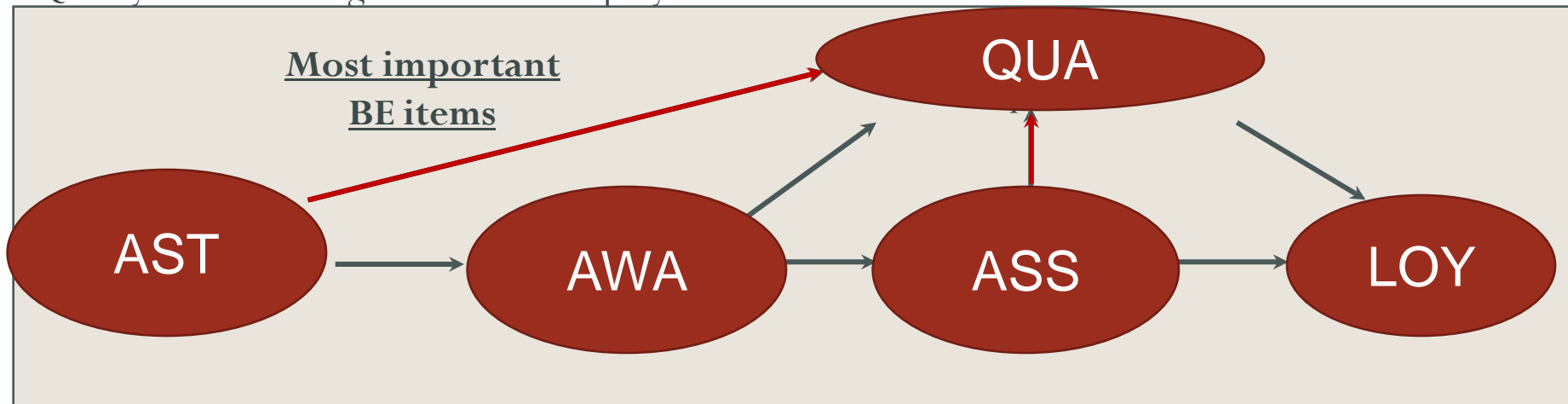
In Istanbul: associations → quality → loyalty → awareness → assets

In Rome: loyalty → quality → awareness → associations → assets

- ❑ *festivals* contributing to the city being perceived as unique, is the most important **cultural brand asset** in **all three cities**
- ❑ providing *quality cultural experiences* has been found to be the most important item for the **quality** dimension in **all three cities**
- ❑ in the cases of **Istanbul and Rome**, being a *famous cultural destination* makes up the most important **awareness** item
- ❑ *fulfilling cultural experiences* and *meeting expectations* are the most important items for the **associations** and **loyalty** dimensions respectively in the cases of **Athens and Rome** respectively

Multi-group conclusions

- All path relationships hold
- Associations and quality are NOT merged into one dimension
- Cultural brand assets and associations have a statistically significant impact on quality
- Associations, through their impact on quality, always have an indirect impact on loyalty
- The cultural brand assets dimension needs further investigation and enrichment
- Quality is the most significant brand equity dimension



Rome + Istanbul:

- all measurement weights, structural weights and structural residuals are invariant
- not invariant measurement residuals

Implications

- academic
- practitioners
- public policy

Future Research



Implications

Academic

- ❑ Validates a largely invariant model
- ❑ Incorporates the assets dimension
- ❑ Investigates the significance of cultural brand assets - Builds on cultural tourism literature to benefit destination brand equity research
- ❑ Assesses brand equity in the case of cultural destinations – Uses brand equity literature to benefit cultural tourism and urban destination branding research
- ❑ Reveals that a approach which places quality in the center is essential in the case of cultural destinations

Practitioners

- ❑ Reveals cultural brand assets, thereby offers insight in investing decisions
- ❑ Emphasizes the significance of festivals and more generalized city products over one specific attraction
- ❑ Portrays the structural relationships followed and the items significant for tourists' evaluations, thus provides input for market-targeting strategies
- ❑ Suggests that DMOs' efforts to positively strengthen one dimension will have a significant and positive impact on the other dimensions and on the overall evaluation of the destination

Implications – Public Policy

Lower ratings of the city being the preferred choice for a cultural holiday (i.e. returned visit) and willingness to recommend the city to friends and relatives

more effort is necessary in order to enhance return visits

Athens

Its lowest evaluations refer to the dimension of quality, while it has the highest evaluations in terms of the pre-existing associations referring to its heritage sites and historical heritage. Thus, its unexplored potential is stressed out.

Istanbul

Seems to be quite successful in managing previous negative image traits. Yet, its lower cultural assets evaluations reveal the need for more effort in order to become a more competitive cultural brand.

Rome

Strong city brand, yet integrated city brand strategies are necessary in order to motivate return visits and desired behavior further.

Future Research

- ✚ respondents' familiarity level, motives and past visitation is likely to have influenced their evaluations
- ✚ including personality and brand identity aspects could lead to an improved model
- ✚ different samples (strictly cultural tourists, domestic tourists, residents, and non-visitors) could also lead to a diversified model
- ✚ the influence of the other four city brand dimensions could help to the development of a more inclusive model

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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