

# Tourism Destination Management and Public-Private Partnership Networks: a Literature Review

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**Abstract:** The competitiveness of tourist destinations depends on their management and the role played by the actors in this activity. In this aspect, the study proposes, based on the review of research on the management of tourist destinations and public-private institutional collaboration networks, to demonstrate the feasibility of carrying out quantitative studies linking these two variables. The method of descriptive bibliographic review of the main databases was applied to find an approach to the most important research and studies on the subject. In the first place, qualitative inquiries directed to destination management and oriented to public and private networks from 2003 to 2022 were analyzed, observing the linkage between these two categories; where the importance of destination management for competitiveness is led by the different tourism stakeholders of the place, who through public-private networks optimize the performance of the locality. Secondly, quantitative cohort studies are presented where the variables of destination management and private public networks are analyzed from the dimensions and indicators for each one, evidencing that these two constructs lead to a relationship, proposing a model in which the factors of the authors Dwyer framed in the management of tourist destinations and that of Chiappa and Presenza channeled to private public networks are included. It is concluded the existence of a theoretical support on a linkage of these categories oriented to the qualitative and relational approach from the quantitative approach between destination management and private public networks, indicating that their study is relevant for the competitiveness of a tourist destination.

**Key words:** Management, Tourism, Social Network, Competitiveness, Narrative Review.

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## 1. Introduction

There have been several investigations concerning destination management and the analysis of social networks both in terms of structure and relationships, all of them show the evident cooperation that private public institutions induce to have a better performance for the development of the destination, even more so when these organizations offer value and commitment (Olavarría-Benavides, 2023). However, in the review conducted, there are few articles that analyze the relationship between these two variables in the competitiveness of the destination.

The competitiveness of destinations is closely linked to the capacity to offer goods and services that provide a better experience to the visitor compared to other places (Dwyer and Kim, 2003). In other words, the activities and/or strategies developed by public and private sector tourism companies influence the types of products and services offered (Gamarra-Ramirez, 2024). These may or may not be oriented to improve their competitiveness and increase the market share of the place (Olavarria-Benavides et al, 2023). For this reason, destination management should include strategies oriented to marketing, planning and development, management organization, human resource development and environmental management, which were proposed in the Tourism Competitiveness model proposed by these two authors (Dwyer and Kim, 2003).

For this reason, it is relevant to study the behavior of the private public networks of a destination and the types of relationships that exist with the management of this, as Strobl and Peters (2012) indicate, because the development of the place will depend on how and in what way the actors are connected to each other and if they have influence on the network, as they are the drivers of creativity and innovation to face the changes in the environment that may affect the competitiveness of the tourist destination.

It is important to emphasize that even when there is a direct interrelationship between public and private companies in the tourist destination, these must be integrated into a social network, according to Chiappa and Presenza (2013), because its performance depends on the links between all the stakeholders of the place and the management carried out. Cobán and Yildiz (2019) state that, although destination management could be key to manage a place effectively and efficiently, it depends largely on having an administration model, where cooperation and coordination are the functions to be highlighted in the relations between public and private institutions of a destination.

Destination management and private public networks are clearly seen as variables that are related and should be worked together, however, the existence of research focused on relating these two variables quantitatively is scarce, according to the literature review this may be due to the presence of studies with a qualitative

approach, aimed at deepening the knowledge of both destination management (Pearce, et al, 2016; Coban and Yildiz, 2019; Crotts, et al, 2022) and private public networks (Fontes Melo, 2014; Tuohino and Konu, 2014; Boiko, et al, 2017; Boiko, et al, 2017; Strobl and Peters, 2012; Olaya, et al, 2021; Trang and Tamara 2022; ), which has led to the formulation of models and theories in this regard or applying factors, dimensions and indicators to evaluate the destination or a social network in a relational or structural way from the years 2003 to 2022 from Science Direct and Scopus databases.

Therefore, it is necessary to deepen the relationship between destination management and public-private networks in the competitiveness of a tourist destination; to this end, scientific articles on these variables will be reviewed from the theoretical perspectives proposed in these articles and how they were approached.

## **1.1 Objectives**

The objective of the study is to conduct a literature review on the variables of tourism destination management and public-private institutional collaboration networks applied to qualitative and quantitative studies to demonstrate the feasibility of conducting quantitative studies presenting a model linking these two variables.

## **2. Literature Review**

When speaking of destination competitiveness, it is imperative to mention Ritchie and Crouch (2003) who are the first authors to delve into the theory of competitiveness, indicating that this depends on the institutions responsible for coordinating and directing the actions of the tourism system and one of the most important aspects is that all the institutions of the sector must be committed to enhancing the tourism service. In this sense, there has been a diversity of research related to destination management and social networks, denominating them as the articulation of associations, organizational networks, tourism clusters or organizational coordination and governance, being these relevant in the articulation between public and private institutions and indispensable in the management of the destination and its competitiveness.

In the competitiveness model proposed by Crouch and Ritchie (2003), destination management is one of the most important factors of the model, which is made up of organization, marketing, quality of the service experience, information and research, human resources management, capital, visitor management, resource management and administrative crisis; this factor of the model being one of those that focuses on activities oriented to the destination's policy framework and planning by the destination managers.

Similarly, Dwyer, et al, (2004) in their model of Competitiveness of Tourism Destinations present the determinant of destination management, where the main role is played by local stakeholders, who will be in charge of improving the quality and efficiency of resources and support factors. This determinant has been extensively studied by Marketa (2020) who determines that "sound governance is common in developing countries, but development patterns differ" (p. 14) from one country to another and the challenge of destination management is given to the change of government by the different policies implemented in the place, on the other hand, it is imperative to understand how the competitive environment works if you want to reach a development of tourism activity.

In that sense, Goffi (2013) explains that destination management is focused on economic profitability and to avoid the deterioration of tourist spaces; in that aspect, Solazzo, et al, (2022) reveal that a destination develops and becomes an attractive one for the visitor, due to the management of organizations and current, deep and wide information about the characteristics, attitudes, preferences and attributes framed in tourism that must be present to design marketing strategies and achieve an efficient planning of the demand.

For which, Coban and Sevet (2019) indicate that well-defined destination management could help the place to be more competitive, and the fact of having resources is not enough if there is no good destination management; where they emphasize cooperation and coordination as the most important functions, especially, for destinations with natural and cultural assets; also indicating that, as the complexity of the destination increases, it needs more efficient management.

Thus, the research conducted by Czernek-Marszałek (2020) mentions social integration as a dependency of the sociocultural and institutional context, therefore, this context should be taken into account to generate awareness in entrepreneurs about the relevance of social relations, which would facilitate the opening of the market. In this regard, Deladem et al. (2020) argue that the purpose of examining the public-private partnership through tourism development can empower stakeholders in the tourism development of a locality focused on

improving the management of the place by directing their efforts to promote the eradication of scarcity or poverty.

In another study by Czernek-Marszałek (2018) on the formation of networks or associativity indicates that while there is greater business cooperation, communication, knowledge, trust, understanding and dialogue between members, the higher the level of evaluation of collaboration and when a member feels an active belonging the better their performance will be oriented to individual and group cooperation, emphasizing on this Moreno-Lobato, et al (2022) that the joint vision can bring common benefits to the management of the destination and there must be a willingness to cooperate among the actors. In this regard, they state the importance of creating an identity, this being the critical factor in the development of the destination, for this it is necessary to evaluate the tourism product and thus identify opportunities to work together, such as designing strategies to promote the place, new tourism products or generate better experiences for the visitor.

In that orientation, the research conducted by Tang, et al (2019) propose the existence of 04 types of linkages, which impact on product innovation, and these can be worked as: intra-company linkages, very suitable for institutional, management and product innovations, while inter-sectoral linkages foster innovations in processes and products, and finally the types of linkages both intra-company and inter-sectoral foster innovation in marketing and tourism product for the destination.

The aforementioned research is framed in qualitative studies on destination management and public and private networks, however, some quantitative research has also been identified separately as the study conducted on destination management by Dwyer et al. (2014) who use the Importance and Performance method called IPA, used to develop business management strategies and can identify opportunities for improvement; they raised 06 factors to analyze destination management which are: product development and innovation, marketing, sustainable development, tourism and hospitality training, risk management and climate change; finally indicating, that if tourism agents do not apply strategies focused on improving their competitiveness and at the same time making it sustainable, the same will not reach their potential, in the same way, they state the use of the IPA approach in other places, to evaluate tourism capacity and the challenges to be faced by destination managers.

Likewise, in another research conducted by Armenski et al. (2017) in Serbia, they investigated the dimensions of destination competitiveness, classifying them into five factors, these being: risk management and environmental adaptation strategies, product development, innovation, networking, sustainable development planning and concern for the community and education for sustainability, concluding that companies linked to the tourism sector have little knowledge of how to increase productivity in tourism activity, explaining that the lack of information may be one of the aspects by which they fail to make timely and efficient decisions to achieve competitiveness in the destination.

On the other hand, Chiappa and Presenza (2013) talk about the evaluation of the different existing relationships between public and private actors in tourist destinations, especially in the relationship networks, indicating that the study of these is becoming indispensable to address the interaction between them, for such reason, they propose to evaluate the network through the analysis of the following concepts such as systemic awareness, trust, reciprocity, collaboration and involvement, which would lead to the identification of the level of relationship existing among these actors, in the same way it states that the presence of networking leads to achieving a consensus to design marketing strategies aimed at strengthening the tourism product and destination branding.

On the other hand, Elvekrok et al, (2022) expressed that organizations perceive the existence of a benefit from cooperation among destination stakeholders, especially when they observe an increase in their sales and greater customer satisfaction; being government institutions the one that should lead this commitment (Olavarría-Benavides, 2023).

In this sense, a model of the relationship between destination management and private public networks is proposed, adapted from the studies conducted by Dwyer et al. (2014) who propose 06 factors involved in destination management, and the research presented by Chiappa and Presenza (2013) in terms of private public networks, composed of 05 factors involved in analyzing the existing relationships between the actors of the place.

### 3. Methodology

In order to locate the scientific articles, a search was carried out in English based on the following literature review variables: "destination management", "competitiveness", "public-private networks", "public-private social networks", "cooperation", "governance" using Boléan operators such as: and, or and not in Scopus and Science Direct databases, the selection of articles was from 2003 to 2024 worldwide. For the organisation of the information, a spreadsheet was used at first and then the JabRef software, with which the information could be arranged in tables and figures. For the analysis of the information, criteria such as the focus of the study, objective of the research, applied methodology, theories, results and conclusions were taken into account, with which the most relevant articles for the study could be identified, and finally the information was presented in tables and figures as shown in the results and discussion. The exclusion criteria were studies that were not published in journals in the Scopus or Science Direct databases.

### 4. Results and Discussion

According to the search of scientific articles in the Scopus and Science Direct databases, applying specific filtered searches according to the purpose of the research related to the variables of destination management and public-private networks, 63 articles were obtained, 18 of which were selected and contributed to the research objective.

The following table shows the title of the research, the year of publication, the country where the study was carried out and the research approach used, which made it possible to analyze and propose the linkage model between the destination management variable and public-private networks.

**Table 1: Qualitative and quantitative approach publications**

| Research Title                                                                                                                                                   | Year of publication | Country                                                                                                                                                                        | Approach     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Achieving destination competitiveness: an importance-performance analysis of Serbia                                                                              | 2014                | Serbia                                                                                                                                                                         | Quantitative |
| Attributes of destination competitiveness: A factors Analysis. Tourism Analysis                                                                                  | 2003                | Korea and Australia                                                                                                                                                            | Qualitative  |
| Exploring the relationship between government and destination competitiveness: The TALC model perspective                                                        | 2020                | Global                                                                                                                                                                         | Qualitative  |
| A Model of Tourism Destinations Competitiveness: The case of the Italian Destinations of Excellence                                                              | 2013                | Italy                                                                                                                                                                          | Qualitative  |
| Extracting insights from big social data for smarter tourism destination management                                                                              | 2022                | Italy                                                                                                                                                                          | Qualitative  |
| Developing a destination management model: Case of Cappadocia                                                                                                    | 2019                | Turkey                                                                                                                                                                         | Qualitative  |
| Social embeddedness and its benefits for cooperation in a tourism destination                                                                                    | 2020                | Poland                                                                                                                                                                         | Qualitative  |
| Developing sustainable tourism through public-private partnership to alleviate poverty in Ghana                                                                  | 2020                | Ghana                                                                                                                                                                          | Qualitative  |
| Cooperation evaluation with the use of network                                                                                                                   | 2018                | Poland                                                                                                                                                                         | Qualitative  |
| Axestión público-privada na rede de destinos dos Itinerarios Culturais do Consello de Europa: a Ruta do Emperador Carlos V                                       | 2021                | Cooperation Network of the Routes of the Emperor Charles V: Algeria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Morocco, Netherlands, Panama, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia, Mexico, and Peru | Qualitative  |
| Are different types of interfirm linkages conducive to different types of tourism innovation?                                                                    | 2019                | China                                                                                                                                                                          | Qualitative  |
| Destination Competitiveness: Public and Private Sector Tourism Management in Serbia                                                                              | 2017                | Serbia                                                                                                                                                                         | Quantitative |
| The use of network analysis to assess relationships among stakeholders within a tourism destination: an empirical investigation on costa smeralda-gallura, Italy | 2013                | Italy                                                                                                                                                                          | Quantitative |
| Effects of network relations on destination development and business results                                                                                     | 2022                | Norway                                                                                                                                                                         | Quantitative |
| Organizational Climate and the Achievement of Objectives in a Governmental Tourism Management Institution                                                        | 2023                | Peru                                                                                                                                                                           | Quantitative |
| Requirements for destination management organizations in destination governance: Understanding DMO success                                                       | 2014                | Switzerland, Austria, and South Tyrol                                                                                                                                          | Quantitative |

| Research Title                                                                                            | Year of publication | Country | Approach     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------|--------------|
| Exploring the relationship between government and destination competitiveness: The TALC model perspective | 2020                | Global  | Qualitative  |
| Relational risk and public-private partnership performance: An institutional perspective                  | 2021                | Egypt   | Quantitative |

The following table shows the selected articles by year, with 50% of the articles being from 2020 to 2023 and 44% scientific articles from 2013 to 2019 and only 5.6% articles from 2003.

**Table 2: Years**

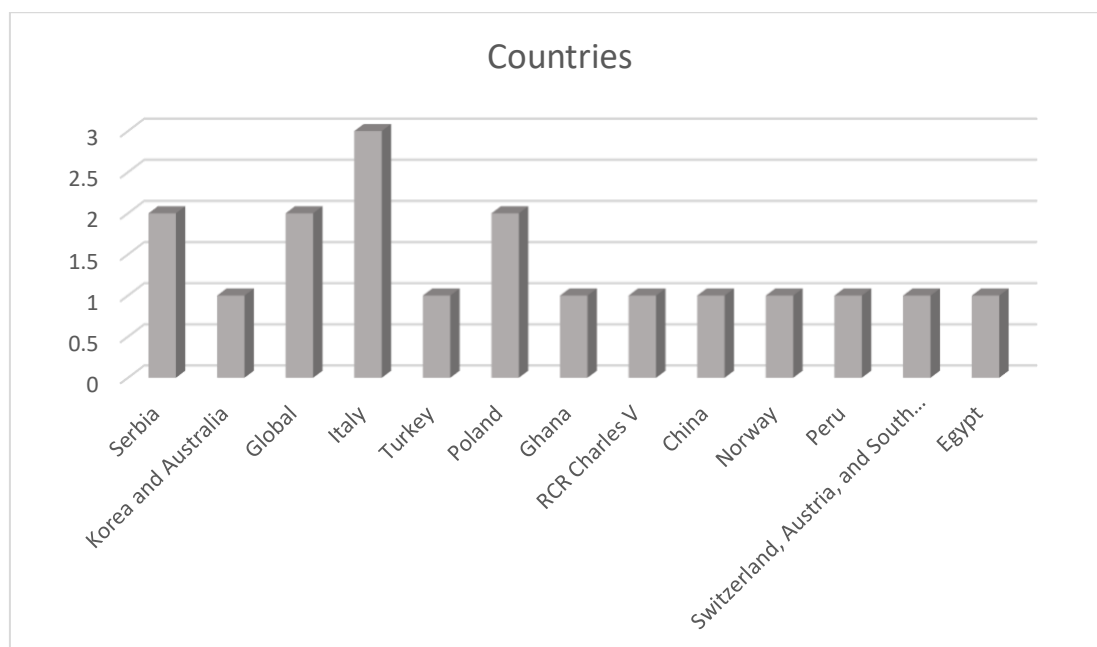
| Year         | Quantity  | %          |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| 2003         | 1         | 5.6        |
| 2013 a 2019  | 8         | 44.4       |
| 2020 a 2023  | 9         | 50.0       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>18</b> | <b>100</b> |

Table 2 shows the number and percentages of scientific articles according to the research approach, with 61% of the articles having a qualitative approach and 39% having a quantitative approach.

**Table 3: Article approaches**

| Approach     | Quantity  | %          |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Qualitative  | 11        | 61         |
| Quantitative | 7         | 39         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>18</b> | <b>100</b> |

Figure 1 shows the scientific articles that were selected by country, showing that these two variables are widely used by the different destinations.



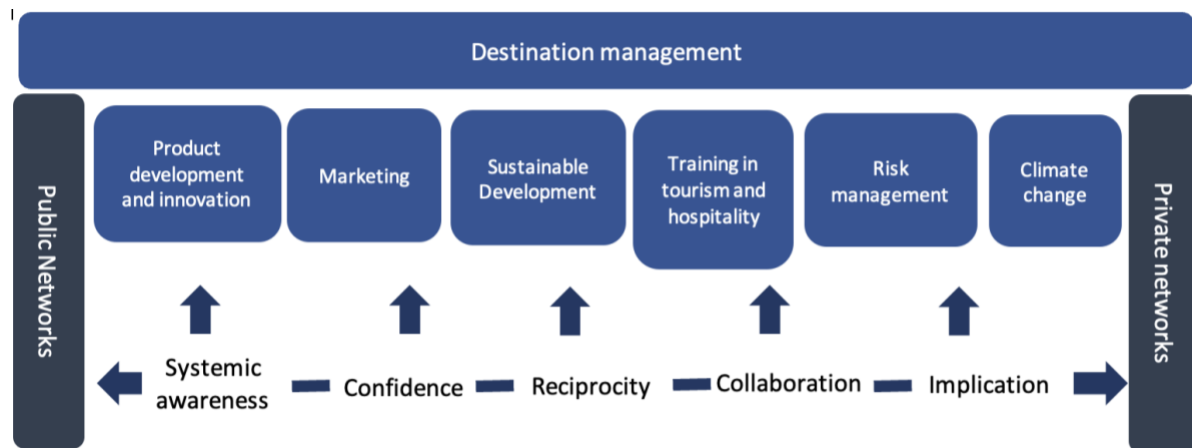
**Figure 1: Countries**

While it is true that there are many qualitative studies on the management of tourist destinations and private public networks, which support the relationship between these two variables, it is evident that quantitative studies are very scarce, especially when it comes to demonstrating this relationship.

The possibility of demonstrating this relationship is observed in the different competitiveness models proposed by the pioneers on the subject (Dwyer and Kim, 2003, Ritchie and Crouch, 2003) who contemplate in these models factors or determinants oriented to destination management which have been widely studied, one of them is the one proposed by Dwyer et al. (2014) who proposed six factors to analyze destination management, these are: product development and innovation, marketing, sustainable development, training in tourism and hospitality, risk management and climate change, formed with their respective indicators, which allow a measurement on the variable.

Similarly, there has been a great theoretical advance on private public networks, framed to sustain that tourism managers play a predominant role in the development and success of a place, and this depends on the vision, planning and strategies developed in the destination to face the competition and the different challenges that tourist spaces must face due to the changing environment. In this sense, one of the studies provided quantitative data, presented by Chiappa and Presenza (2013), who propose five dimensions to measure the management of private public relations: systemic awareness, trust, reciprocity, collaboration, and involvement.

After analyzing the different articles related to destination management and public-private networks, a model of the relationship between destination management and public-private networks is proposed, adapted from the studies conducted by Dwyer et al. (2014) who propose 06 factors involved in destination management, and the research presented by Chiappa and Presenza (2013) in terms of public-private networks, composed of 05 factors involved in analyzing the existing relationships between the stakeholders of the place.



**Figure 2: Proposed model of the relationship between destination management and private public networks.**

## 5. Conclusion

It is concluded that to date there is 61% research with a qualitative approach to both the variable of destination management and the variable of public-private networks, and 39% with a quantitative approach, indicating that these two variables are widely studied in various countries around the world, especially in European countries. Similarly, it is shown that to date these constructs are still being investigated in the tourism sector, because destination management and public-private networks are relevant variables for the good performance of a destination and to improve competitiveness through an articulated planning of the actors of a community. Similarly, it is worth mentioning that the authors Dwyer et al. (2014) are those who proposed 06 intervening factors in destination management, indicating that these can be applied in other destinations; similarly, indicate that the research presented by Chiappa and Presenza (2013), is one of the few studies with a quantitative approach, proposing 05 dimensions to be studied in public-private networks.

In this sense, it is argued that these variables can be worked together in other types of studies such as relational and even causal studies, which is why this article proposes a model that relates the variable of destination management and private public networks adapted from the studies conducted by Dwyer et al. (2014) who propose 06 factors involved in destination management, and the research presented by Chiappa and Presenza (2013) in terms of private public networks, consisting of 05 factors involved in analysing the existing relationships between the actors of the place.

In which it is shown that the pillars of destination management are the actors, i.e. the public and private institutions of a locality and for this network to manage the destination, the authors Chiappa and Presenza (2013) state that systemic awareness, trust in each other, reciprocity in management, collaboration between actors and involvement are relevant factors for a destination to be on the right path for destination management.

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