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TOURIST DESTINATION IMAGE AND SATISFACTION AT PELEȘ CASTLE: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

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Abstract: This study provides a descriptive analysis of the tourism destination image and tourist satisfaction associated with Peleș Castle, a significant cultural and historical landmark in Romania. Using survey data collected from visitors, the study explores perceptions of the castle's image, focusing on visitor services, and examines how these factors contribute to overall tourist satisfaction. Through the identification of key aspects that shape visitors' experiences, this research aims to offer insights into maintaining and enhancing the appeal of Peleș Castle as a prominent tourist destination. The findings contribute to the ongoing scholarly debate regarding the elements influencing tourist satisfaction in cultural heritage tourism and suggest strategies for improving visitor experiences.

• Introduction

Peleș Castle, situated in the Carpathian Mountains of Romania, stands as one of the country's most important cultural and historical landmarks. Constructed in the late 19th century as the summer residence of King Carol I, the castle is renowned for its stunning architecture, extensive art collections, and rich historical significance. Today, it serves not only as a monument to Romania's royal heritage but also as a major tourist destination that draws both domestic and international visitors.

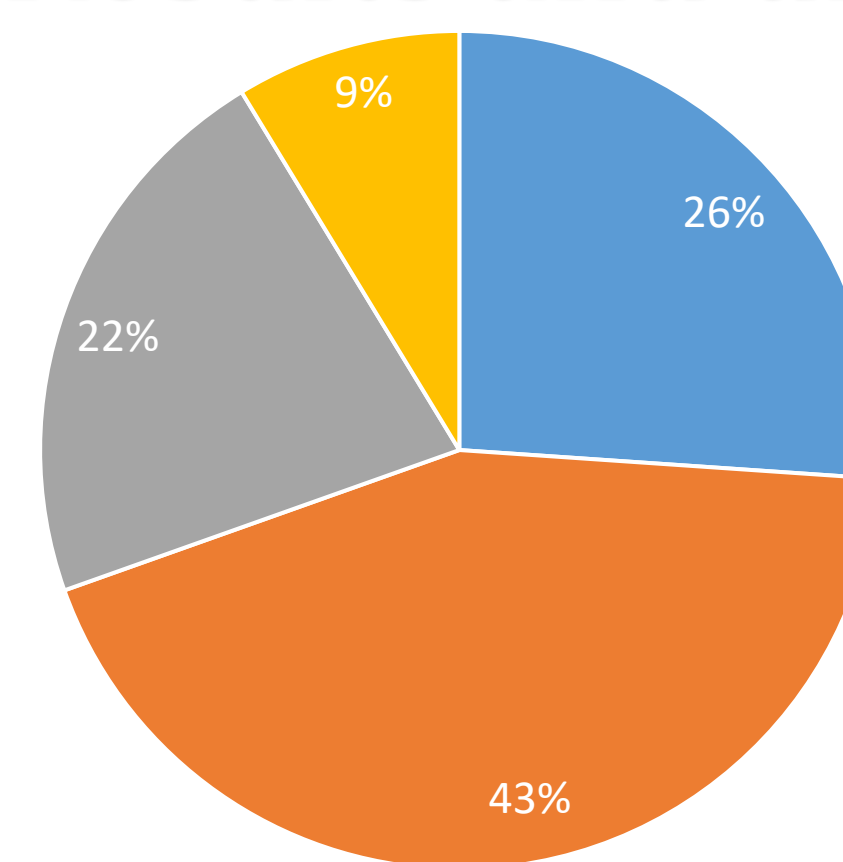
Despite its prominence, there has been limited research focusing on the destination image of Peleș Castle and its impact on tourist satisfaction. The concept of destination image encompasses the perceptions and impressions that visitors hold about a place, which can significantly influence their decision-making processes and overall travel experiences. Tourist satisfaction, meanwhile, reflects how well the actual experience meets or exceeds visitor expectations, affecting their likelihood of returning or recommending the destination to others.

By prioritizing visitor satisfaction and carefully managing the destination image, Peleș Castle can continue to preserve its cultural significance while remaining an attractive destination for future generations of tourists.

Material and method

This descriptive study aims to analyze the tourism destination image and tourist satisfaction associated with Peleș Castle. Utilizing survey data collected from visitors, the research explores perceptions of the castle's image, with a particular focus on visitor services such as guided tours, amenities, and staff interactions. The study examines how these factors contribute to overall tourist satisfaction and identifies key aspects that shape visitors' experiences.

• Results and discussions



■ Very satisfied ■ Satisfied ■ Neutral ■ Unsatisfied

Figure 1. Overall satisfaction

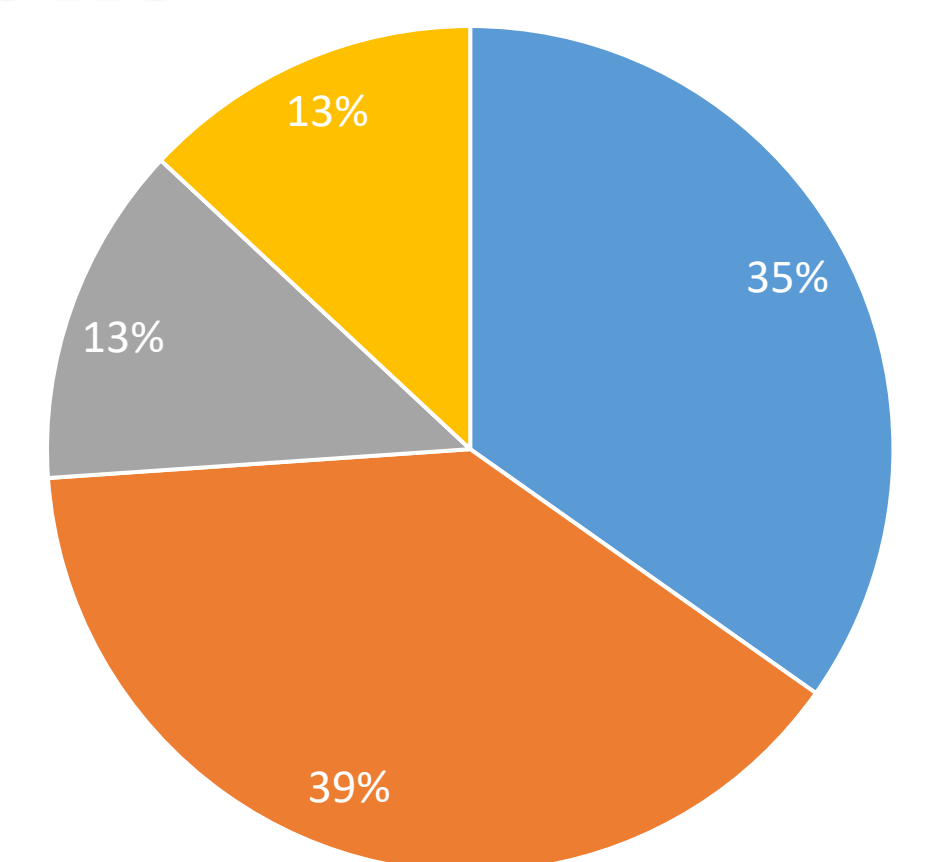
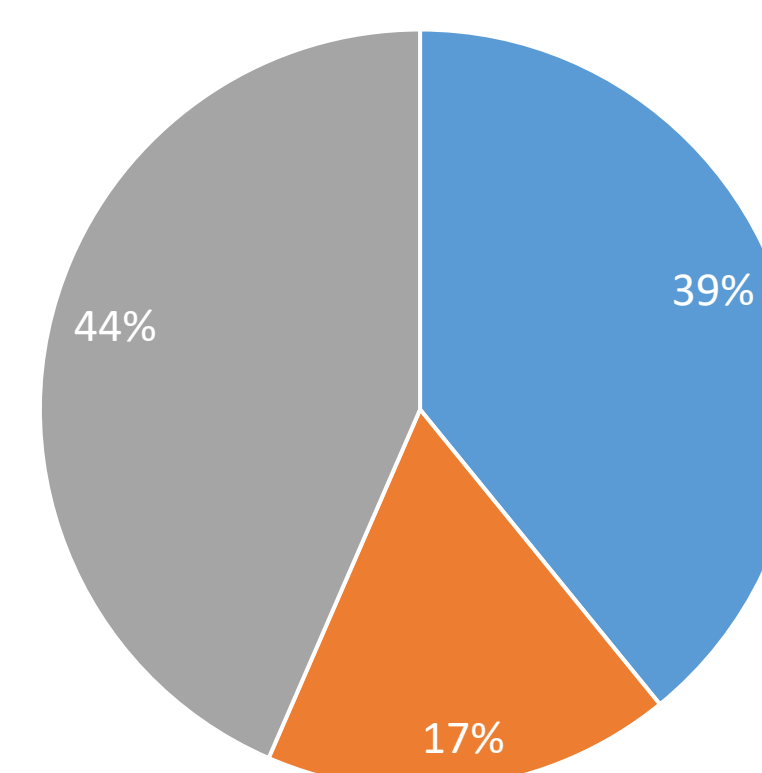


Figure 2. Likelihood to recommend

91% of visitors to Peleș Castle are satisfied, with 42% completely satisfied and 49% satisfied, while 7% are neutral and 2% unsatisfied (figure 1). Visitors are mainly drawn to the castle's history (39%) and architecture (35%), with recommendations and scenery each contributing 13%. The castle is highly regarded for its historical and architectural appeal, with minor areas for improvement to enhance satisfaction further (figure 2).



■ Cultural visit ■ Events ■ Relaxation

Figure 3. Reasons for visiting

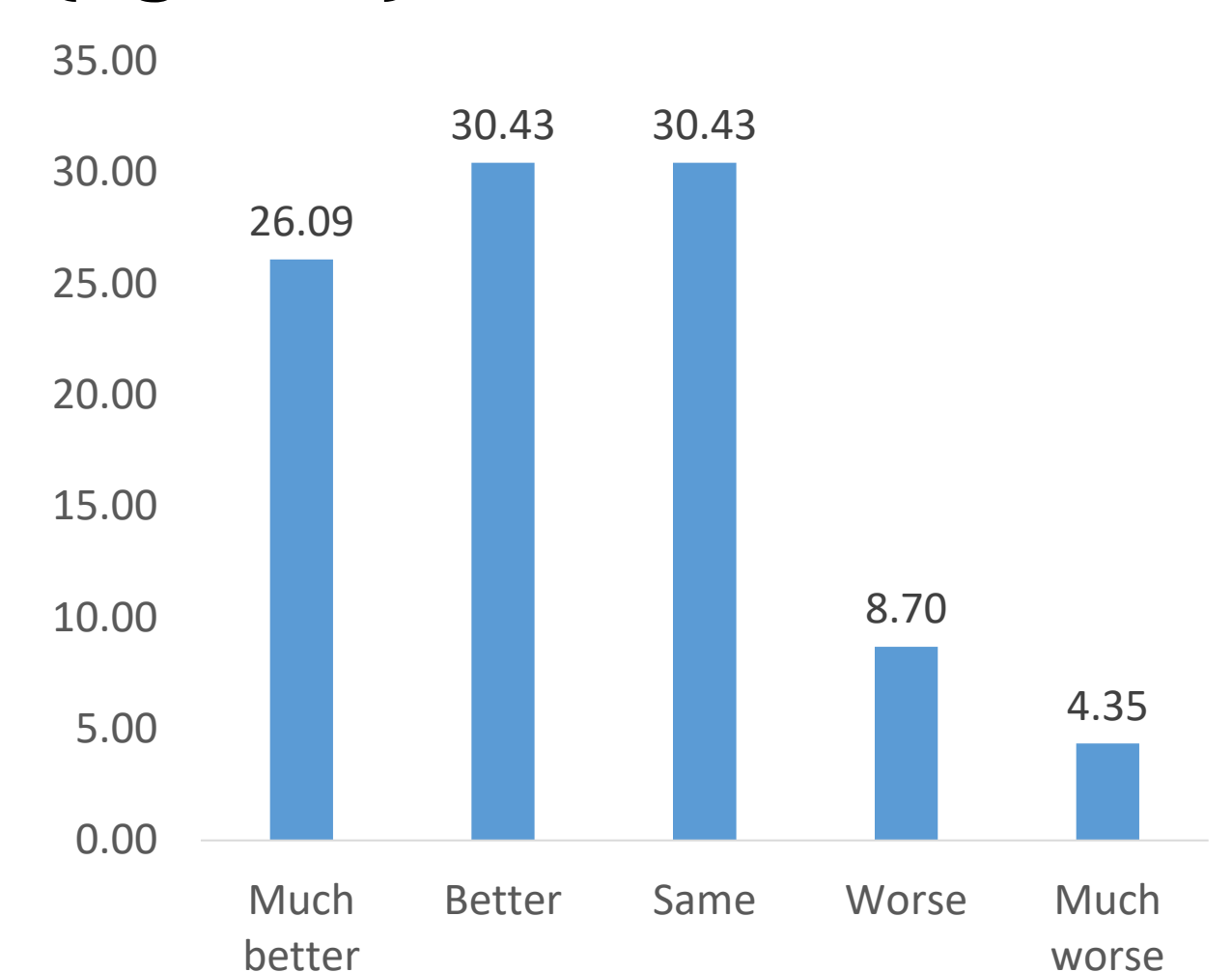


Figure 4. Comparison with other objectives

Visitors to Peleș Castle mainly seek relaxation (44%) and cultural experiences (39%), with events (17%) being a secondary draw. 87% rate the castle as equal to or better than other Romanian attractions, with 26% considering it much better.

Conclusions

Peleș Castle is a highly regarded destination, attracting visitors primarily for its cultural significance and relaxing environment. Most visitors are satisfied with their experience, rating the castle better than other locations.