



DESTINATION IMAGE FORMATION FOR THE DEVA FORTRESS

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Abstract: *This paper analyzes how historical heritage and tourism product characteristics shape the destination image of Deva Fortress and, in turn, visitor satisfaction. We profile key image dimensions such as site presentation, accessibility, satisfaction for touristic services and for festivals. Results underscore the role of site upkeep alongside unique views and destination management in consolidating a favorable image.*

• Introduction

Destination image synthesizes visitors' beliefs and evaluations about a place and is closely linked to satisfaction, recommendation, and revisit intention. For fortified heritage sites, image is shaped jointly by heritage attributes (authenticity, conservation, vistas) and tourism-product features (accessibility, visitor infrastructure, signage and interpretation, cleanliness and safety, and event programming).

This paper examines how these elements contribute to the image of the Deva Fortress and how that image relates to visitor satisfaction. The study profiles key image dimensions—site presentation and upkeep, accessibility, infrastructure adequacy, interpretive support, cleanliness and safety, unique views, and festivals—and assesses their associations with recommendation and revisit intentions. Using a short questionnaire administered in late October 2025 to recent visitors and local residents, the analysis is descriptive and aims to identify strengths and frictions that are most salient for management. The contribution is a concise, site-specific account of destination image formation that can inform routine maintenance, interpretation, and event decisions.

• Material and method

A brief questionnaire administered during October 2025 captured visitation, awareness source, favorite attribute, accommodation use/satisfaction, festival participation/satisfaction, and agreement with statements on access, infrastructure, signage/interpretation, conservation, and cleanliness/safety (Likert 1–5 scales). Based on those, a descriptive analysis of the results was formulated.

• Results and discussions

Awareness is driven mainly by word-of-mouth and school/work; the landscape/views are the standout liked attribute. Access and signage are broadly positive; visitor infrastructure shows the most variability. Conservation and cleanliness/safety are generally well regarded but not uniformly so. Festivals boost satisfaction and image for both intentional and incidental attendees. Recommendation and revisit intentions skew high; lower intentions tend to coincide with weaker ratings on infrastructure or access. Accommodation is used by a subset, with generally good satisfaction.

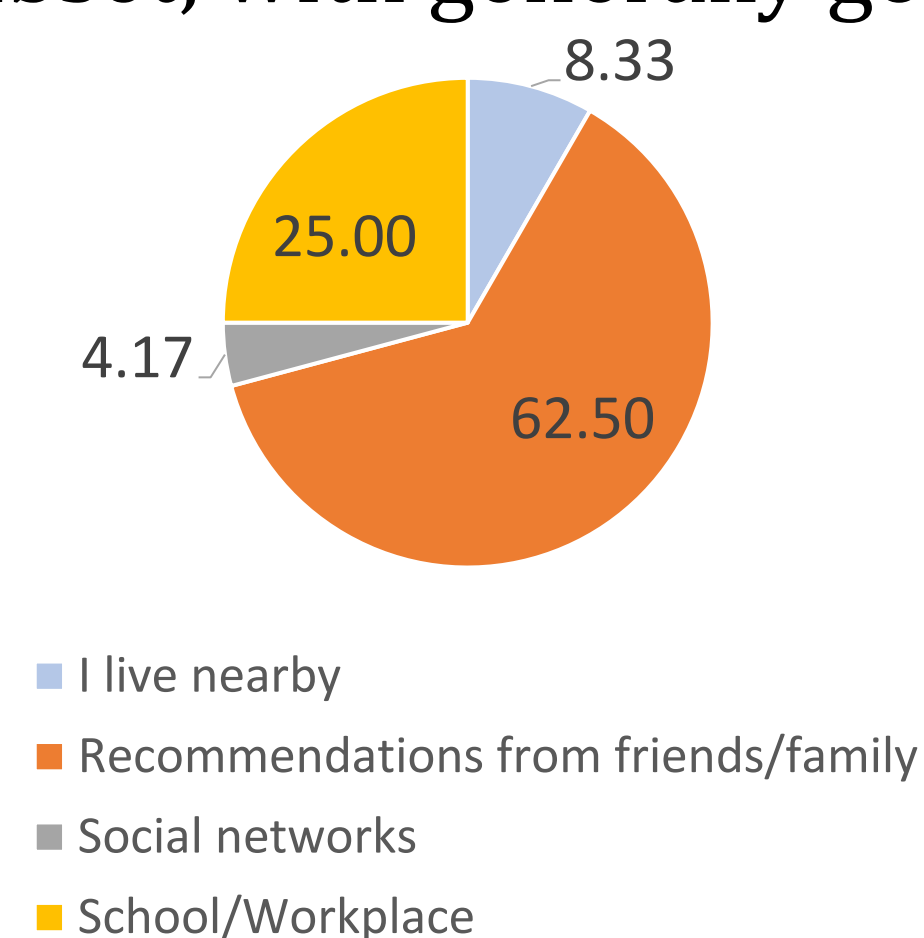


Figure 1: Awareness source

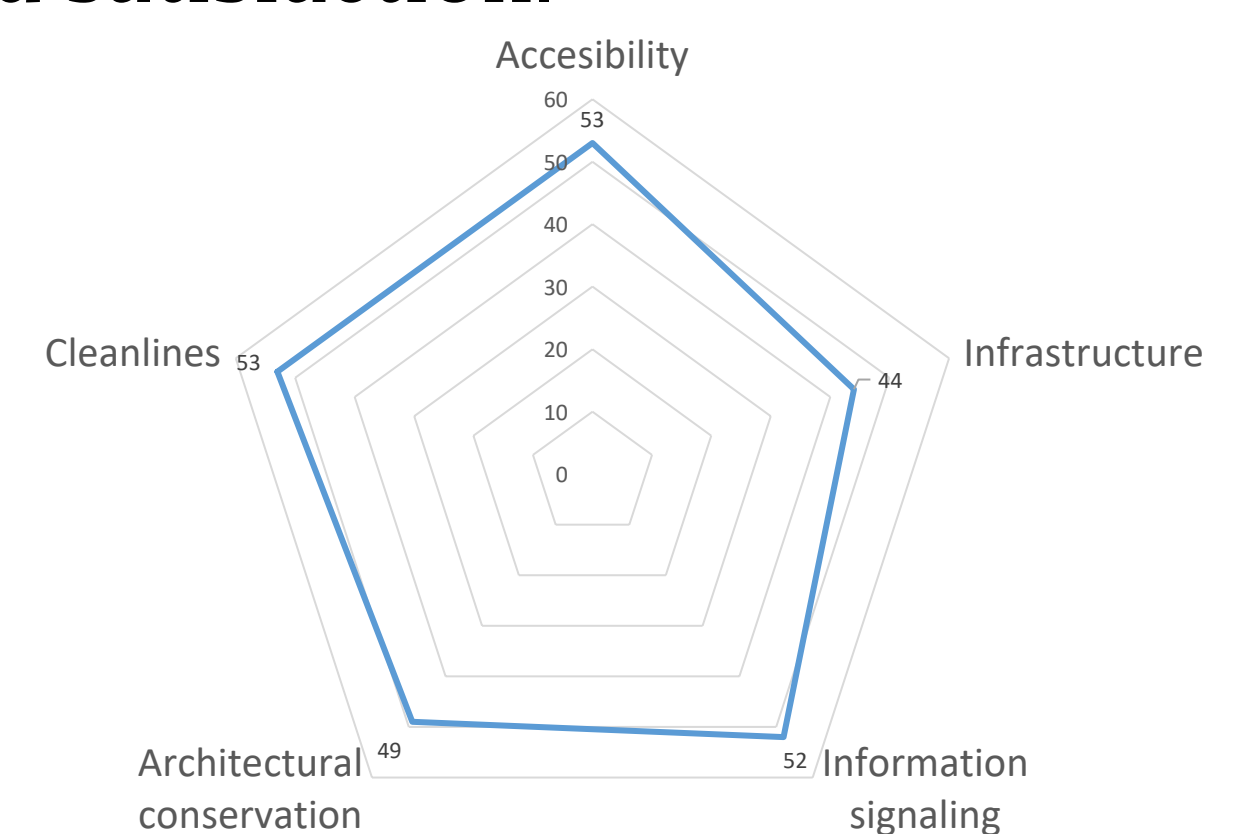


Figure 2: Composite score for functional touristic characteristics

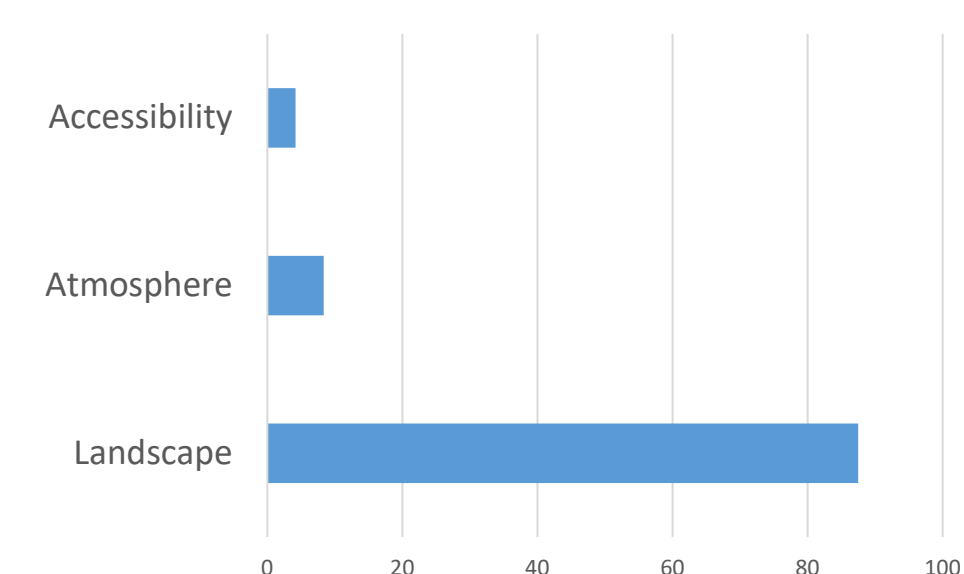


Figure 3: Most liked characteristic (%)

• Conclusions

Deva Fortress's image is anchored in its unique views and strengthened by visible upkeep and clear interpretation; infrastructure gaps are the most common friction. Priorities should include maintain routes and viewpoints, close infrastructure coverage/maintenance gaps, keep conservation efforts visible, and leverage events to amplify a positive image.