



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



Festival Hosting Destination: Investigating the Impact of Place Attachment on Destination Loyalty

Najihah Abdul Rahim, Norhusniyati Husin, Joeaiza Juhari, Nik Rozila Nik Mohd Masdek, Khaizie Sazimah Ahmad

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i5/13234> DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i5/13234

Received: 19 March 2022, Revised: 22 April 2022, Accepted: 07 May 2022

Published Online: 16 May 2022

In-Text Citation: (Abdul Rahim et al., 2022)

To Cite this Article: Abdul Rahim, N., Husin, N., Juhari, J., Masdek, N. R. N. M., Ahmad, K. S. (2022). Festival Hosting Destination: Investigating the Impact of Place Attachment on Destination Loyalty. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*. 12(5), 1847-1855.

Copyright: © 2022 The Author(s)

Published by Human Resource Management Academic Research Society (www.hrmars.com)

This article is published under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) license. Anyone may reproduce, distribute, translate and create derivative works of this article (for both commercial and non-commercial purposes), subject to full attribution to the original publication and authors. The full terms of this license may be seen at: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode>

Vol. 12, No. 5, 2022, Pg. 1847– 1855

<http://hrmars.com/index.php/pages/detail/IJARBSS>

JOURNAL HOMEPAGE

Full Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at
<http://hrmars.com/index.php/pages/detail/publication-ethics>



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



www.hrmars.com

ISSN: 2222-6990

Festival Hosting Destination: Investigating the Impact of Place Attachment on Destination Loyalty

Najihah Abdul Rahim¹, Norhusniyati Husin², Joeaiza Juhari³,
Nik Rozila Nik Mohd Masdek⁴, Khaizie Sazimah Ahmad⁵

^{1,2,3,5}Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Melaka, 78000 Alor Gajah, Malaysia, ⁴Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Selangor, 42300 Bandar Puncak Alam, Malaysia

Email: najih410@uitm.edu.my¹, norhu7002@uitm.edu.my², joeaiza884@uitm.edu.my³, nik_rozila@uitm.edu.my⁴, khaizie.sazimah@uitm.edu.my⁵

Abstract

Tourism is widely regarded as a significant economic driver in many countries. However, the extent to which tourism destinations, particularly festival destinations, are preferred by tourists remains unexplored. Drawing from attachment literatures, the effect of place attachment on destination loyalty is being studied. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between place attachment and destination loyalty. Multiple regressions were used to analyse the responses. A judgmental sampling method was used to analyse the responses, and the hypothesis was tested using multiple regressions. In general, the findings indicate that place dependence and social bonding are significant and have a significant effect on destination loyalty. The findings are beneficial for tourism authorities because they enable them to better understand the impact of place attachment on destination loyalty and how it can be improved in the future.

Keywords: Place Attachment, Place Dependence, Social Bonding, Destination Loyalty.

Introduction

Festivals are critical to the tourism industry's success. As a country which also depending on tourism sector, Malaysia hosts a number of festivals before the pandemic begins to struck the nations and the world in 2020. Festival tourism is deemed as an event which can foster a sense of loyalty among visitors, both domestic and international. Therefore, it is critical to understand the extent to which visitor fulfilment at a festival contributes to the growth of emotional attachment and loyalty to the festival's host city. The concept of place attachment stems from attachment theory, which has been primarily studied by Bowlby and Salter Ainsworth since the early 1930s. Attachment theory examines a child's bond with its mother and how that bond is disrupted by separation, deprivation, and bereavement. Bowlby was intrigued by children's separation anxiety and distress when they are separated from their primary caregivers.

Place Dependence

Place dependence can be defined as individuals' perceptions of the value of a particular location and its capacity to meet their needs in comparison to other locations. It also reflects the suitability of the location to satisfy functional needs and objectives of an individual (Suntikul et. al., 2016). According to Liu et al (2020), the bonding of place dependence can be elevated to a higher level by placing a greater emphasis on individuals' self-identity. Additionally, Cheng and Kuo (2015) state that by incorporating novel elements into new environments, people's place dependence on them can be significantly increased. For example, prior research established a positive correlation between place affect and place dependence and mass tourist environmental activation (Qu et. al., 2019). Yuksel et al (2010), on the other hand, demonstrated that place dependence is a functional attachment, where it emphasises the importance of a place as a background, which enables the desired arrangements to be made in accordance with the degree of involvement. In essence, a place can create person-place bond, if it is able to meet the tourist's actual needs and wants. Therefore, if the place meets the tourists' needs, especially in terms of self-esteem and self-efficacy, and continuity it is said that they have become dependent on the place and may choose to stay loyal to the place. Additionally, the researchers demonstrated that place attachment is a predictor of destination loyalty and positive holiday experiences in their study. Thus, their findings indicated that three dimensions of place attachment (i.e., place dependence, affective attachment, and place identity) influenced cognitive and affective loyalty both directly and indirectly via overall satisfaction, which in turn influenced conative loyalty.

Based on the findings of tourism-related research, it has been determined that the two-factor structure of place attachment is appropriate (Woosnam et al., 2018). The authors also discovered that a sense of attachment to a place may increase the likelihood of revisiting. Woosnam and colleagues discovered that when residents and tourists interacted during religious festivals, the two resulting dimensions of place attachment (i.e., place identity and place dependence) significantly explained the three dimensions of emotional solidarity (i.e., welcoming nature, emotional closeness, and sympathetic understanding). The researchers made no mention of the consequences of such solidarity. However, Ribeiro et al (2018) established a link between solidarity and the outcome variable of destination loyalty, demonstrating that two of the three emotional solidarity factors had a direct effect on visitors' loyalty. According to Dwyer et al (2019), place attachment is also positively and fundamentally associated with the tourism environment. Additionally, there are studies that conclude that place dependence and place identity are inextricably linked and have an effect on residents' perceived resilience when selecting a tourism destination (Guo et al., 2018). Hence, the objective in this study is to determine whether or not place dependence ties to the festival's hosting location are significant.

Social Bonding

Recent research has focused more attention on social bonding, as the community plays a critical role in forming place attachment. Kyle and Chick (2007) defined the context of social relationships and shared experiences as being most applicable to festival settings. Strong social bonds can result in strong emotional attachments to a place, and these attachments are frequently the result of repeated place interactions and experiences that accumulate sentiment over time. Additionally, another supported finding is that social bonding occurs among members of private health clubs who were created for true loyalty. Social bonding in

a place refers to the process by which an individual forms a mutual bond with another group of people, whether known or unknown, through interaction with place-people, thereby fostering "group fitting or belonging" (Hammit et al., 2009). Additionally, Song and Soopramanien (2019) discovered that social bonding has a positive effect on the pro-environmental behaviours of Chinese metropolitan residents.

Numerous scholars in the fields of environmental psychology, leisure, and tourism have emphasised the importance of social bonding with a place (Hidalgo and Hernandez, 2001). Social experiences shape the natural environment (Kyle et al., 2004; Ramkissoon et al., 2012), and when the environment is preserved, it is likely to result in a stronger sense of attachment (Kyle et al., 2005). Thus, the objective in this study is to determine whether or not social bonding ties to the festival's hosting location are significant.

Destination Loyalty

According to Jacoby and Keyner (1973), loyalty is a response to biased behaviour as a result of psychological processes carried out by the decision maker in one or more alternative time dimensions. Additionally, Kumar and Shah (2004) believed that a behavioural approach accurately described basic loyalty in terms of consumption segmentation, likelihood of consumption, likelihood of consuming the same product or service again, repeated consumption behaviour, and multidirectional consumption behaviour.

Customers recognise loyalty when they have a favourable attitude toward the good or service or the company that provides the good or service (Wong & Zhou, 2006). Additionally, several previous researchers discovered that there are two components to the concept of loyalty, namely behaviour and attitude. Participating in certain activities, using certain facilities, and obtaining services, while demonstrating consistency in terms of the number of times visitors participate, is referred to as behaviour loyalty (Backman and Crompton, 1991).

Oliver (1980) recommended that the four stages of customer loyalty are a change in strength, specifically cognitive loyalty, emotional loyalty, intended loyalty, and behavioural loyalty. In the context of tourism, the term "loyalty" refers to an individual's choice of destination and is sometimes referred to as "destination loyalty" (Opperman, 2000). According to Yuksel, Yuksel, and Bilim (2010), destination loyalty is a critical issue to investigate, particularly in the tourism and recreation industry. Tourists will typically choose a destination for vacation or return to the same location if it has received positive reviews and recommendations from previous visitors and has established itself as a loyalty destination (Dwyer et al., 2019).

Numerous items have been used to assess attitudinal loyalty in previous studies. Yoon and Uysal (2005) used two measures of destination loyalty: recommendations to friends/relatives and overall desire to revisit. Yoon, Lee, and Lee (2010), on the other hand, used only three variables to assess visitor loyalty to festivals: word of mouth, recommendations to friends and neighbours, and continued attendance. Meanwhile, Liu, Lin, and Wang (2012) used four items to determine loyalty: intention to revisit, positive comments about the destination, recommending the destination to others, and willingness to pay more for the destination. In this study, we used only two variables to determine a festival's destination loyalty: place dependence and social bonding.

Based on the literature review, the following research framework has been developed.

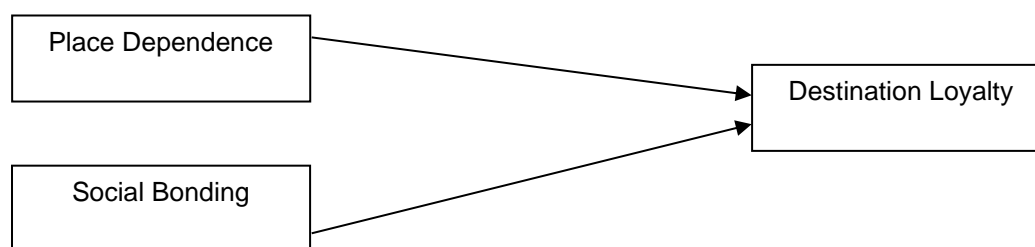


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

The framework is being proposed with two (2) testable hypotheses to be analysed:

H1: There is a significant relationship between Place Dependence and Destination Loyalty.

H2: There is a significant relationship between Social Bonding and Destination Loyalty.

Data and Methodology

Putrajaya is a major city on Malaysia's west coast, located 25 kilometers south of Kuala Lumpur and serving as one of the Federal Administrative Capitals. The city was constructed on the site of a former oil palm plantation in the state of Selangor. As an award-winning city, Putrajaya has developed into a vast area of elegantly designed Islamic architecture with a blend of European styled streets. To further promote Putrajaya as a cultural capital, the city council, Perbadanan Putrajaya, annually engages Putrajaya in a variety of festivals. For example, Royal Floria Putrajaya Flower and Garden festival, Festival of Light and Motion. The main attraction of Putrajaya Festival of Light and Motion is a magnificent projection mapping event that brings to life with an exciting colorful light imagery and sounds. Before Covid-19 pandemic and the country had to resort to lockdown, the city council has successfully organized few events and the last was the Putrajaya Festival of Light 2020. To generate sample for the study, the sample was conveniently obtained by selecting visitors at Putrajaya Light and Motion Festival 2020. A total of 450 questionnaires were distributed in this study but only 384 of questionnaires were returned. Judgmental sampling was used where the sample were approached at the main activity location of the festival. Purposive or judgmental sampling is a technique in which the researcher selects elements of the sample based on his or her judgement (Hsu et al. ,2008). The rationale for using judgmental sampling is that it is more effective than other types of samples because the population may include visitors who attended the festival for another reason, not exclusively for the purpose of visiting the festival. The remaining 66 questionnaires were deemed invalid due to incomplete and insufficient data. Thirty items were operationalized to generate research items. Place Attachment items was developed using items in Hidalgo and Hernandez (2001). Ten items were used to operationalize Destination Loyalty, which was based on Baker and Crompton (2000). All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1= Strongly disagree to 5= Strongly agree.

Findings and Discussion

Reliability of Measures

The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of the variables are obtained as shown in Table 1. The results show that all Cronbach's alpha for the variables is above 0.7. Based on the result of Cronbach's alpha coefficient value, this questionnaire is allowed and applicable.

The nearer the Cronbach's alpha value to 1, the higher the internal consistency reliability (Malhotra, 2010). The internal consistency reliability of the measures used in this study is acceptably good.

Table 1

Summary of Reliability Test

Variables	No of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Place Dependence	10	0.935
Social Bonding	10	0.853
Destination Loyalty	10	0.824

Descriptive Statistic

All the variables indicated in Table 2 below are measured on a five-point Likert-type scale. From the results the mean for all of variables such as Place Dependence (3.9714), Social Bonding (4.0276) and Destination Loyalty (4.2091) indicate that general awareness and courtesy on these issues has always been there.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistic: Central Tendencies

Variables	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Place Dependence	384	3.9714	0.6075
Social Bonding	384	4.0276	0.6727
Destination Loyalty	384	4.2091	0.5797

Correlations Analysis

From the Table 3, it seems to indicate that all dimensions of independents variables that consist of Place Dependence and Social Bonding proves a significant correlation with Destination Loyalty ($r = 0.645$ and 0.580 respectively).

Table 3

Correlations

		Place Dependence	Social Bonding	Destination Loyalty
Place Dependence	Pearson Correlation	1		0.645(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)			0.000
Social Bonding	Pearson Correlation		1	0.580(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)			0.000
Destination Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	0.645(**)	0.580(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Multiple Regression

Additional investigation using multiple regression analysis is being conducted in this research. From the Table 4, the results were statistically significant $F = 95.800$, $p < 0.001$ and the total variance explained by the model as 42.6%. The results further shows that there is a significant relationship between two dimensions which are; Place Dependence ($\beta = 0.446$; $p = 0.000$) and Social Bonding ($\beta = 0.136$; $p = 0.048$) with Destination Loyalty at 5% at significant level. As depicted in Table 4, the R-squared of 0.426 implies that the predictor variable explain about 42.6% of the variance in the dependent variable and this is quite respectable result. To determine the best set of predictor variable in predicting Destination Loyalty, a stepwise regression method was used. From the table below, all predictor variables were found to be of significance in explaining Destination Loyalty. The largest beta coefficient is 0.446 which is for Place Dependence. The results also indicated that the possibility of Multicollinearity in this study is low due to the tolerance value more than 0.1 and Variance Inflation Factor value less than 10.

Table 4
Summary of Regression Analysis

Summary		ANOVA		Dimensions	β	T	P	Collinearity Statistics	
R	R ²	F	Sig.					Tolerance	VIF
				Place Dependence	.446	5.906	0.000	.262	3.813
.656	.426	95.800	0.000	Social Bonding	.136	1.986	0.048	.321	3.111

Conclusion and Recommendations

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of place attachment on destination loyalty. The empirical findings indicate that place dependence, social bonding, and destination loyalty all have a positive relationship. The festival under investigation serves as a destination for visitors seeking to experience city nightlife and unwind in a cityscape setting. The findings suggest that when visitors can make a strong connection between the festival's image and their inner need and purpose, they will develop a sense of loyalty toward the destination that hosted the event. When a location can define itself, visitors will typically find the destination meaningful and will therefore consider the location as a major visiting option. They are a few respondents who attend the festival annually. Regardless of where they stay, visitors may have discovered that their primary reason for attending the festival was fulfilled. Thus, it indicates that the festival was able to meet their needs and objectives. For instance, visitors may discover that the festival satisfies their desire to have fun with their children and family. In addition, there are lesser-known major events in other cities. As a result, the visitors' visit to Putrajaya was significantly more meaningful. It is suggested that the event organisers in Putrajaya come up with a new, interesting, and unique theme each year in order to attract and entice visitors to return to the same festival, thereby fostering destination loyalty. Additionally, it is recommended that Putrajaya maintain its image as the best and most enjoyable festival and destination, as this may result in visitor loyalty. Additional research may reveal additional variables influencing festival destination hosting loyalty, such as contextual or cultural perspective. This will give tourism practitioners a clearer picture of how to implement the best destination loyalty strategies in the future.

This study leads to theoretical contributions to the research within the tourism literature. First, the development of Place Dependence and Social Bonding can increase Destination loyalty. Second, this study adds to the literature by conforming the applications of place attachment to induce loyalty. This specifically means, the model has work in tandem to significantly explain how Place Dependence and Social Bonding can contribute to loyalty. In terms of contextual contributions, the study provides an insightful implication for tourism practitioners. It is important for tourism practitioners to engage the visitors with the place and hinders them from considering other alternatives. In this vein, the practitioners should introduce continuous bonding with visitors such as discounts on admissions, high tea opportunities with celebrity at the place creating a memorable experience. This will attract future dependence and bonding between the destination practitioners and the visitors.

References

- Backman, S. J., & Crompton, J. L. (1991). The usefulness of selected variables for predicting activity loyalty. *Leisure sciences*, 13(3), 205-220.
- Baker, D. A., & Crompton, J. L. (2000). Quality, satisfaction and behavioral intentions. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 27(3), 785–804.
- Cheng, C. K., & Kuo, H. Y. (2015). Bonding to a new place never visited: Exploring the relationship between landscape elements and place bonding. *Tourism Management*, 46, 546-560.
- Dwyer, L., Chen, N., & Lee, J. (2019). The role of place attachment in tourism research. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 36(5), 645-652.
- Guo, Y., Zhang, J., Zhang, Y., & Zheng, C. (2018). Catalyst or barrier? The influence of place attachment on perceived community resilience in tourism destinations. *Sustainability*, 10(7), 2347.
- Hammit, W. E., Kyle, G. T., & Oh, C. O. (2009). Comparison of place bonding models in recreation resource management. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 41(1), 57 – 72.
- Hidalgo, M.C., and Hernandez, B. (2001). Place Attachment: Conceptual and Empirical Questions. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 21 (3), 273-81
- Hsu, C., Killion, L., Graham, B., Gross, M. J., & Huang, S. (2008). *Tourism Marketing: An Asia-Pacific Perspective* (1st Ed) Milton Qld: John Wiley & Sons Australia, Ltd.
- Jacoby, J., & Kyner, D. B. (1973). Brand loyalty vs. repeat purchasing behavior. *Journal of Marketing research*, 10(1), 1-9.
- Kumar, V., & Shah, D. (2004), Building and sustaining profitable customer loyalty for the 21st century. *Journal of Retailing*, 80, 317–330.
- Kyle, G., Graefe, A., & Manning, R. (2005). Testing the dimensionality of place attachment in recreational settings. *Environment and behavior*, 37(2), 153-177.
- Kyle, G. T., Mowen, A. J., & Tarrant, M. (2004). Linking place preferences with place meaning: An examination of the relationship between place motivation and place attachment. *Journal of environmental psychology*, 24(4), 439-454.
- Kyle, G., & Chick, G. (2007). The social construction of a sense of place. *Leisure sciences*, 29(3), 209-225.
- Liu, C. R., Lin, W. R., & Wang, Y. C. (2012). Relationship between self-congruity and destination loyalty: Differences between first-time and repeat visitors. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 1(1-2), 118-123.
<http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2021.05.002>

- Liu, Q., Wu, Y., Xiao, Y., Fu, W., Zhuo, Z., van den Bosch, C. C. K., ... & Lan, S. (2020). More meaningful, more restorative? Linking local landscape characteristics and place attachment to restorative perceptions of urban park visitors. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 197, 103763. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2020.103763>
- Malhotra, N. K. (2010). *Marketing Research: An Applied Orientation Sixth Edition*. New York, USA: Prentice Hall International.
- Oliver, R.L. (1980). A Cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 17(4), 460-469.
- Oppermann, M. (2000). Tourism destination loyalty. *Journal of Travel Research*, 39(1), 78-84. <http://doi.org/10.1177/004728750003900110>
- Qu, Y., Xu, F., & Lyu, X. (2019). Motivational place attachment dimensions and the pro-environmental behaviour intention of mass tourists: A moderated mediation model. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 22(2), 197–217.
- Ramkissoon, H., Weiler, B., & Smith, L. D. G. (2012). Place attachment and pro-environmental behaviour in national parks: The development of a conceptual framework. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 20(2), 257–276.
- Ribeiro, M. A., Woosnam, K. M., Pinto, P., & Silva, J. A. (2018). Tourists' destination loyalty through emotional solidarity with residents: An integrative moderated mediation model. *Journal of Travel Research*, 57(3), 279-295.
- Song, Z., & Soopramanien, D. (2019). Types of place attachment and pro-environmental behaviors of urban residents in Beijing. *Cities*, 84, 112–120.
- Suntikul, W., & Jachna, T. (2016). The co-creation/place attachment nexus. *Tourism Management*, 52, 276-286.
- Wong, A., & Zhou, L. (2006). Determinants and outcomes of relationship quality: a conceptual model and empirical investigation. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 18(3), 81-105.
- Woosnam, K. M., Aleshinloye, K. D., Strzelecka, M., and Erul, E. (2018). "The Role of Place Attachment in Developing Emotional Solidarity with Residents." *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, 42 (7): 1058–1066.
- Yuksel, A., Yuksel, F., & Bilim, Y. (2010). Destination attachment: Effects on customer satisfaction and cognitive, affective, and conative loyalty. *Tourism Management*, 31(2), 274-284. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2009.03.007>
- Yoon, Y., & Uysal, M. (2005). An examination of the effects of motivation and satisfaction on destination loyalty: a structural model. *Tourism management*, 26(1), 45-56. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2003.08.016>
- Yoon, Y. S., Lee, J. S., & Lee, C. K. (2010). Measuring festival quality and value affecting visitors' satisfaction and loyalty using a structural approach. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 29(2), 335-342. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2009.10.002>