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Antecedents of Domestic Tourists' Loyalty: The Role of Place Attachment and Satisfaction*

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Abstract

Place attachment is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct reflecting the bond between individuals and places. Tourists may also develop an attachment to a destination, and attachment could be an essential measure of tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. Therefore, this study empirically evaluates a model linking place attachment, satisfaction, and destination loyalty. The study also analyses the mediating effect of satisfaction on the relationship between place attachment and destination loyalty in island tourism destination context. Data were collected from 311 domestic tourists visiting Bozcaada Island, Turkey. An analysis was carried out using a Partial Least Squares (PLS) technique through structural equation modelling to test the theoretical model. After the analysis, significant and positive relationships were determined between place attachment, satisfaction, and destination loyalty variables. With this research, place attachment and satisfaction are defined as the antecedents that have an important place in the formation of destination loyalty. The relations of these antecedents with each other and destination loyalty and their direct and indirect effects on the construction of loyalty are revealed. In line with these effects, a series of suggestions for literature and practice are presented.

Keywords: *Place attachment, Satisfaction, Destination loyalty, Destination marketing, Bozcaada.*

Öz

Yer aidiyeti, bireyler ve yerler arasındaki bağı yansıtan ve farklı disiplinlerde kullanılan bir kavramdır. Turistlerde ziyaret ettikleri destinasyonlara karşı aidiyet geliştirebilirler ve yer aidiyetinin, turist tatmini ve destinasyon sadakatinin ölçümünde önemli bir yeri bulunmaktadır. Bu kapsamda, araştırma yer aidiyeti, tatmin ve destinasyon sadakatini ilişkilendiren bir modeli test etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma ayrıca yer aidiyeti ve destinasyon sadakati arasındaki ilişkide tatminin aracılık rolünü de analiz etmektedir. Araştırmanın verileri, Bozcaada'yı ziyaret eden 311 yerli turistten toplanmıştır. Oluşturulan teorik modeli test etmek için Kısmi En Küçük Kareler (KEKK) tekniği kullanılarak yapısal eşitlik modellemesi yoluyla bir analiz yapılmıştır. Gerçekleştirilen analiz sonrasında yer aidiyeti, tatmin ve destinasyon sadakati değişkenleri arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı ve pozitif yönlü ilişkiler tespit edilmiştir. Bu araştırma destinasyon sadakati oluşumunda yer aidiyeti ile tatmini önemli birer öncül olarak tanımlamaktadır. Söz konusu bu öncüllerin birbirleriyle ve destinasyon sadakati ile olan ilişkileri ve sadakat oluşumu üzerindeki doğrudan ve dolaylı etkileri ortaya koyulmuştur. Bu etkiler doğrultusunda alan yazınına ve uygulamaya yönelik öneriler sunulmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Yer Aidiyeti, Tatmin, Destinasyon Sadakati, Destinasyon Pazarlaması, Bozcaada.*

Introduction

The islands have been recognized as heavenly tourism destinations for centuries, offering authentic cultural and natural experiences in unique environments, far from the urbanized and suburban areas that provide the source of tourists (Carlsen & Butler, 2011, p.1). Distant, smaller areas, slower pace of life, different culture, exotic nature and wildlife, and natural environments are some of the main characteristics of the islands (Cheng & Lu, 2013, p.767). Given these characteristics, islands worldwide have become popular tourist destinations for millions of people today.

When the case of island tourism considered Turkey in particular, Bozcaada, one of the two islands of Turkey in the Aegean Sea, stands out as an essential tourist attraction with its delicate and rare natural, physical, and cultural structure. Located four miles from the mainland and the third largest island in Turkey, Bozcaada has transformed into an essential destination for domestic tourism, attracting most domestic tourists in the last decade thanks to its clean beaches and coves vineyards and wines (Okumuş, 2018). The island's architecture bears the traces of Turkish and Greek cultures due to the coexistence of Greeks and Turks for about five hundred years. The entire island is a natural and archaeological site, and the new architectural texture is being preserved (Bozcaada Municipality, 2021). In addition to the natural advantages of being an island, Bozcaada also has importance in terms of a touristic attraction and features such as having a unique historical and architectural texture, castle, and hosting diverse cultures together. Akpınar, Saygın & Karakaya (2011, p.229) indicate that Bozcaada, which possesses a rich cultural heritage of two thousand years, appeals to the tastes of the middle and elite classes. The fact that many writers and artists have preferred Bozcaada in recent years has made the island popular in terms of tourism (Bozcaada District Governorship, 2021).

The island also draws attention thanks to the boutique accommodation concept offered to its visitors (Atsız & Türkmen, 2020a, p.2055) and accommodation establishments, including vineyard cottages, private facilities, and small hostels on the island, are usually open between April 1 to November 1. Tourism facilities on the island offer a sea, sun, and sand product primarily relying on bed and breakfast experiences. In addition to this, new tourism products such as agriculture and wine tourism have been flourished in Bozcaada, where many national and international events have been held recently to prevent seasonal concentration (Bozcaada Master Plan, 2016). Despite the Covid-19 epidemic, it was determined that 41,202 domestic tourists stayed for an average of 2.27 days in the municipal and operating certified facilities on the island in 2020 (Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Republic of Turkey, 2021). These data indicate that the island has maintained its attractiveness for domestic tourists despite the epidemic.

Choosing Bozcaada as the location of this study was primarily based on two reasons. First, according to the Bozcaada Tourism Master Plan (2016), the island has grown in both the number of daily visitors and tourists in the last decade. Second, as stated in the plan, Bozcaada holds a significant repeat visit among domestic tourists. A study conducted by Atsız & Türkmen (2020a, p.2056) on 448 domestic tourists determined that approximately 78% of the participants were tourists revisiting Bozcaada. This data suggests that Bozcaada significantly affects domestic tourists' destination satisfaction and place attachment levels. In brief, Bozcaada is a vital destination for Turkish tourism and constitutes a valuable case study for understanding tourist loyalty and its antecedents. Therefore, the main goal of this study is to evaluate a theoretical model involving place attachment and satisfaction as antecedents of loyalty.

Hou, Lin & Morais (2005, p.223) remark that research on destination attachment helps understand how tourism affects national identity. It can be argued that this information shows the importance of investigating the concept of place attachment for domestic tourists. The study also aims to expand the applicability of place attachment to touristic destinations.

Place Attachment

Place attachment, which stands out as a concept in which researchers from different disciplines investigate its development, antecedents, and results, has been a topic of research in the tourism discipline since the early 1980s (Hwang, Lee & Chen, 2005, p.146). Place attachment is defined as a cognitive and emotional bond between people and particular places in a broad sense. The essential feature of the concept is that the individual tends to maintain his/her affinity to the place to which he/she has a positive bond (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001, p.274). Individuals establish emotional bonds to places by developing relationships with specific environments over time. Although it is believed that it would be possible for an individual to develop strong feelings for a place, he/she has never visited, it is argued that attachment to a particular place will generally expand after one or more visits (Chen & Phou, 2013, p.271). In other words, visitors and tourists tend to develop place attachment if their social interactions and involvement in the destination are significant (Dwyer, Chen & Lee, 2019, p.646).

Many studies in the tourism literature indicate that the concept of place attachment helps understand the aspects of an individual's leisure and tourism behavior (Alexandris, Kouthouris & Meligdis, 2006, p. 414). In this respect, studies investigating the antecedents and mediating effects of place attachment come to the fore (Gross & Brown, 2008; Hwang et al., 2005; Lee, Kyle & Scott, 2012; Sağlık & Türkeri, 2015). Although different dimensions were addressed in these studies aimed at measuring the concept of place attachment, two dimensions, "place bonding" and "place identity," were the first to emerge in the measurement of attachment (Korpela, 2012, p. 148) and were the most frequently used. Place bonding is defined as a functional attachment. It is expressed as the various features of the visited region providing the necessary convenience for the tourists to experience the activities they desire.

On the other hand, place identity is defined as an emotional attachment and is expressed as a component of self-identity that increases self-

esteem and one's sense of belonging to the community (Vaske & Kobrin, 2001, p.17). To put it differently, a tourist can develop attachment by evaluating the destination according to how well it fulfills his/her functional needs within the scope of place bonding. One can create a sense of attachment by evaluating the destination according to the symbolic bond they establish with the extraordinary view of the destination within the scope of place identity (Yüksel, Yüksel & Bilim, 2010, p.276). In summary, destination attachment refers to the bond that people establish with a tourism destination. This bond reflects the extent to which the tourist values and identifies with the destination in question (Reitsamer, Sperdin & Sauer, 2016, p. 94).

Satisfaction and Destination Loyalty

Today, the tourism competition experienced on a global scale led to studies and research related to loyalty drawing attention (Su, Cheng & Huang, 2011, p.2721). It is essential for the tourists to realize their expectations or experience satisfaction above their expectations so that they can have a sense of loyalty (Atsız & Türkmen, 2020, p.2054). Tourist satisfaction is defined as the feeling of satisfaction that tourists experience after visiting the destination, and it is regarded as one of the main aims of destination marketing because it affects the destination choice, consumption of products and services, and the decision to revisit (Yoon & Uysal, 2005, p.47).

In touristic destinations, visitor loyalty is considered an important indicator of successful destination development. Many studies on the antecedents of tourist loyalty in different environments such as countries, states, cities, and islands (Prayag & Ryan, 2012, p.342). The concept of destination loyalty, which has been the center of attention of academia for the last three decades, has been addressed as an extension of customer loyalty to destinations and has been measured by construct, visitors' intention to revisit their goal and their intention to spread positive word-of-mouth to family and/or friends (Stylidis, Woosnam, Ivkov & Kim, 2020, p.605). In this context, the fact that tourists visit the same type of

destination or a destination in the same region, their intention to revisit actively disseminating positive information about a particular destination is also defined as positive word-of-mouth communication (Wang, Liu, Hwang & Chen, 2020, p. 499). Also, in the literature, emotional solidarity, place attachment, satisfaction, and destination image are among the most often used variables to clarify destination loyalty (Patwardhan et al. 2020a, p.5).

Research Model and Developing Hypothesis

In recent years, the concept of place attachment has been addressed in the literature mainly within its behavioral consequences. Lee et al. (2012, p.754) aimed to discover the factors that ensure the festival visitors feel loyal to the host destinations. According to the research findings, it was determined that satisfied visitors at a festival develop a moderate level of place attachment to the destination hosting the festival and remain loyal to that destination. Xu & Zhang (2016, p.86) aimed to determine the antecedents of place attachment and the causal relationship between place attachment and destination loyalty, including several factors such as perceived destination attractiveness, activity involvement, tourist satisfaction, and motivation among urban tourists. Data from Western tourists and domestic tourists obtained using tourist survey data collected in Hangzhou, a historical city in China, demonstrated that although place attachment is an important antecedent of destination loyalty, its impact is smaller than tourist satisfaction. Stylos, Bellou, Andronikidis & Vassiliadis (2017, p.15) found out that place attachment softens the relationship between destination image and the UK and Russian tourists' loyalty to Greece. Using the theory of place attachment, Yi, Fun, Jin & Okumuş (2018, p.224) constructed a conceptual exhibition-attachment model that includes a push/pull motivation, attachment, and loyalty. To test the model, empirical data were collected from attendees in a trade fair, and it was determined that both exhibit attachment and exhibition identity had an impact on attendees' loyalty. Plunkett, Fulthorp & Paris (2019, p.36) analyzed

the relationship between place attachment and behavioral loyalty in the urban park setting, data collected from 405 respondents in eight urban parks located in Manhattan Beach, California, showed that frequent use of certain parks for the urban park environment contributes to a stronger place attachment. On the other hand, Patwardhan et al. (2020b, p.36) investigated the effect of religious holiday visitors' place attachment and emotional experiences on destination loyalty and revealed the impact of visitors' emotional experiences and levels of place attachment on loyalty. In light of the above-cited information, the study's first hypothesis was formed.

H₁: Place attachment affects destination loyalty positively.

Hwang et al. (2005, p.143) used the commenting services of five National Parks in Taiwan to examine the relationship between tourist involvement, commenting service quality, and destination attachment. Research findings show that destination attachment positively and significantly affects tourist satisfaction. Veasna, Wu & Huang (2013, p. 511) analyzed a sample consisting of 398 international tourists visiting a famous world heritage tourism destination (Angkor Wat) and a famous skyscraper (Taipei 101) and determined that reliability and destination image could genuinely affect tourists' perceptions of destination satisfaction in terms of destination attachment. In addition, the mediating role of destination attachment and destination image was also confirmed in this study. In a survey conducted by Campón-Cerro, Alves, and Hernández-Mogollón (2015, p.74), place identity and place bonding are the basic dimensions of attachment on tourists' satisfaction and loyalty to rural tourism destinations were evaluated. The data obtained from 464 tourists shows that place bonding has more effect on satisfaction and loyalty towards rural tourism destinations than place identity. Considering the above-cited information, the study's second hypothesis was formed.

H₂: Place attachment affects satisfaction positively.

Yüksel et al. (2010, p.281) investigated the effect of place attachment on customer satisfaction and loyalty. Research findings indicated a statistically significant and robust correlation between the

dimensions of place attachment and customer satisfaction. Another outcome of the research is that place attachment indirectly increases loyalty to the destination by forming destination satisfaction. Prayag & Ryan (2012, p.342) examined a sample of 705 international visitors staying in hotels on the island of Mauritius and determined that destination image, personal involvement, and place attachment were the antecedents of visitors' loyalty. However, this relationship was mediated by their satisfaction levels. In a study conducted by Chen & Phou (2013, p.269) on destination image and tourist behavior, it was determined that tourists establish trust and attachment-involving emotional relationships with destinations. In the study, it was also concluded that satisfaction affects destination loyalty positively. Mohamad et al. (2019, p.228) revealed that destination attractiveness influences destination loyalty in the presence of place attachment and tourist

satisfaction. Yılmazdoğan & Seçilmiş (2020, p.21) conducted a study on domestic tourists visiting Eskişehir and found statistically significant and positive correlations between destination attachment and destination loyalty, and between satisfaction and destination loyalty. Overall, these studies indicate that place attachment is central to tourist satisfaction and loyalty. In this direction, the third and fourth hypotheses of the study were formed.

H3: Satisfaction affects destination loyalty positively.

H4: Satisfaction bears a mediating role in the correlation between place attachment and destination loyalty.

The research model, which is discussed in the study's introduction and literature review section and formed based on the information included in the literature, is given in Figure 1.
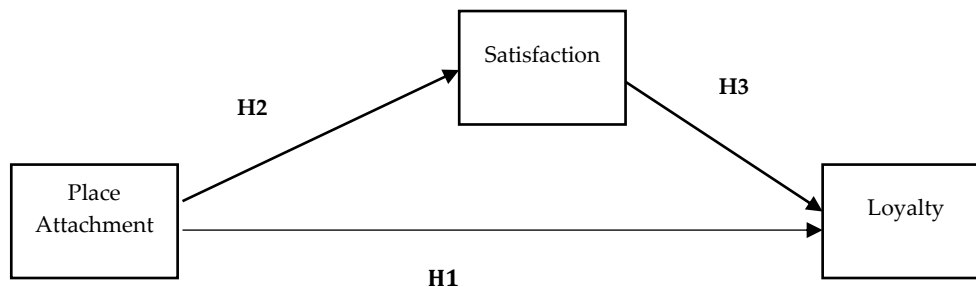

Figure 1. Theoretical model and hypotheses

Method

The study of the population consists of the domestic tourists visiting Bozcaada. Since this study was conducted for heuristic purposes, a questionnaire was used as a data collection tool. The questionnaire was completed with domestic tourists waiting for the ferry to leave the island at Bozcaada ferry port between August 1 and August 31, 2019. The questionnaire form used in the study had thirteen items and consisted of four parts. In the first part, the scale implemented in Prayag & Ryan's (2012) study was used to measure place attachment; the question in the scale consists of eight items. In the second part, the scale implemented in Lee, Yoon & Lee's (2007) study

was used to measure satisfaction, question in the scale consisted of three items. In the third part, the scale implemented in Chen & Phou's (2013) study was used to measure destination loyalty; questions in the scale consisted of two items. On the other hand, Respondents were asked to respond to these statements within the framework of a 5-point Likert scale (1- Strongly Disagree; 5- Strongly Agree). The last part included open-ended and category questions to determine the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, such as age, gender, marital status, educational status, and the number of times they have visited Bozcaada.

Atsız and Türkmen (2020b, p.2020) indicated that based on the data of the Ministry of Culture

and Tourism, 15,972 domestic tourists stayed in facilities having either municipality or operation certificates in Bozcaada in 2019. However, it is also known that residents rent their houses to tourists, especially in peak season such as August. There is no data on the people who stay in these rented houses. Similarly, people can visit Bozcaada without requiring any accommodation with same-day tours. For this reason, there is no clear data available on domestic tourists visiting Bozcaada in August 2019. Due to this reason research data were collected by convenience sampling method and 311 convenient questionnaires were obtained. When calculating the sample size within the scope of the research, in line with the suggestion of Hair et al. (2017, p.24) "calculating the minimum number of observations necessary for the model by multiplying at least 10 times the maximum number of arrows pointing to any latent variable" in multivariate studies emphasized. In the research model, the maximum number of arrows pointing to any latent variable is 8. Based on this rule (8*10= 80), the minimum number of sample necessary for estimating the research model is met.

Findings

As a result of analyzing the data obtained based on the purpose of the study, the findings on demographic characteristics of the respondents, the reliability and validity of the scales, and the hypothesis results are explained in detail in this section. Information on the demographic characteristics of the respondents in the study is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Socio-demographic Profile of Sample

Demographics	Frequency Counts	%	Demographics	Frequency Counts	%
Gender			Highest educational qualification		
Male	128	41,2	Primary school	8	2,6
Female	183	58,8	High/secondary school	41	13,2
Marital status			Associate degree	46	14,8
Single	113	36,3	Bachelor's degree	144	46,3
Married	198	63,7	Postgraduate degree	72	23,2
Age group (years)			Visitation level		
≤25	17	5,5	First-time	46	14,8
25-34	100	32,2	Repeat	265	85,2
35-44	110	35,4	Avg. length of stay (days)	4≥	
45-54	50	16,1	Number of previous visits		
55-64	26	8,4	≤2	101	38,2
65 ≥	8	2,4	≥3	164	61,8

Examining Table 1, it is observed that the majority of the respondents are women (58,8%) and married (63,7%), more than half (51,5%) are between the ages of 35 and 54 and well-educated (69,5% with bachelor's or higher degree). It was also found that the majority of the respondents (85,2%) had visited Bozcaada before, and those visiting the island had already visited the island three times or more (61,8%).

Analysis of the Research Model

For the analysis of the research model, SmartPLS 3.2.9 packaged software was used with the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method. PLS-SEM has become gradually popular in marketing research in the last decade thanks to its ability to model latent structures under variance-based and non-parametric conditions, unlike traditional covariance-based SEM (Ali, Hussain, Konar & Jeon, 2017, p.364). This exclusive method has also been used in recent studies in hotel management and tourism to analyze structural research models (Ali et al., 2018, p.514). Analyzes are conducted in two phases in the SmartPLS software. In the first phase, validity and reliability analyses of the model variables are performed using the research model and measurement model (outer model). In the second phase, the correlations between independent and dependent latent variables are determined by

using the structural model (internal model) (Yıldız, 2020, p.26).

Validity and Reliability Analysis of Scales

Consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity were evaluated to review the validity and reliability of the measurement model of the study. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) coefficients were examined for internal consistency reliability. In determining convergent validity, factor loadings and the values of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were used. It is expected that factor loadings would be ≥0,70; Cronbach Alpha and composed reliability coefficients would be ≥0,70; and the value of average variance extracted would be ≥0,50 (Hair, Hult, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2017; Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 2 below demonstrates the internal consistency reliability and convergent validity of the constructs included in the study.

Table 2. Assessment of the measurement model

Construct/items	Loadings
Place Attachment α=0,937; CR=0,937; AVE=0,650	
Bozcaada is an exceptional destination for me	0,833
I identify strongly with this destination	0,844
No other place can provide the same holiday experience as Bozcaada	0,725
Holidaying in Bozcaada means a lot to me	0,896
I am very attached to this holiday destination	0,803
Bozcaada is the best place for what I like to do on holidays	0,771
Holidaying here is more important to me than holidaying in other places	0,800
I would not substitute any other destination for the types of things that I did during my holidays in Bozcaada	0,765
Satisfaction α=0,905; CR=0,906; AVE=0,763	
Overall, my vacation in Bozcaada is satisfactory	0,901
My vacation in Bozcaada met my expectations.	0,886
My vacation in Bozcaada was worth the time I spent and the cost I made	0,832
Destination Loyalty α=,905; CR=0,905; AVE=0,827	
I will likely revisit Bozcaada in the future	0,918
I will likely recommend Bozcaada to my family and friends	0,900

It can be argued that the internal consistency reliability was maintained because the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients and CR coefficients of the constructs were between 0,905 and 0,937. Looking at the values included in the table, it is understood that the factor loadings are between 0,725 and 0,918. According to Hair et al. (2017, p.113), factor loadings should be ≥0,708. It is also seen that AVE values are between 0,650 and 0,827. In view of such

information, it can be stated that the convergent validity was maintained in the study.

To check discriminant validity Fornell-Larcker Criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015) were used. The results are included in Table-3.

Tablo 3. Discriminant validity analysis

	Fornell-Larcker Criterion			Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)		
	DL	PA	S	DL	PA	S
Destination Loyalty	(0,956)					
Place Attachment	0,672	(0,833)		0,726		
Satisfaction	0,806	0,696	(0,917)	0,890	0,755	

According to the Fornell Larcker criterion, the square root values of the AVE calculated for each factor must have the highest value in the relevant factors. This criterion is met upon examining Table-3. The heterotrait-monotrait method has been developed by Henseler et al. (2015) due to recent criticisms claiming that the Fornell Larcker criterion remains incapable of discriminant validity. According to this method, the calculation of the heterotrait-monotrait ratio below 0,9 is considered sufficient for discriminant validity. When Table-3 is examined, it can be understood that this criterion is met.

The SmartPLS software also reports the model fit values as a result of analyzing the measurement model. Reported values include standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) and normed fit index (NFI). Values below 0.08 for SMRM and above 0.90 for NFI are designated as good fit values (Hu&Bentler, 1999). Another value calculated by the software is root mean square residual covariance (RMStheta). RMStheta values below 0.12 indicate good fit (Hair et al., 2017, p.209). The SRMR, NFI and RMStheta values of the research are; 0.05, 0.879 and 0.210 respectively. However, Henseler, Hubona & Ray (2016, p.11) specify that if the analyst's aim is to test or compare models, there is no reason to evaluate and report them. Similarly, Hair et al., (2017, p. 194) also claim that the fit values in PLS-SEM are not the focal spots as in the covariance-based structural equation models. The authors noted that researchers may sacrifice predictive power by

placing more focus on a better fit in the model, thus, their usage may even be detrimental.

Structural Model

Following the acceptance of the validity and reliability tests of the measurement model, the SmartPLS 3.2.9 packaged software was implemented to perform the structural equation analysis of the study, and the results of the structural model after the research are shown in Figure 2.
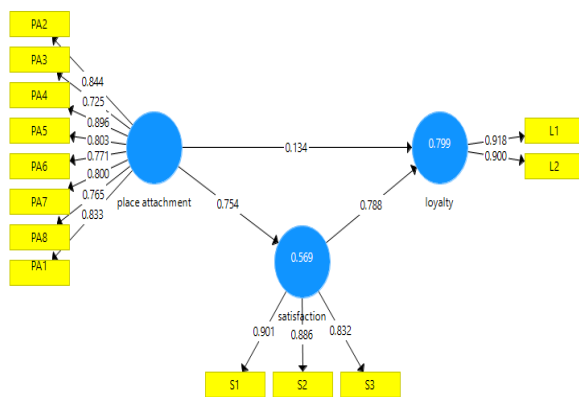

Figure 2. Structural model

Concerning the research model, the PLS algorithm was run to calculate linearity, path coefficients, R^2, and effect size (f^2); on the other hand, blindfolding analysis was also run to estimate the prediction power (Q^2). Table 4 shows VIF, R^2, f^2, and Q^2 coefficients.

Table 4. Research model coefficients

		VIF	R^2	f^2	Q^2
Place Attachment	Loyalty	2,321	0,799	0,038	0,608
Place Attachment	Satisfaction	1,000	0,569	1,321	0,402
Satisfaction	Loyalty	2,321	0,799	1,331	0,608

According to the PLS-SEM method, the R^2 value, which is the coefficient of determination, is used to measure the explanatory power of the model in the evaluation of the internal model. R^2 values range from 0 and 1; and 0,25 and above is considered a weak explanatory ratio, 0,50 and above is a moderate, and 0,75 and above is a substantial explanatory ratio (Henseler, Ringle &

Sinkovics, 2009). Considering the R^2 values in Table 4, it was determined that satisfaction was explained by 57% and destination loyalty by 80%.

Moreover, the effect size (f^2) coefficient is calculated for each independent variable. The f^2 coefficient indicates the share of the independent variables in the explanatory rate of the dependent variables (Yıldız, 2020). Having an effect size coefficient (f^2) of 0,02 and above represents small; 0,15 and above represents medium; 0,35 and above represent significant (Cohen, 1988). Upon evaluating the effect size (f^2) coefficients, the destination loyalty and overall satisfaction were found to have a high-level effect size.

The fact that the prediction power coefficients (Q^2) calculated for the dependent variables are more significant than zero indicates that the research model has the power to predict the dependent variables (Hair et al., 2017). Since the Q^2 values in the table are more significant than zero, it can be implied that the research model has predictive power.

Lastly, according to Hair et al. (2017), VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) coefficients should occur below the threshold value of 5 so that there is no linearity problem between the variables. There is no problem ensuring linearity between the variables as the VIF coefficients in Table 4 is below 5.

The Bootstrap method was run on the research model to calculate the t values and their significance within the scope of the research. 5000 sub-samples were collected from the sample through the derivative sampling method, and t values were calculated. Table 5 shows the results on the effects of the research model.

Table 5. Structural model results

	Beta(β)	S.E.	t-value	p-value
Place AttachmentLoyalty	0,730	0,031	23,267	0,000
Place AttachmentSatisfaction	0,754	0,034	22,065	0,000
Satisfaction Loyalty	0,788	0,061	10,960	0,000
Place AttachmentSatisfactionLoyalty	0,595	0,058	12,995	0,000

To investigate the mediation effect, the mediating variable was removed from the research model at the first stage, and the significance of the path coefficients was tested. It was determined that place attachment affected destination loyalty

(β=0,730; p<0,01). Based on these findings, hypothesis 1 of the study was supported.

At the second stage, the significance of the path coefficients was tested by including the mediating variable in the model. It was determined that place attachment affected satisfaction (β=0,754; p<0,01), and satisfaction, on the other hand, affected destination loyalty (β=0,788; p<0,01). Therefore, hypotheses 2 and 3 of the study were supported as well. Lastly, (taking the indirect effects into account), it was observed that place attachment also affected destination loyalty (β=0,595; p<0,01) through satisfaction.

The analysis of Baron and Kenny's (1986) classical causal step approach was used to test the mediating effect. Baron and Kenny (1986) stated that the independent variables must have significant effects on the dependent variables to mention a mediating effect. At the same time, independent variables should have significant effects on mediating variables, and mediator variables should have a significant impact on dependent variables when mediating variables are also included in the model. In the light of this information, a mediating effect can be mentioned due to the significant effect of place attachment on destination loyalty and satisfaction and the significant effect of satisfaction on destination loyalty.

VAF (Variance Accounted For) values were calculated since the mediating effect was determined. If VAF > 0,80, full mediating effect could be mentioned; if $0,20 \leq VAF \geq 0,80$, there is partial mediating effect. If it is <0,20, there can be no mediating effect (Doğan, 2018). In VAF calculations, indirect and total effect coefficients are used. The VAF formula used to calculate the VAF coefficient is given below:

$$VAF = \frac{indirect\ effect}{total\ effect}$$

VAF values were calculated as 0,449 on the path of Destination Attachment → Overall Satisfaction → Destination Loyalty. In this direction, hypothesis 4 of the study was also supported. In addition, it was further determined that overall satisfaction had a partial mediating role in the relationship between destination attachment and destination loyalty.

Upon examining the R^2 values obtained from the model, it was determined that the destination loyalty was explained at the rate of 54% in the model without the mediating variable and at the rate of 80% in the model involving the mediating variable. The increase in R^2 value can be interpreted as confirming the identified mediation role.

Conclusion

Since it is a well-known phenomenon that tourists can visit the same destination repeatedly and is usually regarded as an important market criterion for the success of a destination, a significant part of the tourism literature explores destination loyalty and its correlations (Taşcı, Uslu, Stylidis & Woosnam, 2022, p. 432). Destination attachment is defined as tourists' behavioral intentions for revisiting and recommending the destination through positive word-of-mouth communication (Su, Hsu, & Swanson, 2017, p.188). There are many studies conducted in the tourism literature analyzing the role of tourist satisfaction in the formation of destination loyalty (Antón, Camarero & Laguna-García, 2017; Kozak, Bigné, & Andreu, 2005; McDowall, 2010; Özdemir et al., 2012; Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Su et al., 2017; Yoon and Uysal, 2005). As part of the phenomenon of tourism, which is multidimensional by its nature, consumers wish to feel experiences that can satisfy their different needs at the same time and these experiences are mostly emotionally based (Chiappa, Andreu & Gallarza, 2014, p.422). In other words, tourists tend to seek psychological/emotional (attachment, achieving, enjoying, etc.) satisfaction as well as physiological satisfaction in when making preferences for destination (Koç, 2016).

Nevertheless, the destination visitors who are very satisfied with tourist service may even turn to a different destination in search of new experiences and originality (Croes, Shani, & Walls, 2010, p.120). The fact that travelers have almost unlimited choice of destinations (Murdy & Pike, 2012, p.1281) has an impact strengthening this case. However, it is noted that visitors who develop a sense of belonging to the destination tend to change their

preferences less despite the existence of alternative options (Yüksel et al., 2010, p.274). In this context, the main purpose of this study is to examine the antecedents that determine the destination loyalty of domestic tourists. In this context, the concepts of satisfaction and attachment were addressed as loyalty antecedents in the study. The island of Bozcaada, a popular destination for domestic tourists in Turkey, was chosen as the field of implementation.

The research model was evaluated with the PLS technique. It was concluded that the dependent variables, satisfaction, and destination loyalty, had moderate and high explanatory abilities, respectively, in the model in which place attachment was addressed as an antecedent. This outcome is considered the main theoretical conclusion of the study. In addition, the fact that place attachment, directly and indirectly, affects destination loyalty through satisfaction forms another outcome of the study. These determined outcomes were supported by the results of studies conducted in the literature (Alexandris et al., 2006; Campón-Cerro et al. 2015; Prayag and Ryan, 2012; Yılmazdoğan and Seçilmis, 2020; Yüksel et al., 2010). Similarly, the view emphasized in the study conducted by Yüksel et al. (2010) that satisfaction should be a consequence of attachment, rather than an antecedent, was also supported.

There are also theoretical implications in the study. Research findings revealed that the majority of the respondents (85.2%) had visited Bozcaada before. This finding refers to the strong position of Bozcaada in establishing a connection with a place in the context of tourism. In this direction, it can be argued that the efforts to protect, develop and diversify the touristic attractions on the island will also contribute to this strong position of the island. When satisfied visitors, on the other hand, tend to recommend their satisfactory experiences to others, in a sense, they become the brand ambassadors of that destination. Accordingly, this research revealed the solidity and competitiveness of Bozcaada as a tourism destination. However, considering the fact that tourism is becoming a gradually increasing competitive market that allows only the best managed destinations to prosper (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2015, p.377), it

is recommended that decision makers in Bozcaada should adopt strategies that protect and strengthen this sense of belonging between the island and its visitors in their destination management plans.

The research is a study focusing on the concepts of attachment, satisfaction, and loyalty in domestic tourists. In conclusion, the most crucial limitation of this study is that other variables such as image, emotions, and authenticity that affect destination loyalty were not taken into consideration. Future studies could explain destination loyalty by modeling with variables that may have other determinants for Bozcaada.

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