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# Defining factors of destination loyalty that are unrelated to tourist satisfaction: A review of preceding studies

Hiroaki Kawada Mr.  
*Tokyo Metropolitan University*

Taketo Naoi Dr.  
*Tokyo Metropolitan University*

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# Defining factors of destination loyalty that are unrelated to tourist satisfaction: A review of preceding studies

Drawing from preceding studies on factors influencing destination loyalty, the factors are classified according to whether satisfaction is an influence, factors that influence via satisfaction (satisfaction-mediated factors), and factors that influence without being mediated by satisfaction (satisfaction-unmediated factors). Satisfaction-unmediated factors include pre-visit image and motivation about the destination; the discovery of a new attraction during the visit, experiencing positive emotions, and individual attributes. Nevertheless, the preceding studies have limitations, including the absence of context, such as unique attributes of the destination and research subjects, and the absence of standardization in measuring satisfaction. It is necessary to extract factors that influence destination loyalty by drawing from these observations.

Keywords: destination loyalty, tourist satisfaction, satisfaction-mediated factors, satisfaction-unmediated factors

## 1. Introduction

Mid- and long-term acquisition, maintenance, and improvement of destination loyalty is essential for a sustainable development of tourist destinations/facilities.

Certain preceding studies on the relationship between destination loyalty and its constitutive elements have pointed out that tourist satisfaction does not lead directly to the formation of destination loyalty. There are two types of studies that do not find a direct relationship between destination loyalty and tourist satisfaction: those that analyze destination loyalty without considering tourist satisfaction and those that do not find a route through which tourist satisfaction impacts destination loyalty. There has been no study focusing on these two types of research. This study reviews the preceding studies on the defining factors of destination loyalty, and classifies the factors into those that are related to tourist satisfaction and those that are not, in order to suggest future research agenda.

## 2. Factors influencing destination loyalty

Studies on the factors that influence destination loyalty are sorted as shown in Table 1, referring to whether satisfaction influences loyalty, factors that exert influence through satisfaction (satisfaction-mediated factors), and factors that exert influence without going through satisfaction (satisfaction-unmediated factors).

### (1) Satisfaction-mediated factors

Regarding satisfaction-mediated factors, Bigné (2005) points out the 'perceived disconfirmation', which refers to

the degree of fit between pre-visit expectation and actual experience and 'pleasure', which includes boredom, joy, delight, anger, and happiness; in contrast, Bosque (2008) points out expectation and positive/negative emotions. Yoon (2005) identifies push motivation, which is an internally-driven factor, and pull motivation, which is externally given as satisfaction-mediated factors. Chi (2008) proposes a model in which the image of destination exerts influence on satisfaction of each constitutive element of the destination and satisfaction as a whole, which, in turn, impacts destination loyalty.

Among the studies carried out in Japan, Akazawa and Sato (2010) suggest that satisfaction-mediated factors include those not seen/achieved during the visit, desire for new learning opportunities, which are triggered by renewal of the visitor's preference owing to his/her experience, the scenery, transport, car parks, and the impression of the community. Yamada and Toyama (2014) suggest a model in which pre-visit expectation, 'disconfirmation', which is a degree to which pre-visit expectation is surpassed, and sensory values and sensory quality influence destination loyalty via tourist satisfaction.

**Table 1: Factors that exert influence on destination loyalty found in preceding studies**

Author	Destination	Factors influencing destination loyalty (repeat demand)	
		Influencing through satisfaction (satisfaction-mediated factors)	Influencing without going through satisfaction (satisfaction-unmediated factors)
Bigné (2005)	Spanish Theme Park	Perceived disconfirmation Pleasure	Perceived disconfirmation Pleasure
Bosque (2008)	Cantabria	Expectation Positive emotion Negative emotion	Images of the destination Positive emotion
Yoon (2005)	North Cyprus	Push motivation Pull motivation	Push motivation
Chi (2008)	Arkansas	Images of the destination	Individual constitutive elements
Akazawa and Sato (2010)	Iwami Ginzan	Sight-seeing values Historical/cultural values Scenery Transport Car parks The impression of the community	Sight-seeing values Historical/cultural values The impression of the community Access Shop values Age
Yamada and Toyama (2014)	84 regions throughout Japan	Expectation Disconfirmation Sensory values Sensory quality	Disconfirmation Connection to the community
Toyama, Yamada, and Nishio (2015)	Okinawa Main Island	Extraordinariness Positive emotion Negative emotion	Experience of the nature/culture Vividness of memory Amenity/'omotenashi' values
Meleddu (2015)	Sardinia		Repeated experience Motivation Characteristics of the holiday Individual attributes

Moreover, Toyama, Yamada, and Nishio (2015) suggest that 'enjoyment of extraordinariness', a factor made with enjoyable experience and is detached from everyday life and relaxation, as well as positive and negative emotions constitute satisfaction-mediated factors.

## (2) Satisfaction-unmediated factors

Bigné (2005) argues that 'perceived disconfirmation' and 'pleasure', which are satisfaction-mediated factors can also impact directly on destination loyalty as satisfaction-unmediated factors, and that enjoyable experience tends to lead to positive communication on the experience and intension to repeat the visit. Bosque (2008) shows post-visit positive emotion and the image of destination as satisfaction-unmediated factors.

Yoon (2005) shows that push motivation can work as both satisfaction-mediated and satisfaction-unmediated factors, and that the tourists' internal motivation exerts a

large influence on loyalty. Akazawa and Sato (2010) list as satisfaction-unmediated factors shops those that have not been visited during the stay, activities that the tourist could not experience at that time, the impression of the community as a whole, and tourists' access and age. Yamada and Toyama (2014) cite disconfirmation and connection to the community as satisfaction-unmediated factors. Toyama, Yamada, and Nishio (2015) point to the degree to which a tourist has enjoyed the natural environment of the destination and 'the vividness of memory' as satisfaction-unmediated factors. They argue that it is important to encourage repeat visits to not only enhance the degree of satisfaction of the visit but also make its memory vivid. Meleddu (2015) shows that in addition to satisfaction, 'repeated experience', 'motivation', 'characteristics of the holiday', such as transport, the length of stay, companions, and the timing, and 'individual attributes', such as gender,

age, nationality, income, and employment status exert influence.

### (3) Classification of satisfaction-unmediated factors

Table 2 presents the classification of satisfaction-unmediated factors according to elements related to the experience during the visit, those related to prior to and after the visit, and individual attributes.

Major factors related to prior to and after the visit include various images of the destination and sightseeing motivation. Experience during the visit includes what is experienced during the visit, discovering of new attractions during the visit, disconfirmation, experience with positive emotion, and conditions of the visit (the weather, companions, the level of crowdedness, and expectations).

**Table 2: Classification of satisfaction-unmediated factors that impact destination royalty**

	Prior to and after the visit	Experience during the visit	Individual attributes
Yoon (2005)	Push motivation		
Bigné (2005)		Perceived disconfirmation Pleasure	
Chi (2008)		Various constitutive elements	
Bosque (2008)	Images of the destination	Positive emotion	
Yamada and Toyama (2014)	Connection to the community	Disconfirmation	
Toyama, Yamada and Nishio (2015)	Vividness of memory	Experience of the nature/culture Amenity/'omotenashi' values	
Akazawa and Sato (2010)	The impression of the community Access	Sight-seeing values Historical/cultural values Shop values	Age
Meleddu (2015)	Motivation Repeated experience	Transport Length of stay Place of stay Companions The timing The cost	Gender Age Nationality Income Employment status

Individual attributes, including gender, age, nationality, income, and employment status, also exert influence on destination loyalty.

### 3. Interpretation of preceding studies

The previous studies have suggested that destination loyalty can be influenced by images of destination and motivation for the visit prior to the visit, experience during the visit, such as, discovery of new attraction during the visit, experience with positive emotion, and individual attributes.

The reason the image of the destination is seen as a satisfaction-unmediated factor is that when the tourist cannot

form a clear image of the destinations that are the subject of study because they are on a large scale, for instance, it can be difficult to see a direct relationship with satisfaction.

The renewal of visitor's preference through experience appears to be particularly important. It is also possible that external factors to the destination, such as conditions of the holiday, including the weather, companions, crowdedness, ad timing, the size of barrier, such as distance and cost.

These findings point to the necessity to consider not only satisfaction but also mediating variables, in building a factor model of destination loyalty.

#### 4. Future research agenda based on the review of preceding studies

##### 1) The absence of context such as the nature of the place and research subjects

There is certain inconsistency in places/facilities and attributes of individuals that were subject to the questionnaire survey in preceding studies. These studies often engage with generalization without clarifying the relationship with the context, such as the nature of the place and attributes of those who answered the questions in the study. In reference to the aforementioned examination of whether the image of a destination can be seen as a satisfaction-unmediated factor, it is necessary to pay attention to the selection of destinations that is studied, because the tendency could vary according to which a destination is chosen.

##### 2) Inconsistency in measuring satisfaction

In the preceding studies, satisfaction has been considered in building a model in various manners. Certain studies have measured satisfaction of all tourists on a scale, whereas others have created composite variables by measuring various concepts. To examine the relationship with destination loyalty and the relationship with satisfaction-unmediated factors, it is important to enhance the validity of the ways in which satisfaction is measured, and then build a model that has satisfaction-unmediated factors as mediating variables of destination loyalty and satisfaction.

#### 5. Conclusion

The need to have more insight into how to improve destination loyalty, through enhancing destination satisfaction and using approaches to satisfaction-unmediated factor through the study of the structure of destination loyalty, is likely to expand. As pointed out as a future research agenda, it is important to gain insight that can be used in destination management, by working on the measurement of destination satisfaction and extracting factors that influence destination satisfaction and satisfaction-unmediated factors under a specific context of a destination.

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