

Towards Emotional Experience and Place Attachment as Tourist Satisfaction Attributes

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Abstract

This research explores the effects of emotional experience and place attachment on customer satisfaction. A field survey based on, a quantitative approach was conducted using questionnaires as a tool to investigate tourists having chosen a specific destination for their holidays. Data were collected through a questionnaire with a sample size of 303 individuals. The research methodology consisted of an exploratory phase for establishing scales dimensionality, a Structural Equation Modelling (LISREL) for validating empirically the structural framework, with respect to all thresholds needed, and a rigorous analysis methodology. The research had highlighted the impact of emotional experience generated by the tourist trip, such as joy, love, and positive surprise and dimensions underlying place attachment such as place identity and place dependence on the tourist satisfaction. Research findings revealed that positive emotions experienced during a trip, develop an emotional attachment and generate satisfaction. And consequently, extremely satisfied customers are excellent describers of the destination via word of mouth.

Keywords: Satisfaction, Emotional experience, Place attachment, Structural Equations Modelling.

JEL Classifications: D31, E21, E27, J32

1. Introduction

Tourism industry had grown significantly in recent decades. The main reasons are population growth, increasing prosperity of some population segments and development of the free time and leisure aspect. The information availability on tourist destinations, the opportunities of travelling and the multiplicity of supply also contributed to this development. Thus, tourism has become a major industry for many national economies and new destinations are constantly emerging, which reinforces concurrence. Thus, adequate strategies must be developed in order to build and maintain profitable positions with strong and durable image. This objective has become a major challenge inducing reflections and research developed in marketing field.

In parallel with this strategic vision, multiple are motivations which lead tourists to choose a destination. It is relative to irresistible desire to move back in time, to learn new things, to change ideas, to forget a daily loaded too much, to have a good time and to enjoy the pleasure of the emotion and the discovery.

In this perspective, emotion is more representative of travel experience. It plays a central role in defining memorable experience (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). It has the power to boost lived experience and to take tourist beyond the rational satisfaction. Experience may be therefore the essential goal of the trip, and tourist feels more and more the need to live it, to create a lifetime memory that will remain after the trip and eventually be transmitted to others. In other words, plunging into a full universe of positive emotions, It's, therefore, pertinent to investigate this research current. In fact, it is no longer enough to ensure and to offer a quality service that fits the standards, it is also important to consider this willingness among the tourist to live experience and feel emotion which contribute in maximizing satisfaction and creating a durable link.

The experiential paradigm (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982) was the first, considering experience as a source of evaluation and decision-making. However, little research in the field of tourism which have addressed this perspective to explain satisfaction. Yet, it seems very important to highlight the scope of the emotional experience with satisfaction, and thus be able to offer to managers a second perspective on which they can strategically act to develop a sustainable link with tourists and promote destination. More specifically, emotional experience and destination attachment are considered. This perspective adds value to emotional relationship that an individual develop with a destination. Accordingly, this study will test the following research questions:

1. What is the impact of the emotional experience on destination and on satisfaction?
2. Is there a relationship between place attachment and satisfaction with destination?

Thus, the study will attempt to provide answers to these key research questions. First by addressing a literature review that will define the concepts considered, then presenting the research design, the methodology and main results achieved. Finally, results are discussed to open the way to further researches in the field.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Tourists Satisfaction

From a marketing perspective, satisfaction concept is until today the main objective around which settled all the strategies and commercial actions. More specifically, researches on the concept attempted to highlight variables that positively affect satisfaction.

Oliver (1980) defines satisfaction as an emotional state resulting from the positive or negative non-confirmation of initial expectations during a possession or a consumption experience. It was one of the first models proposed to establish a link between expectations and evaluations (Oliver, 1980). These expectations are perceived as reference points from which the individual emits comparative judgments. Satisfaction is then materialized by comparisons between these reference points and evaluation. For Westbrook & Oliver (1991), satisfaction is an overall assessment after a choice regarding a specific purchase decision. This assessment varies along a continuum ranging from dissatisfied to satisfy.

In reference to relational approach, satisfaction is considered as "*an abstract construct that describes the cumulative entire consumption experience of a product or service*" (Johnson & Ali, 1995). It is not the result of a single transaction but of multiple experiences of consumption cumulated in time (Oliver, 1997; McAlexander, Kim and Roberts, 2003).

Research on satisfaction is essentially structured around the expectations- confirmation paradigm. The latter conceptualizes the satisfaction in reference to three concepts: comparison, expectations and perceptions. According to this model, when the perceived quality is lower than expected, it results in dissatisfaction. Instead, when the perceived quality is higher than expected, the client feels a strong satisfaction. Finally, when perceived quality is equal to expected quality, client experiences satisfaction.

The literature acknowledges typically existence of three characteristics of satisfaction: It is subjective; that is, it depends on the client perception. It is relative; that is, it depends on the customer's expectations. Finally, it is scalable; that is to say it varies over time. These three important characteristics materialize judgment of someone who evaluates a product or a service. Customer judgment is thus based not on absolute grounds, but made in subjective, relative and scalable manner. For same service experience, the level of satisfaction experienced by individuals will be inevitably different.

Satisfaction must be distinguished from perceived quality concept. These two notions are sometimes confused in the literature. Perceived quality results from the evaluation of the client when using a service. This assessment precedes and determines satisfaction. Satisfaction materializes therefore service experience and a consequence of quality evaluation.

In tourism domain, satisfaction is frequently considered during a travelling experience (Oliver and Swan, 1989; Oliver, 1980; Latour and Peat, 1979; Martilla and James, 1977). In this sense, Neal and Gursoy (2008) suggest that the satisfaction with a tourist destination is divided into three phases and it is based on the services received before the trip, those obtained at destination and those related to the events of transition. To increase the overall satisfaction and to improve the travel experience of tourists, all the various phases of the travel must be taken into consideration (Neal and Gursoy, 2008).

Many studies establish destination performance by considering satisfaction expressed by visitors regarding factors describing it. More specifically, tourist's satisfaction is determined by the attributes associated with reasons for selecting the destination. However, in certain situations or experiences, the evaluation cannot be established in reference to destination's attractive attributes. The destination is then described taking into consideration negative features which could lead if known before, to reject this destination.

Thus, satisfaction is also conditioned by emotions felt during consumption experience. Indeed, in satisfaction models, the important role of consumption emotion is noted as predictors of satisfaction. In this sense, Westbrook and Oliver (1991) suggest that "*Consumption emotion refers to the set of emotional responses elicited specifically during product usage or consumption experiences, as described either by the distinctive categories of emotional experience and expression (e.g., joy, anger, and fear) or by the structural dimensions underlying emotional categories, such as pleasantness/unpleasantness, relaxation/action, or calmness/excitement*". Affective experience is then related to the unidimensional satisfaction response. Also, Oliver (1993) demonstrate that attribute satisfaction affects emotions and overall satisfaction. What justifies the relevance of taking into account relationship that may exist between emotional experience and satisfaction?

2.2. Tourist Emotional Experience

A destination is much more than a geographic location where the tourist decided to spend time. It is an amalgam of products, services and experiences able to attract visitors (Buhalis, 2000). In other words, the tourist destination is a complex, integrated services portfolio that provides a holiday experience to meet the needs of tourists.

The experiential approach considers individual as sensual, sentimental and emotional. He consumes products, services or activities to live experiences which give him sensations, feelings and emotions (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982). The consumer may in some contexts be motivated by searching for hedonic gratuities and pleasure rather than searching for information and choice optimization.

In this sense, tourists today are more in search of positive emotions when they choice their vacation destinations. In reference to this experiential paradigm (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982), experience is the basis for the decision-making essentially for service activities. Research in this field have therefore highlighted the superiority of this experience in predicting attitudes and preferences more than destination attributes, such as hospitality, food, etc. Despite the revolution of the experiential paradigm (Pine and GiJmore, 1999; Schmitt, 1999), touristic destinations remain frozen in a conventional approach of marketing yet considered obsolete (Schmitt, 2002). Strategies for the development of a tourist destination often favoured the tangible aspects of the offer, such as service quality, diversity of attractions, price. One of the possible justifications lies in the difficulty of operational zing this experience.

Emotional experiences have been taken into account in the explanation of the behaviors associated with leisure (Grappi and Montanari 2011), with shopping (Yuksel and Yuksel, 2007), with food (Han and Jeong, 2013), and with holidays (Nawijn, Mitas, Lin and Kerstetter, 2013). These investigations have shown that different experience aspects are influenced by the emotion felt, such as the emotion related to tourists motivation (Goossens, 2000) or choice processes (Chuang, 2007). It also influences satisfaction (Faillant et al. 2011), trust, attachment (Han and Jeong 2013) and behavioral intentions (Grappi and Montanari 2011). Krishnan & R.W. Olshavsky (1995) suggest with this effect that affective experiences may provide strong influences on overall satisfaction for products/services that are primarily hedonic in nature. This statement fits perfectly in the field of tourism. Similarly, Ng and Dagger (2007) demonstrated that positive and negative affect experienced had a significant impact on perceived value, as well as a direct and indirect impact on satisfaction. In addition, in service contexts where emotional benefits are at the core of the service offering or when individuals are motivated by affective benefits offered by the service, a positive affect was a significant antecedent of satisfaction (Price et al., 1995). Dubé and Menon (2000) propose that positive emotions during the service experience lead to enhanced satisfaction whereas negative emotions would decrease satisfaction if they are attributed to the service provider, and not to the customer himself or to the situation. Hence, the following hypotheses were tested:

H1: Emotional experience has a significative impact on satisfaction.

2.3. Place Attachment

Place attachment theory was initially proposed by Fried in sociology (1961) reflecting emotional investment of an individual to a community (Hummon, 1992) and has experienced rapid development such as research in environmental psychology (Shumaker and Taylor, 1983; Altman and Low, 1992; Giuliani and Feldman 1993 ; Hidalgo and Hernandez, 2001), in Human Geography (Relph, 1976; Brown and Raymond, 2007) and in leisure sciences, studying links between people, natural areas and vacation destinations (Williams & Vaske, 2003; Kyle & al, 2003).

In Marketing, this concept is used in leisure sciences, taking into account how an individual values or identifies with a specific physical environment (Williams and Roggenbuck, 1989). These are usually natural recreational areas (national parks) where tourist destinations are taken as geographical entities. In context of services places, attachment is a positive long-term emotional connection between a consumer and a consumption place with variable intensity which is manifested particularly when the place suddenly deteriorates or is unavailable (Debenedetti, 2007).

The thematic of attachment is more and more developing in marketing (brand attachment). Applied to place, this concept highlights the links between people and their physical environment (Debenedetti, 2006), and is nourished from hedonism, social meanings and symbolisms associated to places. Indeed, individuals who have developed a sense of attachment to a place tend to revisit, to seek the proximity, to talk about it to others (Yuksel et alii, 2009). During a trip, visited places have a symbolic meaning related to attitudes and beliefs that are attached to (Sack 1992). In fact, Yuksel & al. (2010) have demonstrated that people develop strong relationships with places they visit. The destination attachment involves “ *interplay of affection and emotions, knowledge and beliefs, behaviors and actions in reference to a place*” (Altman & Low 1992). In tourism domain, two conceptualizations materialize place attachment (Lee, Kyle and Scott 2012; Tsai 2012; Yuksel et al. 2010):

- Emotional or symbolic attachment relative to connection between a place and individuals self-identity (Prohansky 1978). Prayag and Ryan (2012) had noted that a Tourist’s self-identity contributes to a sense of belonging toward destinations.

- Functional attachment relative to pertinence of a place in providing features, activities and conditions that support a person’s goals (Williams et al. 1992). The attachment is then determined by the destination’s physical characteristics (Prayag and Ryan 2012). Places satisfying people’s needs generate deeper functional attachment (Stokols and Shumaker 1981).

These two dimensions materialize relation between individual and destination. This link appears first in information search phase and choice process. The individual in his objective to consider the best choice is often focused on information elements responding the adequacy between his self-identity and destination characteristics. He will then focus on information elements that meet his expectations and evolving beliefs. In addition, during and after the trip, a positive experience evaluation will strengthen his place attachment and will generate a satisfaction and a possible an intention to revisit.

Taking into account specificities of tourist destination, we consider attachment to tourist destination as a positive emotional relationship that translated the extent with which an individual identifies with a destination, to which a meaning has been given through personal and social interactions. Place attachment has thus three facets. Identity facet which refers to values beliefs that constitute individual perception of himself and pushing him to choose some types of destinations. The individual will focus on a place for what it symbolizes, and because it reflects the image he has of himself. A social facet is expressed through creation and strengthening of interpersonal bonds. Tourist attaches to persons as well as to developed relationships in the workplace (family, friends, people encountered in the workplace). A hedonic facet refers to an attachment to pleasant experiences and fun from place visiting. It reflects personal experience with the destination.

Little research has attempted to highlight relationship between place attachment and satisfaction. Yet it seems obvious to consider that when the individual develops an attachment to a destination (functional and/or emotional), he would be more inclined to feel satisfaction toward his trip. The more his destination choice is in adequacy with his self-identity, the higher his satisfaction is. This fact was tested by the following hypothesis:

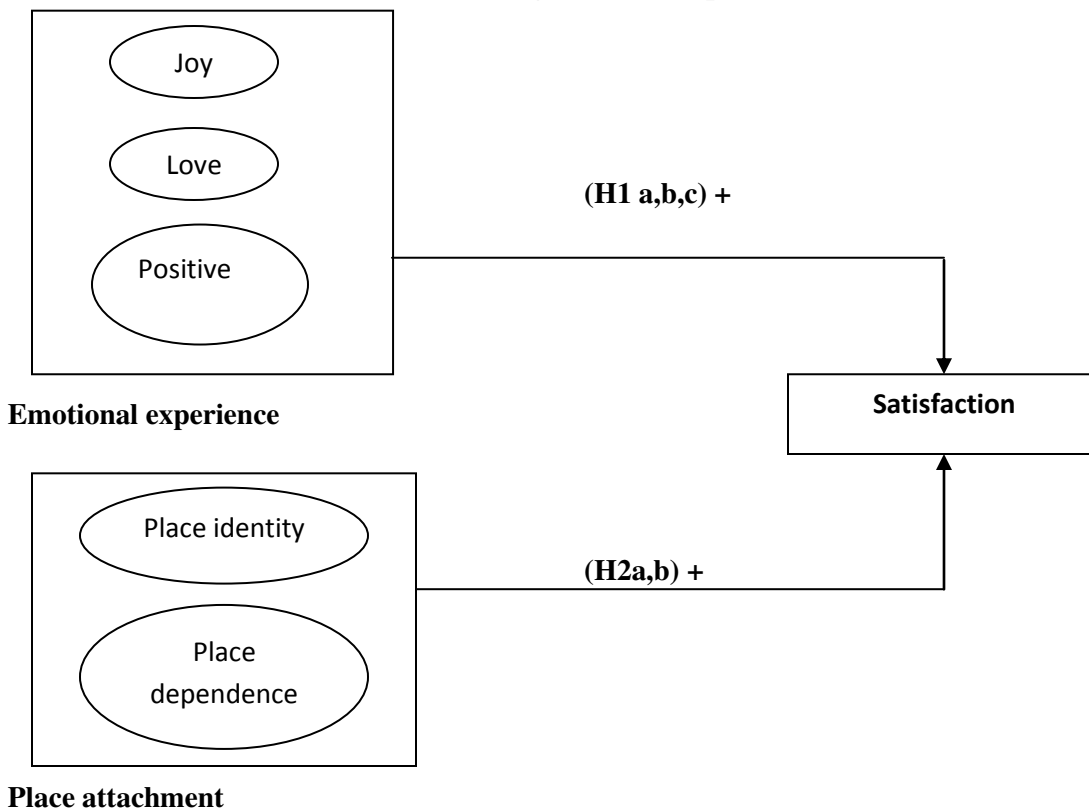
H2: Place attachment has a significant impact on satisfaction.

3. Research Methodology

The literature review has allowed drawing a conceptual framework with two independent variables such as emotional experience and place attachment and a dependent variable such as satisfaction toward trip. Hypothesis were established and proposed to empirically validate them through by structural equations modeling.

A self-report survey was developed to examine links suggested in proposed model. Emotional experience was measured in reference to Hosany & Gilbert (2010) destination emotion scale. The DES consists of three dimensions such as joy, love and surprise. Each dimension is composed of five items evaluated on a 7-point scale ranging from (1) not at all to (7) very much. Place attachment was measured using Williams & Vaske’s (2003) scale. This scale was validated in many studies such as Hosany and Gilbert (2010), Prayag & Ryan (2012). This scale is divided into two dimensions. The first dimension (4 items) related to place identity and the second dimension (4 items) related to place dependence. Respondents had to evaluate their level of agreement and disagreement with items related to these two dimensions on a 7- point scale (1 strongly disagree and 7 strongly agree). Finally, to measure satisfaction, we used the scale of Magi (2003). The scale has three items in a 7-point Likert- type format that explains the extent to which a consumer is satisfied with something. The three versions of the survey were pretested in the order to eliminate any possible problems of understanding or of poor interpretation of the items. The conceptual framework proposed was schematized as follows:

Figure 1- Conceptual model



Place attachment

A convenient sampling method was chosen. Taking into consideration analysis type, a sample of 303 was deemed sufficient. Literature suggests that tests related to SEM are sensitive to the size of the sample, depending on variable numbers used for latent constructs. These tests must also respect normality conditions. Surveys were administered during two months of the summer of 2012 (July- August) to tourists who had chosen to spend their holidays in Tunisia specifically in Hammamet, Sousse and Djerba. Data was collected at the end of their visit to Tunisia. 4 star hotels were chosen to administer the surveys, in order to respect the perceptual homogeneity in terms of benefits and of service quality. The choice of hotels was established in a random manner. The collection consists of two hotels in Hammamet, three hotels in Sousse and two hotels in Djerba. In order to interact with tourists from different nationalities, the survey was presented in Arabic, French and English. During translation, attention was given to remain faithful to the meaning of the items that make up the scales of measurement.

Respondents were given the freedom to choose the language they prefer. German tourists were part of the sample and they were able to answer the English version of the survey. Table 1 summarizes the respondents' profile.

Table 1: Respondents Demographic profile (N=303)

	N	%
Gender	169	55,8
Male	134	44,2
Female		
Age	44	14,5
20-24	57	18,8
25-34	83	27,4
35-44	71	23,4
45-54	48	15,8
more than 55		
Nationality	118	38,9
French	135	44,6
Algerian	50	16,5
German		
Number of previous visits	145	47,9
No previous visit	150	49,5
1-2 times	8	2,6
3-4 times		
Purpose of visit	111	36,6
Rest and relaxation.	122	40,3
Culture.	70	23,1
Fun.		
Travel companion	25	8,3
Alone	128	42,2
Family	129	42,6
Tour group	21	6,9
Friends		

4. Results

4.1. Measure refinements

In the first phase, psychometric qualities of all scales were verified. With a principal components analysis (SPSS), checking dimensionality, observing 1) Kaiser-Meyer –Olkin (KMO >0.5) and Barlett's test (significant at the 0.00 level) for ad equation of factor analysis to the data (Hair & al., 1998), 2) eigenvalue (>1) and cumulated variance percentage (>50%) for number of dimensions to retain 3) Factor loadings (>0.40) and communalities (>0.30) for distribution of items on the selected dimensions and 4) Chronbach's alpha coefficient (>0.6) for internal coherence bewteen items in each dimension. Results are summarized in the following table:

Table 2: Principles Components Analysis Results

Items	KMO Bartlett's test	eigenvalue	Variance pourcentage	Factorial contributions	Cronbach's Alpha
Emotional experience (Oblimin)					
Joy		5,898	42,130		
I feel cheerful				,926	
I feel a sense of delight				,898	
I feel a sense of enthusiasm				,860	0,93
I feel a sense of joy				,885	
I feel a sense of pleasure				,853	
Love	0,905				
I feel a sense of affection	3856,164	,911	27,934	,929	
I feel a sense of caring	df=91			,909	0,95
I feel a sense of love	p=. 000			,898	
I feel a sense of tenderness				,943	
I feel a sense of heart-warmth				,916	
Positive surprise					
I feel a sense of amazement				,877	
I feel a sense of fascination				,921	
I feel a sense of inspiration		1,604	11,455	,897	
I feel a sense of surprise				,884	0,91
Place attachment					
Place identity					
Tunisia is a very special destination for me				,862	
I relate strongly to Tunisia		3,026	37,825	,871	0,88
Holidaying in Tunisia means a lot to me				,743	
I am very attached to Tunisia				,857	
Place dependence					
Holidaying in Tunisia is more important to me than holidaying in other places	,819			,808	
Tunisia is the best place for holidays	1323,020	2,923	36,531		
I will not replace Tunisia with any other place because of the experience I had here	28			,805	0,87
	,000			,823	
I get more satisfaction out of holidaying in Tunisia than from any other destination.				,821	
How satisfied are you with your trip to Tunisia?					
very dissatisfied----- very satisfied				,917	
(satis1)					
How well does your Trip in Tunisia match your expectations? not at all-----	,708				
--completely (satisf2)	431,909	2,340	78,009	,877	0,85
Imagine a perfect Trip. How close is this vision to your trip to Tunisia?	3				
not close at all -----very close	,000				
(satis3)				,854	

This exploratory phase shows so that selected scales comply with commonly accepted thresholds. Researchers have been forced to eliminate an item belonging to the dimension, positive surprise for its low correlation.

A variance analysis was performed with the aim of establishing significant relationships between socio-demographic variables and concepts that composed our model. We examined whether dimensions related to emotional experience, to place attachment and to satisfaction vary with gender, age, nationality and travel motivation. The following table summarizes results:

Table 3: Anova Results

	Gender		Age		Nationality		Travel motivation	
	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.
joy	17,898	,000	,500	,736	,811	,445	1,345	,262
love	30,602	,000	,657	,622	2,725	,071	2,698	,069
positive surprise	16,777	,000	1,028	,393	1,340	,263	1,080	,341
place identity	6,729	,010	,822	,512	1,290	,277	2,758	,065
Place dependence	,231	,631	4,465	,002	1,766	,173	1,275	,281
satisfaction	4,075	,044	,490	,743	2,564	,079	4,385	,013

	Previous visits		Travel companions	
	F	Sig.	Sig.	F
joy	4,344	,014	10,203	,000
love	3,737	,025	6,885	,000
Positive surprise	1,358	,259	2,802	,040
place identity	9,996	,000	6,313	,000
Place dependence	8,859	,000	7,731	,000
satisfaction	3,756	,024	5,229	,002

According to results, gender, previous visits and travel companions have an impact on all dimensions influencing emotional experience, place identity and satisfaction. Concerning age, nationality and travel motivations, no significant linkages were identified, except for trip reasons and satisfaction. These results can guide segmentation strategies and so, the variables to be taken into account. Exploratory phase being validated, it is proposed in what follows, to test the research conceptual framework with SEM (LISREL 3.50) and check significance links, which fulfil the hypotheses.

4.2. Data Analysis

Using Structural Equations Modeling to analyze empirical data allows researchers to take into account interaction between explanatory variables, and their simultaneous impact on explained variable. This analyses closers to reality, and maximize adequacy of the results with this reality.

Before using SEM, data should be examined for extreme values and normality distribution. Skewness and Kurtosis indices (ranging between -2 and 2) show that values for all items belong to the interval, respecting the normality condition, a main condition for using SEM with covariance matrix.

With LISREL 8.5, a structural equation modeling was run to test the hypothesized relationships in the conceptual model. Indeed, structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used with six constructs to test valence and magnitude of the relationships.

The structural model was estimated using Maximum Likelihood. To evaluate relationships goodness of fit, three types of adjustment indices were considered: absolute, incremental and parsimony (Browne & Cudeck, 1992).

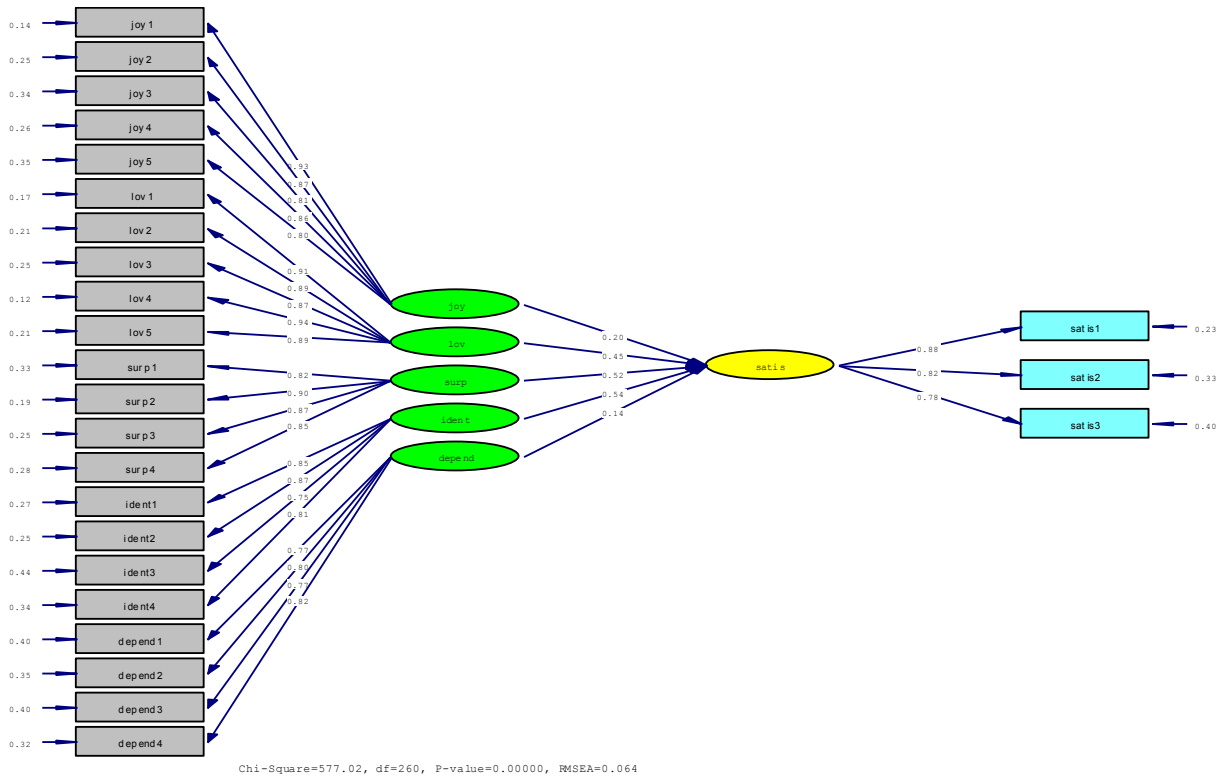
1) Absolute indices to assess to what extent theoretical model reproduces observed data. We took into consideration goodness of fit indices such as χ^2 (see associated p), GFI (>0.90), AGFI (>0.90), RMR, SRMR (smallest possible) and badness of fit indices such as, RMSEA (< .08).

2) Incremental indices assessing what brings the model tested against a basic model taken as reference such as, NFI, NNFI or TLI and CFI (>0.90 for all).

3) Parsimony indices that serve to avoid overestimating models with too many parameters and to detect if the poor fit of a model, doesn't come from a lack of free parameters, such as AIC (smallest possible, comparison), normed χ^2 (smallest possible, between 1, 2-3, or even 5) and PNFI (strongest possible, comparison).

The diagram provided by the software highlights significant linkages between the three dimensions related to emotional experience, and the two dimensions of place attachment with the satisfaction. The following diagram summarizes the main results obtained:

Figure 2: Path Diagram



The diagram shows standardized loadings between dimensions related to emotional experience and place attachment with dependant variable such as satisfaction with destination choice. The following table summarizes results:

Table 4: Results of SEM

Structural links and indices	t-value	Loadings	Significance
Joy —satisfaction (H1a)	2,86	0,20	Confirmed
Love —satisfaction (H1b)	6,29	0,45	Confirmed
Positive surprise—satisfaction (H1c)	6,45	0,52	Confirmed
Place identity—satisfaction (H2a)	6,56	0,54	Confirmed
Place dependence—satisfaction (H2b)	2,27	0,14	Confirmed
χ^2			577,02
df			260
P			0,00000
GFI			0,87
AGFI			0,83
RMR			0,15
SRMR			0,052
RMSEA			0,064
NFI			0,91
NNFI			0,94
CFI			0,95
Independence AIC			6665.24
Model AIC			707.20
Saturated AIC			650.00
normed χ^2			2,219
PNFI			0,79
R^2 (satisfaction)			0,71

The results present good fit of theoretical model with data. Most fit indices respect commonly accepted thresholds. In reference to absolute indices, χ^2 was at 577.02, with df at 260 ($p < 0.000$). GFI (0.87) and AGFI (0.83) were slightly lower than the thresholds. But results were accepted because the most important indices such as RMSEA and SRMR were good. All incremental and parsimonious indices had very acceptable values. In reference to t-value, they were all greater than 1.96 (significance threshold).

The assumptions have all been confirmed by validating the significant linkages between dimensions related to emotional experience (joy, love and positive surprise), those relating to place attachment with satisfaction. By observing the loadings, it was found that satisfaction is more intensely correlated with love, positive surprise, and place identity. Individuals are more looking for identical congruence with destination, an emotional attachment materialized by love and also the need to discover and to exceed their expectations. It is on this that tourist destinations' managers should focus on holidays which are considered as an escape and an opportunity for an individual to be enlightened.

5. Discussion, conclusion, limitations and future research

The study makes an important contribution to our understanding of emotions role in satisfaction. According to our results, our research questions have been answered positively. Relations between emotional experience, place attachment and satisfaction have been confirmed. Overall satisfaction is modeled as a unidimensional affective concept. It is determined by the cumulative impact of satisfaction experienced on each of trip steps and activities. Touristic products are hedonic per nature, and then these elements are evaluated in reference to emotional dimensions materializing experience.

Our results are in line with those of Krishnan and Olshavsky's model (1995). Indeed, consumers may describe their experience in terms of specific emotions such as joy, love and positive surprise. Specifically, when individual considers hedonic attributes in his evaluation, emotions are automatically evoked (Mano and Oliver 1993) and also have an impact on satisfaction. Generally, after experiencing a product or service, a comparison process takes place between desire and perceived performance (Spreng and Olshavsky 1993). This comparison process reflects desires congruency, leads to an emotion related to individual's evaluation. These emotions may be positive, negative or mixed valence.

Emotional experience must be at the center of satisfaction studies. If positive emotions are felt during the trip, an emotional attachment will be developed and will generate satisfaction. Very satisfied customers are excellent describers of the destination via word of mouth.

Regarding place attachment, it appears appropriate to implement actions aimed to highlight the congruence between individual identity and that of the tourist destination. Much research goes in this direction, essentially those who addressed destination personality concept. It's about this element that tourism industry's managers should operate.

6. Limitation and Future Research

The study has some limitations. Due to the lack of time, sample size was in a minimum quota in reference to SEM. It would, therefore, be appropriate to increase sample size in order to maximize results generalizability. It would be also interesting to collect data from other tourist destinations, to make comparisons and to observe if the significant links are confirmed or are inherent to the destination which was the study subject. Furthermore, the study had considered only lived emotional experience. It would be interesting to see how this emotional experience can be extrapolated to potential consumers. Similarly, elements which generate positive or negative emotional experience were not taken into account. In other words, what are the elements that compose the tourist experience that are correlated to each of felt emotions. This perspective would be very helpful to professionals in order to make their marketing strategies by taking into account these elements.

Moreover, a distinction had not been made between emotions experienced during the consumption episode, and emotions evoked during the evaluation of this directly experienced emotion. Krishnan and Olshavsky (1995) had demonstrated a difference between these two types of emotions in nature and valence. The authors present this example to clarify the idea "*consumers may experience excitement and interest during a music concert, and evaluate the experience as joyful*". Distinguishing between these two types of emotions is particularly relevant. A future research may establish this distinction and verify the most important relation with satisfaction.

Finally, country's image as a safe tourist destination has been particularly tarnished by political instability and lack of security, especially with the latest attacks in different countries. Many countries are now calling their citizens to be cautious. Croutsche et al (2005) showed that war, terrorism, hygiene and disease risks are the main aspects that a potential tourist examines. These risks induce brakes on tourism development which leads to think that risk perception is a predominant factor in tourism choices and to observe link between this concept and emotional experience. In this perspective, it would be appropriate to focus on motivations and brakes in tourist destination choice and their link with emotional experience.

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