

DESTINATION AND SPORT EVENT: IMAGE, ATTACHMENT AND LOYALTY RELATIONSHIP

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to evaluate how Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) may be used to foster image, attachment, and loyalty to a sporting event destination. This study was undertaken in conjunction with the MotoGP race at the Mandalika International Circuit in Lombok, Indonesia. A random sample of events was chosen to test the suggested model's validity. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling was used in this study to examine 367 questionnaires that Indonesian respondents filled out on the spot. Using the PCM framework, this study was able to find that event image can increase event attachment, but not destination loyalty based on our findings. Individuals are more likely to have experiences related to events and destinations when the psychological link between people and those events or destinations grows. Event-related variables, rather than destination-related variables, entice travelers since they are more easily influenced by the event.

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INTRODUCTION

Each year, many nations host a recurrent yearly sporting event, which frequently serves as a catalyst for the development of society into a well-known sporting destination (Reitsamer et al., 2016). Additionally, staging repeated events may alter a destination's image and deepen tourists' attachment and loyalty to a specific area (Prayag & Ryan, 2012). Thus, in the case of recurrent sporting events such as MotoGP, the commitment of sporting tourists to an event and destination continues to be a critical indicator of event development success. In sports tourism, image and attachment have emerged as critical notions for understanding customer loyalty. For instance, Ballouli et al. (2016) discovered a favorable correlation

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between audience interaction with drivers, venues, and activities and audience loyalty to the Grand Prix and host city. Experts in sports management have sought to explain the aspects that impact sports tourists' loyalty. Additionally, the Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) (Funk & James, 2001) may be used to describe how audiences develop from newcomers to event devotees throughout sporting events. Funk and James (2001) coined the term PCM to describe how sports clients advance through stages of awareness, attraction, attachment, and loyalty. To that end, it is crucial to understand how certain psychological factors (such as attachment) contribute to event destination and loyalty, as each stage of PCM is focused on detecting sports consumer engagement in sporting events (Funk & James, 2001). Although previous research has suggested that PCM can account for the attraction stage in the destination image (Chen & Funk, 2010), due to the limitations inherent in characterizing travelers through each track of the development of awareness, attractiveness, attachment, and loyalty, it is difficult to ascertain how each phase formed loyalty (Taghizadeh et al., 2015; Nyadzayo et al., 2016).

As a result, we employ PCM as a conceptual perspective to illustrate the growth of phase sports participation for sports travelers in the context of a recurrent sporting event. Scientists have noticed that when a sporting event is hosted in a certain area, the event and the destination live together (Mariani & Giorgio, 2017). Psychological components linked with destination and events (e.g., image, attachment, and loyalty) may coexist when sports tourists attend sporting events in a particular destination (Kirkup & Sutherland, 2017). There is, however, a scarcity of studies examining loyalty development through image and attachment creation to destination and event attributes concurrently. Prior study has established that the image of a destination has an influence on destination loyalty (e.g., Chi & Qu, 2008; Kim et al., 2013; Lee & Xue, 2020). Additionally, some researchers have stressed the significance of event image in determining event loyalty and branding (Lu & Cai, 2011; Girish & Lee, 2019; Sharma & Kumar Nayak, 2019), whereas others have observed that attachment to a destination influences destination loyalty (Tasci et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2020). It is important to note that scholars have discovered that engagement strategies and co-branding among sporting events and destination images affect sports travelers' destination loyalty (Jeong & Kim, 2019; Kim et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2019).

Scholars have been writing about how events change vacation destinations for decades. It is assumed that visitors will have a more positive impression of the host destination after attending a well-organized

event (Kaplanidou, 2006; Knott et al., 2015). Thus, the image of an event serves not only as a tool for luring visitors but also as a platform for enhancing the reputation of a travel destination (Getz, 2008; Wong, 2011). Large events tend to improve the public's perception of a destination, and this is supported by actual research (Kim & Morrision, 2005; Moreira, 2009). Due to the aforementioned, several countries, including Indonesia, are making concerted efforts to grow into event destinations and compete better for tourists so that they can host sporting events. However, few studies have really measured tourists' attachment to an event or destination and how these attachments could alter tourists' perceptions of destination loyalty, despite the fact that past research has attempted to explore the role of events on destination image and tourist behaviors.

The objective of this study is to examine destination loyalty development using PCM in a recurrent sporting event context. To this purpose, this study explores how recurrent sporting events and destination loyalty are established using data from sports tourists who attended the Mandalika Moto Grand Prix (MotoGP Mandalika) in Indonesia. The Mandalika International Circuit is a new world-class circuit in Indonesia (MotoGP, 2021), but not enough studies have been conducted on the attitudes of Indonesian tourists toward the event and the destination. This study contributes to the body of scientific knowledge in numerous ways. Through the interplay of destination or event images and attachments, the current study provides insight into the process by which destination loyalty is built. Second, by undertaking an empirical analysis of destination loyalty using event-related characteristics, the current study fills a need in the literature. Moreover, this study helps destination and periodic sporting event organizers to have a stronger insight to the determinants of destination loyalty, starting to concentrate their efforts on the essential psychological components of destination loyalty.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Destination and Sport Event

Researchers in the fields of tourism and sport science have been very interested in the significance of the destinations that host major events for quite some time (see Gibson, 1998; Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2007; Hallmann & Breuer, 2010; Jin et al., 2013; Malchrowicz-Moško & Poczta, 2018). There are some qualities that sports tourists associate with both sporting events and the destination where they take in the games (Huang et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2021). For the most part, sports tourists travel to specific sport events to

participate or observe (Perić, 2010). Travelers attending sporting events are frequently more concerned with the event itself than with the destination, and their perspectives on the event and the area frequently diverge. Because of this, event attendance is not primarily driven by the image of a destination (King et al., 2015). Many studies have been done to determine what motivates people to return to a particular destination for a specific event (Jeong & Kim, 2019), but there has been far less study on what motivates people to return to the same destination for other sport events in general (Halpenny et al., 2016). Since a result, spectators are left in the dark about sport activities, as the event and destination domains are left out of the equation. New viewpoints (such as how events and destinations are constructed) in the context of repeating occurrences require an explanation for why previous studies should be integrated.

The Psychological Continuum Model

Sport-related activities and teams are linked psychologically and sociologically in PCM (Funk & James, 2001). Studying how participants' attitudes and actions evolve through four stages: awareness, attraction, attachment, and loyalty has been used in many sports management research projects. One of the most utilized theories to explain the link between destination related attitudes and their interactions is the "destination set formation hypothesis" (Stylos et al., 2017). Visitors' return intentions are positively influenced by cognitive and emotive images, according to this model of tourist decision-making, which is a sequential process. According to attachment theory, visitors' loyalty is strongly influenced by their feelings of attachment to a particular destination (Bowlby, 1982). There is a lack of continuity between image, connection, and loyalty in both theories of tourist research that are now in use (Stylos et al., 2017). This study uses a PCM stage-based framework to provide a new viewpoint on creating loyalty among sports tourists based on the four stages of the movement of sports tourists. The four phases of the PCM framework may be used to explain how sports tourists develop a sense of loyalty (awareness, image, attachment & loyalty). Additionally, individuals who participated in the present research were sports visitors who set a higher premium on sporting activities than on tourist attractions (Chen & Funk, 2010). Thus, PCM is a good theoretical framework for the current study.

Building connections to events and destination begins with awareness. At the awareness phase, individuals gain acquaintance with an entity but are not always drawn to it (Funk & James, 2001). The awareness

stage of sports tourism may readily be distinguished from the other three phases since a sports tourist advances through the awareness stage after attending an event (Funk et al., 2007). Study on the last three phases of PCM (loyalty, attraction and attachment) has dominated the literature (Baker et al., 2020). This current study excluded sports tourists who were aware of the event but did not attend. When they get interested in something, they enter the attraction stage and start to participate in certain behaviors (Mahoney et al., 2013). In this phase, it is important to send carefully chosen images that depict the desired features of a certain destination (Alcañiz et al., 2009). PCM may be used in order to have a better understanding of sports tourism attractions. According to the research, an image is a combination of cognitive and emotional components (Prayag & Ryan, 2012). It is a human construct comprised of factual facts, subjective sensations, prejudices, fantasies, and emotional ideas about the destination that is referred to as a "destination image" (Zhang et al., 2014). In the words of Deng et al. (2015), "event image" refers to the sum total of the meaning or connections consumers assign to occurrences. The sports literature has analyzed the event's image in terms of its emotional, social, organizational, and physical components (Aicher et al., 2015). Both destination and event images are used in this study to depict hidden individual cognitive and emotional processes that occur during the PCM attraction phase. Unlike attraction phase, the attachment phase creates a lasting and solid psychological link between the person and the item because the individual viewpoint acts as an extension of the self-concept and feelings connected to a certain activity. To better understand the attachment stage, the attachment variable was used in the current study. The term "destination attachment" refers to a person's emotional and psychological attachment to his or her perception of the significance of a destination (Yuksel et al., 2010). It is defined as an individual's emotional attachment to a geographical place and social attachment toward an occasion; this process is self-perpetuating (Prayag et al., 2020). It's possible to form a strong attachment to a sporting event because of its numerous components, such as sports activities, teams, players, or other participants (Cho et al., 2014). In this study, we postulated that sports tourism destinations and events are founded on PCM engagement mechanisms.

When people agree that the things and activities are in line with their own fundamental values and beliefs, they are involved and committed to the loyalty stage (Funk & James, 2001). It is becoming increasingly common for sports tourists to become so enamored with the destination and event values that they form an emotional attachment to the destination and event.

As a result, the researchers in this study feel that during the PCM loyalty stage, loyalty becomes a distinguishing factor. People who are more attached to a certain product than others are more likely to buy it, according to research conducted by Ballouli et al. (2016). Attendance intentions, product intentions, endorsement intents, and word-of-mouth marketing were utilized to measure conative loyalty in sports tourism by Ballouli et al. (2016). The event has a lasting psychological impact on the person who participates in it (Funk & James, 2001). This third level of PCM loyalty, referred to as conative loyalty, can assist us better comprehend the hierarchical model as it pertains to MotoGP events.

The Image, Attachment, and Loyalty Relationship

Considering that both attachment and image are attitude constructs with cognitive and emotional components (Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Hernández-Mogollón et al., 2018; Moital et al., 2019), there is enough evidence in the literature to suggest that their conceptual foundations are the same. The two parts illustrate a tiered approach to attitude creation, namely the formation of an emotive connection when a sports tourist builds a cognitive image (Moital et al., 2019). When it comes to an emotional response, destination attachment refers to the feeling response to a social economic setting, whereas a destination image refers to the affective and cognitive characteristics of a destination (Kusumah et al., 2022), such as attraction, experience quality, and environment, that are considered predictors of interpersonal destination attachment (Prayag & Ryan, 2012).

The attachment hypothesis, which is the basis for place attachment, postulates that a child would develop a strong emotional bond with the first person who provides for his or her basic physiological needs (Venta et al., 2020). In the same manner, visitors develop a strong emotional connection to their vacation destinations because they help them meet essential physiological, psychological, social, and cultural requirements (Jiang et al., 2017). When visitors spend enough time at a tourist attraction, they develop an emotional connection to it (Reitsamer et al., 2016). When visitors engage with a tourist attraction, a variety of feelings, thoughts, and deeds emerge as a result of the experience (Kyle et al., 2005). Another way in which a tourist's emotional connection to their vacation destination might be shown is through the concept of "destination attachment" (Japutra, 2020). In addition, a tourist may develop a strong sense of connection to a specific destination if it provides them with ample opportunities for self-expression and affirmation and facilitates the upkeep of meaningful relationships and a sense of community (Scannell & Gifford, 2010). The likelihood of a visitor

returning to and recommending that destination is positively influenced by feelings of attachment to that destination (Prayag & Ryan, 2012). The way a visitor feels about a site may be affected by its accessibility, facilities, local community, and scenery (Reitsamer et al., 2016). Destination attachment can also be predicted by the traveler's visual image of the destination they're going, the reliability of their information sources about the destination, and their own attachment types (anxiety and avoidance) (Japutra, 2020).

Gwinner's (1997) model of image production and image transfer in event sponsorship comes closest to characterizing event images. An event's "event image" is composed of "the cumulative interpretation of meanings or connotations assigned to events by consumers," as defined by Gwinner (1997, p. 147). From a psychosociological vantage point, Ferrand and Pages (1996) described the image of events as "a cognitive construction linking rational and emotive representations of an event by a person or a group." Spectators at sporting events might develop an emotional attachment to a destination if the event is accurately portrayed (Kaplanidou et al., 2012). In the minds of travelers, how a destination is portrayed will have an impact on how strongly they feel about it (Song et al., 2017). Sports tourists, on the other hand, engage in physically demanding pursuits and rely on sport event resources. High-quality materials may aid in the formation of an event's image and, as a result, its emotional connection. However, sports visitors who are familiar with the image of events linked with a certain destination may not be aware of this construction. The image of the destination or event will thus benefit the attachment to the destination or event, as we expect. Thus, the following hypotheses have been developed:

H1: *Destination image has a significant influence on destination attachment*

H2: *Event image has a significant influence on event attachment*

Loyalty in sports tourism studies is defined as a person's desire to return to a destination or event (Barshan et al., 2017; Sato et al., 2018). It is more probable that tourists will return to a destination with a strong sense of attachment if they have a strong sense of belonging to it (Patwardhan et al., 2020). People value as well as empathize with the emotional relationship they have with the venue when they participate in sports-related events, which is why destination loyalty was included as an outcome measure (Jeong & Kim, 2019; Yamashita & Takata, 2021). Moreover, consumers who had a favorable experience at a sporting event seem to be more willing to visit in the future (Ballouli et al., 2016). Following hypotheses are therefore put forward:

H3: *Destination attachment has a significant influence on destination loyalty*

H4: *Event attachment has a significant influence on destination loyalty*

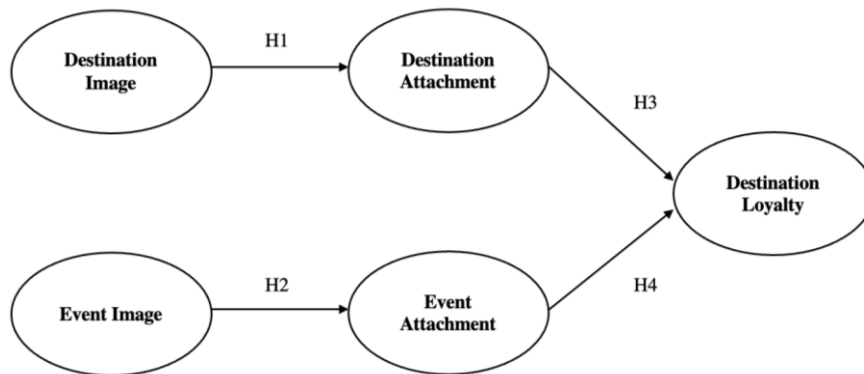


Figure 1. *Research Model*

METHODOLOGY

This study was undertaken in conjunction with the MotoGP race at the Mandalika International Circuit in Lombok, Indonesia. A random sample of events was chosen for this research model. Respondents in the present study were limited to Indonesian spectators who took part in three sessions (practice, qualifying, and race). The MotoGP race was picked because it is widely regarded as one of the world's well-known repeated sport events. Indonesia initially staged the MotoGP in 1996 at the Sentul International Circuit in West Java, and again in 2022 at the Mandalika International Circuit in Lombok (Media Indonesia, 2022). Apart from the MotoGP race, the Mandalika track also hosted a World Superbike race in 2021 (CNN Indonesia, 2021). The Mandalika Superbike event drew around 25 thousand spectators, based on the capacity permitted by the Indonesian government during the COVID-19 epidemic (Infopublik, 2021), while the Mandalika MotoGP event drew approximately 63,000 spectators based on the number of tickets sold (Kompas, 2022). The capacity of the MotoGP event, as determined by the Indonesian government, increased significantly. As an outcome, the current study analyzed sports travelers' event engagement and destination loyalty utilizing respondents from the Mandalika MotoGP 2022.

Mandalika MotoGP 2022 is an annual event that consists of practice, qualifying, and the race. As such, to ensure that all respondents managed to travel particularly to witness the 2022 Mandalika MotoGP; participated in the same event on the same days; and assessed their emotional processes throughout the three occasion sessions, non-residents (outside Lombok

Province) who took part in all three of the study's sessions were considered sport tourists for the purposes of this study. Regarding the 2022 Mandalika MotoGP, five trained research assistants delivered surveys in a variety of locations, including parking lots, seating sections, and refreshment areas. The participants were approached and briefed of the study's purpose, and screening questions were asked regarding: their residency on Lombok Island and their attendance at all three event sessions. Only individuals attending the 2022 Mandalika MotoGP as tourists were requested to complete and return the questionnaires on-site. All data was gathered on March 20, 2022, the final day of the event. Those who completed the survey and qualified were rewarded with a cash prize of 20k Rupiah (Indonesian currency). Twelve responses from the 2022 Mandalika MotoGP sample were deleted due to missing data; thus, 367 responses were obtained on-site.

Destination image (DI) is a complicated notion that include information and emotional connections as well as presumptions about a destination, together with subjective perceptions (Kusumah et al., 2022). Ten questions (Zhang et al, 2019) that were revised to reflect the MotoGP context, were used to measure DI. The event image (EI) is a composite of the event's emotional, social, and organizational characteristics of activities and programs, all of which were quantified via the use of five survey questions (Huang et al., 2015). Destination attachment (DA) is defined as an emotional connection and individual's psychological value of a place; this connection was assessed in the survey using three items (Ramkissoon et al., 2013). Event attachment (EA) is a scale that evaluates social bonding with an event and an individual's emotional attachment to physical destinations via the use of three indicators (Ouyang et al., 2017). Destination loyalty (DL) was employed in this study along with four items to elicit customers' plans to revisit the destination and event as well as word-of-mouth feedback (Zhang et al., 2019). Items were scored from 1 to 5 on a 5-point Likert scale, and the means of these measurements were used to calculate the variable of interest. After deciding on the measuring scales, we consulted expert panels comprised of persons with past experience attending MotoGP events. The questionnaire began with 32 items, and expert panels were entrusted with analyzing its content validity in three major areas: intelligibility, representativeness, and relevance. The questionnaires were modified in response to the opinions received from these panels. We retained 25 items, including the following: event image consists of 5 items (excitement, kindness, infrastructure, ambience, and cleanness); event attachment consists of 3 items (myself a fan, important to me, myself an expert);

destination image consists of 10 items (scenery, information, entertainment, friendliness, accommodation, infrastructure, cleanliness, relaxation, excitement, and pleasure); destination attachment consists of 3 items (destination is part of me, destination is important to me, and strong sense of belonging at the destination); and destination loyalty consists of 4 items (availableness, future orientation, experience, and recommendation). Indonesian-speaking respondents were given a translation of the English questionnaire.

Utilizing partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM), we investigated 367 completed surveys with the SmartPLS software. In this work, PLS-SEM was used because it allows for exploratory model estimation and is more causally predictive than SEM. Models may then be tested for their capacity to explain and forecast (Shmueli et al., 2019). For example, PLS-SEM is focused on optimizing endogenous component prediction rather than model fit, unlike covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) (Hair et al., 2017). A more comprehensive analysis of a hypothesised model may be achieved by using PLS-SEM, which provides a more comprehensive knowledge of the event under research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Valid surveys were first examined for the demographic profile. 70.2 percent of respondents were male, while 29.8 percent were female. The average age of the participants was 31 years old. About 52.3 percent of those surveyed were graduates, while 21.1 percent were undergraduates. Moreover, majority of responders (67%) had spent three days on Lombok Island, followed by more than three days visit (33%). In the PLS-SEM assessment of the reflective measurement model, convergent validity, internal consistency, and discriminant validity are highlighted. We use composite reliability (CR) as a surrogate for internal consistency in order to achieve these objectives. There are no outside loadings below the 0.7 threshold, as shown in Table 1. According to the AVE data, all are higher than the minimum predicted value of 0.50, showing that the hypothesis is correct (Hair et al., 2017). How different an item is from another is determined by the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT). Table 2 shows a range of values from 0.165 to 0.509 for each component. If the HTMT value is less than 0.90, two reflective ideas are deemed to be discriminant valid (Henseler et al., 2015).

Table 1. *Assessment of Reliability and Convergent Validity*

| Construct | Item | Loading | VIF | CR | AVE |
|--------------------------------|------|---------|-------|-------|-------|
| Destination Image (DI) | DI1 | 0.737 | 3.628 | 0.947 | 0.643 |
| | DI2 | 0.801 | 5.173 | | |
| | DI3 | 0.760 | 6.349 | | |
| | DI4 | 0.821 | 4.372 | | |
| | DI5 | 0.809 | 3.58 | | |
| | DI6 | 0.721 | 2.747 | | |
| | DI7 | 0.783 | 4.257 | | |
| | DI8 | 0.889 | 2.307 | | |
| | DI9 | 0.808 | 3.192 | | |
| | DI10 | 0.871 | 2.517 | | |
| Destination Attachment (DA) | DA1 | 0.871 | 1.733 | 0.867 | 0.687 |
| | DA2 | 0.728 | 1.456 | | |
| | DA3 | 0.878 | 1.724 | | |
| Destination Loyalty (DL) | DL1 | 0.879 | 2.053 | 0.876 | 0.639 |
| | DL2 | 0.832 | 1.979 | | |
| | DL3 | 0.785 | 1.756 | | |
| | DL4 | 0.701 | 1.342 | | |
| Event Image (EI) | EI1 | 0.844 | 2.531 | 0.930 | 0.729 |
| | EI2 | 0.841 | 2.746 | | |
| | EI3 | 0.904 | 4.726 | | |
| | EI4 | 0.894 | 4.681 | | |
| | EI5 | 0.780 | 2.039 | | |
| Event Attachment (EA) | EA1 | 0.874 | 2.209 | 0.897 | 0.744 |
| | EA2 | 0.843 | 1.692 | | |
| | EA3 | 0.871 | 1.989 | | |

Table 2. *The Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) criterion*

| | DA | DI | DL | EA | EI |
|----|-------|-------|-------|-------|----|
| DA | | | | | |
| DI | 0.165 | | | | |
| DL | 0.466 | 0.241 | | | |
| EA | 0.495 | 0.246 | 0.233 | | |
| EI | 0.509 | 0.431 | 0.409 | 0.454 | |

Before assessing the structural model, it is vital that the collinearity issue to be addressed for each set of predictors. According to the variance inflation factor (VIF) ratings, collinearity does not appear to be a concern (see Table 1). A bootstrapping method with 1,000 subsamples is then used to test all of the model's route links (see Figure 1). Table 3 summarizes the findings for hypothesis testing. This study found a positive correlation between destination image and attachment (H1: $\beta = 0.187$, $p < 0.001$), destination attachment and loyalty (H2: $\beta = 0.373$, $p < 0.001$), as well as a positive correlation between event image and attachment (H3: $\beta = 0.401$, $p < 0.001$), but no correlation between event attachment and destination loyalty (H4: $p > 0.05$). Thus, H4 was not supported. This model may also

benefit from the R² values for destination attachment (3.2%), destination loyalty (15.4%), and event attachment (15.8%) (see Table 4).

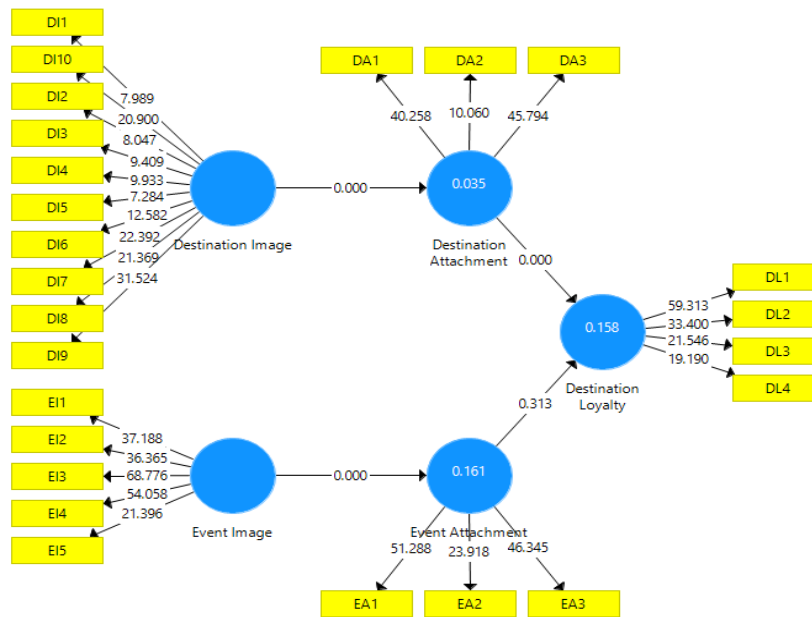


Figure 1. Bootstrapping Results

Table 3. Assessment of Structural Model

| | Standardized Beta (β) | Standard Deviation | T Statistics | P Values |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|----------|
| DI \rightarrow DA | 0.187 | 0.032 | 5.784 | 0.000 |
| DA \rightarrow DL | 0.373 | 0.061 | 6.112 | 0.000 |
| EI \rightarrow EA | 0.401 | 0.040 | 9.964 | 0.000 |
| EA \rightarrow DL | 0.054 | 0.053 | 1.010 | 0.313 |

Table 4. The R Square Adjusted Results

| | Original Sample | Sample Mean | Standard Deviation | T Statistics | P Values |
|------------------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------------|--------------|----------|
| Destination Attachment | 0.032 | 0.041 | 0.014 | 2.314 | 0.021 |
| Destination Loyalty | 0.154 | 0.162 | 0.041 | 3.740 | 0.000 |
| Event Attachment | 0.158 | 0.164 | 0.033 | 4.846 | 0.000 |

The PCM is a useful method for gauging the depth and coherence of a person's emotional investment in a team or sport, which is a crucial first step in elucidating the motivations behind fans' devotion to their favorite teams and players (Doyle et al., 2013). The model sheds light on how factors exert different degrees of effect at different points along a vertical continuum (awareness, attraction, attachment, loyalty). It's crucial to remember, though, that progression along the vertical continuum isn't limited to rising steadily, nor does it always occur in a linear way. According to the results of our study, which is grounded in the mutual reliance of events and destinations, PCM has some relevant results to

discuss with the sports tourism sector. In this study, we discovered that destination attachment can enhance destination loyalty, and that the PCM framework can assist explain the connection between image, attachment, and loyalty in the event and destination domains. Meanwhile, destination loyalty is unaffected by event attachment. Since sports are so prevalent in modern culture (Wheaton, 2010), it's possible to assume that the vast majority of the population is familiar with at least some of them. Many people will start at the awareness level and go down the continuum, learning about many sports and teams before developing a preference for one over another. However, there are those who may never reach the stage of self-awareness. They may have some knowledge of sports but have no desire to follow them. Some fans of a given team or sport will go on to elevate their level of dedication to that sport or team to the point where it truly matters to them emotionally. Some fans become so invested in their favorite sport or team that it begins to shape how they think and act. A person progressing along the continuum is free to stop at any step if they so desire.

CONCLUSION

Many managements ramifications flow from the research's theoretical conclusions. Event-related variables, rather than destination-related variables, entice travelers since they are more easily influenced by the event. In addition, the image of the event is a significant predictor of event participation. Event attachment is increased by focusing on emotional, social, organizational, physical, and distinctive features of a certain event. Event planners and local government should make advantage of these aspects to set their event apart from others taking place in the same destination, ensuring that attendees will find the event worthwhile. Destination image and attachment are also important indicators of long-term customer retention. Tourists' cognitive and emotional responses to a destination should be prioritized by tourism executives. Providing accurate information about the destination and expressing the destination's enthusiasm and majesty to sport tourists are two possible methods.

Theoretical Implications

There were a number of noteworthy theoretical implications for sport tourism based on the study's interaction between an event, a destination, and the PCM. Using the PCM framework, we were able to find that event image can increase event attachment, but not destination loyalty. The

studies reveal hierarchical systems that regulate a sport tourist's progression from destination image to destination attachment, and to destination loyalty. Individuals are more likely to have experiences related to events and destinations when the psychological link between people and those events or destinations grows. Attachment is the next step in this psychological process, which is why sports tourists might get emotionally attached to a certain destination over time. While Lee et al. (2014) discovered a substantial link between events and loyalty to the destination, the current study did not find similar results. In other words, sports fans will flock to the MotoGP no matter where it takes place in the future. Affective components like tourist activities and destination attachments have the potential to tamper with this relationship. This study suggests that MotoGP venues should keep holding the event to further improve destination loyalty. The PCM framework's continuum approach to attachment and loyalty is compatible with the influence of event attachment on allegiance. This is especially true for sports fans and visitors, who tend to have more emotional ties to the action than to the destination (Chen & Funk, 2010). Loyalty is linked to an individual's feelings about an event or a destination, according to these results. Emotional components that impede the transfer of loyalty in a range of recurring settings may be the focus of future research.

Event image had a higher influence on attachment than destination image had on loyalty, suggesting that event image is more important than destination image in the context of a specific event. People who attend sporting events are more likely to remember their experiences if they have a strong psychological attachment to the event. Evidence suggests that sport visitors care more about the event than about the destination generally (Chen & Funk, 2010). Sport visitors may have a more lasting and solid psychological attachment to the event than those who live in the destination. Therefore, we argue that event image is an essential role in the evolution of sport tourism via stages that account for different psychological ties linked to attachment in the hosting destination. The article's emphasis on the shift from event to destination is another key addition. When compared to previous studies, this one focuses on both the destination and the event, rather than focusing only on one or the other (Huang et al., 2015).

Managerial Implications

These findings have substantial managerial implications beyond its theoretical significance. Tourists in the sporting industry who visit an

annual event are drawn there because of the event itself, rather than the destination itself. Additionally, event image is a significant precursor to emotional investment in an event. Managers in the tourism industry would do well to put more resources into fostering attendees' feelings of connection to the event by emphasizing its emotional, social, organizational, physical, and distinctive qualities. In addition, the local government should leverage the event's distinctive features to set it apart from similar events in the destination, so boosting the event's value. Similarly, people's impressions and feelings of connection to a destination are seen as major factors in how loyal they are to that destination. Therefore, it is crucial for tourism professionals and local governments to emphasize the significance of the destination's impact on visitors' minds and hearts. Among the potential approaches is conveying the destination's enthusiasm and beauty to sports tourists in a realistic and engaging manner.

Limitations and Future Study

Despite these positive findings, there were several limitations associated with this study. Although this study verified that the PCM is a useful framework that can be used in a sports tourism context, it did not consider investigating whether temporal separation would allow for or prompt the existence of different psychological processes. In the future, researchers could use different time series to collect data at each stage, following the suggested PCM psychological processes. Another limitation related to the use of unidimensional constructs. This study used both event image and destination image as unidimensional constructs based on theoretical rationale for the purpose of the current study. However, the unidimensional constructs served to limit both the theoretical and practical understandings regarding which attribute of the event and destination image was more influential related to attachment or loyalty. In the future, it would be helpful to use a multidimensionality approach to measure event image and destination image constructs. Finally, the correlation between event image and event attachment was high in the current study. Therefore, caution is required when interpreting the findings related to these latent constructs. Since image and attachment are theoretically distinct, this theoretical notion should continue to be tested in future research.

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