

Centre for Tourism Research, Development and Innovation (CiTUR)

11th INTERNATIONAL TOURISM CONGRESS

THE IMAGE AND SUSTAINABILITY OF TOURISM DESTINATIONS



5 - 7 NOV 2019
FUNCHAL | PORTUGAL

Proceedings Book

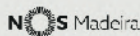
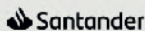




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APÓIOS



Title ■ XI International Tourism Congress - *The Image and Sustainability of Tourism Destinations* (Proceedings Book).

Editing and Property ■ Centre for Tourism Research, Development and Innovation (CiTUR)

Printing ■ Online Edition ■ <http://itc.citur-tourismresearch.com/>

Editorial Board

Susana Teles | Paulo Almeida | Mara Franco | João Paulo Jorge

ISBN: 978-989-97395-1-2

The Book is open access and double-blind peer reviewed.

Authors are responsible for the linguistic and technical accuracy of their contributions

*Financed by national funds through FCT - Foundation for the Science and Technology,
I.P. (UID / GES / 04470/2019)*

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The role of attachment in the choice of tourist destination of emigrants: a preliminary study

Bruno Barbosa de Sousa^a, Rossana Santos^b, Diana Azevedo^c

^a *Instituto Politécnico do Cávado e Ave (IPCA), CiTUR research member
bsousa@ipca.pt*

^b *Universidade da Madeira, CiTUR research member
rossana.santos@staff.uma.pt*

^c *Instituto Politécnico do Cávado e Ave (IPCA)
diazzevedo23@gmail.com*

Extended Abstract

In the current, globalized and competitive scenario, tourist destinations need to differentiate themselves from their competitors to stand out from the crowd and attract more tourists, investors or residents. Tourism is a multi-faceted and geographically complex activity, with tourism increasingly giving rise to new (and different) market segments with distinct individual interests. These segments are characterized by the motivations that make them travel and, in turn, by differentiating the existing supply (Sousa & Rocha, 2019). In this context, Visiting Family and Relatives (VFR) is a considerable way to travel, although this event has been largely ignored and long forgotten (Backer, 2007). Trips that involve visiting friends and family may have a variety of special properties. For example, travel may have as its main objective a special event such as a birth or marriage, or it may just be part of a desire to return to important places in an individual's history. The term diaspora was originally used in the context of the dispersion of the Jews from Palestine, but in recent years has become to mean dispersion, as of people originally belonging to one nation. Such links between ethnicity, emigration and tourism have been noted in a more general sense by other authors. Given the above, this manuscript considers relevant to study the role of affectivity and the sense of belonging as a driver of ethnic tourism and VFR tourism, from a perspective of connection with family origins and roots. The following section aims to explore attachment theory as an influential variable of tourist (e.g. ethnic) motivations (Dalgic & Leeuw, 1994).

Yet only recently have place attachment and personal involvement as predictors of destination loyalty been of interest to tourism academics. According to Gross and Brown (2008), tourism knowledge has advanced by applying theories developed in other disciplines and so it is surprising that some research streams have been developed, tested and widely reported in leisure journals without attracting the interest of tourism researchers. This is characteristic of the situation that exists with regard to research about involvement, place attachment and, more recently, the combined use of several constructs. In this sense, place attachment attracted researchers' interest when investigating the relationship between psychological impressions of people with aspects related to geography, architecture, environment, tourism or leisure. Ultimately, place attachment becomes instrumental in supporting the management of destinations and territorial planning (Hwang et al., 2005; Poço & Casais, 2019; Sousa & Rocha, 2019). Based on relevant inputs from previous studies (e.g., Ramkissoon, Smith & Weiler, 2013; Yoon & Uysal, 2005), and an exploratory study, we advance research propositions that expand previous studies developed in similar contexts. The positive relationship between attachment and tourist activity is an economic catalyst for growth in specific territories, promoting local products and providing added value to the tourist. In this context, ethnic tourism is an excellent business opportunity for Portugal if the country is able to capitalize on the development of sense of place, city

brand management and hospitality. The exploratory study of the researchers should allow to understand the phenomena of place identity and place dependence with the participants and the consequent effect on satisfaction and loyalty.

When considering to evaluate in this article the role of attachment in the choice of tourist destination of Portuguese emigrants, this section intends to make a framework of the Portuguese emigration context, from the second half of the twentieth century to the present, in order to understand the mobility strategies of emigrants and what significance they attach to their place of origin, with the target of being visitors of their homeland (or relatives origin). In this scope, in 2017 Munoz et al. have proposed a new definition for “visiting friends and relatives” (VFR) which consisted of the group of emigrants that not only include VFR as a trip purpose and accommodation but also participate in activities with their hosts and receive advice from them (pure VFR). The second group of emigrants that don't have any motivation to see their hosts but take their advice and use their accommodation (exploitative VFRs) (Marschall, 2018). Contextually, the past of Portuguese emigration reveals that the strongly emigration occurred between the mid-1950s and the mid-1970s and was linked to post-war European economic growth, in an essentially intra-European process of massive transfer of labor from the South to the industrialized North, where Portugal was substantially involved in this transfer from the 1960s (Barreto & Mónica, 1999). Until the 1960s most Portuguese who emigrated went to Brazil (Marques, 2001). From this decade onwards, Portuguese emigration goes mainly to Europe, integrating progressively the national migratory flow into the processes of transfer of labor forces from the South to the Northern European countries that began in the 1950s (Marques, 2001). In the host countries, Portuguese communities, as a whole, have been associated with the aim of combating the risk of losing their identity, and associations or collectivities based on nationality and even regionally (from origin) have been one of the strategies to do so. Therefore, emigration led to the formation of several Portuguese communities today scattered around the world, many of them made up of individuals from the same region (see for example Arroteia and Fiss, 2007; Silva et al., 1984): “as a prisoner of his culture, the emigrant can not completely detach it from his social and spatial movements. It transports and modifies it in a dynamic that characterizes its own existence. When going into the unknown, it becomes natural, because the attitude that emigrants have is to seek support from those who are culturally similar to them, in order to alleviate the discontinuity produced by the distance of their home country. This greatly contributes to the definition of specialized destinations” (Rocha-Trindade, 1976: 997). In this scope, Gonçalves (2007) identifies the birth and the origin (78.9%), as well as the length of stay and the experience in the country (21.1%) as the main reasons of sense of belonging of the Portuguese emigrants.

Over the years, the emigration of the Portuguese has been a constant achievement, reaching large percentages in certain periods of Portuguese history. This phenomenon has had significant impacts on the country in certain areas such as the economy, demography, culture, among many others, visible at national, regional and local levels. Emigrants become Portuguese communities residing outside the country, and emigration generates the emergence of the Portuguese diaspora. The phenomenon of emigration ends the bilateral focus between the country of origin and the country of destination. At the same time, the affectivity variable assumes special importance in tourism studies and decision making by visitors and tourists (i.e. behavioral intensions). In the present study, a preliminary contribution is presented based on a sample of 1057 respondents (ie Portuguese residing abroad), from April to May 2019, aiming to better understand the profile and behavior of migrants and what motivates them to return to Portugal in contexts for tourism or leisure.

This research is divided into four phases: i) the first, the conceptual phase, where the literature review on the case study is presented; ii) the second, the methodological phase, is to define how the study will be carried out and by what means; iii) the third empirical phase, is related to the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data and their conclusions; iv) finally, the fourth phase, discussion of results. As the questionnaire was applied online, it was decided to construct a simple questionnaire, consisting of 23 closed questions, among them multiple choice and dichotomous. The average response time per questionnaire was 3 minutes. The survey respondents were "Portuguese around the world" (emigrants). More than 50% of respondents report visiting their home country (Portugal) at least once a year (i.e. ethnic tourism). Therefore, a conceptual model is presented, which seeks to highlight the role of attachment in the behavioral intensities of emigrants (i.e. choosing the tourist destination Portugal). The realization of this study was based on the originality of the theme “Tourism Visiting Family and Friends - Portuguese around the world”, at a time when Portugal wins

again for the third consecutive time the best European destination for the World Travel Awards, together with 38 other awards tourism, Portugal receives three more awards than in 2018.

This study was conducted with the objective of understanding the importance of VFA Tourism in the context of Portuguese emigrants. Realizing first of all the reason for their departure from the country, and then their attitudes and choices in their visits to Portugal. Tourism is increasingly one of the most important socioeconomic activities in many countries, and in some cases the most powerful activity, particularly in countries that live in this tourism sector. In general terms, there has been a growth in tourist activity. Tourism is thus presented as an activity that, when well planned and developed, has advantages and positive aspects, such as job creation and environmental conservation, culture enhancement, conservation and / or recovery of historical heritage and large increases in infrastructure, among others. However, in order to cope with this rapid growth in the tourist flow that has occurred in recent decades, it is important to adopt tools for preparing and controlling tourism activity in tourist destinations, thus avoiding negative impacts (Oliveira, 2014). VFR tourism is a segment of tourism unknown to many, as it lacks scientific research. The exploratory study of the researchers allowed them to understand the phenomena of place identity and place dependence with the participants and the consequent effect on satisfaction and loyalty. These conclusions are based on the perception of researchers derived from the preliminary research. This study presents a preliminary contribution around the theme of tourism (segmented). Specifically, research topics such as ethnic tourism, VFR tourism and affectivity theory were addressed. Preliminary results from the study show that emigrants are willing to return to their home country. The initial results of the study show the role of belonging and affective ties when choosing tourist destinations. Therefore, the authors presented a conceptual model that aims to establish the causal relationship between affectivity variables with satisfaction and fate loyalty (e.g. Portugal). From an interdisciplinary perspective, this study presents contributions to marketing, tourism and local development. Future studies should measure causal relationships presented here and test the influence of affectivity on specific tourism contexts (i.e. ethnic tourism and VFR tourism).

Keywords: affectivity, tourist destination, emigration, loyalty, ethnic tourism

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