

PLACE ATTACHMENT, HOST-GUEST INTERACTION AND SUPPORT FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: RESIDENTIAL TOURIST PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: The importance of stakeholder participation in achieving sustainable and successful tourism development is well established. In particular, the attitudes of local residents toward tourism development are regarded as a critical consideration by destination management organizations. In this context, understanding the attitudes of residential tourists—voluntary migrants who, like local residents, reside in the host destination year-round—is essential for inclusive and comprehensive tourism planning. Their perceptions and support can play a pivotal role in the long-term viability and social acceptance of tourism initiatives. Therefore, this study aims to examine the influence of place attachment and host-guest interaction on support for tourism development. By testing this model within the context of residential tourists, it seeks to advance the existing body of literature by addressing a relatively understudied group within tourism research. This study, grounded in quantitative research methods, employed a survey technique for data collection. A total of 330 valid responses were obtained from residential tourists—primarily Northern Europeans—residing in the Alanya region of Antalya. The findings reveal that place attachment has a significant effect on support for tourism development. Furthermore, the results indicate that place attachment also exerts a statistically significant influence on host-tourist interaction. In addition, the results demonstrate that the level of host-tourist interaction is a key determinant of the degree of support for tourism development. The findings underscore the necessity of considering residential tourists in tourism planning processes. As long-term residents of the destination, residential tourists can contribute positively not only to enhancing the quality of the visitor experience through host-guest interactions but also to the promotion and marketing of the destination. Their unique position between local and tourist identities offers valuable potential for sustainable and community-oriented tourism development.

Keywords: place attachment, host-tourist interaction, support for tourism, residential tourism, retirement migration, destination management

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INTRODUCTION

Residential tourism refers to long-term stays or permanent relocations to a destination, as opposed to short-term tourist visits. In this context, the host destination becomes the primary residence place for residential tourists, meaning that they are no longer considered tourists but rather foreign residents. (Perles-Ribes et al., 2018). Residential tourism, which is conceptualized in different ways such as international retired migration, lifestyle migration or amenity migration, is developing especially in the direction of Global North and Global South (Castilla-Polo et al., 2023). This form of tourism is particularly popular among Northern Europeans, with the primary destinations being Mediterranean countries such as Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece, and Turkey. Better climatic conditions, economic circumstances, and appealing environmental factors attract many Northern Europeans, particularly retirees, to the Mediterranean coasts (Mach et al., 2025). In addition, some studies suggest that residential tourism also fulfills existential needs, addressing deeper psychological and emotional motivations beyond economic or recreational purposes (Özyurt, 2023). Therefore, certain destinations in the Mediterranean target to expand their residential tourism offerings.

Residential tourism, which involves year-round stays in a destination, is distinguished from other types of tourism in terms of its impacts (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009). Hence, one of the key issues examined in tourism researches is the long-term economic, sociocultural, and environmental impacts of residential tourism on a destination. However, there has been no research found in the literature regarding the attitudes of residential tourists towards tourism development in the host destination. This group, much like the locals, lives in the host destination throughout the year and relies on the region's infrastructure. Therefore, both the positive and negative impacts of tourism development can also affect residential tourists. In this respect, it is crucial to examine the attitudes of residential tourists toward tourism development. These individuals can recommend their region to friends and acquaintances for both short-term visits and long-term stays.

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By understanding the perspectives of residential tourists on tourism, destination management organizations can gain valuable insights and develop effective marketing strategies for the area. Place attachment refers to the behavioral, emotional, and cognitive connections that develop over time between individuals and specific locations, ultimately influencing human behavior (Brown & Perkins, 1992). Place attachment is a concept studied in tourism, as it significantly influences local people's attitudes and behaviors towards tourism development (Dwyer et al., 2019). Research indicates that people's attitudes toward tourism development vary based on their level of place attachment. However, analyzing the factors that influence perceptions of attachment remains significant (Pai et al., 2024). Host-tourist interaction is a crucial aspect of the tourism system (Qu et al., 2024). A positive relationship between locals and tourists leads to a favorable attitude among residents toward tourism, enhancing the overall experience of visitors as well. Conversely, when this relationship is negative, both locals and tourists may have unsatisfactory experiences (Shi et al., 2025). The importance of fostering positive interactions between hosts and tourists has been the focus of numerous studies (Zhang & Xu, 2023).

However, it is evident that the interaction between hosts and guests, as well as its impact on attitudes towards tourism, has not yet been explored in the context of residential tourist sample. The attitude of residents toward tourism development is essential for successful tourism development. In this respect, this study will examine the attitudes of residential tourists who live in the destination year-round, like the locals, towards tourism development. The lack of prior research on this topic highlights the significance of this study. Furthermore, exploring the interaction between locals and tourists, along with the relationship between place attachment and attitudes toward tourism from the perspective of residential tourists, adds an original aspect to the research. The results are anticipated to aid tourism planning for destination management organizations and to assist decision-makers in residential tourism destinations. The research model is shown in Figure 1.

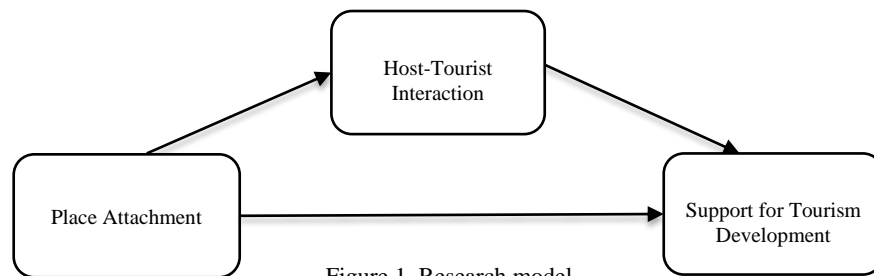


Figure 1. Research model

LITERATURE REVIEW

Place Attachment

Place attachment refers to the emotional and cognitive bonds that individuals develop with the places (Ramkissoon et al., 2013). The concept also encompasses the psychological, emotional, and social relationships that an individual establishes with a place (Altman & Low, 1992). Research has shown that the level of place attachment significantly influences individuals' behavior and their participation in social processes (Stylidis, 2016). In this context, place attachment plays a crucial role in fostering social movements, such as social participation, local initiatives, organization, and action (Stylidis et al., 2015; Guo et al., 2018). Accordingly, place attachment fosters an awareness of social events and encourages efforts toward environmental protection (Vaske & Kobrin, 2001). High levels of attachment result in increased resistance to spatial changes due to a motivation for conservation. Furthermore, high levels of place attachment foster volunteer work and encourage active participation in local decision-making (Kyle et al., 2004).

Stylidis et al. (2015) highlights that a destination's unique features enhance place attachment and cultivate a strong social identity. The perception of place attachment is influenced by various factors. A review of previous studies identifies some of these factors, including the duration of residence, social relations, cultural identity and environmental quality. Duration of residence suggests that individuals who have lived in the same location for an extended period tend to have a stronger sense of attachment to that place (Lewicka, 2011). Social relations, such as connections with family, friends, and neighbors, strengthen the bond with the community, resulting in higher place attachment (Scannell & Gifford, 2010). While cultural identity creates a sense of attachment to a shared history, culture, and a collective place (Manzo & Perkins, 2006), environmental quality, encompassing natural beauty and a clean environment enhances place attachment emotionally and psychologically (Ramkissoon et al., 2013).

Place attachment is an important issue highlighted in tourism discipline, as it influences human behavior. The economic, social, and environmental impacts of tourism can influence perceptions of place attachment (Huong & Lee, 2017). That is why place attachment is emphasized as a crucial factor in shaping local people's perceptions of tourism development (Hu et al., 2019). Although individuals with a high level of place attachment care about the economic contribution of tourism to the region, it is not the sole criterion to support tourism development (Shen et al., 2019; Woosnam, 2012).

Local residents who feel a strong attachment to their community support tourism development, provided it aligns with their local identity and environmental values (Lee, 2013). It is essential that any tourism development in the area is compatible with these local values and does not adversely affect the unique characteristics of the region. The level of place attachment positively influences tourism development in a manner that protects culture and identity, promotes the region, and ensures fair resource sharing (Stylidis, 2016). Activities that promote cultural heritage enhance place attachment, leading residents to support tourism more actively (Prasad et al., 2023). This fact provides valuable insights for destination management organizations, highlighting the need to develop policies that reflect local values and identities (Almeida-García et al., 2020). Integrating the concept of place attachment into tourism planning benefits both residents and visitors (Guo et al., 2018).

Host-Tourist Interaction

While tourism activities are often discussed in terms of economic impacts, they also create cultural interactions through the relationships formed between host communities and visitors. In this context, understanding the nature of these interactions has become a key research area in the literature (Shi et al., 2025; Eusébio et al., 2018). Interactions between hosts and guests significantly influence the behaviors of both groups (Zhang & Xu, 2023). Research shows that interactions between cultures can result in both positive and negative effects. Positive interactions may lead to cultural enrichment, increased tolerance, economic benefits, and social development. Conversely, negative interactions can result in cultural degeneration, erosion of local values, economic dependence, and social conflict (Doxey, 1975; Zhang et al., 2006).

Tourism naturally brings together diverse cultures, fostering mutual cultural interactions that can create beneficial outcomes for all involved. Therefore, appropriately scaled and sustainable tourism policies are deemed essential to achieve this goal (Qu et al., 2024). In tourism developments that prioritize sustainability, interactions between hosts and tourists provide a valuable opportunity for cultural exchange. These interactions allow for the sharing of information about local handicrafts, traditions, and customs, which enhances the overall tourism experience by fostering strong connections between hosts and guests. Tavakoli et al. (2017) argue that homestays offer tourists a unique opportunity for authentic cultural interactions by connecting them with local people.

Lu et al. (2024) highlight that positive interactions enhance tourists' levels of engagement, satisfaction with their experiences, and the likelihood of their intention to revisit. Consequently, what might seem like a typical tourism activity can transform into an unforgettable experience for visitors (Sthapit et al., 2022). Additionally, positive interactions can foster environmental sensitivity among tourists as well (Tu & Ma, 2022). This synergy allows local communities to preserve and promote their unique cultures, fostering a long-term connection with tourists (Amoiradis et al., 2021). This process not only enhances destination branding but also improves the quality of life for locals (Wu et al., 2024).

Negative host-tourist interactions can have irreversible consequences for the future of the destination. In particular, rapid, uncontrolled, and incompatible tourism developments can have devastating effects on the region not only environmentally but also socio-culturally. The type of tourism that develops in the region is formed as a result of the policies of decision-makers, rather than by the visitors themselves. However, host-tourist interactions occur when visitors want to use and purchase services in the region, use public infrastructure or participate in local events (Su & Wall, 2010). Unlike local people, visitors have limited knowledge about the culture and lifestyle in the region (Liu-Lastres & Cahyanto, 2021). A negative interaction can diminish the quality of tourists' experiences, leading to lower satisfaction levels and fostering a negative perception of the region. Additionally, for local residents, this situation poses risks such as threats to culture and the environment, the rise of social problems, and a decline in overall quality of life (Lehto et al., 2020).

Support for Tourism Development

The attitude of residents toward tourism development is a crucial factor in its success (Gautam, 2023). Tourism facilitates human interactions by connecting diverse cultures. Additionally, it relies on the natural environment, which the local community also utilizes. Since interactions between locals and tourists are unavoidable, the attitudes of residents during these interactions are vital for the success of tourism development (Wardana et al., 2018). In this respect, the attitude of locals towards tourism development is among the most studied topics in tourism (Gursoy et al., 2019). When the local community has a positive attitude towards tourism, it indicates that tourism development in the area is both successful and sustainable. Conversely, a negative attitude can lead to various social and environmental issues. When locals perceive tourism development as compatible with their identity and culture, they are more likely to support it (Almeida-García et al., 2020). Therefore, it is crucial to plan tourism policies that consider the social structure of the local community to ensure their support for tourism development (Khasawneh et al., 2023).

Various models have been developed to explain the attitude of the locals as it is a determining factor in tourism development. Among these models, Allport's "Contact Hypothesis" (1954), Homans' (1958) "Social Exchange Theory" and Butler's (1980) "Life Cycle Model" are the most widely recognized.

Allport's (1954) Contact Hypothesis suggests that when individuals from different communities engage in equal-status and cooperative interactions, it can improve their relationships and reduce prejudices. This model argues that under the right conditions, interactions between people from diverse cultures can diminish biases and foster mutual understanding (Allport, 1954; Reisinger & Turner, 2002). From a tourism perspective, direct interactions between the host community and visitors enhance cultural understanding and promote tolerance (Fan et al., 2024). Therefore, when tourism development aligns with the characteristics of a destination, local residents are more likely to have a positive attitude toward tourism. As a result, this positive attitude contributes to stronger relationships between local people and visitors.

The Social Exchange Theory, developed by Homans (1958), suggests that individuals shape their relationships based on a cost-benefit analysis. In the context of tourism development, the attitude of locals is influenced by this framework. When locals perceive the positive impacts of tourism as outweighing the negatives, they tend to support tourism initiatives. In such cases, they may tolerate the adverse effects of tourism due to the benefits they receive in return. Conversely, if residents believe the negative effects are greater than the positive ones, they are likely to have a negative attitude toward tourism development. Thus, it is important to note that host communities form their attitudes and behaviors toward tourism and tourists based on the economic, social, or cultural benefits they derive from tourism (Ap, 1992).

The Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) Model, introduced by Butler in 1980, illustrates how locals support for tourism changes based on the stage of tourism development. The model outlines six key phases a destination typically undergoes: exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, and either decline or rejuvenation. It

suggests that residents' attitudes toward tourism vary across these stages. In the initial phases—exploration and involvement—local communities generally show strong support for tourism, as interactions between hosts and visitors are more genuine and positive (Butler, 1980). However, in the middle stages—development and consolidation—interactions often become more superficial due to increased commercialization and overcrowding, which can lead to discomfort and even hostility among residents. Although locals may still hold generally favorable views of tourism during this time, issues and tensions may begin to surface. The final stage—stagnation—marks a period when tourist satisfaction, repeat visits, and destination recommendations begin to decline (Doxey, 1975; Butler, 1980). As tourism intensifies, sustainability challenges such as overdevelopment, environmental degradation, and cultural erosion can emerge. These negative impacts, in turn, contribute to a decline in local residents' support for tourism (Linderová et al., 2021).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Site

The research was conducted in Alanya, a district of Antalya, one of Turkey's leading tourism destinations. Located on the Mediterranean coast, Alanya has a well-developed sea-sand-sun tourism due to favorable climate conditions, including long and warm summers. According to Euromonitor (2024) the Antalya region received 19.3 million visitors in 2024, making it the sixth most visited destination globally. In addition to short-term tourists, Alanya also hosts a significant number of residential tourists, thanks to its well-established tourism infrastructure, natural environment, and favorable climate. The development of the region as a residential tourism destination dates back to the 1990s, when it was particularly favored by German citizens. In the 2000s, interest from Scandinavian countries and the United Kingdom increased, followed by a significant rise in demand from Russia in the 2010s.

According to the most recent data from Alanya Chamber of Commerce and Industry [ALTSO] (2023), a total of 48,216 residential tourists permanently live in Alanya, accounting for around 10% of the district's total population. These figures highlight that Alanya is one of the most popular destinations in Turkey, especially among retirees from Northern European countries. In Alanya, local life and tourism are deeply intertwined. As a result, the impacts of tourism—both positive and negative—directly affect not only the local community but also the residential tourists living in the area. Due to these characteristics, which align closely with the objectives of the study, Alanya was selected as the research site.

Survey Instruments

In this study, the Place Attachment Scale developed by Williams & Vaske (2003) was employed. Comprising six items, the scale was tested across seven different samples and demonstrated high reliability. It has been widely utilized in various disciplines, including tourism research (Dang & Weiss, 2021). To measure the level of host–tourist interaction, the four-item scale developed by Teye et al. (2002) was adopted. This scale aims to assess the extent of interaction between local residents and tourists, and it continues to be widely used in studies focusing on community–tourist dynamics (Eusébio et al., 2018). Participants' support for tourism development was measured using a four-item scale proposed by Liang & Hui (2016). This scale has shown strong internal consistency and has been applied in several tourism-related studies (Wang et al., 2020; Han et al., 2023). All three scales in the study were applied using a five-point Likert format, ranging from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree.

Sampling and Data Collection

This study focuses on permanent residential tourists living in the Alanya region of Antalya, Turkey—one of the country's most prominent coastal tourism destinations. As of the most recent data, approximately 36,000 residential tourists reside year-round in Alanya. While the region also attracts seasonal second-home owners, particularly from Northern Europe, who stay for less than six months per year, they are excluded from the scope of this study due to their transient residency status and differing motivations and expectations. Therefore, this research specifically targets residential tourists who have made Alanya their primary residence area. The data collection was conducted in person by the researchers between April 2021 and May 2022. In order to reach the residential tourist population, the researchers attended regular weekly and monthly social gatherings and events held by and for foreign residents.

Additionally, to enhance sample diversity, contact was established with community associations and clubs representing different nationalities residing in the region (e.g., German, Scandinavian, and Russian). A combination of simple random sampling and snowball sampling techniques was utilized. The former ensured the inclusion of a diverse group within public gatherings, while the latter was particularly useful in reaching participants through peer recommendations in expatriate networks. A total of 330 valid responses were collected through structured questionnaires. Considering the estimated size of the residential tourist population in Alanya, this sample size is deemed sufficient for representing the population, as it meets general criteria for confidence level and sampling adequacy in social research (Wong, 2023).

Data Analysis

All data collected for the study were coded and entered into the IBM SPSS Statistics Software. Initially, the dataset was screened for missing values and outliers to ensure data quality. Following this, the normality of the scale distributions was examined to assess the suitability of parametric analyses.

Descriptive statistics and reliability analyses (Cronbach's alpha) for all measurement scales, as well as participants' demographic characteristics, were conducted using SPSS. Beyond preliminary analyses, confirmatory factor analyses (CFA), structural model, and hypothesis testing were carried out using AMOS. These analyses allowed for the evaluation of the validity and structural relationships among latent variables in the proposed research model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistics

Participants' demographic characteristics reveal that 83% of respondents were female, and 48% were aged 60 years or older. In terms of nationality, the largest group was British nationals, comprising 43% of the sample. Additionally, 40% of participants reported having resided in Alanya for 10 years or more. The majority (66%) indicated that they spend between 10 to 12 months annually in Alanya, reflecting long-term residency patterns. Furthermore, 69% of the participants reported owning property in the region. A detailed breakdown of the demographic characteristics is presented Figure 2 below.

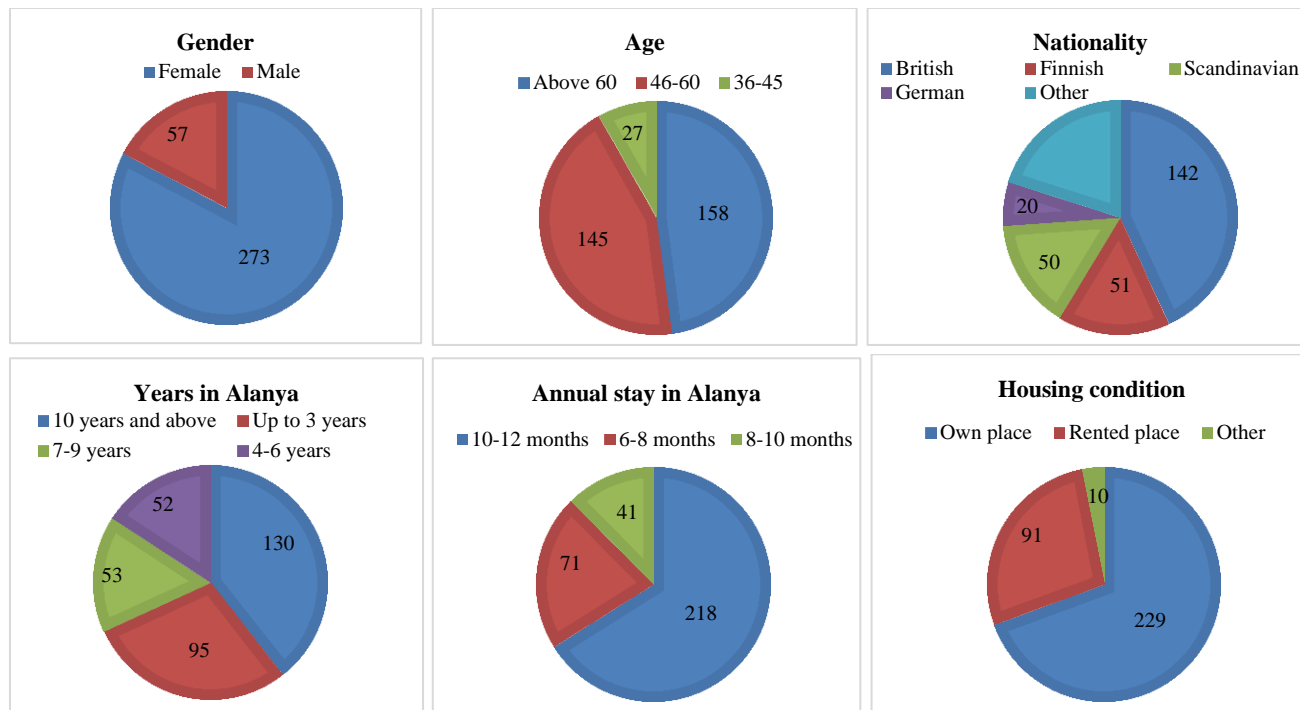


Figure 2. Demographic profile of the sample

Measurement Model

The measurement scales employed in the study were subjected to Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to assess their construct validity. All CFA procedures were conducted using IBM AMOS. Model evaluation was based on multiple goodness-of-fit indices, as provided in the program output. Among these, the chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio (χ^2/df) is considered one of the most critical indicators. According to Cheung & Rensvold (2002) a χ^2/df value below 3.00 indicates a good model fit, while values between 3.00 and 5.00 are considered acceptable.

Another key index is the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), with values below 0.08 indicating an acceptable level of model fit. In addition to these, the analysis also considered the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Incremental Fit Index (IFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), and the Root Mean Square Residual (RMR), in line with established recommendations for evaluating model fit (Keith, 2019).

The construct validity of the measurement model was assessed using Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR) values. These indicators provide evidence of the convergent validity and internal consistency of the latent constructs. The AVE reflects the proportion of variance captured by a construct relative to the variance due to measurement error. According to Kline (2016), an AVE value greater than 0.50 is indicative of adequate convergent validity, meaning that the construct explains more than half of the variance of its indicators. Higher AVE values suggest lower error variances and stronger explanatory power of the latent factor. The Composite Reliability (CR) measures the internal consistency of the construct, similar to Cronbach's alpha but considered more precise in the context of structural equation modeling. CR values above 0.60 are considered acceptable, indicating sufficient reliability of the construct (Kline, 2016).

The goodness-of-fit indices obtained from the confirmatory factor analysis indicate that the model demonstrates an acceptable fit to the data. The chi-square statistic (χ^2) was 7.345 with 2 degrees of freedom, resulting in a χ^2/df ratio of 3.67. According to Hair et al. (2019), χ^2/df values between 3 and 5 are considered indicative of an acceptable model fit. Additional fit indices further support this assessment. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was 0.090, which, while slightly above the ideal threshold of 0.08, still falls within an acceptable range for complex models (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Taken together, these values suggest that the model provides an adequate representation of the observed data and meets commonly accepted standards of fit in structural equation modeling.

The results of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) also indicate that all factor loadings exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.50, as recommended in the literature (Hair et al., 2019). Specifically, the standardized factor loadings ranged between 0.78 and 0.97, demonstrating strong item-construct relationships. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all scales were 0.81 or higher, exceeding the recommended cutoff of 0.50 and confirming adequate

convergent validity. The Composite Reliability (CR) values were also found to be 0.92 or above, indicating a high level of internal consistency. In addition, the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for all scales were greater than 0.94, further supporting the reliability of the constructs. These results collectively suggest that the measurement scales used in the study exhibit strong reliability and construct validity. A summary of these psychometric properties is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Confirmatory factor analysis findings

	λ	t-value	AVE	C.R.	(α)
Place Attachment			0.88	0.97	0.96
Alanya is very special to me	.95	38.54			
I feel Alanya is a part of me	.97	45.04			
I identify strongly with Alanya	.97	43.36			
I am very attached to Alanya	.97	44.42			
Living in Alanya says a lot about who I am	.81	22.93			
Alanya means a lot to me	.95	**			
Host-Tourist Interaction			0.81	0.94	0.94
I have developed friendships with tourists visiting Alanya	.93	19.77			
I enjoy interacting with tourists in Alanya	.94	35.02			
My interactions with tourists are positive and useful	.96	33.17			
I like learning about tourists' own country and culture	.78	**			
Support for Tourism Development			0.82	0.92	0.95
Tourism is an important industry for the community	.84	24.04			
I support tourism development in Alanya	.92	23.33			
I hope Alanya attracts more visitors	.93	23.02			
Benefits of tourism are greater than its costs	.94	**			

Model Fit: $\chi^2=7.345$, $df=2$, $\chi^2/df=3.67$, RMSEA=0.90, CFI=0.99, GFI=0.98, IFI=0.99, NFI=0.99, RMR=0.01

Table 2. Hypothesis results

Hypothesis	(β)	t-value	Result
H₁ : Place Attachment → Host-Tourist Interaction	0.69	15.347***	Supported
H₂ : Place Attachment → Support for Tourism	0.56	13.794***	Supported
H₃ : Host-tourist interaction → Support for Tourism	0.41	10.695***	Supported

*** $p < 0.001$, Model Fit: $\chi^2=6.093$, $df=2$, $\chi^2/df=3.047$, RMSEA=0.06, CFI=0.99, GFI=0.99, IFI=0.99, NFI=0.99, RMR=0.01

Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis were tested through path analysis, a statistical technique commonly used to assess the strength and significance of the relationships among variables within a proposed model. Path analysis enables to assess the strength and direction of causal relationships by estimating standardized regression coefficients (path coefficients) for each hypothesized link. One of its key advantages is the ability to evaluate both the overall fit of the model and the specific contribution of each pathway, making it particularly useful for testing theoretical models (Streiner, 2005). The model examining the relationships among place attachment, host–tourist interaction, and support for tourism development demonstrated statistically significant and theoretically consistent path estimates. The critical ratios and standardized path coefficients (β) were used to evaluate the hypothesized relationships. An inspection of the standardized estimates revealed that all hypothesized paths were statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) and in the expected positive direction. The hypothesis results are shown in Table 2. Specifically, place attachment had a strong and significant positive effect on both support for tourism development ($\beta = 0.56$, $p < 0.001$) and host–tourist interaction ($\beta = 0.69$, $p < 0.001$). Similarly, host–tourist interaction was found to significantly and positively influence support for tourism development ($\beta = 0.41$, $p < 0.001$). In terms of explanatory power, the model accounted for 80% of the variance in support for tourism development and 47% of the variance in host–tourist interaction. These findings provide strong empirical support for the proposed relationships among the variables and highlight the central role of place-based and interpersonal dynamics in fostering community support for tourism. The result of path analysis is shown in FIGURE 3 below.

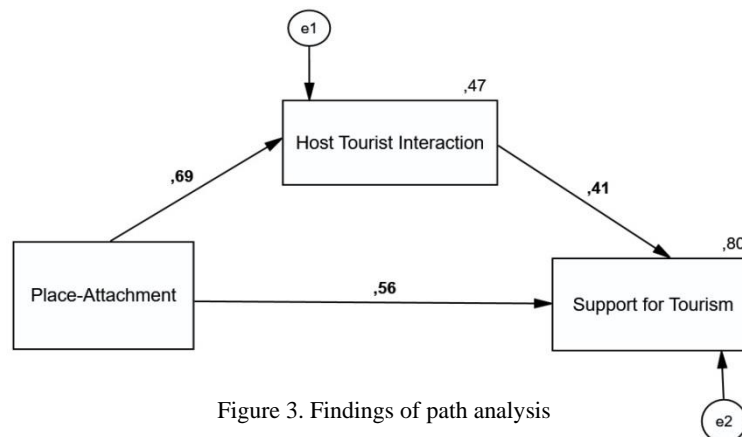


Figure 3. Findings of path analysis

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Tourism is regarded as a strategic sector by many countries, primarily due to its economic impacts. In an effort to capture a greater share of the tourism market, destinations engage in competitive and sustainable tourism planning. The success of tourism development is closely linked to the level of support it receives from stakeholders. In this context, the attitudes of the local population toward tourism development are of critical importance for the successful tourism development. While numerous studies (Özyurt & Gülmez, 2020; Swain & Sthapak, 2023) have explored local residents' perceptions of tourism, the present study focuses on the attitudes of residential tourists toward tourism development. Similar to local residents, residential tourists reside in the destination year-round and are affected by both the positive and negative impacts of tourism. The research findings indicate that the model comprising place attachment, host-tourist interaction, and support for tourism development yields significant results within the sample of residential tourists. Accordingly, place attachment has a significant influence on both the level of host-tourist interaction and the degree of support for tourism development. This finding aligns with previous research (Eusébio et al., 2018) suggesting that the level of place attachment affects the quality of host-tourist interaction and is a determining factor in the tendency to support tourism development. In this regard, place attachment can be identified as one of the key factors shaping the attitudes of resident groups toward tourism development in a destination. It is well established that the emotional and psychological bond local residents feel toward their environment directly influences their attitudes toward tourism.

Indeed, whether tourism activities are supported by local residents depends not only on the economic benefits they provide but also on the extent to which these activities align with local identity, cultural values, and environmental sustainability. From this perspective, it becomes apparent that these considerations, commonly associated with the local population, are equally applicable to residential tourists who have become long-term inhabitants of the region. Therefore, it has been determined that the attachment residential tourists feel toward their place of residence plays a decisive role in shaping their attitudes toward tourism development. This finding suggests that destination management organizations should take such insights into account in order to design inclusive and long-term sustainable tourism models.

As part of the study, the relationship between host-tourist interaction and support for tourism development was also examined. It has been emphasized that the long-term effects of host-tourist dynamics shape the attitudes and behaviors of local residents toward tourism, contributing significantly to the sustainability of tourism in their regions (Fan et al., 2024).

The findings of this study reveal that this dynamic, typically attributed to local residents, is also applicable to residential tourists living in the region. Accordingly, the interactions of residential tourists with temporary visitors have a determining influence on their attitudes toward tourism development (Gursoy et al., 2010). In this context, it can be asserted that residential tourists—who have become integrated into local life and communities—must be considered when analyzing the impacts of tourism on local populations. In this regard, the satisfaction levels of long-term residents, such as residential tourists, can influence their likelihood to recommend the destination to friends and acquaintances not only as a place to visit but also as a place to live (Stylidis, 2016). This, in turn, presents destination management organizations with a cost-effective and organic marketing opportunity (Boley et al., 2014). Including residential tourists in discussions of host-tourist interaction is also important in terms of tourist satisfaction. In Alanya, where approximately 36,000 residential tourists reside (ALTSO, 2023), their interactions with visitors and their attitudes toward them can directly impact the overall visitor experience. Given that the quality of experience is known to be a significant factor influencing repeat visitation (Ding & Hung, 2021), the interactions between residential tourists—who have become permanent residents of the destination—and traditional tourists emerge as an important field of both research and practice. Therefore, destination management organizations bear considerable responsibility in fostering positive interactions between these groups.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies

This study explores a topic that has been largely overlooked in the literature, acknowledges certain limitations, and offers several recommendations for future research in this area. The study is geographically limited to the Alanya region, with a target group consisting primarily of Northern European individuals who are either retired or approaching retirement. Additionally, the research is constrained by the specific measurement scales utilized in the survey instrument.

This study was conducted in Alanya, a district of Antalya and one of Turkey's most prominent residential tourist destinations. To enhance the generalizability of the findings, future research could replicate this study in other destinations—both within Turkey and in other countries along the Mediterranean coast. Such comparative studies would provide valuable insights for destination management organizations by highlighting similarities and differences in residential tourist behavior and perceptions across diverse cultural and geographic contexts. In addition, it is recommended that future research be conducted with residential tourists living in rural, non-coastal areas in order to enable comparative analysis. Such studies could provide a broader understanding of how residential tourists' attitudes toward tourism development may vary across different geographic and socio-cultural settings. Additionally, qualitative research methods—particularly in-depth interviews—could be utilized to gain deeper insights into the experiences and perspectives of residential tourists.

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